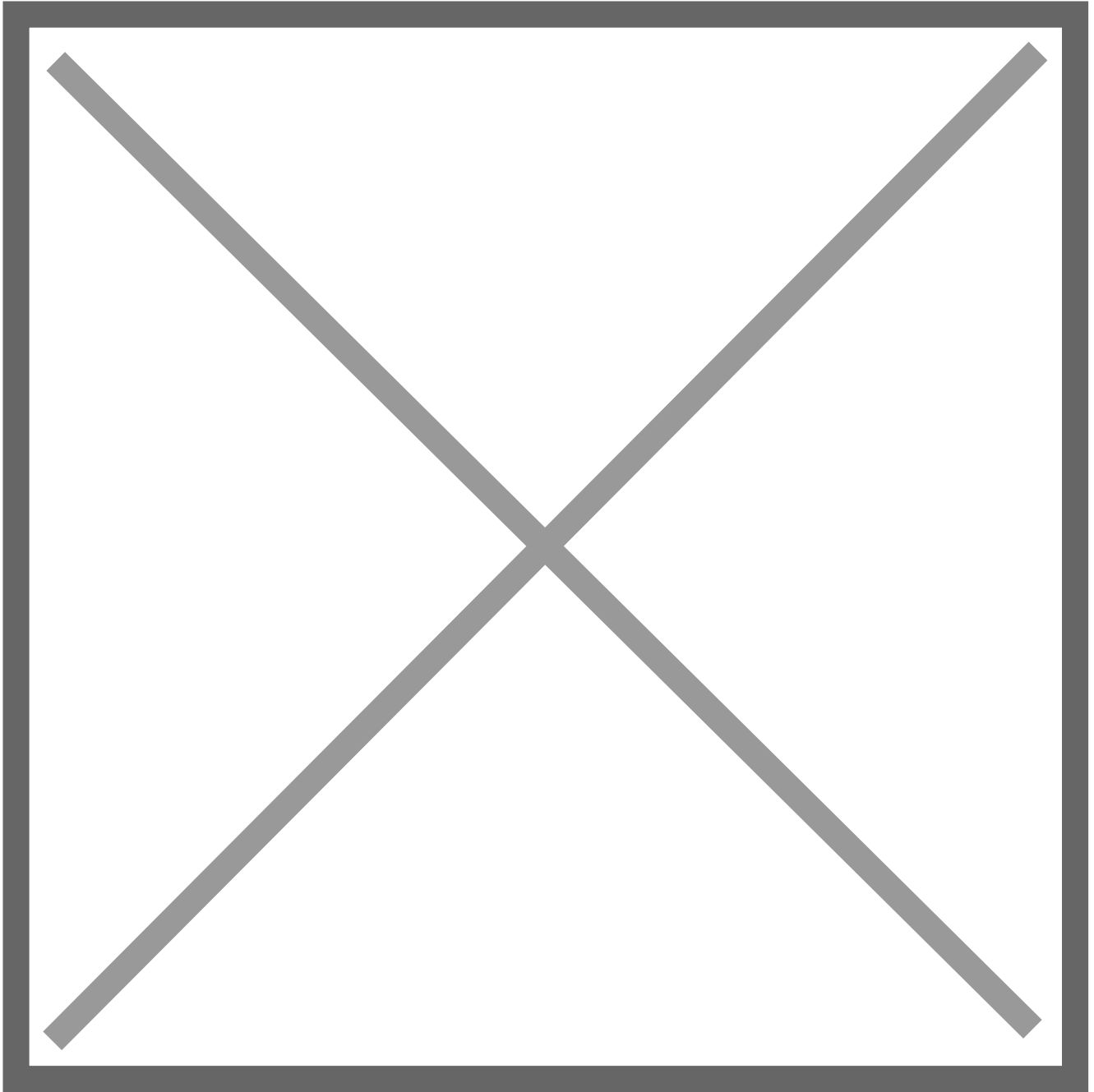


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Police officers detain a man at the scene of a shooting at the Seattle Center July 26, 2026, which was hosting a food festival. In a July 27 letter to Seattle Mayor Katie Wilson, Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Seattle offered prayers for the victims of the shooting that left at least three people dead and four others injured. (OSV News/Reuters/Justin Reinhard)

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Seattle — July 28, 2026

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In a July 27 letter to Seattle Mayor Katie Wilson, Archbishop Paul Etienne conveyed his sadness in hearing of the shooting the evening before at the Seattle Center.

"I wish to express our deep sorrow and assurance of prayers for the victims of yesterday's shooting at the Seattle Center. We pray also for the family and friends of those who died or were injured as well as for the many who are traumatized by this shooting," the archbishop wrote, noting that "as a pastor in Seattle, I pray for this community daily."

Gunshots erupted around 6 p.m. July 26, leaving three people dead and four others injured during the Bite of Seattle food festival at the Seattle Center, an event that drew thousands of people. Four injured in the shooting, including a 2-year-old boy, were treated at the city's Harborview Medical Center and the University of Washington Medical Center. By the evening of July 27, all of them had been discharged, according to media reports.

The King County Medical Examiner identified the three people who were killed in the shooting as Carlos Villalba, 44, and Ashley Whitehead, 56, and Junior Cee Semo, 19.

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Investigators said they believed that three suspects exchanged gunfire in a suspected gang-related incident, and victims were caught in the crossfire. A 15-year-old suspect was arrested while another remained at large, Seattle police said. The third suspect is believed to have been Semo.

"We will continue to pray for an end to this kind of violence, which violates human life, human dignity and the peaceful existence we strive for in every community and nation," Etienne said in the letter. "May God continue to heal our wounds, hear our prayers and guide us in the ways of peace."