

## Tucson victims were inspirations as Catholics and Americans

Suzanne Morse | Jan. 12, 2011 NCR Today

Among the victims of Saturday's horrific shootings in Arizona were Christina Taylor Green and U.S. District Court Judge John Roll.

As Catholics and Americans, we should pray for all those who died -- Gabe Zimmerman, Dorwin Stoddard, Dorothy Murray, and Phyllis Scheck as well as Green and Roll -- and who were injured, the most well-known being U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords.

But I single out Green and Roll not only because both individuals were Catholic but because both seemed also to share a love of public service.

Judge John M. Roll, chief judge for the District of Arizona, had just gone to Mass when he decided to stop by the "Congress on Your Corner" event that Giffords was holding to thank her for her help in getting funding for the district court, according to news reports.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Roll attended Salpointe Catholic High School in Tucson, was a member of the Knights of Columbus, and reportedly a daily communicant. He was appointed by President George H.W. Bush to the district court in 1991, and reportedly received death threats himself over a ruling he made with regard to a case that involved Mexican immigrants.

Christina Taylor Green was born on September 11, 2001. According to news reports, the 9 year old girl had just received her first Holy Communion at St. Odilia's Catholic Church last spring. The granddaughter of Dallas Green, a former manager of the Philadelphia Phillies and New York Mets, she was the only girl to play for her Little League baseball team.

Green was at Saturday's event because she had been recently elected to her school's student council and a neighbor thought she might enjoy learning more about the political process.

All of the victims should be celebrated, but I thought it was striking that Roll and Green -- both Catholic -- seemed to have this commitment to public service, despite their generations apart.

We do not know what life Green would have led, but we know she was a vivacious, determined little girl. And we know that, by all accounts, Roll was a fair-minded judge.

Let's use their inspiring examples to be the kind of Americans we all should be.