

Church Security and Response



- Deacon Lonnie Grabowska
- Roman Catholic Bismarck Diocese

Background of Presenter (as of 12/25)

Military Service

- Submarine Duty in United States Navy (4 years)
- USS San Juan (SSN-751)

Law Enforcement Experience and Training

- 30 years of LE experience (corrections, patrol, SWAT, field training officer, criminal investigations, narcotics agent, undercover agent, and law enforcement management). 3300+ hours of training

Education

- Bachelors and Masters degrees (Management) from University of Mary.
- Masters and PhD degrees (Criminal Justice) from Walden University.
- Part time faculty in Criminal Justice for the University of Mary.

Permanent Diaconate

- Ordained in October of 2011 (14 years)
- First class of (5) years (aspirant and candidate)

Family and Parish Member

- Married for 32 years
- Father
- Parishioner

Topics of Presentation

Facts: Bismarck Diocese

- Overview of geographic region
- Review of parishes and schools

Areas of Pressure and Tension for the Catholic Church

- Secular and church related topics leading to “pressure points” involving the Roman Catholic Church and Diocese of Bismarck.

Acts of Violence and Hostility

- Mass Shootings
- Arson and Fire Attacks
- Vandalism and Property Destruction
- Other Threats and Incidents
- Underlying Factors and Impacts

Topics of Presentation

Recommendations from Authorities

- United States Department of Homeland Security (USDHS)
- Department of Justice's Federal Bureau of Investigation (DOJ's FBI)
- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) – benefit coverage for the Catholic Church in North America (Bismarck Diocese)

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

Critical Incidents: Preparation and Response

Topics of Presentation

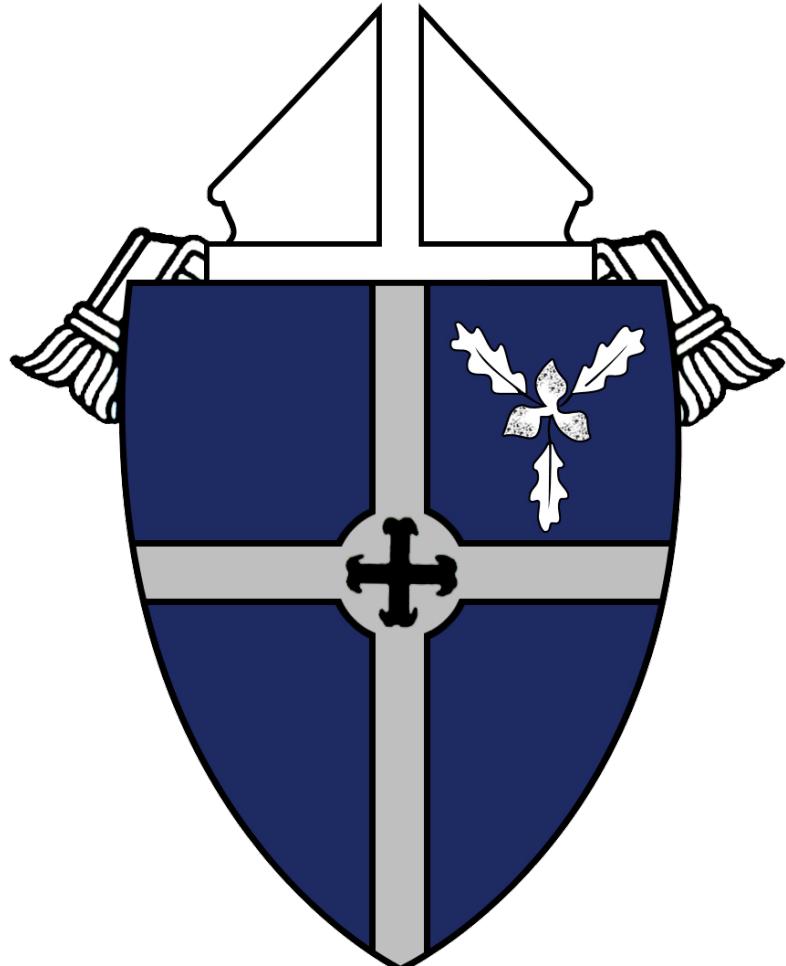


Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools



Actions of Clergy & Leadership

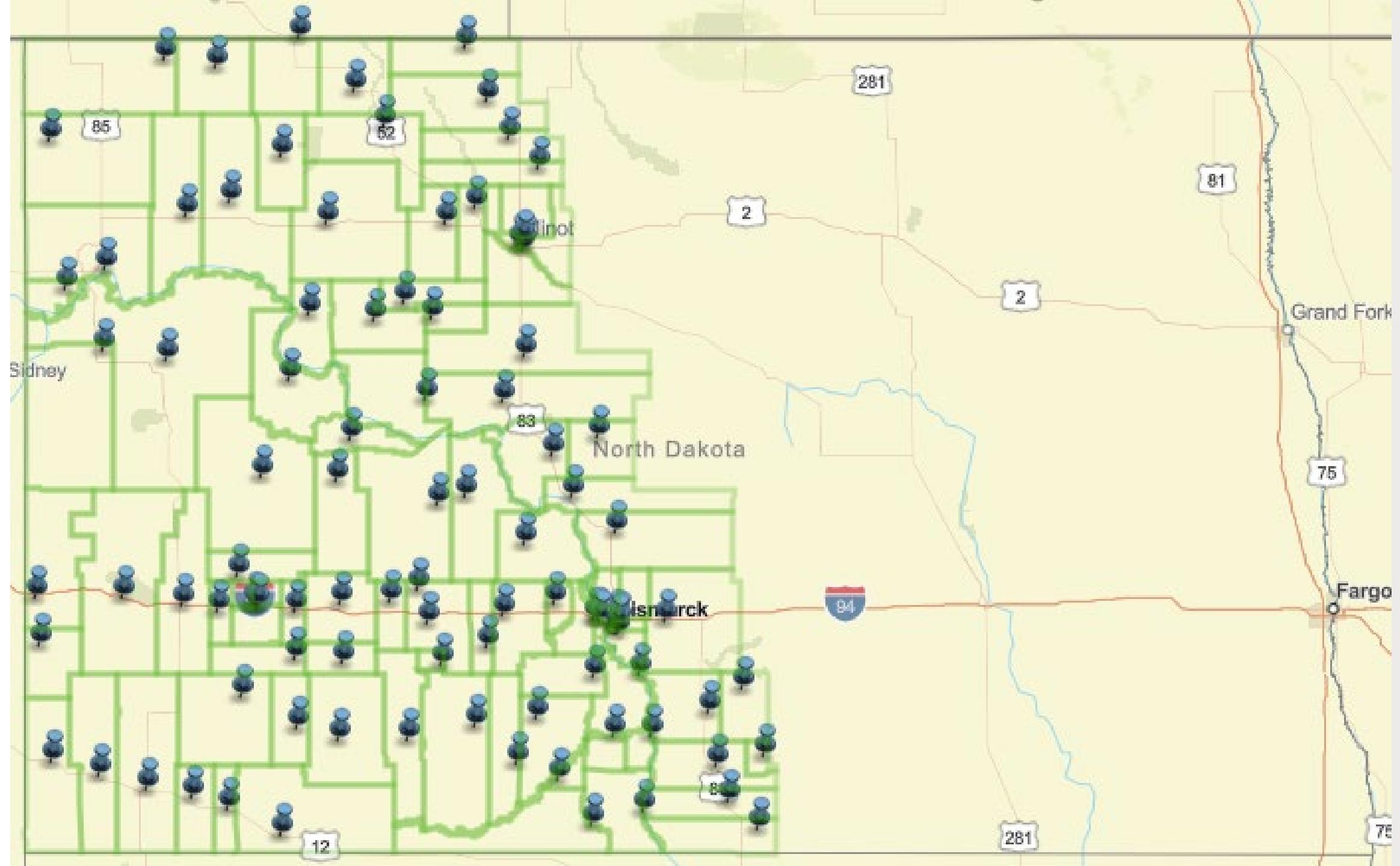
Facts: Bismarck Diocese



- The Bismarck Diocese consists of a 34,773 square mile area in western North Dakota and is comprised of Adams, Billings, Bowman, Burke, Burleigh, Divide, Dunn, Emmons, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, McKenzie, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Mountrail, Northwest Bottineau, Oliver, Renville, Sioux, Slope, Stark, Ward and Williams counties.

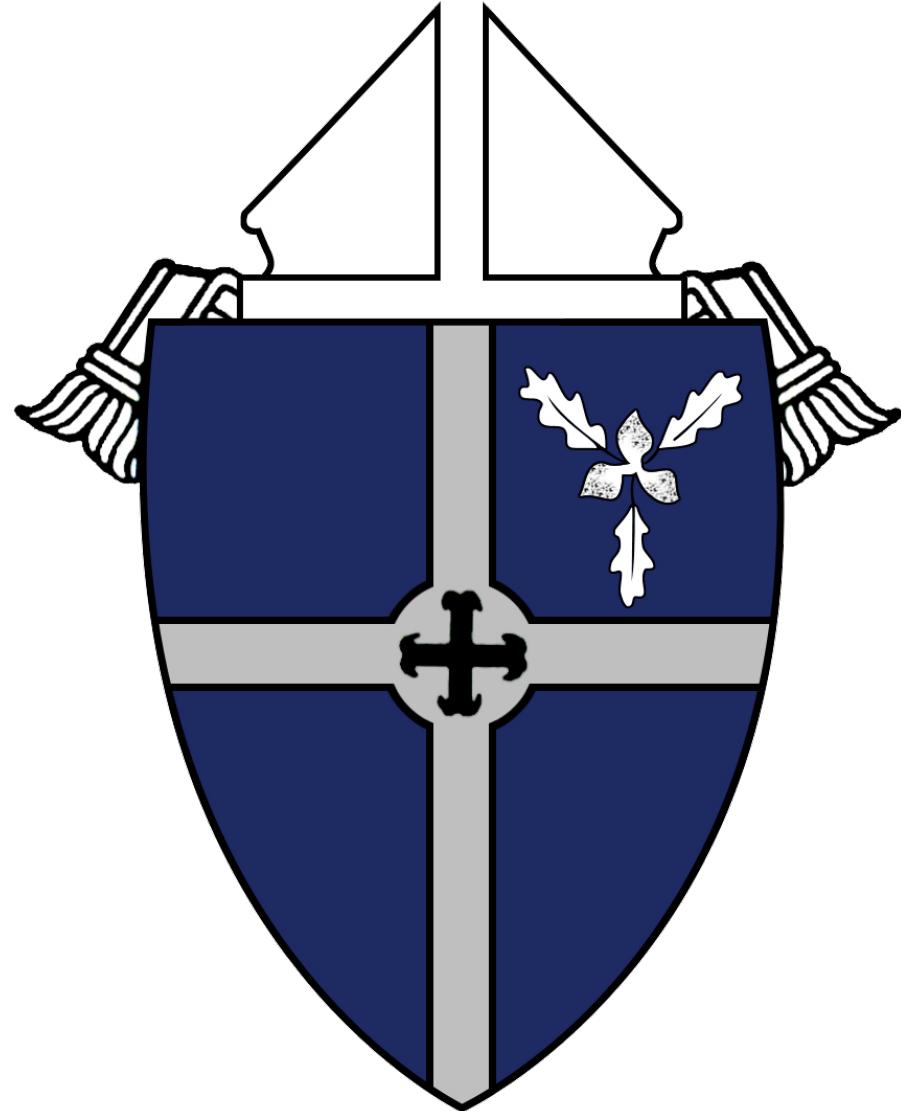
The total population in the 24 counties is approximately 280,836 with a Catholic population of approximately 61,862.

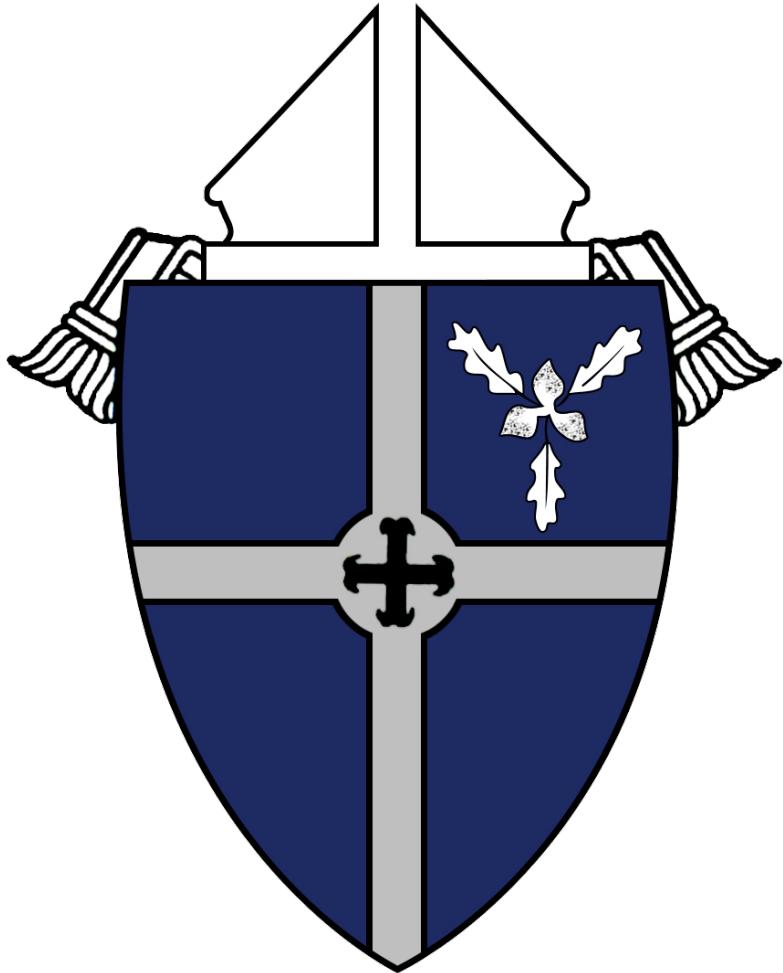
- 93 parishes and 5 Oratories (Haymarsh [Morton], Solen, Selfridge, Cannonball, and Porcupine [Sioux]).



Facts: Bismarck Diocese

- **Catholic Schools in Diocese**
- Light of Christ Catholic Schools (Bismarck)
 - Cathedral Elementary School
 - Saint Anne Elementary School
 - Saint Mary's Elementary School
 - Saint Mary's Academy
 - Saint Mary's Central High School
 - Light of Christ Kids Club
- University of Mary (Bismarck)



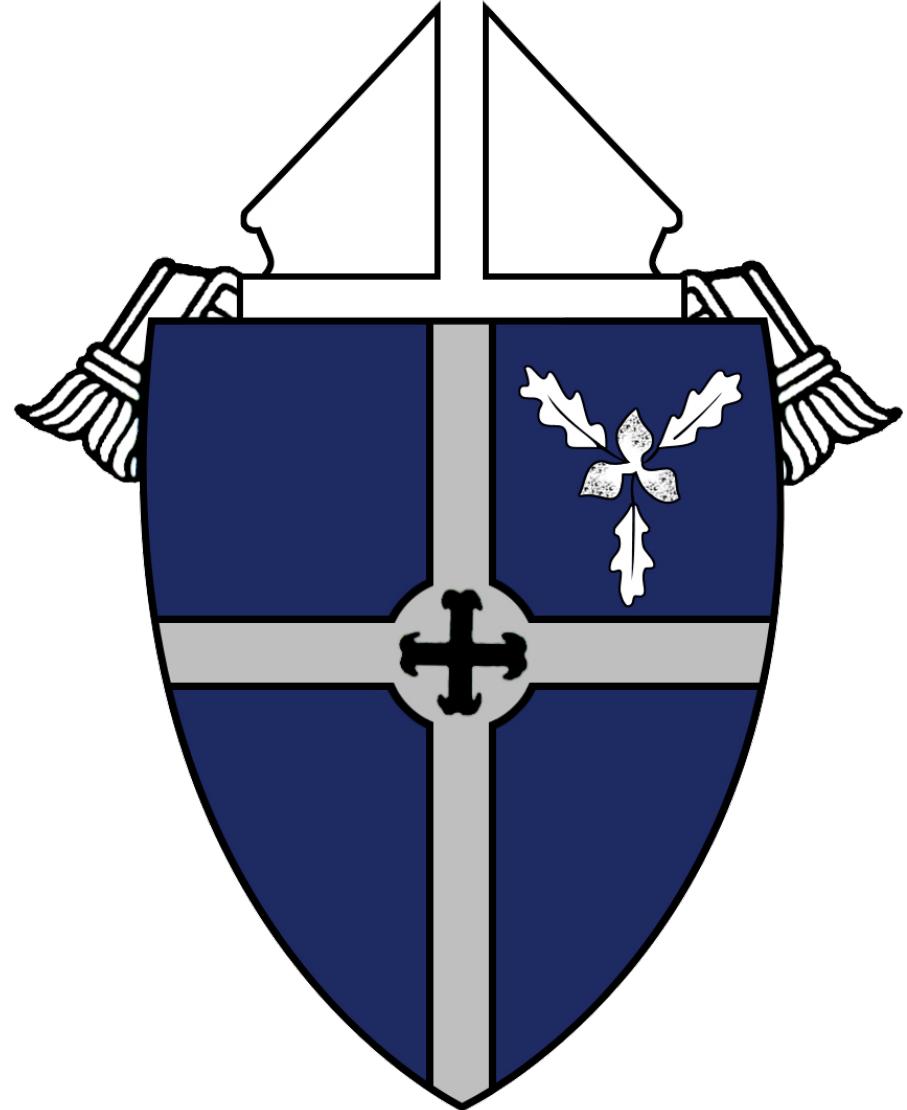


Facts: Bismarck Diocese

- **Catholic Schools in Diocese**
 - Bishop Ryan Catholic School-Elementary (Minot)
 - Bishop Ryan Catholic School-Secondary (Minot)
 - Christ the King Montessori School (Mandan)
 - Saint Joseph Montessori School (Mandan)
 - School of the Holy Family Secondary School (Mandan)
 - Saint Bernard Mission School (Fort Yates)
 - Saint Joseph School (Williston)

Facts: Bismarck Diocese

- Catholic Schools in Diocese
- Titan Tots Preschool (Grades: Pre-kindergarten) (Dickinson)
- Trinity Elementary East (Dickinson)
- Trinity Elementary North (Dickinson)
- Trinity Elementary West (Dickinson)
- Trinity Junior High and High School (Dickinson)
- Home on the Range (Sentinel Butte)



Areas of Pressure and Tension

Areas of pressure and tension exist as the Catholic Church responds to changing social norms and the evolving needs of individual congregations.

These pressure points and areas of tension must be viewed through the lens of **situational awareness** and **operational preparedness**.

Areas of Pressure and Tension

Sexual Abuse Scandals

- The issue of clergy sexual abuse has led to significant criticism, legal actions, financial repercussions, and a decline in the Church's reputation.

Role of Women

- There is tension over the ordination of women to the priesthood and the broader role of women in church leadership, which is often perceived as restricted by the all-male hierarchy.

Areas of Pressure and Tension continued:

- Social and Moral Issues
 - Divisions exist within the Church regarding social issues, including LGBTQIA2S+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and Two Spirits) rights, with the Church's stance on issues like same-sex unions becoming a point of controversy.
- Global Challenges
 - The Catholic Church grapples with contemporary challenges such as the environmental crisis, threats to democracy and human rights, and war, as well as the impact of changing demographics and the rights of immigrants.

Areas of Pressure and Tension continued:

Internal Divisions and Trust

- Internal divisions persist among some bishops and among different factions, such as those who support or oppose traditionalist interpretations of the Second Vatican Council. This has also led to a loss of trust among members.

Financial and Membership Issues

- The Church faces challenges related to the reduction of active members in pews, the financial stability of parishes, and overall financial mismanagement.

Areas of Pressure and Tension continued:

- Non-denominational and Interfaith Relations
 - The Church also faces tensions in its ecumenical and interfaith interactions, with conflicts arising in specific situations, like the war in Ukraine.
- Marriage and Divorce
 - The church's teachings on contraception, divorce, and remarriage without an annulment are at odds with the practices of many lay Catholics, leading to private dissent and alienation from some church teachings.

Areas of Pressure and Tension continued:

Native Boarding Schools/Missions

- Indian boarding schools operated in the United States between 1819 and 1977 and were part of Christian missionaries and is seen as a movement to eradicate Native culture and traditions by removing children from their parents and tribes.
 - (5) Federally recognized Tribal Nations exist within the borders of North Dakota.

Clergy Celibacy

- The mandatory celibacy for Roman Catholic priests is an ongoing source of tension, with debates about its practicality and necessity.

Areas of Pressure and Tension continued:

- Abortion and pro-life versus pro-choice
 - The Church bases its opposition on the biblical commandment "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13). It interprets this commandment as applying to all human life, including unborn children.
 - The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that "human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception." The Church teaches that abortion is a direct and intentional killing of an innocent human being, regardless of the stage of pregnancy.
- Etc.

Acts of Violence and Hostility

Acts of violence and hostility toward churches in the United States have been increasing, with hundreds of incidents recorded annually.

These acts include shootings, arson, bombings, and vandalism.

Mass Shootings at Churches and Houses of Worship:

- Mass shootings at churches and houses of worship, while rare, are frequently deadly.

Mass Shootings at Churches and Houses of Worship:

Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church,
Charleston, South Carolina

- A white supremacist killed nine Black parishioners during a Bible study. The perpetrator was convicted on federal charges.

2015



2017

First Baptist Church, Sutherland Springs, Texas

- A gunman killed (26) people and wounded (22) others in the deadliest mass shooting at a place of worship in U.S. history.

Mass Shootings at Churches and Houses of Worship:

Tree of Life synagogue,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (2018):

- Although a synagogue and not a church, this attack is often cited in discussions of violence against houses of worship. A white supremacist with a history of antisemitism killed 11 worshippers.



Mass Shootings at Churches and Houses of Worship:

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Grand Blanc, Michigan (2025):

- A gunman rammed his vehicle into the church, opened fire, and set a fire, killing four people and injuring eight. The FBI is investigating the attack as targeted violence.





Mass Shootings at Churches and Houses of Worship:

- **Church of the Annunciation, Minneapolis, Minnesota (2025):**
 - Two children were killed, and multiple others were injured during a school Mass.
 - The shooter was a former student of the parish school.

Mass Shootings at Churches and Houses of Worship:

- From 2000 to 2024, records indicate (379) incidents and (487) deaths at religious congregations and religious community centers.
- Most involved a single victim, but some — like the recent shootings in Michigan and Minnesota — killed or injured many people.

Arson and Fire Attacks

- Arson and fires set at churches are a persistent problem, with hundreds of incidents occurring in recent years.
- Historical context:

Arson and Fire Attacks

Historical context:

- Arson attacks against Black churches were a tool of racial terror during the Civil Rights movement. A spike in church burnings in the 1990s led Congress to pass the Church Arson Prevention Act.

Louisiana (2019):

- Three historically Black churches were burned by an individual who was later convicted and sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Arson and Fire Attacks



- **Ohio (2024):**

- Four churches in two adjacent counties were destroyed by arson over a span of four months. Authorities suspect a single individual is responsible for the fires.
 - Kokeen Christian Enterprise Baptist
 - Flag Springs Methodist Church
 - Rehobeth Pentecostal Church
 - Fox-Fairview Christian Church



Kokeen Enterprise Baptist Church, Oak Hill, Ohio (April 23, 2024)



Flag Springs Methodist Church, Patriot, Ohio (May 10, 2024)



Rehobeth Church, Waterloo, Ohio (July 6, 2024)



Fox-Fairview Church, Patriot, Ohio (August 6, 2024)

Vandalism and Property Destruction

- Vandalism is the most common type of hostility against churches, with hundreds of incidents reported annually.

Vandalism and Property Destruction

- Types of vandalism:
 - Vandalism includes incidents like smashing and decapitating religious statues, defacing property with hateful graffiti, and desecrating religious items.
- Recent trends:
 - The [Family Research Council \(FRC\)](#) documented a high number of hostile acts, with 415 incidents in 2024 and a record high of 485 in 2023. Catholic churches have been frequent targets of vandalism in recent years.

Vandalism to St.
Elizabeth of
Hungary Catholic
Church in
Pleasant Hill, PA
(July 21, 2025)



Vandalism to St.
Elizabeth of
Hungary Catholic
Church in
Pleasant Hill, PA
(July 21, 2025)



Vandalism to St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church in Pleasant Hill, PA (July 21, 2025)



Vandalism and Property Destruction

- Anti-abortion incidents (2022):
 - In the wake of the Supreme Court overturning *Roe v. Wade*, there was a sharp spike in incidents against churches, with at least 59 cases motivated by pro-abortion sentiments in 2022.

Other Threats and Incidents

- Besides active shooter incidents, arson, vandalism, and other acts of violence and intimidation are directed at churches and their members.

Other Threats and Incidents

- Bomb threats:
 - Churches have received bomb threats communicated via phone calls and emails.
 - Routine to disrupt major events and cause fear for parishioners and staff.

Other Threats and Incidents

- Explosive Devices:
- Current violent actors are creating and utilizing Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) by purchasing basic propane containers equipped with varied ignition sources (ex. shooting with a high velocity bullet and/or flammable wick).

Other Threats and Incidents

- Explosive Devices:
- On 11/23/16, during the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) protests in southern Morton County, 21-year-old Sophia Wilansky lit a small propane canister, modified to ignite via a wick, to throw at law enforcement. The device ignited while she had it cradled in her arm.

Example of
Coleman
16-ounce
propane tank for
\$7.99



Other Threats and Incidents

- Explosive Devices:
- On 07/14/23, 37-year-old Mohamad Barakat was traveling to an outdoor public event in Fargo, ND with plans to ignite several propane canisters filled with Tannerite (binary explosive – oxidizer and fuel [aluminum powder]) to injure and kill citizens.
- Barakat detoured and stopped to shoot and kill Fargo Police Department Officers (Andrew Dotus, Tyler Hawes, and Jake Wahlen) on the way to the event. Barakat was killed on scene by assisting officer Zach Robinson.

CCTV still of
Barakat at a
shooting range near
Casselton, ND on
the morning of
07/14/23.





Seized
weapons and
armor
Barakat
utilized
during the
shooting on
the afternoon
of 07/14/23.



3-pound propane tank
for \$64.99

2-pound container of
Tannerite for \$18.99

Approximately 6-
pounds of Tannerite
for a 3-pound
propane tank.

Total cost: \$125.00

Other Threats and Incidents

- **Assaults and Threats:**
- In December 2024, an intruder armed with a hammer broke into the historic Zion Baptist Church in West Louisville, Kentucky, and attempted to attack a worker. The workers barricaded themselves inside the church and called the police. The suspects fled before police arrived, and no one was seriously injured in the incident.
- The intruders caused external and internal damage to doors and windows but did not steal anything. Police asked the public for help in identifying the individual responsible

Other Threats and Incidents

- Service disruptions:
 - Individuals have intentionally disrupted church services with threatening behavior or protest actions.

Ladder of
Increased
Aggression by
Violent Actors

Shooting Violence

Arson and Fire Attacks

Vandalism and Property Damage

Bomb Threats

Assaults and Threats

Service Disruptions

Underlying Factors and Impact



Motivation:

The motives behind attacks vary and can include hate toward Christianity, anti-religious or political hostility, or mental health struggles.



Underreporting:

Many attacks on churches are likely not reported to authorities or featured in the news, suggesting the true number is higher than available data.

Underlying Factors and Impact

- Impact on communities:
 - Attacks on houses of worship disrupt and intimidate religious communities, leading many to increase security measures.
 - The U.S. Department of Justice considers targeted crimes against religious institutions a form of **terrorism**.

Recommendations from Authorities

United States
Department of
Homeland
Security (DHS)

Federal Bureau
of Investigation
(FBI)

Catholic Mutual
Group (CMG)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (USDHS)



Recommendations from Authorities

- United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
 - DHS Active Shooter – How to Respond document
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship document
 - **Hand out and review documents (2x)**

Federal Bureau of
Investigation (FBI)

U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation



Recommendations from Authorities

- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
 - Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Active Shooter Preparedness Action Guide handout
 - FBI Active Shooter Event Quick Reference Guide
 - **Hand out and review documents (2x)**

Catholic Mutual Group
(CMG)



CATHOLIC
MUTUAL GROUP

Recommendations from Authorities

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
 - CMG Parish Safety & Security Guide
 - **Hand out and review of document**
 - **Walkthrough of Appendix A through Appendix F**
 - **Explanation of Best Practices**

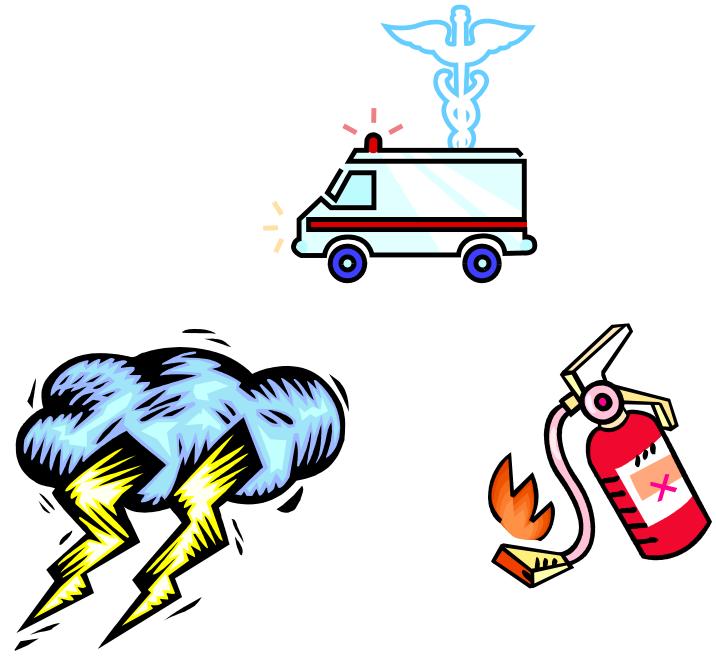
Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Overview of Recommendations:
 - Awareness and Prevention
 - Locking Doors
 - Easily Identifiable Ushers
 - Perimeter Security
 - Cell Phones
 - Clearly Marked Exits
 - Threat and Course of Action Plans

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- **Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)**
- Church of Corpus Christi Emergency Handbook
 - Digital walk through of document (1x)

CHURCH OF CORPUS CHRISTI EMERGENCY RESPONSE



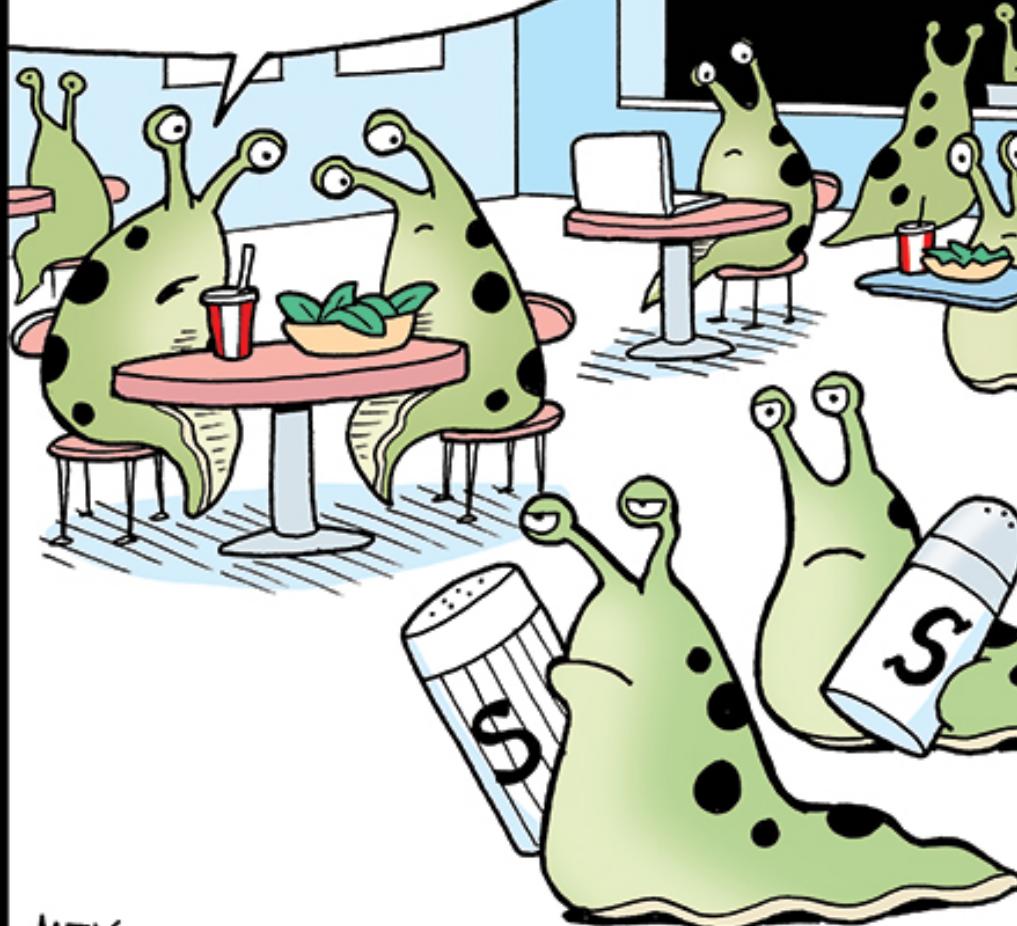
HANDBOOK

1919 North 2nd Street
Bismarck, ND 58501-1735

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- **Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)**
- Levels/Classes of Licenses or Permits
 - Handout and review document (1x)

THOSE OPEN CARRY
FOLKS MAKE ME
NERVOUS...



Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- **Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)**
- Armed Personnel for Church/School Security Chart
 - **Handout and review document (1x)**

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Recommendations:
 - Catholic Mutual **strongly recommends** **not** allowing armed employees or volunteers as part of your parish safety/security plan.
 - Allowing trained armed employees and volunteers to provide security is a very complex process that not only increases your liability exposure, but it also exposes the individual to great personal risk.

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Recommendations:
 - If armed security is going to be part of your safety/security plan, Catholic Mutual recommends hiring active law enforcement or a qualified and properly insured security firm to transfer the risk associated with the use of firearms.
 - Private security or active law enforcement
 - Advantages/Disadvantages to discuss with both unique groups

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Example for sworn **officer** assistance (contractual):
 - The Bismarck Police Department pays a newly hired sworn officer approximately \$64,000 as an annual salary.
 - This equates to an hourly wage of \$31.00 per hour and an overtime wage of \$47.00 per hour (1.5 times or time and a half).

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Example for sworn **deputy** assistance (contractual):
 - The Burleigh County Sheriff's Department pays a newly hired sworn deputy approximately \$61,464 as an annual salary.
 - This equates to an hourly wage of \$29.55 per hour and an overtime wage of \$44.33 per hour (1.5 times or time and a half).

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Recommendations cont.:
 - To have an effective safety/security team and an overall presence of safety in the church, you should develop a sense of “situational awareness.”
 - Become aware of your surroundings and do not let complacency rule. People often believe “it will never happen” to them. It’s time to change that mindset and develop new procedures to prepare for a situation “when” it happens and not “if” it happens. In the event of a threat, having no safety/security plan in place creates chaos and fear. With a plan in place, there is structure and organized actions.

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Recommendations:
- In a letter (dated July 2022), CMG states the following:
 - The Catholic Mutual Relief Society of America (“Catholic Mutual”) has been asked by numerous members if there is liability coverage when a parish or school **defends itself** with the use of firearms.
 - Catholic Mutual acknowledges the answer is “**yes**”. In virtually all instances, defense of the diocese, parish or school entity is covered.

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Recommendations:
- **In a letter (dated July 2022), CMG states the following: (cont.)**
 - Specifically, coverage will always apply for any arch/diocese, parish, school and religious order when utilizing employed and trained security guards, third-party security guards, off-duty law enforcement and retired law enforcement.
 - Please note that third-party security guards or companies should have their own coverage and be able to provide a certificate of insurance.

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Recommendations:
- **In a letter (dated July 2022), CMG states the following: (cont.)**
 - Volunteers and employees will be covered when acting reasonably
-and-
they are part of an organized
and trained parish or school
safety/security team.

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Recommendations:
- **In a letter (dated July 2022), CMG states the following: (cont.)**
 - If you plan to utilize armed individuals/security as part of your safety/security plan at your parish or school location, you **MUST** contact the Diocese prior to entering into any agreement.

Concerns of Failure to Plan

- Risk to the overall safety and wellbeing of members of the congregation, parish staff, and clergy.
- Legal action
 - Civil action and insurance coverage for parish and diocese
 - Negligent Death Claim
 - Wrongful Death Lawsuit

Concerns of Failure to Plan

1

Negligent Death Claim, also known as a Wrongful Death Claim, is a civil lawsuit filed by a deceased person's family or estate against a party whose negligence or wrongful act caused the death.

2

This claim seeks compensation for the survivor's economic losses, such as lost income and funeral costs, and non-economic damages, like emotional suffering.

Concerns of Failure to Plan

The **average cost of a negligent death claim** can vary significantly based on various factors, including the circumstances of the case and the jurisdiction. Here are some key points:

- **Average Settlement Amount:** The average settlement for wrongful death caused by medical negligence can reach over **\$1 million**, but this varies widely. [↪ 1](#)
- **Median Settlement Amount:** The median settlement amount is approximately **\$294,728**. [↪ 1](#)
- **Factors Influencing Settlement:** Factors such as the financial dependence of family members, the age and earning potential of the deceased, and the degree of negligence involved can significantly affect the settlement amount. [↪ 2](#)
- **Punitive Damages:** In some cases, punitive damages may be awarded to deter similar misconduct, which can increase the overall compensation. [↪ 1](#)

For a more accurate estimate, it is advisable to consult with a legal professional who can assess your specific situation.

Concerns of Failure to Plan

Approximately \$973,054

The **average cost of a wrongful death lawsuit** can vary significantly, but here are some key figures:

- The **average settlement amount** in the United States is approximately **\$973,054**. [↪ 1](#)
- The **median settlement amount** is around **\$294,728**, which better represents the typical payout. [↪ 1](#)
- Settlement amounts can range from **\$500,000 to several million dollars**, depending on various factors such as the circumstances of the death and the negligence involved. [↪ 2](#)
- Factors influencing settlements include medical expenses, funeral costs, and the deceased's earning potential. [↪ 2](#)
For a more accurate estimate, it is advisable to consult with a legal professional.



Active Assailant Preparedness Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- Active Shooter Definition

- The FBI defines an active shooter as “one or more individuals actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area.”
- Implicit in this definition is the shooter’s use of a firearm.
- The active aspect of the definition inherently implies the ongoing nature of an incident and thus the potential for a response to affect the outcome.”
 - FBI Active Shooter Incidents in the United States

Active Assailant Preparedness
Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

CMG video training for Defeating a
Violent Intruder (run time is 13:15)

**Review of video and outlined
processes**

Active Shooter: **RUN**, Hide, Fight

RUN

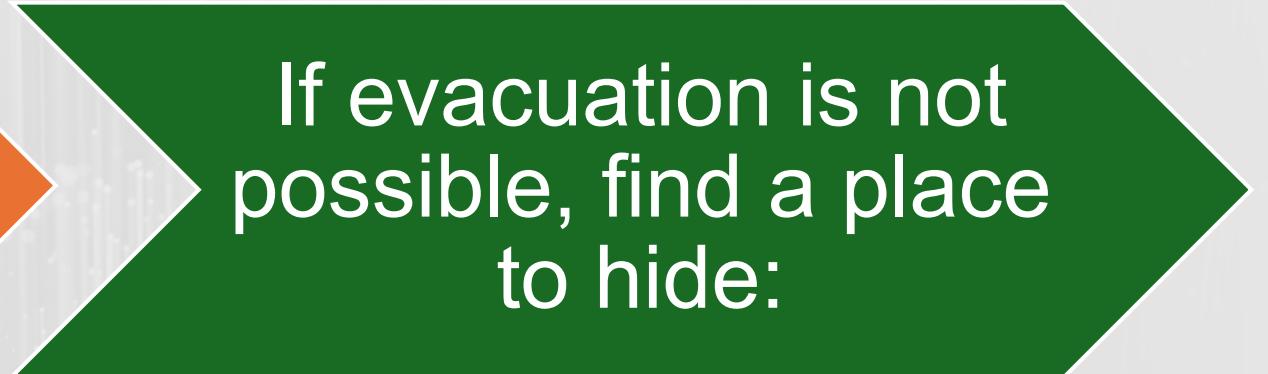
When an active shooter is in your vicinity

- If there is an escape path, attempt to evacuate
- Evacuate whether others agree to or not
- Leave your belongings behind
- Help others escape if possible
- Prevent others from entering the area
- Call 911 when you are safe

Active Shooter: Run, **HIDE**, Fight



HIDE



If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide:

- Lock and/or blockade the door
- Silence your cell phone
- Hide behind large objects
- Remain very quiet

Active Shooter: Run, **HIDE**, Fight

HIDE

If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide:

Your hiding place should:

- Be out of the shooter's view
- Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction
- Not trap or restrict your options for movement

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, **FIGHT**

FIGHT



As a last resort, and only if your life is in danger:

- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter
- Act with physical aggression
- Improvise weapons
- Commit to your actions

Active Assailant Preparedness
Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

CMG video training for Critical
Incidents: Preparation and Response
(run time is 15:31)

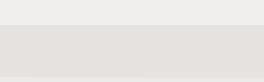
Review of video and outlined
processes

Catholic Mutual Group (CMG) Guidelines:

- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Recommendations:
- Access to CMGConnect:
- CMG provides a “CMGConnect Bismarck Diocese – Church and School Safety and Security” guidesheet.
- **Handout for CMGConnect Bismarck Diocese – Church and School Safety and Security**

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers - **incidents**: 
- Last year (2024), the FBI designated 50 shootings as active shooter incidents. The 50 active shooter incidents occurred in 25 states and the District of Columbia and represent seven location categories, to include:
 - Open spaces, residences, commerce, education, government, houses of worship, and health care facility.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers - **incidents**:
- The 50 active shooter incidents resulted in 313 casualties (100 killed and 213 wounded). The incidents with the highest number of casualties occurred was an elementary school in Texas.

Active Assailant Preparedness Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers - **shooters**:
- Fifty shooters carried out 50 active shooter incidents. Forty-seven shooters were male, one female, one nonbinary, and one unidentified.
- The youngest shooter was 15 years old, and the oldest was 70 years old. Four shooters wore body armor. Two shooters had destructive devices.

Active Assailant Preparedness Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers - **shooters**:
- Twenty-nine of the shooters were apprehended by law enforcement (11 at the scene and 18 at another location)
- Seven shooters were killed by law enforcement
- Two shooters were killed by armed citizens at the scene

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers - **shooters**:
 - Nine shooters committed suicide – three before law enforcement arrived (two at the scene and one at another location).
 - Four at the scene after law enforcement arrived
 - One after an exchange of gunfire with law enforcement at the scene
 - One at the scene after being confronted by a citizen after law enforcement arrived
 - Three shooters remain at large

Active Assailant
Preparedness
Active Shooter: Run, Hide,
Fight

By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement:**

12.5 minutes is the average length of an active shooter incident (shooter arrival to shooter neutralization) 2 to 3 minutes of active shooting.

5 minutes is the average time taken to call the police (9-1-1) following a gunshot.

Such attacks cause widespread panic amongst bystanders, who instinctively seek safety, resulting in delays in informing law enforcement.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- **By the numbers – arrival of law enforcement:**
- Furthermore, during these chaotic events, inaccurate location and situation details present an immense challenge to the emergency response, preventing first responders from being correctly dispatched and hindering their performance of potentially life-saving actions.

Nikolas Cruz entering the second floor of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Elementary School on Wednesday, February 14th, 2018, at approximately 2:22 pm

- By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement:**
- Fire alarms will most likely be sounding.
- Large amount of dust and debris from the overhead will fall due to the percussion of the weapons being fired indoors.



Nikolas Cruz exiting the 2nd Floor
at approximately 2:24 pm

(2 minutes spent shooting on the
2nd floor)



Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement:**
- First responding law enforcement officer(s) will immediately enter the building (area) to neutralize the shooter.
- This may consist of single or multiple law enforcement personnel.
 - Police, Sheriff, State, Federal
 - Form a wedge or diamond and move to shooter

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement:**
- Law enforcement response to a school shooting typically involves a high-risk "contact team" formation, where officers move in a tactical, protective wedge or "V" or "Y" shape to rapidly locate and neutralize the threat.
- While a follow-up "support team" provides backup and medical aid.

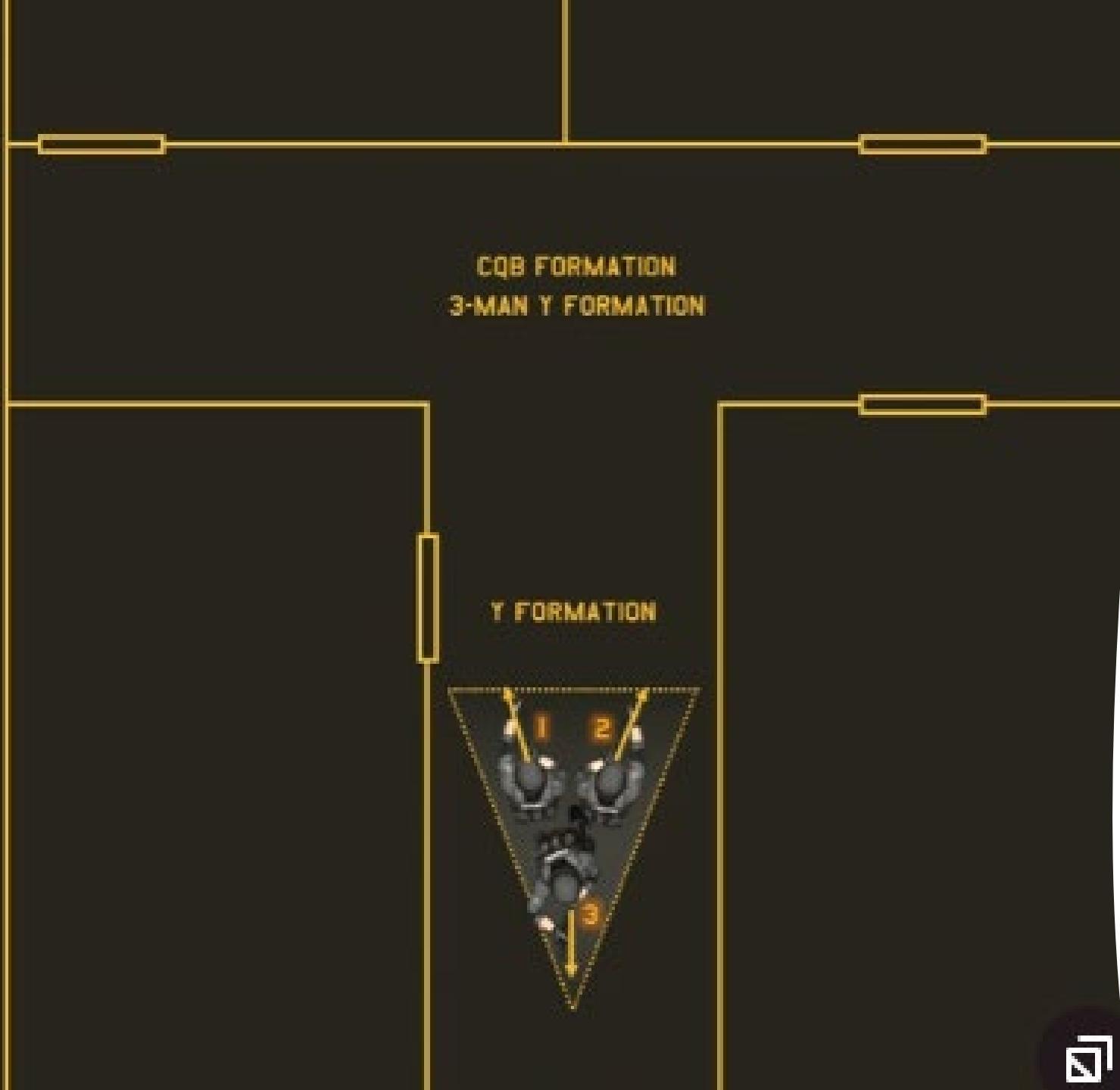
Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement:**
- This formation is designed to maximize cover for the officers entering the building and to provide immediate medical assistance to the wounded, as well as to ensure the officers are not exposed to crossfire.
- The use of this formation is a key component of the "active shooter" response protocol, which focuses on getting help to the victims as quickly as possible.

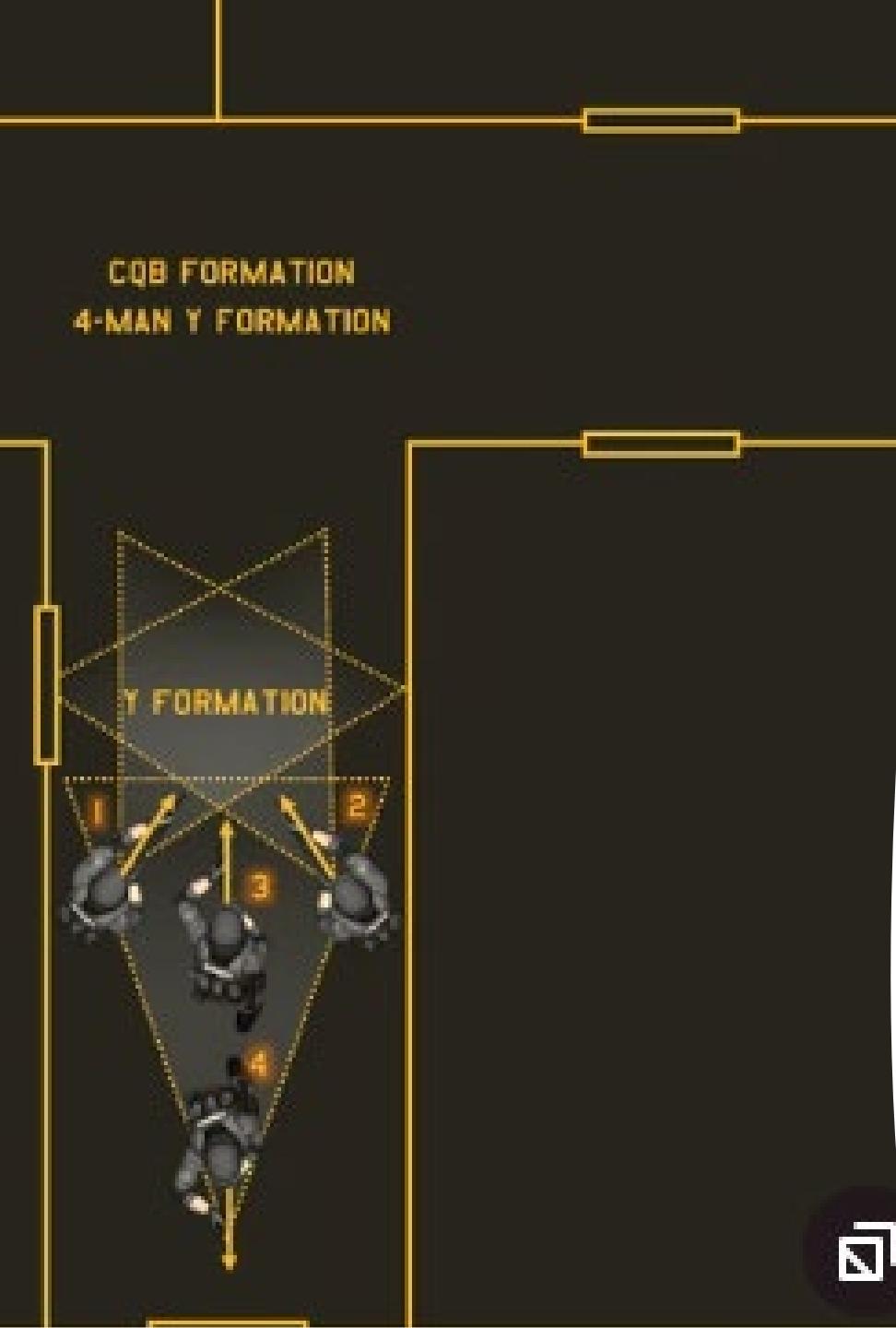
By the numbers - **arrival of law enforcement**

3-Man “V or Y” Formation



By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement**

4-Man “V or Y” Formation



Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement:**
 - Initial Law Enforcement “contact team” **will** pass over injured or dead victims.
 - EMS will treat injured persons and process the dead after the scene is secure, and the shooter is neutralized.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement:**
 - Do not rush the law enforcement group
 - Stay on the ground with hands visible
 - Listen to all directions

Active Assailant Preparedness Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **arrival of law enforcement (synopsis):**
- 9-1-1 – when law enforcement arrives:
 - Remain calm and follow instructions
 - Keep your hands visible at all times
 - Avoid pointing or yelling
 - Know that help for the injured is on its way

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

By the numbers – good practices for coping:

Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.

Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit.

If you cannot Run:

- and you are in an office, stay there and secure the door.
- and you are in a hallway, get into a room and secure the door.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

By the numbers – **good practices for coping:**

As a last resort, attempt to take the active shooter down.

When the shooter is at close range and you cannot flee, your chance of survival is much greater if you try to incapacitate him/her.

CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO!

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **human resources preparedness**:
 - Understand your workforce and colleagues.
 - HR should have a clear, documented procedure and training for accepting, addressing, and documenting employee issues, as well as careful documentation of reprimands, layoffs, and known issues linked to financial or personal trouble.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **human resources preparedness:**
- Suggestions for self- or third-party reporting:
 - Supervisor, Human Resources, Security, Employee Assistance Portal
 - 24/7 Tip Lines
 - Ethics Hotline for employees with grievances (an outlet).
 - Suggestion Box, Emails, Text address
 - “For lower-level behaviors,” feel comfortable giving the person a chance to vent or talk.
 - Add procedures and best practices in Emergency Action Plan.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **leadership preparedness:**
- Warning Signs of Active Shooters:
 - Loners, isolate themselves from the outside world including their families.
 - Exaggerated need for attention and respect.
 - Rejection and isolation by peers.
 - Feelings of alienation, bullying and persecution.
 - Antisocial tendencies

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

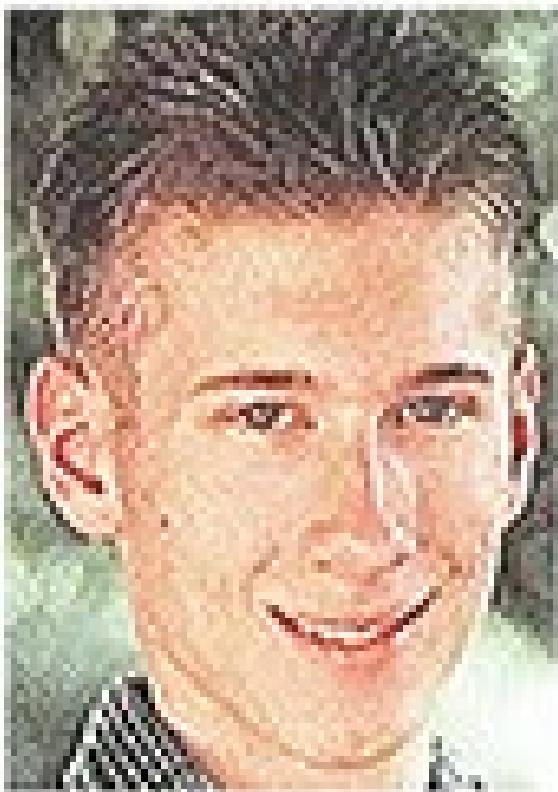
- By the numbers – **leadership preparedness:**
- Warning Signs of Active Shooters continued:
 - Anger management issues
 - Relationship and discipline issues
 - History of making violent threats
 - Depression
 - Attempted suicide
 - Access to parents' weapons

Active Assailant Preparedness

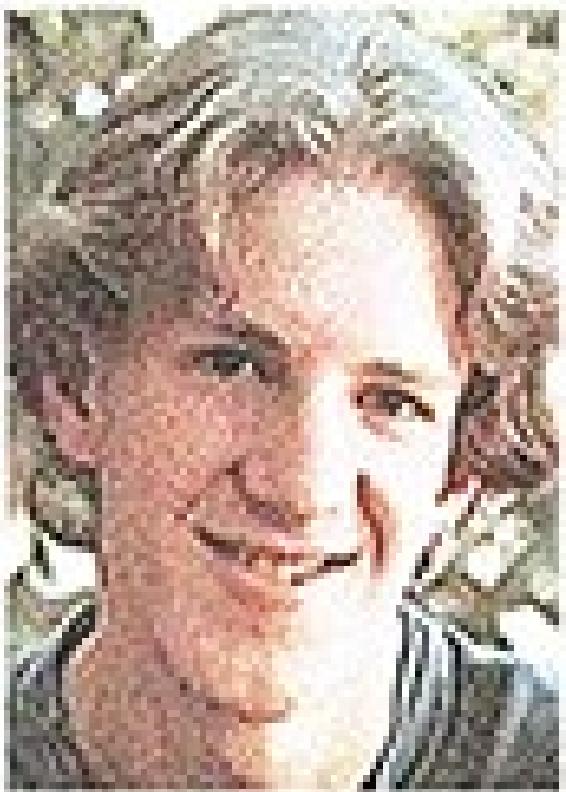
Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **descriptions of active shooters:**
 - What does a violent actor look like?
 - No matter the demographics, each violent actor:
 - carried out violent and deadly attacks.
 - planned the attack and executed their plan with full intent.
 - wanted to kill as many people as possible in the shortest amount of time (maximum body count).
 - targeted innocent victims (age, gender, lifestyle, and belief were all selection criteria).

Columbine High School (16 dead)



ERIC HARRIS
Columbine, CO
1999



DYLAN KLEBOLD
Columbine, CO
1999

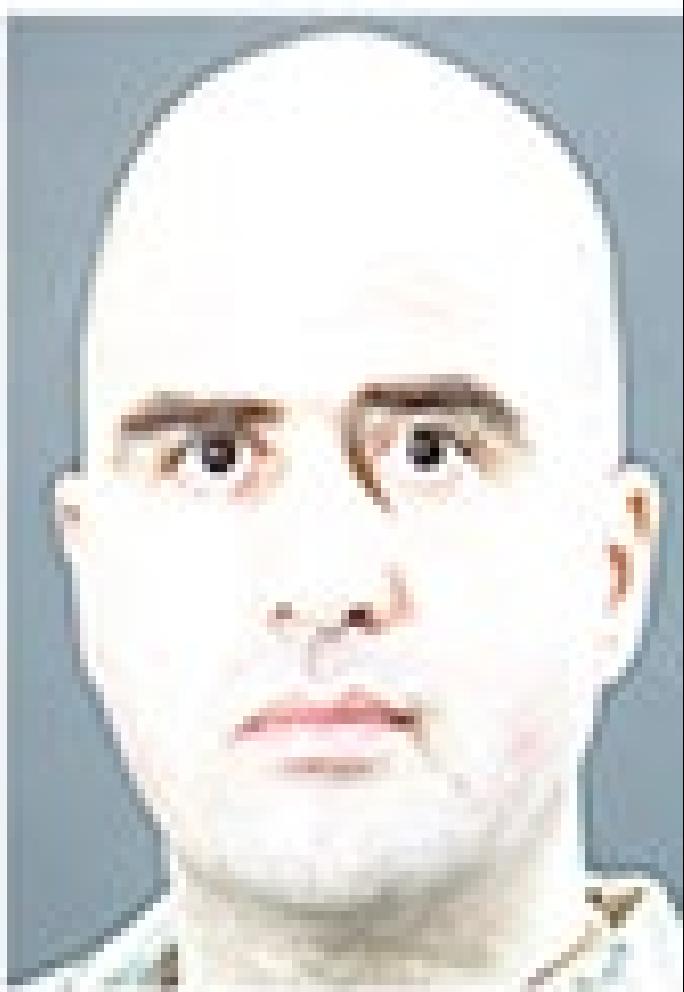
- 23 injured
- Harris (18) and Klebold (17) shot themselves on scene in the Columbine school library.
- Super Columbine Massacre RPG (2005)



SEUNG HUI CHO
Virginia Tech
2007

Virginia Tech University (32 dead)

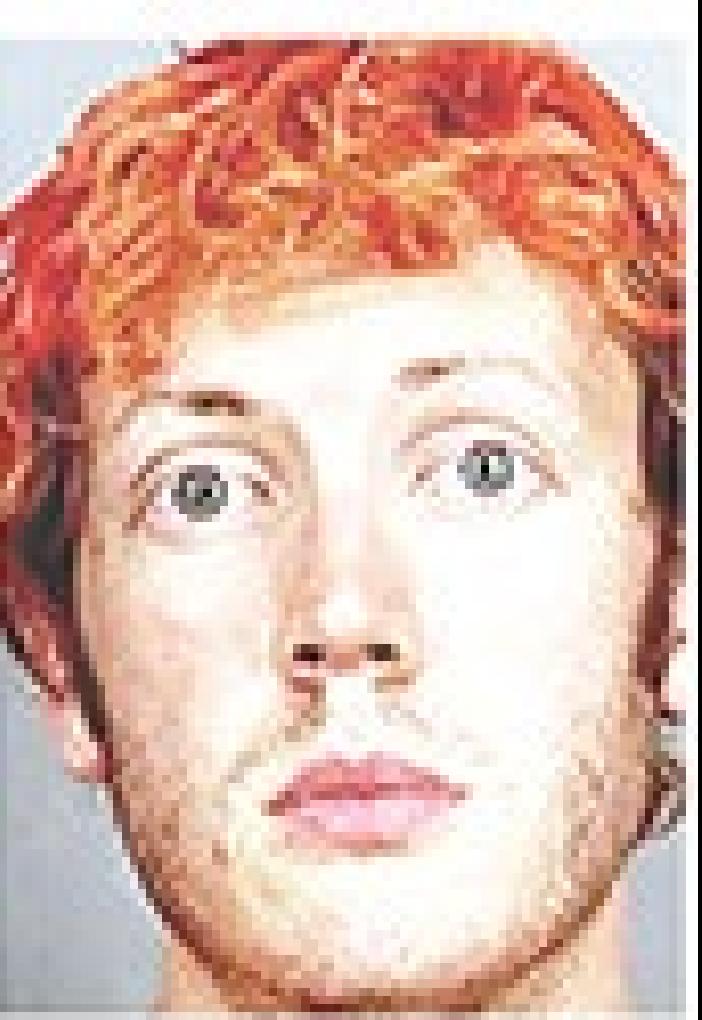
- 17 injured
- Huicho (23) shot himself off scene as police breached Virginia Tech's Norris Hall.



NIDAL MALIK HASAN
Fort Hood, TX
2009

Fort Hood Army Base (14 dead)

- 32 injured
- Hasan (39) at time of shooting, was shot by police on scene and was subsequently paralyzed from the waist down.
- Hasan is incarcerated on military death row at the United States Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.



JAMES HOLMES
Aurora, CO
2012

Century 16 Movie Theater (12 dead)

- 70 injured
- Holmes (24) at time of the shooting, is currently serving 12 consecutive life sentences, plus an additional 3,318 years, without the possibility of parole.
- Holmes has attempted suicide multiple times. Due to his mental state, he is currently housed at the Federal Correctional Institution in Allenwood, Pennsylvania.



ADAM LANZA
Sandy Hook, CT
2012

Sandy Hook Elementary School (28 dead)

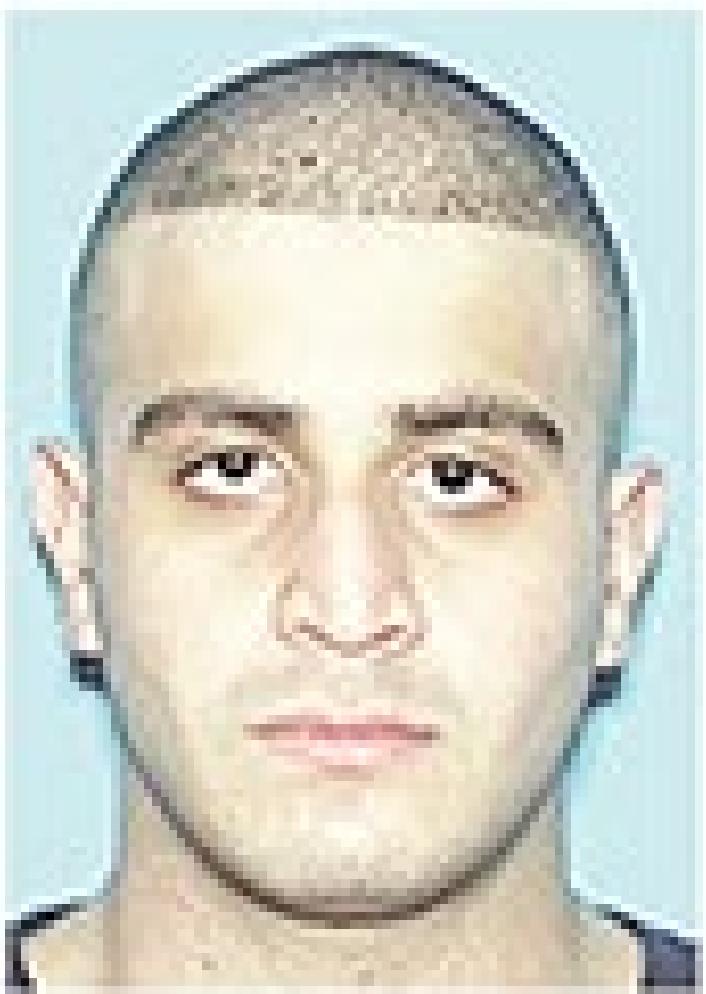
- 2 injured
- Lanza (20) shot himself in a classroom of Sandy Hook Elementary as police were closing in on his location.



FAROOK & MALIK
San Bernardino, CA
2015

Inland Regional Center (16 dead)

- Syed Farook (28)
- Tashfeen Malik (27)
- 24 injured (explosive device did not detonate)
- Both fled the scene in a vehicle (Farook the passenger and Malik the driver).
- Both died in a shootout with 21 law enforcement officers approximately 1.7 miles from the shooting scene.



OMAR MATEEN

Orlando, FL

2016

Pulse Nightclub (50 dead)

- 58 injured
- Mateen (29) remained on scene and died of gunshot wounds in a shootout with law enforcement after a tactical entry was made into the Pulse Nightclub.



**STEPHEN CRAIG
PADDOCK**
Las Vegas 2017

Route 91 Harvest Concert (60 dead)

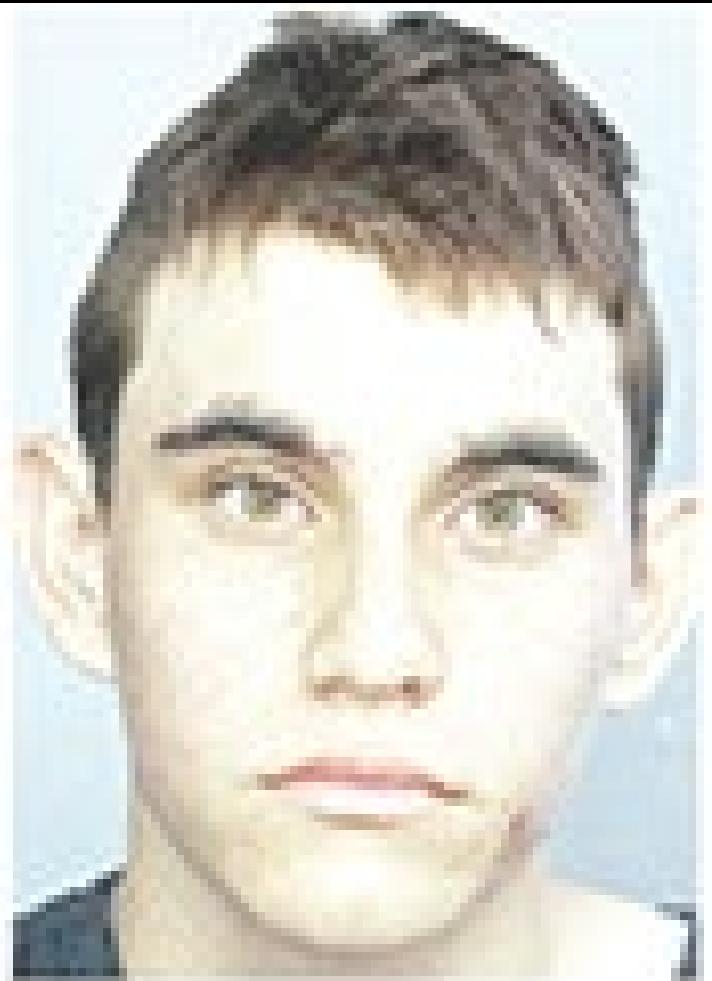
- 867 injured
- Paddock (64) shot himself in the hotel room he used as his sniper hide on the 32nd floor of the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino.



DEVIN PATRICK
Sutherland Springs, TX
2017

First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs (27 dead)

- 22 injured
- Patrick (26) shot himself in the First Baptist Church moments after the shooting ended.



NIKOLAS CRUZ
Parkland, FL
2018

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (17 dead)

- 18 injured
- Cruz (19) at the time of the shooting, fled the scene and was arrested in a residential neighborhood in Coral Springs, FL approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes after the shooting.
- Cruz is currently serving 34 consecutive life sentences in prison without the possibility of parole at Florida State Prison in Raiford, Florida.



PATRICK CRUSIUS
El Paso, TX
2019

El Paso Walmart (23 dead)

- 22 injured
- Crusius (21) at the time of the shooting, fled the scene in his car and gave himself up to law enforcement at the intersection of Sunmount Dr. and Viscount Ave in El Paso without incident.
- Crusius received 90 consecutive life sentences in federal prison and 23 life sentences without the possibility of parole in state court. He is currently incarcerated at the Louis C. Powledge Unit in Palestine, Texas.



Robin Westman
Minneapolis, MN
2025

Annunciation Catholic Church (3 dead)

- 30 injured
- Westman (23) barricaded church doors with lumber and shot into the church's stained-glass windows.
- Westman killed himself in the parking lot area at the rear of the Annunciation Church after the shooting had occurred.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **descriptions of active shooters:**
 - Current record for deaths associated with active shooters (based on body count):
 - In history:
 - The highest death toll from a single active shooter event in history occurred during the **2011 Norway attacks**, where 69 people were killed in a shooting on the island of Utøya (oot-oy-ah).
 - This was part of a coordinated attack that also involved a bombing in Oslo, bringing the total death toll of the combined events to 77.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **descriptions of active shooters:**
 - Current record for deaths associated with active shooters (based on body count):
 - In the United States:
 - The deadliest mass shooting was the **2017 Las Vegas shooting**, where a gunman opened fire on a music festival crowd from a hotel room, killing 60 people.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **descriptions of active shooters:**
- Current record for deaths associated with active shooters (based on body count) in a school setting:
- In history:
- The highest death toll from an active shooter at a school occurred during the **Beslan (beh sluhn) school siege** in Beslan, Russia, in 2004, which resulted in **334 deaths**, including 186 children. This was a terrorist attack involving the taking of over 1,100 hostages.

Active Assailant Preparedness

Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- By the numbers – **descriptions of active shooters:**
 - Current record for deaths associated with active shooters (based on body count) in a **school setting**:
 - In the United States:
 - The deadliest active shooter incident at a school was the **Virginia Tech massacre** in Blacksburg, Virginia, in 2007, with **32 fatalities** (including shooter).
 - The next deadliest in the U.S. was the **Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting** in Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012, which killed **28 people** (20 children, 7 adults [including shooter]).

DHS Quick Reference Card

COPING

WITH AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

- Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit
- If you are in an office, stay there and secure the door
- Attempt to take the active shooter down as a last resort

Contact your building management or human resources department for more information and training on active shooter response in your workplace.

PROFILE

OF AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area, typically through the use of firearms.

CHARACTERISTICS

OF AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

- Victims are selected at random
- The event is unpredictable and evolves quickly
- Law enforcement is usually required to end an active shooter situation



**CALL 911 WHEN IT
IS SAFE TO DO SO**

DHS Quick Reference Card

HOW TO RESPOND

WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY

1. EVACUATE

- Have an escape route and plan in mind
- Leave your belongings behind
- Keep your hands visible

2. HIDE OUT

- Hide in an area out of the shooter's view
- Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors
- Silence your cell phone and/or pager

3. TAKE ACTION

- As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter
- Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter

CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO

HOW TO RESPOND

WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

- Remain calm and follow instructions
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets)
- Raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety
- Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating

INFORMATION

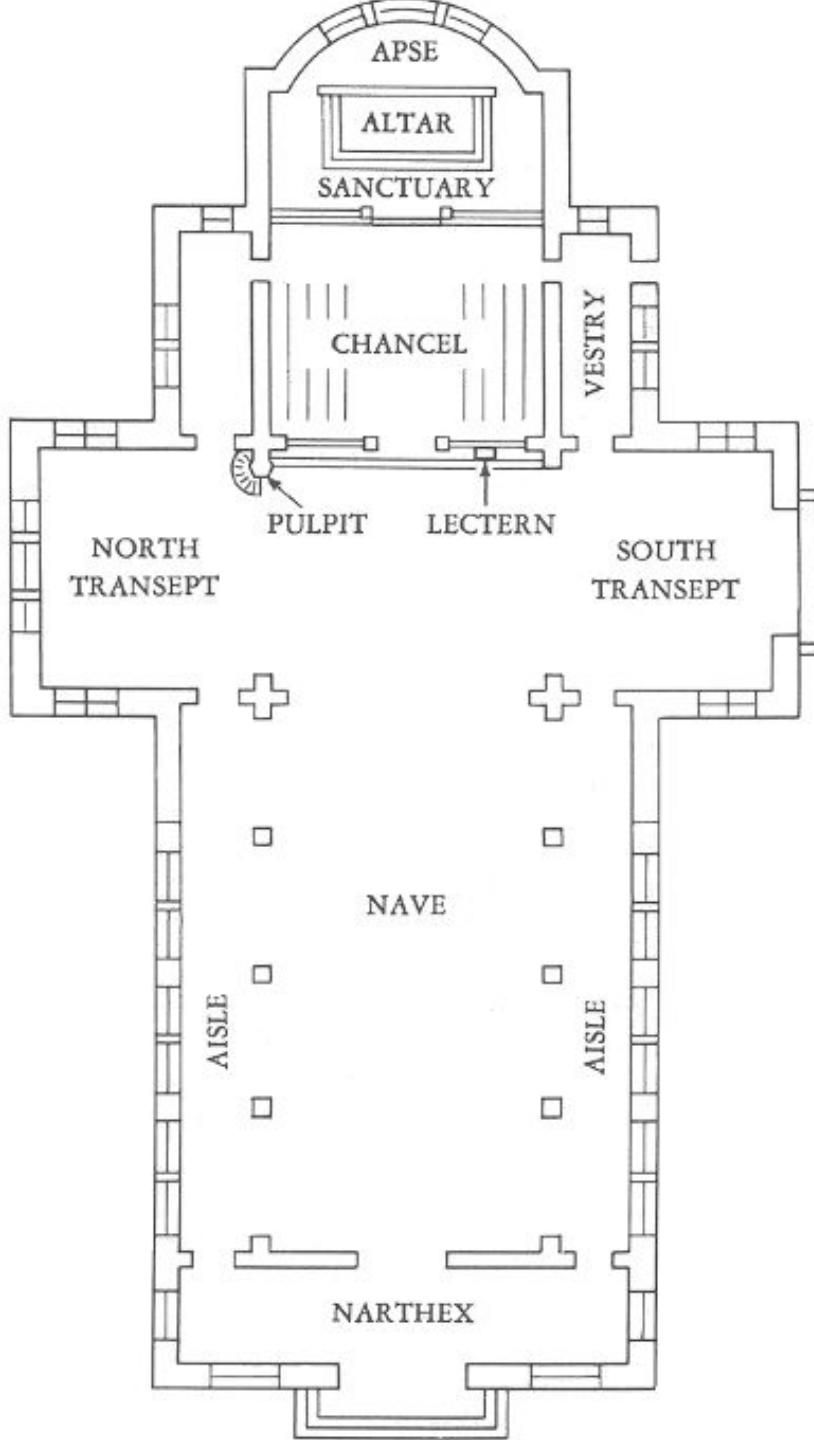
YOU SHOULD PROVIDE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR 911 OPERATOR

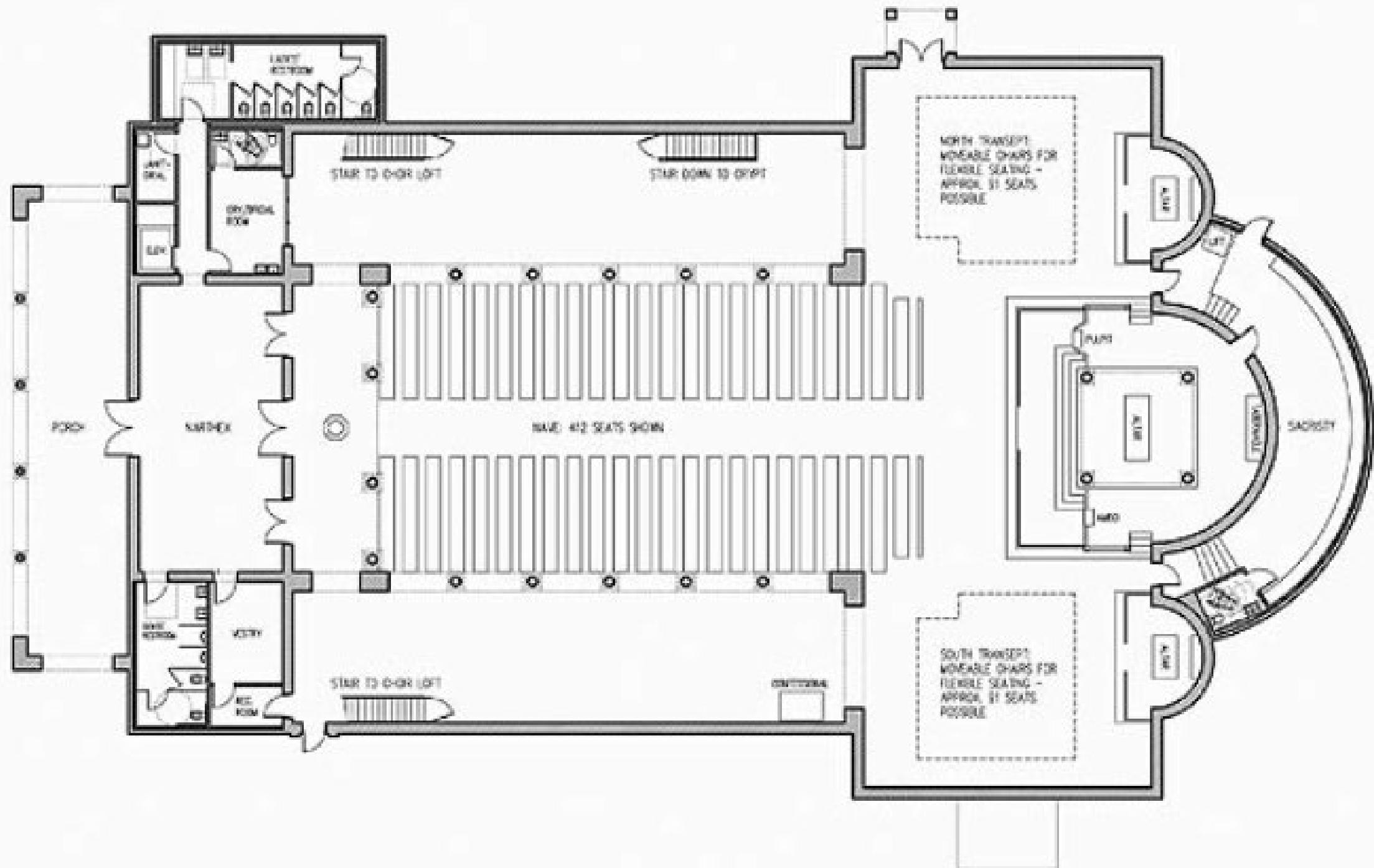
- Location of the active shooter
- Number of shooters
- Physical description of shooters
- Number and type of weapons held by shooters
- Number of potential victims at the location

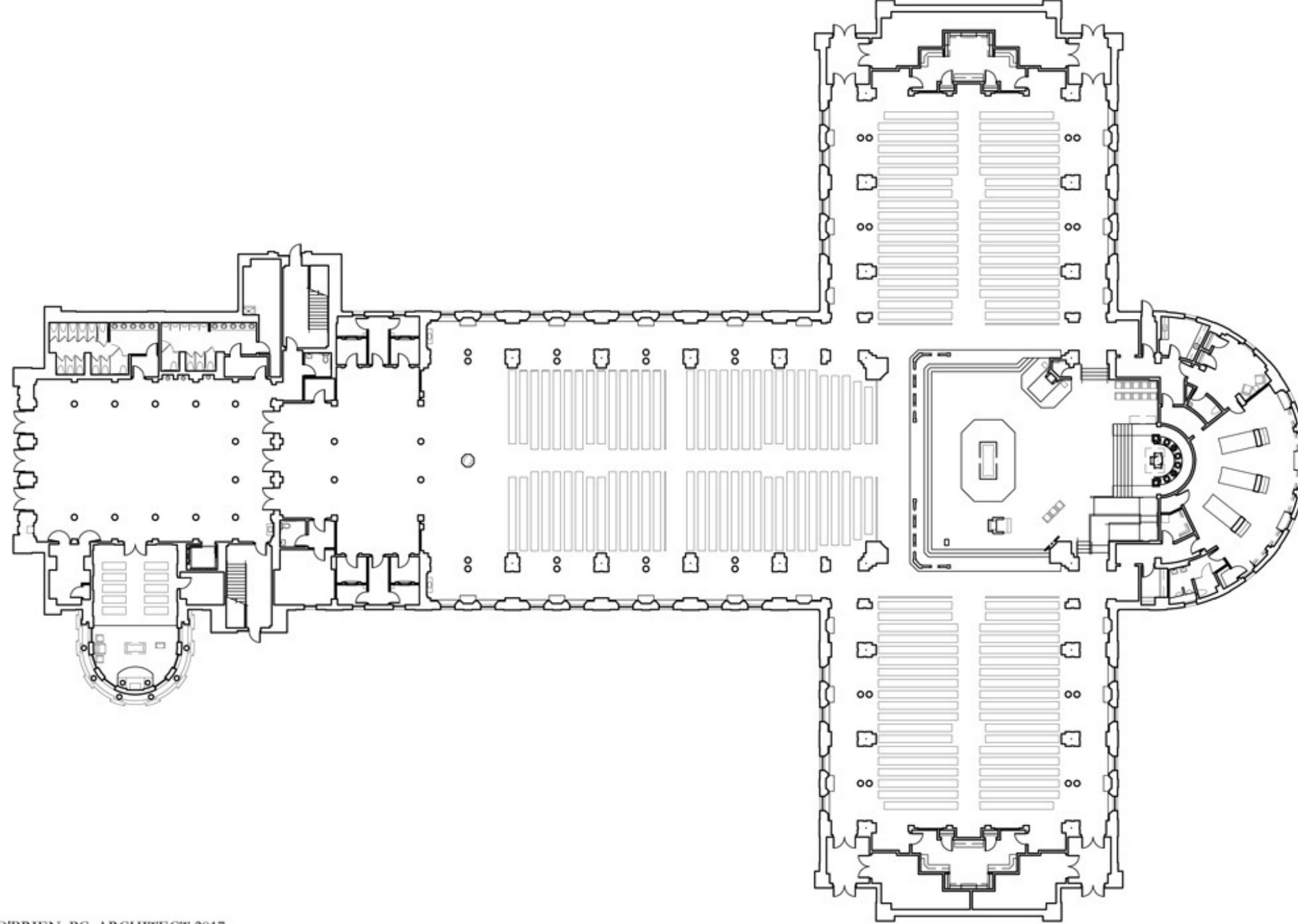
Active Assailant Preparedness

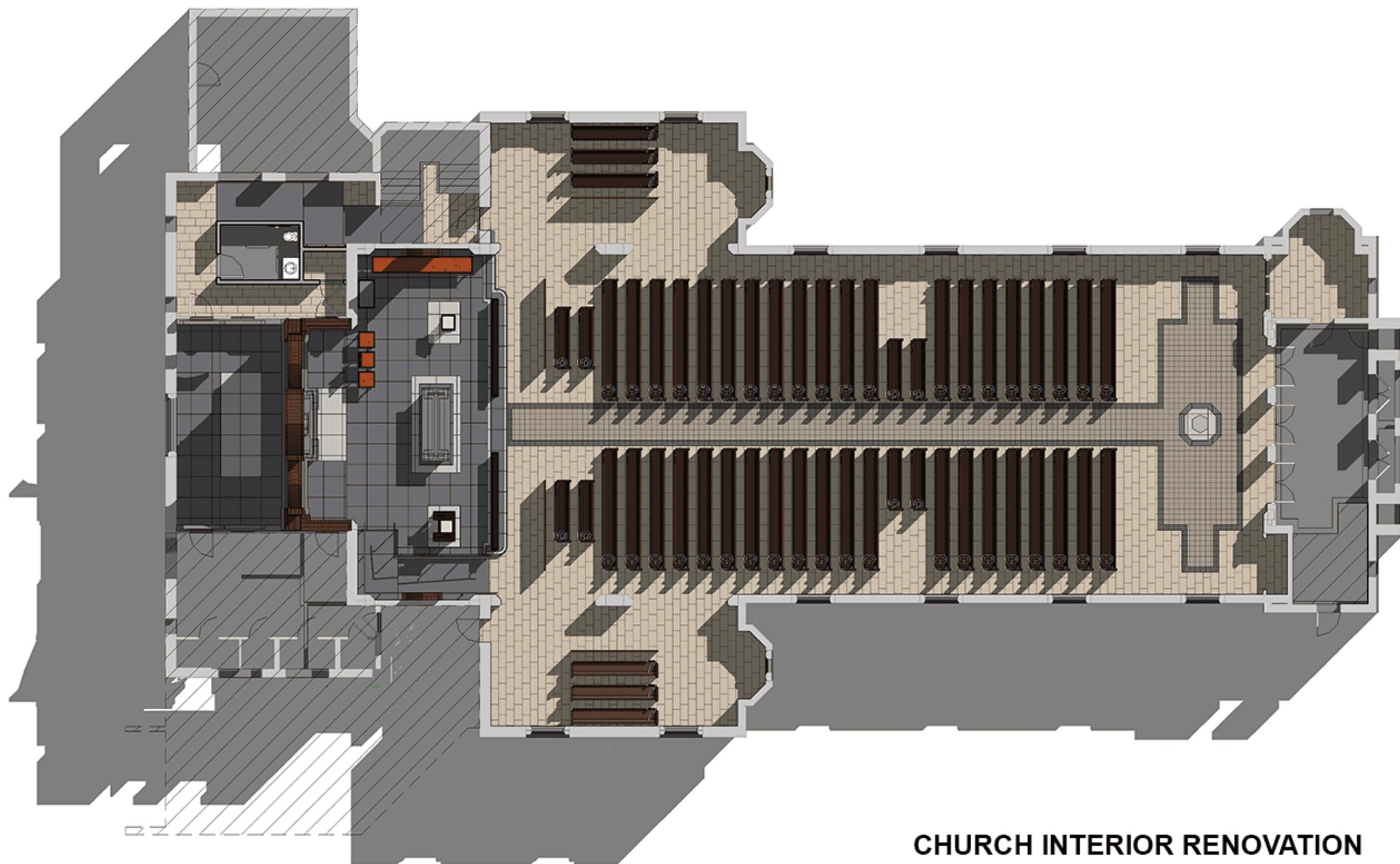
Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight

- Operational explanation of an active shooter in a church event or Mass setting.









CHURCH INTERIOR RENOVATION









Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Site Assistance Visit (SAV)
 - Designed to facilitate vulnerability identification and mitigation discussions between the North Dakota State and Local Intelligence Center (NDSLIC) and public/private critical infrastructure entities.
 - The SAV is an information-gathering visit.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Site Assistance Visit (SAV) cont.
 - The visit is non-regulatory and is not an inspection. There is no pass-fail grade, and the final report detailing findings from the visit will not be sent to other agencies. The report is a protected document and not subject to open records requests, per N.D.C.C. 44-04-24.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Site Assistance Visit (SAV) cont.
 - Depending upon the size and complexity of a facility, an NDSLIC team of 1-3 personnel conducts the SAV. In addition, a varying number of federal, state, and local officials from emergency management services, and/or law enforcement agencies may be in attendance.
 - Visits typically take 2-3 hours, depending on the size and complexity of the facility. NDSLIC Critical Infrastructure Program personnel aid and provide options for consideration tailored to each facility.

There is no cost to the requesting entity, and the final report is generated within a week of the visit.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Site Assistance Visit (SAV) cont.
- Due to Foreign Adversary Intelligence Projects, the time frame of conducting site assessment visits will be **no earlier than July of 2026.**
- If any parish or school would like to schedule an assessment, please contact Mr. Dan Krueger at 701-595-9385 or dpkrueger@nd.gov

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Site Assistance Visit (SAV) cont.
 - Examples of SAV (Church of Corpus Christi, Bismarck)
 - **Digital example of the Church of Corpus Christi Site Assessment Visit**



SITE ASSISTANCE VISIT

NORTH DAKOTA STATE & LOCAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER



Corpus Christi Catholic Church

1919 N 2nd St, Bismarck, ND 58501



Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- To prevent viewing windows from the outside, use frosted privacy glass or privacy window films, such as one-way mirror films, which create a reflective, mirror-like effect on the exterior during the day, or frosted films, which provide full-time privacy by diffusing light. Smart films are another option, offering privacy that can be adjusted electronically.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- If you are unable to provide a watchful eye for each entrance door, please consider securing these doors (ensure decisions are within fire code). If this step is too challenging at this time, a good start would be to lock the doors during the week for school Mass.
- Entrances directly from parking lots, along with the narthex, should be always monitored by a member of your Safety/Security Team.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Unfortunately, to keep our churches safer, we can no longer maintain the theme of an open campus. It provides an all too easy setting for a shooter and our mindset must change on this.
- Fifteen years ago, our schools were unlocked and open for anyone to walk into. We would never consider unlocking our schools today. We should hold these same principles for all places of assembly including our churches.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Train parish staff and ushers on “situational awareness” to be able to recognize and deal with citizens and parishioners inside the church during events and Mass.
- Ushers possess the ability to “roam” the congregation and view the areas out of sight by clergy, parish staff, or other parishioners.
- Discussion on the “ability” of current parish ushers to fill this role.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- What can we do?
 - Understand your organization's EAP and counseling options when you sense a significant change in a co-worker's behavior.
 - “See something, say something”
 - Practice situational awareness

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Practice situational awareness
 - Be mindful – practice being “in the moment” – when you are cognizant of your surroundings, your senses are all fully engaged. You can hear, smell and see everything and react much quicker.
 - Identify exits – Anything can technically be an exit, even if it’s not an actual one. But this could prove useful in an emergency.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Practice situational awareness
 - Watch people without staring – Observing people around you (in a non-invasive way) and watching how they react, express themselves and so on, is a great way to understand what's going on around you.
 - Notice nonverbal cues – Nonverbal communication can tell you a lot about how people are feeling. Does their body language align with what they're saying? Most people have an easy giveaway that they're lying, nervous or angry.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Practice situational awareness
 - Limit distractions – While distractions can't always be eliminated everywhere, you can do your best to limit them. Being distracted opens you up to being more vulnerable.
 - Trust your gut feeling – Listen to your instincts. If you feel uneasy about someone or someplace, you can remove yourself from danger by listening to your gut. Even if there's no danger, learn to trust your instinct.

Individual Recommendations for Parishes/Schools

- Preliminary Planning and Assessment
- Practice situational awareness
 - Be strategic – Being alert, walking tall and limiting your distractions is extremely important for **situational awareness** and **physical presence**.
 - Example traffic stop with Trooper versus Deputy
 - You can do this by still showing kindness to people you meet.

Actions of Clergy and Leadership During Event

01

Lead by Example

02

Mentally be aware of what you need to do (mental preparedness exercises - visualization).

*Military and law enforcement tactic for operational planning, execution and success

03

Do not get overwhelmed by the commotion, movement, and panic of those around you (parishioners).

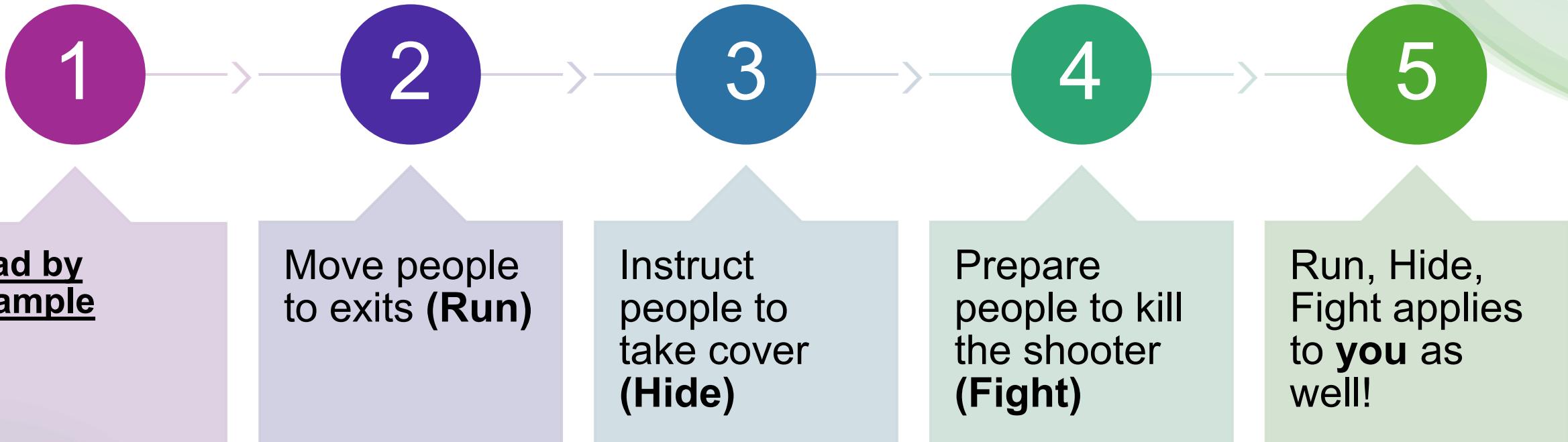
04

Identify the location of the shooter(s).

*Warrior Mindset

**Tactical Contemplation

Actions of Clergy and Leadership During Event



Actions of Clergy and Leadership During Event

Lead by Example

**DECIDE
SOMETHING &
DO IT!**

**Doing nothing
leads to
increased injury
and death.**

Actions of Clergy and Leadership During Event

Lead by Example

You run, hide, or fight until law enforcement arrives and kills the shooter.

YOUR JOB IS TO SURVIVE!

What do we do now ?

- Be aware of societal pressure points affecting the Catholic Church and discuss concerns with diocese leaders, your parish staff, and your parish council (**information provided in power point**).
- Request a Site Assessment Visit (SAV) from the ND SLIC (**information provided in power point**).
 - When complete, make reasonable changes based on immediate need and current financial capability (window film, extra keys for locking entrance doors, interior door locks, recording cameras, radios, etc.)
- Form a Security/Safety Committee tasked with creating or updating your Church Response Plan (**process provided in CMG document**).

What do we do now ? (continued)

- Utilize the Security/Safety Committee to select, guide, and oversee the Safety/Security Coordinator (process provided in CMG document).
- Have the Safety/Security Coordinator create a Safety/Security Team (guideline and checklist provided in CMG document).
- Train your Safety/Security Team members, parish staff, and ushers on the details of the Church Response Plan and the actions of “Run, Hide, Fight” (videos provided through CMG training website – also referenced through DHS and FBI).

What do we do now ? (continued)

- Train the Safety/Security Team on awareness and actions related to potential violent actors on church property (parking lots, entryways/doors, and the interior of the church space) for emergency response (**guideline and checklist provided in CMG document**).
- Establish and confirm the roles, actions, and responsibilities of ushers, parish staff, possible contracted security, and the Safety/Security Team during active shooter incidents (**guideline and checklist provided in CMG document**).

What do we do now ? (continued)

- Rehearse with the Safety/Security Team how to respond to an active shooter scenario to include: activating 9-1-1, correct response actions (ex. secure entrance points) and effective communications (ex. radios or cell phones) when a possible threat is identified in parking lot areas, entranceways/doors, and the interior of the church space **(guideline and checklist provided in CMG document)**.
- Continue to plan and develop safety upgrades including purchasing equipment for the parish such as locking mechanisms, enhanced camera systems, communication equipment, etc. **(process provided in CMG document)**.

What do we do now ? (continued)

- As the pastor and/or administrator of the parish/school, train yourself to visualize the action you will personally take during an active shooter event **(information provided in power point)**.
- Visualize the actions you will take (from various locations and roles) as if the event were happening in front of you. Have your actions memorized to maximize your muscle memory and your personal effectiveness and efficiency during an active shooter incident **(information provided in power point)**.
- Decide to act and survive the incident **(information provided in power point)**.

Conclusion - Overview

Spark

- Spark communication and planning at the school or parish level.

Ensure

- Ensure guidelines of safety planning and insurance oversight are met.

Offer

- Offer references for safety planning information.

Supply

- Supply a knowledge of situational awareness and active shooter response.

Outline

- Outline preliminary planning and recommended action(s).

Discuss

- Discuss actions as clergy and leadership during event(s).

Conclusion – Contact Information

- Deacon Lonnie Grabowska
- Church of Corpus Christi (Bismarck)
- Director of the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation (NDCBI)
- 701-220-7025 (work cell)
- Igrabowska@nd.gov
- Ikgabowska@umary.edu

Conclusion – Contact Information

- William Targy
- Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU)
- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Loss Control Representative for the Diocese of Bismarck
- (800) 228-6108 ext. 2368
- wtargy@catholicmutual.org

Conclusion – Contact Information

- Kim Thomsen
- Senior Claim Law Associate (SCLA)
- Catholic Mutual Group (CMG)
- Loss Control Assistant Manager
- (402) 514-2373 (work)
- (402) 450-4434 (cell)
- kthomsen@catholicmutual.org

Conclusion

-

Discussion



- QUESTIONS?