



A sign stands amid flowers at a memorial at Annunciation Catholic Church after a school shooting Aug. 28, 2025, in Minneapolis. (AP/Abbie Parr)



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Being a journalist in 2025 is not easy. Journalists are in the fray, in the middle of the story and that story can be brutal, gutting and unforgiving.

Some of that has always come with the business. As a young journalist covering police in San Diego, I saw some gruesome stuff. A cop once had to catch me as I fainted at a crime scene. It was about as raw as the footage of [Charlie Kirk's murder](#).

In the 1980s, there was no internet to broadcast a slaying, and the media screened video with families in mind. Those days are gone and many of us have seen the horrendous shooting of the conservative commentator.

Thankfully, no images have emerged of the [shooting at Annunciation Church](#) in Minneapolis. But that doesn't make it any easier. The day of the slaying of two children at the Mass during the first week of school was tough on a lot of us at National Catholic Reporter. Not that Columbine, Virginia Tech, Newtown, and on and on were not bad days. But this was the first Catholic school shooting that any of us could remember and many of us at NCR can remember sitting in pews at those Masses for the first days of school.

My sons are grown, but many on the staff at NCR have small children, making it a particularly difficult day as we marshalled our limited resources to produce gripping accounts and edit thoughtful commentary. It is hard to underestimate the impact of how the tragedy was felt by all of our staff. It was traumatic. And the continuing spate of gun violence just repeats the trauma each time.

Family priorities and challenges

Families are important at NCR and sometimes they take precedence over the office. Luckily, we have not had any horrific family tragedies, but we have had some serious matters to attend to. Recently, [Katie Collins Scott](#) decided to leave NCR after a successful run as a reporter following her son's major surgery. She is leaving us primarily because she needed to spend more time with her youngest son, who has had ongoing medical challenges.

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Katie takes with her a mantel-full of well-deserved prizes. Just this year, she earned 10 Catholic Media Association awards, including four first place wins. She also nabbed third place for Writer of the Year. Her reporting explored conservative networks within the church, the politicization of Eucharist access, and justice for immigrants and workers. She also was a named finalist at the Religion News Association awards. And she won for in-depth coverage from the Associated Church Press for an EarthBeat story on the [U.S. Supreme Court and the Catholic influence on the Chevron doctrine's demise](#). The judges nailed it for Katie's work: "Well written and researched from a number of angles and over a long period of time. This is what in-depth coverage looks like in a single long-form article."

Also, [environment editor Stephanie Clary](#), mother of four young children, will be stepping back from her work, citing child care costs as a factor in that decision. "Being an editor at NCR, particularly EarthBeat, has been incredibly meaningful and rewarding work," she said. Everyone at NCR joins Steph in the hopes she will be able to continue to contribute to NCR through some freelance or contract work, particularly in the areas of audience engagement and specific editorial projects. Like Katie, Steph's contributions to NCR have been nothing short of amazing. I genuinely appreciate how much she has given of her time and expertise, even as I've relied on Steph's seemingly unlimited pool of goodwill and resources.

We will miss Katie and Steph, particularly at this time when the work is so demanding, meaningful and important to our readers in a dynamic, challenging and scary world.

This story appears in the [Minneapolis church shooting](#) and [Charlie Kirk murder news and commentary](#) feature series.