

Catholic college in Leeds mourns 'kind and hard-working' teacher



A Catholic school community in Leeds is in mourning today after a female teacher was stabbed to death yesterday morning.

Anne Maguire, taught Spanish and Religious Education at Corpus Christi Catholic College in Neville Road and was stabbed by a pupil in front of a class of 30 pupils, according to reports. A 15-year-old male pupil has been arrested. Mrs Maguire was 61 years-old and married with two grown-up daughters.

The school was expected to open today and earlier this morning a Mass was held for Mrs Maguire at Corpus Christi Church that was attended by pupils and their parents, teachers and other members of the local community.

During the service, Mgr Paul Fisher said: "Yesterday evening, the community gathered here in church as well as outside to light candles and to say a prayer. Some people struggled to know what to pray for. By the time the church was closed, the candelabras were full of light.

"Today we pray for the light of hope. Hope for ourselves that we will come to terms, eventually, with what has happened. We pray for all those young people at our school next door and their teachers. We pray for Anne's family and friends. We pray for Anne. We offer prayers too for the family of the man who, unfortunately, did what he did.

"We pray for ourselves."

This morning, Cardinal Vincent Nichols expressed his sadness at the death of Mrs Maguire. He said: “Today I express my utter shock and sadness at the tragic killing of Mrs Anne Maguire at Corpus Christi College. My heart goes out to her husband and daughters, to their wider family, to everyone at Corpus Christi Catholic College and to the parishes connected to the College.

“I want to assure them of my prayers, and those of the entire Diocese of Westminster at this time. May the Lord comfort the bereaved, consoling them with his unshakeable promise of eternal life.

“I pray, too, that through the shock, distress and anger that this action evokes, the light of Christ may shine, a light that calls us to trust in his merciful love, that brings us a touch of calm and healing and that opens our hearts to each other in our bewilderment and dismay.”

Upon hearing of the tragedy Bishop Malcolm McMahon of Nottingham and Chairman of the Catholic Education Service said: “I was shocked and saddened to hear of Anne Maguire’s death yesterday. My prayers, and those of every Catholic parish and school in England & Wales, will be with her family and friends, the staff and students of Corpus Christi Catholic College in Leeds, and all who have been affected in any way by this senseless tragedy.

“Anne gave her life to the College and Catholic education, and thousands of young people have benefitted from her kindness and hard work over many years. May she rest in peace.”

A spokesman for the Diocese of Leeds added: “The thoughts of all of the Diocese are with the families involved – all is being done to give support to all those involved.”

Speaking yesterday, Tom Riordan, chief executive of Leeds City Council said: “We are aware of the serious incident at Corpus Christi Catholic College this morning and our thoughts are with all those concerned.

“We are working with the school to support pupils and staff at this very upsetting time. We wish to reassure people that this was an isolated incident and there is no ongoing risk to pupils or staff at the

school.

“We are working closely with the police and helping with their investigation.”

The prime minister’s official spokesman said: “The Prime Minister’s thoughts are very much with the victim’s relatives as well as the entire school community there, which I’m sure will be deeply shocked.”

Madeleine Teahan - Catholic Herald