

Fear of violence, or Detroit, just crept up another notch

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Detroit's Cathedral Church of St. Paul will show 15 movies about Christ during Lent, giving people a chance to imagine a suffering, saintly, jubilant, silent, outcast, tempted and even singing savior.

Unfortunately, the folks who most need to see these films from 5-7 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays probably won't.

A 22-year-old private guard armed with a sawed-off shotgun paid so little heed to Jesus' preachings that he brought gunfire inside an eastside Detroit church on Sunday.

Unfortunately, it wasn't the only time someone has invaded what is supposed to be the ultimate safe haven against a community's physical and emotional storms.

Churches have been vandalized. Churches have been robbed. Churches have been firebombed.

And, yes, churches have become the tombs of those who perished in them.

All the same, there is something especially shocking about a young man with a sawed-off shotgun storming into a place where people come to lay down their troubles and lean on God.

Violence is everywhere

By the time Kevin Wilson's orgy of violence ended, he had shot to death 38-year-old **Rosetta Williams**, his former girlfriend's mother, wounded a 9-year-old girl and fired at a man who tried to remove him from the church balcony.

He also killed Alarie Davis, 54, during a carjacking. Davis apparently died trying to protect his wife.

And, finally, Collins, described as a scorned lover who either feared or was furious with his ex-girlfriend, turned his shotgun on himself.

Valerie Goddard, special agent-in-charge of the ATF, Detroit Division, said she worries that perhaps people are "becoming desensitized to the violence as a result of them being exposed to it day in and day out."

It often seems that way, especially when one blast of violence follows the next, and our pot of outrage fails to boil over.

Yet the people I most worry about are just the opposite of desensitized: They will spend the rest of their lives reliving their loved ones' final minutes.

Nationwide news

This church shooting also made national news, erasing the glow created by Super Bowl XL. Stories about the incident appeared in USA Today, the Chicago Tribune, AOL News, CBS News, ABC News, Associated Press and other media.

Even in a nation as violence-prone as America, fatal shootings inside churches still snatch headlines.

This shooting, in fact, created many kinds of victims: those who knew the dead, those who knew the church or churches like it and those whose fears of violence -- or Detroit -- will now creep up another notch.

Yet good and evil, joy and pain, celebration and sadness often travel together.

It would be good news if Zion Hope Missionary Baptist Church leaders continue their newly created campaign for peace, the perfect project for the season leading up to Easter's joy.

It would be even better if many others joined them.

Caption: Betty DeRamus

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