

# Cockeysville parish, school come together following tragedy

One by one, hundreds of people placed a small, colored note card in a cross that sat in front of the altar of Cockeysville's St. Joseph Church Aug. 19.

The people silently filed up the aisles, clutching cards that contained prayers for friends facing unimaginable tragedy hundreds of miles away in Ohio. A mother, Susan Slattery, died in a nightmarish Ohio car accident that left her two sons, Peter, 16, and Matthew, 12, badly injured as well.

Peter is a former student of St. Joseph School, while Matthew is a current student there.

Friends and supporters came to the parish for a prayer service held in honor of the Slatterys.

Sister of Mercy Anne O'Donnell, principal of the school, provided an update of the medical condition of Peter and Matthew during the prayer service that was led by Monsignor Paul G. Cook, the parish's pastor.

The Slattery's car was reportedly rear-ended by a tractor trailer and careened into another truck. Peter and Matthew were taken to Akron, Ohio, hospitals following the accident.

"Our prayer tonight is that Susan is with the Lord," Monsignor Cook told attendees. "Our prayers are that the Lord is with the boys and the Lord is with their father (Edward)."

Sister Anne had been in contact with Edward Slattery hours before the prayer service.

Matthew was put into an induced coma because, according to Sister Anne, the medical staff wants his brain to swell less and for him to be still. He underwent an unspecified surgical procedure Aug. 17.



“His situation is still very, very serious,” Sister Anne told attendees. “The next 24 to 48 hours will be very important in Matthew’s recovery.”

Peter, a rising junior at Towson’s Calvert Hall College High School, had surgery Aug. 19 on his pelvis and hip bones, Sister Anne said, “and he is progressing pretty well, but he will have a long recovery. Things look very positive. “

Edward Slattery, Sister Anne said, was traveling to an Ohio funeral home Aug. 19 to view his wife before she was to be cremated. A service was to be held in that state Aug. 20.

Sister Anne said Edward Slattery asked that people continue to pray for his family.

“It’s very appropriate we’re having this prayer service tonight,” Sister Anne told attendees.

The family had been active volunteers in the school and in Boy Scout Troop 497.

Susan Slattery was mathematics chairwoman at Stephenson University.

Sister Anne said Edward Slattery expressed his appreciation to St. Joseph’s parish and school community, Boy Scout Troop 497 and Calvert Hall for their overwhelming show of “love and prayers.”

The school’s website’s provided a link to information about the boys’ health, which would be updated regularly.

Sister Anne said Archbishop Edwin F. O’Brien left a message with Edward Slattery on his phone, saying he would offer a Mass for the repose of Susan and for her boys to recover well.

Monsignor Cook had also reached out to provide support.

Attendees wrote cards to the family in the parish’s multipurpose room before and after the service.

Monsignor Cook told those in attendance they were making a difference, especially after hearing about the long road ahead for the Slattery boys emotionally and



physically.

“The report gives focus to our prayers,” Monsignor Cook said. “There are lots of things we need to pray over and prayer is the most important thing we can contribute to the family and their needs at this time.”