

Cristo Rey mourns staff member

A month after students at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School participated in the making of a video that promoted a message of peace in Baltimore, members of that fledgling institution were left to make sense of the violent demise of one of their own.

According to Baltimore County Police, Aysha Ring, an administrative assistant at Cristo Rey, was slain Nov. 22, while making a purchase in a store in western Baltimore County. On Nov. 25, county police announced that they had arrested and charged David Aaron Briggs with the murder of Ms. Ring.

She had been a full-time employee of Cristo Rey since June 2007, prior to its opening, arranging logistics and transportation in the East Baltimore school's Corporate Internship Program. The school, which now consists of freshmen and sophomores, sends its students into the work world for experience and skills.

"Aysha liked to get problems solved, and was in love with the mission of the school, Father John W. Swope, the Jesuit president of Cristo Rey, said. "She was in the middle of her own studies at Anne Arundel Community College. She was beginning to take her own education seriously, and make plans for the future. Isn't that what we want for all of our young people?"

Father Swope cited the October video promoting peace, which Ms. Ring helped coordinate.

"Aysha, in particular, made sure that everything went smoothly that day," he said. "Now the kind of tragedy our students want to stop has come to visit our Cristo Rey family."

As students returned to school Nov. 24, Father Swope said that Cristo Rey's crisis

management team was aided by counselors from Loyola Blakefield, Towson, and a counselor from Calvert Hall College High School, Towson.

“The entire counseling department from Loyola Blakefield moved down here for the day,” Father Swope said. “We’re identifying students who might be particularly affected, and we’ll follow up with those students over the Thanksgiving break.”

Father Swope said that Cristo Rey will hold a formal memorial service for Ms. Ring after the Thanksgiving break.