

Wounded girl back home

William Brand
Oakland Tribune

April 28 - She has four bullets permanently lodged in her abdomen and her many bullet and shrapnel wounds are painful, but Valeen Schnurr is home again.

A week after she and a friend were shot inside the Columbine High School library, the 18-year-old senior is back in her own bed, surrounded by her family - and the heartfelt best wishes of people around the world.

The first thing she wants to do is say thanks for the outpouring of support, her father and mother, Mark and Shari Schnurr, said Tuesday at the family's southern Jefferson County home.

"She really cares for the other families who lost their children," her dad said, "and the victims she left behind in Swedish Medical Center. It bothered her a lot to leave them. She gave each of them a rose before she left Tuesday and promised to do anything she could."

Her parents said they always knew they had an amazing, incredible daughter - but her courage under the fire of the two killers, bent on annihilation, leaves them in awe.

"She really did a testimonial (to God and her Roman Catholic faith)," Mark Schnurr said. "It wasn't like what they've been saying that somebody pointed a gun in her face and said, 'Do you believe in God?'"

"First, they shot her, and she said, 'Oh my God!' She was on the floor under the library table and one of them looked back and said - 'Do you believe in God?'"

"She said, 'Yes, my mom and dad brought me up that way.' They were reloading a gun and she crawled back under the table and they went away," Schnurr said.

"She said that what went through her mind when they asked that was, 'If I say no, what will they do. And if I say no and die - that's a problem.' "

"So she gave her testimonial to her faith. Did it save her? Was it a sign (from God)?," her dad asked. "If it was - it's a heck of a deal. It means she's here for a reason."

"Val has always been there for people," Shari Schnurr said. "She's always shared and been a good friend. She's been very active in her church, St. Francis Cabrini. We have raised her and her younger sisters Christian.

"We're very proud of her."