



Firefighters and ambulance attendants remove a covered body from the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., Sept. 15, 1963, after a deadly explosion detonated by members of the Ku Klux Klan. The bombing killed four girls. (AP, file)



by A Nun's Life Ministry

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Benedictine Sr. Madeline Contorno was 13 when four girls were killed when [16th Street Baptist Church](#) in Birmingham, Alabama, was bombed. "Something went all through me," Contorno said. "I couldn't understand the hatred and the evil of killing people just because of their race. I think the God of justice touched me at that point.

God's call for justice was a big part of her vocation to religious life, she said.

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