

When It Mattered Most

From Knightline <knightline@kofc.org>

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News for Knights of Columbus



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This Friday marks the 25th anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York and Arlington, Virginia, on Sept. 11, 2001. The unprecedented attacks took the lives of nearly 3,000 people, among them 46 Knights of Columbus — 12 firefighters, six law enforcement officers and 28 other victims. On this solemn anniversary, the Knights of Columbus join in prayer for the souls of those who died and for the families and friends they left behind.



The Tribute in Light illuminates the New York City skyline on Sept. 11, 2018, as seen from Jersey City, N.J. (Gary Hershorn / Getty Images)

When It Mattered Most

Following the terrorist attacks on 9/11, the Order quickly established the \$1 million Heroes Fund, providing \$3,000 to the families of full-time law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel who died in the rescue and recovery efforts. Through the Order's scholarship program for the children of Knights of Columbus first responders, more than 30 children affected by 9/11 have received scholarships over the years, including some who were infants at the time of the attacks.

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'Help Me To Light the Way'

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Charles "Chuck" Costello Jr., a 46-year-old elevator mechanic and member of St. Ambrose Council 6424 in Old Bridge, New Jersey, was working at a hotel about 20 blocks north of the World Trade Center. After the planes struck, he ran 2.1 miles to help save those trapped in the two towers, ultimately sacrificing his own life in the effort.

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From Saving Lives to Saving Souls

Father Tom Colucci, pastor of Most Precious Blood Parish in Walden, New York, and chaplain of Most Precious Blood Council 9254, was a 15-year veteran of the New York City Fire Department who served in Lower Manhattan when he received the call to report to ground zero on Sept. 11, 2001. The great tragedy and sacrifice he witnessed that day helped solidify his path to the priesthood, and he was ordained in 2016 at age 60.

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Al Fuentes, a member of George W. Hudson Council 3701 in Woodside, N.Y., and his wife, Eileen, visit the 9/11 Memorial in New York.

Brotherhood Amid Tragedy

Twenty-five years later, firefighter Al Fuentes reflects on the heroism, sacrifice and brotherhood he witnessed as a first responder at the World Trade Center. “[It] was the worst disaster that ever happened in the United States, but it was our finest day,” said Fuentes, a member of George W. Hudson Council 3701 in Woodside, New York. “Over 25,000 people were saved that day in 102 minutes. ... I do hope that the world remembers how we responded on Sept. 11, not only as first responders, but as human beings, as a community, as Knights of Columbus.”

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