

# **Memorial Service 2015**

**September 11<sup>th</sup>**

**On May 26<sup>th</sup> 1940 thousands of British and French soldiers were stranded on the beaches of Dunkirk. Their destruction was certain, only a miracle could save them. Sir Winston Churchill called for a national day of prayer, God sent fog to give them cover and calm on the English Channel so boats could begin a rescue attempt.**

**In 9 days 700 boats of all sizes made trip after trip and what historians called the greatest boat rescue in history took place. In those 9 days 339,000 soldiers were saved and the certain destruction of England was prevented.**

**Fourteen years ago today while the men of our DPW and our fire company were arriving at ground zero we found people in a total state of panic. There was nowhere to go, the trains and subways were shut down, airports closed, the tunnels and bridges were locked down and heavily guarded**

**Thousands of people went to the south to escape and were crowded along the water's edge, some clinging to the sea walls. Our Coast Guard arrived and found people jumping into the River trying to swim to safety; others were cramming into boats, over filling them some were ready to capsize.**

The Commander of the coast guard in New York harbor put out a call for help, a May Day call to all Maritime workers, urgent we need your help now!

Within 40 minutes they began to arrive, Tug boats ferry boats, fishing boats, pleasure boats. The Coast Guard over saw the rescue, checked and made sure the boats were safe, and made sure that there was an orderly loading of each vessel.

One of my friends Captain Andy told me he saw four business men lifting and elderly lady in a wheel chair over the railing and onto his boat, followed by her German shepherd guide dog. That day everyone was helping each other and everyone became a First Responder.

At the end of that day fourteen years ago 500,000 people were boat lifted from Manhattan to safety. Not one person drowned or was injured being transported and it was accomplished in just 9 hours, not 9 days. It became the Largest Amphibious evacuation in History. Only in America could this occur, Aren't you proud to be an American, I know that I am.

That fateful 9/11 day members of the village of Walden were honored to become part of the greatest rescue team ever assembled. We found it humbling to serve as your representatives as the Lord gave us all the strength we needed to minister for Him at Ground Zero just two hours after the towers collapsed.

**As a Chaplain of the Walden Police and Fire Departments I was privileged to listen too many of the stories of those who survived that day. One Lady came to me on September 12<sup>th</sup> and asked how she could get absolution, how could she apologize to God. She told me this story.**

**Her mother was just released from the hospital in New Jersey, she stayed overnight with her and left early that morning to get to work, one of the biggest meeting that morning of her life. Delays everywhere she said I was stopped at every red light in North Jersey than an accident outside the Lincoln tunnel, at the parking garage young fellow at the gate wishing her a good day and said, "God bless you." As she ran from her car to the elevator she broke a heel on her shoe, she ran back to the car through the shoes in the trunk and grabbed a pair of flats and ran to the elevator. Once at the ground level she was running across Church Street heading for the South Tower when her new brief case opened and her papers went everywhere. As she picked them up she was cursing God for it was His entire fault, just than the second plane hit the South Tower where her office was, everyone in the office was killed instantly.**

**I told her God understands and forgives us all, She said all that day she was rushing to her death and God was working all along the way to save her life. We prayed together!**

I told her a friend of mine had written a poem and sent it to me the night before and so I took it out of my turn out gear and shared it with her, these are the words of the poem.

### **"Meet Me in the Stairwell"**

You say that you will never forget where you were when you heard the news on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, neither will I.

I was on the 100<sup>th</sup> floor in a smoke filled room with a man who called his wife to say "good bye" I held his fingers steady as he dialed the phone. I gave him the peace to say, "Honey, I'm not going to make it, but it's OK... I'm ready to go!"

I was with his wife when he called as she fed breakfast to their children. I held her up as she tried to understand his words and realized that he was not coming home that night.

I was in the stairwell of the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor when a women cried out to me for help. "I have been knocking on your hearts door for 50 years! I Said, Of course I will show you the way home... Only believe in me now."

I was at the base of the building with a Priest named Father Mike, ministering to the injured and devastated souls.

I took him home to tend my flock and his flock in Heaven. He heard my voice and answered:

I was on all four of those planes, in every seat, and with every prayer. I was with the crew as they were overtaken. I was in the hearts of believers there, comforting and assuring them that their faith saved them.

I was in Texas, Kansas, London. I was standing next to you when you heard the terrible news. Did you sense me there?

I want you to know that I saw every face. I knew every name---- though not all knew me. Some met me for the first time on the 86<sup>th</sup> floor.

Some sought me with their last breath. Some couldn't hear me calling to them through the smoke and the flames; "Come to Me... This Way... Take My hand." Some chose, for the final time to ignore Me. BUT I WAS THERE!

I did not place you in the tower that day, you may not know why, but I do. However, if you were there in that explosive moment of time, would you have reached for me?

September 11<sup>th</sup> was not the end of the journey for you. But someday your journey will end. And I will be there for you as well.

**"SEEK ME NOW WHY I CAN BE FOUND." Than, at any moment, you will know that you are ready to go."**

**I will be in the stairwell of your final moments.**

**Signed: GOD**