

## **911 Memorial**

### **Chaplain Samuel P. Lundy**

There are certain things that have been already written, by another, that any attempt to alter them, to improve them, to meddle with them, is counter-productive. I am thinking of “The Lord’s Prayer”, “The Pledge of Allegiance”, or maybe “Mary had a little lamb”. Singing “Happy Birthday” to your four-year-old grandchild is in no way diminished by the fact that you sang it last year when they were three years old. The words of Sir Winston Churchill as he encouraged a besieged Great Britain to “Keep Calm and Carry On” are timeless, they cannot be improved.

As a preacher, reading someone else’s material, tends to put a whole congregation asleep, fast. Today I will take that risk. If I shared them with you before, please listen again with new ears, to an edited version of a homily, delivered, at a mass for fire fighters, at a fire station, in NYC on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The day before. . . . it is timeless in its message.

You do what God has called you to do. You get on that rig, you go out and you do the job. No matter how big the call, no matter how small, you have no idea of what God is calling you to do, but God needs you. God needs us to keep supporting each other, to be kind to each other, to love each other. . .

We love this job, we all do. What a blessing it is! It’s a difficult, difficult job, but God calls you to do it, and indeed, He gives you a love for it so a difficult job will be well done.

Isn’t God wonderful? Isn’t he good to you, to each one of you, and to me? Turn to God each day - - put your faith, your trust, your hope and your life in his hands. He’ll take care of you, and you’ll have a good life. And this firehouse will be a great blessing to this neighborhood and to this city. Amen

These were the words of Fr. Mychal Judge + As most of you know he died the next morning during the 911 attack, performing his duties as a FDNY chaplain to the very end. May we all have God’s grace to serve our fellow man. . . . . until the very end!

A century and a half earlier, another martyr at the altar of freedom, perhaps our greatest President, Abraham Lincoln, spoke words that can easily be adapted to our current situation:

“We have come here today to remember a great struggle, a great struggle between good and evil.” A struggle that I sadly have come to believe is not over.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate this day. The brave men and women who responded, who struggled, and who died on that hot September morning in Lower Manhattan, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.

It is for us the living, therefore to dedicate ourselves, to the tasks that are before us, that we might likewise respond, however and whenever we are called, that this nation, the United States of American, might not perish from this earth.

So, as September 11, 2001, joins Pearl Harbor Day, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941; both now remembered by us as “Dates of Infamy” in our nation’s calendar, we prayerfully remember our law enforcement officers, our emergency medical, personnel, an our firefighters, and those in the armed services, in saying, “God Bless America”!