

## Prayer for the Closing of Ground Zero

Gracious and Merciful God, we give you thanks for the courageous lives of all your children who died on Sept. 11. For the firefighters, police officers, EMS workers, airline passengers and crew members onboard those four planes, the workers at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and all those who continue to survive and grieve and remember.

We give thanks for Paul, a firefighter who, up until last week, continued his mission of finding remains.

Thank you Paul and all of New York's bravest who have worked in "the pit" to bring closure for so many families.

For Paul and so many others, thank you Lord Jesus.

We give thanks for Dan, a police officer who while standing on the promenade overlooking Ground Zero, said "I still can't believe this happened."

Thank you, Dan and all of New York's finest who've tirelessly worked in the pit and protected the perimeter.

For Dan and so many others, thank you Lord Jesus.

We give thanks to Ritchie from the Port Authority Police who has worked the morgue shift, recording the remains and insuring they will arrive for DNA testing.

Thank you, Ritchie and all who've worked at the morgue, always with a presence of dignity and respect.

For Ritchie and so many others, thank you Lord Jesus.

We give thanks for Mike and Allison, medical examiners who have with great care and determination, distinguished remains amidst the rubble.

For Mike and Alison, thank you Lord Jesus.

We give thanks to Pete, an FDNY EMS paramedic who gave up Christmas with his family because others were working at Ground Zero and he wanted to support them.

Thank you and all who have sacrificed so much and have sought no recognition.

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For Pete and so many others, thank you Lord Jesus.

We give thanks for Ann, Carol and all the chaplains at St. Paul's Chapel, T-Mort, the Family Center, St. Paul's, hospitals, emergency services and the military who provide care, support and spiritual guidance.

For Ann, Carol and so many others, thank you, Lord Jesus.

Thank you to all New York's Bravest and Finest who have worked in the pit with rakes and on hands and knees to bring closure for so many families.

Thank you, Lord Jesus.

We give thanks for everyone who took the time to write words of encouragement to the rescue and recovery workers.

Thank you, Lord Jesus.

For all others unnamed but not unrecognized, the steel workers, construction workers, the National Guard and members of the Armed Forces, other law enforcement agencies and all others who have served.

Thank you, Lord Jesus.

And now the prayer is offered that has been said so many times at Ground Zero. It is offered in memory of all who have died.

Into your hands, O Merciful God, we commend your servants. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, sheep of your own fold, lambs of your own flock, sinners of your own redeeming. Receive them into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

For all of these your children, thank you Lord Jesus.

Amen

*Written by Pr. Thomas E. Taylor, Grace Lutheran Church, North Bellmore, Chaplain, North Bellmore Fire Department, Nassau County Critical Incident Stress Management Team (Fire Service), Chaplain at T-Mort\* and St. Paul's Chapel.*

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