

# FATHER MYCHAL JUDGE, OFM

5/11/1933 – 9/11/2001

*“Lord, take me where you want me to go, let me meet who you want me to meet, tell me what to say, and keep me out of your way.”*



Shortly before entering the World Trade Center on 9/11, Father Judge rejected an offer to join Mayor Giuliani, choosing instead to step into harm's way to be with the Fire Department and the victims of the terrorist attack. A Reuters photograph of Father Judge's body being carried from ground zero by rescue workers made him an international icon of heroism.

Father Judge was a hero to many long before his death. He was beloved by New York Fire Department personnel and their families. He was a champion

of New York's homeless, AIDS patients, gay and lesbian Catholics, alcoholics, immigrants and disaster victims.

Born in Brooklyn to Irish immigrant parents, he was only 6 when his father died after a long illness. As a boy, Judge was inspired to enter the priesthood by the Franciscan friars at the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi near Penn Station in Manhattan.

In the early years of his ministry, Father Judge served two parishes in New Jersey where he gained a reputation as “the listening priest.” During his service as Assistant to the President of Siena College, Father Judge confronted his alcoholism and achieved sobriety through Alcoholics Anonymous.

In the 1980s, Father Judge was among the first clergy to minister to AIDS patients, who at that time were considered untouchable. Through the organization Dignity, he ministered to gay and lesbian Catholics even after the Church excluded them from worship.

In 1996, Father Judge led a memorial service on the beach at Smith Point, Long Island, for the families of the victims who lost their lives in the nation's second worst air disaster, the explosion of TWA Flight 800. More than 2,000 people attended.

Father Judge received numerous posthumous honors, including France's highest recognition, the Legion of Honor. His F.D.N.Y. helmet was blessed by Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

**Father Mychal Judge was a Franciscan priest and the chaplain of the New York Fire Department who died heroically on September 11, 2001. He has been called “the Saint of 9/11.”**

