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Tears & smiles for loved ones

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The seemingly endless procession of funerals continued yesterday with hundreds of mourners shedding a torrent of tears and managing a few smiles as they remembered loved ones lost.

Bagpipes droned and bugles blared in the drizzle from Long Island to Kinnelon, N.J., as the grieving mounted over the deaths in the World Trade Center attacks.

At St. Lawrence The Martyr Church in Sayville, L.I., firefighters saluted the coffin carrying Battalion Chief Richard Prunty, 57, of Battalion No. 2 in lower Manhattan.

Prunty's wife, Susan, his daughter, Lisa, 25, and son, Christopher, 21, comforted each other in the front pew as Msgr. John Rowan talked of the "great evil that was placed upon us in a very intimate way."

"There is sadness in departing, but we take comfort in knowing we will one day see him again," Rowan said.

As the family left the church, Susan Prunty clutched her husband's helmet and kissed it, leaving lumps in the throats of the men he trained.

"He was a fireman's fireman," said firefighter Frank Gatto, 40, of Engine Co. 328 in Far Rockaway, Queens, where Prunty used to work.

"He would never leave you," Gatto said. "He was the last one out. That was him, a fireman all the way."

At St. Francis of Assisi Church in Manhattan, grim-faced firefighters paid tribute to another fallen brother, William (Big Buddy) Henry of Rescue Co. 1 in midtown.

"He's the epitome of a firefighter. That was his life, and if he had to die, it would have been like that. Rescue was what he was all about," said his friend, Emergency Medical Service Capt. David Diamond.

Henry, 49, is survived by his mother, Ethel, his sister Ellen James and his grandmother Elsie Fredricks.

While firefighters appeared exhausted and heartbroken, a fire alarm that rang during Henry's service proved why they are called the Bravest. At least five firefighters sprinted out of the church to answer the call.

Heroism remembered

There were also tears yesterday for civilians who perished.

At the Community Church of Smoke Rise in Kinnelon, N.J., a bagpiper played "Amazing Grace" as more than 700 friends and relatives remembered Seth Morris, 35, a managing director at Cantor Fitzgerald.

While Morris' body remains missing in the World Trade Center rubble, the Rev. Sanford Hull said Morris' family "has acknowledged the inevitable."

Mourners recalled Morris' heroic efforts during the 1993 World Trade Center car bombing, when he carried a female colleague on his back down 103 floors to safety.

Morris' three young children, who sat in a front pew with their mother, Lynn, brought the crowd to tears as Hull read notes from each child to their father.

"He was a kind person," wrote Madilynn, 10. "He told jokes to me. He was my pal. Daddy, I'm going to miss you very much. I'm going to make the best out of this."

Kyle, 8, wrote, "We played sports everyday. I wish you could be here now. Uncle Bob is going to take me to all my football games."

And the youngest, Hayley, 5, penned, "Daddy, I love you. I'm glad you're in a happy place with no more bad people. I'd like to know how you're doing up there some time."

Brother-in-law Patrick Mooney said it was fitting that friends and relatives heard from Morris' children. He remembered a family outing to the Jersey Shore when Morris confided, "I know I should only be a father to my kids, but my kids are my best friends."

At St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan, mourners came to bid farewell to Timothy Coughlin, 42, a senior managing director at Cantor Fitzgerald.

As his casket was carried into the cathedral, the crowd stood to sing "Be Not Afraid," and tears flowed before the first eulogy was given.

Coughlin's wife, Maura, and their three children, Ryann, Sean and Riley, seemed comforted by words of Coughlin's "infectious enthusiasm."

"You always hear in sports that one great player made all of his teammates better. That's how Timmy was with his friends and family," said Coughlin's brother, Denis. "I love you, Timmy."

Coughlin and Morris are among 628 Cantor Fitzgerald employees killed or missing. The company had its offices in the top floors of 1 World Trade Center.

Come out for city's Bravest

The city Fire Department is asking members of the public to attend the funerals of the firefighters killed in the World Trade Center disaster as a show of support.

Traditionally, hundreds of fellow firefighters turn out at services for the fallen, but that has not been possible because of the continuing search operations at the twin towers site.

Schedule of funerals:

Today

Lt. Michael Walchola, Ladder Co. 5: 10:45 a.m. at Resurrection Ascension Church, Woodhaven Blvd. and Eliot Ave., Middle Village, Queens.

Lt. Dennis Mojica, Rescue Squad 1: 10 a.m. at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Ave. at E. 50th St., Manhattan.

Tomorrow

Lt. Geoffrey Guja, Battalion 43: 10 a.m. at Claude R. Boyd/Spencer Funeral Home, 448 W. Main St., Babylon, L.I.

Firefighter Joseph Angelini, Rescue 1: 9:30 a.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 210 S. Wellwood Ave., Lindenhurst, L.I.

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A funeral Mass for Firefighter Timothy Stackpole will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Monday at Good Shepherd Church, 1950 Batchelder St., Brooklyn. The Daily News incorrectly reported the time of the Mass yesterday.

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