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CAN'T LOOK: The late Dennis Mojica's fiancée holds his helmet as his casket arrives at St. Patrick's Cathedral yesterday. Mary Altaffer

Both saved lives and sacrificed their own

By SIMON CRITTLE, KENNETH LOVETT and ANDY GELLER

Mike Warchola issued an order that saved a young firefighter's life at the World Trade Center.

Dennis Mojica pulled an elderly man from the rubble of a burning building in Brooklyn.

The heroism of the two brave fire lieutenants, both victims of the worst terrorist attack in America, was recalled yesterday at their funerals in Queens and Manhattan.

A lone piper played "Amazing Grace" as the body of Warchola, 51, was borne into Resurrection Catholic Church in Rego Park, which was packed with colleagues, friends and family members.

Mike's older brother, Denis, a retired fire captain, delivered the eulogy, telling how Mike, a 24-year veteran of the force, kept a young firefighter, Greg Frusci, from dying in the trade center tragedy.

When the call that the Twin Towers were under attack came into the Houston Street station house that Mike's Ladder Co. 5 shared with Engine Co. 24, Frusci had just finished his shift and was hanging around.

Mike told him not to go but Frusci got on the truck, anyway. When Mike saw Frusci at the scene, he told him he was violating a direct order and if he went inside the burning buildings, he would be fired.

Frusci obeyed — and survived.

"When they got to the trade center, he saw the young firefighter and went ballistic," said Denis, 54. "The kid did what he was told and is here alive and now with us."

But Mike is not. He and 10 other firefighters died in the inferno, Mike and other Ladder 5 members trying to lead a woman to safety.

Mike's body was recovered last Friday, the day that George Bush visited the site and F-16 fighter planes filled the skies over lower Manhattan.

"I'm thinking maybe those F-16s were flying the missing man formation," Dennis said.

He said his brother, who was very well read and loved history, had majored in English at the University of Buffalo.

"He never failed to remind me that the beer was not chilled 'good' but chilled 'well,' " he said.

In Manhattan, meanwhile, hundreds of mourners filled St. Patrick's Cathedral to bid farewell to Dennis Mojica, one of 11 members of the 25-person Rescue Co. 1 who died or are missing in the tragedy.

A 28-year veteran of the FDNY, the 50-year-old Mojica was decorated in 1998 for helping to rescue Joseph Steel, 67, whose legs were pinned under a bookcase when a Brooklyn building collapsed the previous year.

Mojica and fellow firefighter Robert Galione felt their way through dust and debris and sawed the bookcase from Steel's legs.

The fallen firefighter was a member of "that great company of heroes," said Rector Msgr. Eugene Clark. "Our admiration for him is beyond expression."

After the 50-minute service, Mojica's flag-draped casket was carried outside the cathedral and loaded onto a waiting firetruck. Family members wept as onlookers saluted and applauded.

"Dennis was my mentor," said Bronx firefighter George Diaz, a good friend. "There was no one better."

Today's funerals

FDNY Firefighter **Joseph Angellni**, Rescue 1. 9:30 a.m., Our Lady of Perpetual Help, South Wellwood Avenue, Lindenhurst, L.I.

FDNY Lt. **Geoffrey E. Guja**, Battalion 43. 10 a.m., Claude R. Boyd-Spencer Funeral Home, 448 W. Main St., Babylon, L.I.

FDNY Battalion Chief **Dennis A. Cross**, Battalion 57. 10:30 a.m., St. Peter the Apostle Church, Greenlawn and Rockaway Avenues., Islip Terrace, L.I.

FDNY Battalion Chief **William McGovern**, Battalion 2. 11:45 a.m., St. Patrick's Church, 284 East Main St., Smithtown, L.I.

FDNY firefighter **Joseph Maloney**, Ladder 3. 8:30 a.m., St. Sylvester R.C. Church, 68 Ohio Ave., Medford, L.I.

In Memoriam



MICHAEL WARCHOLA, 51
FDNY Lieutenant
Queens, NY

Survived by his two children Aaron, 19, Amy, 16, his father Mike, 82, and brother Denis, 54.

In Memoriam



DENNIS MOJICA, 50
FDNY Lieutenant
Long Island, NY.

Survived by his daughter Alessandria, 14, his sister Judith, 51, brother Jorge, 35 and nephew Roberto Moses, 17.

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