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A giant among men

Giuliani, commish hail one of the Bravest

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Capt. Vincent Brunton was fondly remembered yesterday as a firefighter's firefighter, someone dedicated to his job who was every inch a gentleman.

Brunton, 43, was a 21-year veteran of the Fire Department who served both as a lieutenant and captain of Ladder Co. 105 in Boerum Hill, Brooklyn.

Fire Commissioner Thomas Von Essen said, "You should know that we don't do that very often. Only outstanding lieutenants in outstanding companies go back to lead them as captains."

Von Essen described Brunton as a highly skilled leader who was confident, both in himself and in his men.

"It took the largest terrorist act in the history of America to topple the world's largest office tower, to stop Vinny Brunton. I can't think of any other circumstances in which he would not have prevailed," Von Essen said.

Mayor Giuliani told an overflow crowd at Holy Name Church in Windsor Terrace, "We honor his entire career, not just what he did on Sept. 11."

So many of Brunton's friends and neighbors joined with officials and uniformed officers for the service that many had to be seated in the lower level of the church or stand outside in the rain, listening to loudspeakers.

Brunton was born and raised in Windsor Terrace and attended Holy Name Elementary School and Bishop Ford High School. The Rev. John Gildea, a former parish priest, celebrated yesterday's memorial Mass at Holy Name, where Brunton was baptized and received his first Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Gildea said he married Brunton and his wife, Cathy, at Holy Name 25 years ago and the couple had their two children, Kelly, 22, and Thomas, 20, baptized there.

He loved life

Brunton's brother Thomas, a member of Engine Co. 310 and an Emerald Society bagpiper, described his youngest brother as a "standup guy" who was uncomplicated and unassuming.

Vincent Brunton worked out every day, rooted for the Yankees and the Giants and loved tailgate parties and trips to the Jersey Shore, his brother said.

Brunton worked part-time at Farrell's, the famous Windsor Terrace tavern, which was closed yesterday in his memory. A color picture of him was displayed in the window, along with an American flag.

He is also survived by his brother Michael of Engine Co. 282 and a sister, Maryann DeLuise.

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