NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

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A Medal for Father Mike

If it's Sunday, Chuck Schumer has a scheme to get himself on the tube, right? But of course.

And sometimes he even has something newsworthy to say.

Like the day before yesterday, when New York's senior senator urged President Bush to award the Rev. Mychal Judge a posthumous U.S. Medal of Freedom.

Judge was the 68-year-old FDNY chaplain who perished Sept. 11.

He had removed his helmet to administer last rites to a dying firefighter, and was hit by debris from the collapsing World Trade Center.

Father Mike didn't have to be there.

But he was — just like his 342 FDNY colleagues who died that day.

The president has the chance to honor the memory of this man who dedicated his life to helping others — and thereby also honor the breathtaking heroism of the many who gave so much that horrific day.

The Medal of Freedom, created in 1945 by President Harry S Truman, is the nation's highest award for valorious conduct by a civilian.

It is not to be awarded lightly.

But by any measure, Father Mike qualifies.

President Bush should do the right thing.

And if Chuck Schumer gets to announce it on a Sunday afternoon, so much the better.

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