

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In a way, I recall the morning of September 11, 2001, as though it were just yesterday. And yet, at other times, it seems like a lifetime ago.

At the time, I was pastor of the Church of the Resurrection in Farmingville, New York. I remember so clearly that the weather was spectacular. It was a clear sunny day and I said to myself as I was driving to the church, "Wow, Lord, what a beautiful day! Little did I realize at that point what would unfold within the next hour or so."

I was sitting at my desk in my office waiting to begin the 9:00 AM Mass. My secretary arrived and came into my office to tell me that a small plane had just crashed into the World Trade Center. My initial thought was how unfortunate for those passengers and pilot. It was only afterwards that I learned about the second plane and what was really happening. We were under attack.

During the day people started flocking into the church. I was so grateful that they knew that the church was a place where they could come for refuge and to deal with all those confusing feelings that we were all experiencing back then. We were all a bit numb from it all. Then came the worry and fear and overwhelming grief as we learned of the loss of life after the collapse of the Twin Towers.

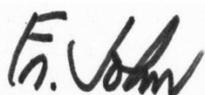
Word came of the attack on the Pentagon and the heroic successful thwarting by the passengers on Flight 93 to stop the planned attack on another location in Washington, DC, perhaps the White House.

Sadness, worry, fear and anger were in the air for weeks ahead and yet there was such an outpouring of mutual support, help and encouragement being shared by Americans all over our country.

Now, twenty years have passed and many of us have probably gone on with our lives. Yet, we know that there are many others who still deal daily with the loss of loved ones on that day or from a 9/11 related illness over these many years.

I pray that this Twentieth Anniversary will give us an opportunity to remember with love all those whose lives were lost on that day. Furthermore, even as we might experience anew the feelings that we thought be put to rest, we will always never stop honoring those first responders and give them what they need to deal with the health issues that so many face because of their placing their lives on the line that day and the days that followed.

May the Lord bless our Nation and all people of good will.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. John". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.