

# Ithaca couple grieves loss of son

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

Rarely does pain cut deeper than when parents lose a child. Olga and Peter Potorti, parishioners at Immaculate Conception Church in Ithaca, now know that feeling.

The Potortis' son, James, worked on the 92nd floor of One World Trade Center — directly in the line of hijacked American Airlines Flight 11 that hit the building at 8:45 a.m. Sept. 11.

"I understand, from an eyewitness a few buildings away who knew where our son would have been sitting, the plane

went right through the office and he would have had no chance at all," Olga said Sept. 17.

James was a systems analyst for Marsh and McLennan, a global professional services firm. According to a Sept. 17 statement by the company's chairman, J.W. Greenberg, the crash killed 315 Marsh and McLennan employees.

James, 52, graduated from Immaculate Conception School and moved out of the Ithaca area after college, his mother said. He resided in Princeton, N.J., with his wife of 11 years, Nikki. They had no children.

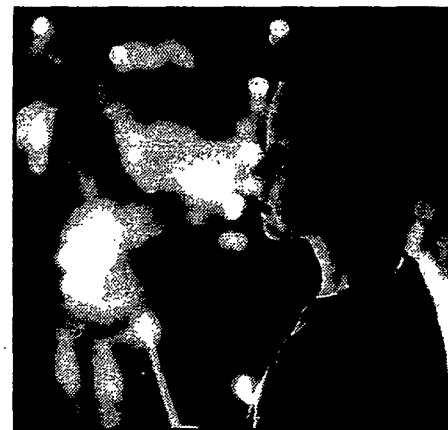
"He loved life, loved people," Olga said.

"We had a very close relationship. He was very understanding, very easy to talk to."

A memorial Mass for Mr. Potorti will be held at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 22, at Immaculate Conception Church, 113 N. Geneva St. Father Leo Reinhardt, pastor, will preside and the public is welcome.

Olga said that her intense grieving has been softened by the presence of several family members and friends. "We have the support of so many people here in the neighborhood and Ithaca, and we appreciate it," she said.

"Our hearts go out to all the others who have lost loved ones," she added. "It hurts so much."



Don Blake/CNS

Adam Cowen, 12, a Catholic school student, joins in the "Walk for Peace" prayer vigil at Salesianum High School in Wilmington, Del., Sept. 16.



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## 'Conquer evil with good'



Karen Callaway/CNS

Wrapped in the U.S. flag, Rosana Cozza of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Hammond, Ind., weeps for the victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks during a memorial service at Block Stadium in East Chicago, Ind., Sept. 16. An annual festival honoring Mexican culture was canceled to honor and remember the victims.

By Catholic News Service

Americans moved quickly from shock and terror to prayer after suicidal terrorists used hijacked passenger planes to demolish the twin towers of New York City's World Trade Center and a large section of the Pentagon.

Across the nation churches held special services for the victims.

On Sept. 16 worshippers packed St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York and the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington for special Masses. Throughout the country churches reported overflow crowds at Sunday liturgies.

Pope John Paul II, who rarely speaks more than once or twice about any tragedy, spoke out immediately and repeatedly against the "inhuman terrorist attacks" and offered his prayers for the victims. Even as he condemned the violence, he urged Americans not to resort to revenge.

He departed from long-standing custom at his Wednesday general audience, speaking about the previous day's tragedy at length in English and turning the audience into a prayer service for the victims.

At the Sept. 16 Mass for Healing and Peace at the National Shrine, part of the papal message read, "To all I solemnly repeat the Gospel injunction not to be conquered by evil, but to conquer evil with good."

Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick of Washington was chief celebrant of that Mass. Joining him were Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien of the Military Archdiocese and Bishop Paul S. Loverde of Arlington, Va., where nearly 200 people died in the Pentagon crash.

In New York, where the combined toll of dead and missing climbed to more than 5,000, thousands unable to get into St. Patrick's lined Fifth Avenue and adjacent streets as Cardinal Edward M. Egan celebrated a Mass of Supplication.

When he expressed thanks to all the rescue workers, the congregation gave them a prolonged standing ovation.

Historians quickly began comparing the Sept. 11 attacks on the nation's financial and military nerve centers with the Japan

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