

DIOCESAN NEWS

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thought it was an accident. After the second one, it started to dawn on people that it was not an accident," said Woodard, a 1988 McQuaid graduate.

Beginning at 11 a.m., he walked nearly seven miles uptown to his apartment near the United Nations headquarters.

"I think the strangest thing, walking up toward Midtown, was that every block you'd look back and see that big plume of smoke. And you'd keep looking, checking, hoping you were just dreaming."

Woodard said his mother, Sandra, a parishioner of St. Anne in Rochester, had spent considerable time at the World Trade Center while visiting him three weeks earlier. He also noted that he had once interviewed for a firm on the center's 105th floor, and was acquainted with several Villanova alumni who were employed there.

"It's just the uncertainty — who knows what can happen, being in the wrong place at the wrong time?" Woodard said.

Another J.P. Morgan Chase employee who witnessed the New York City tragedies was Brigid Bergin, formerly of St. Joseph's Parish in Penfield, who has lived in Brooklyn Heights for two years. At the time of the crashes, Bergin was only three blocks from the World Trade Center, in the Chase Plaza skyscraper.

A day later, Bergin sent an e-mail titled "I am OK" to several friends including Nora Bradbury-Haehl, her former youth minister at St. Joseph's and now the diocesan coordinator of youth and young adult ministry.

Bergin's e-mail read, in part:

"I was at a department wide staff meeting when the first plane hit. When I heard the first explosion I thought it was some campaign stunt. (Sept. 11) was primary day in NYC and I thought one of the mayoral candidates was doing a massive campaign drop because papers were flying all around the windows. We ran down from the 60th floor of the building. The crowd just started moving north through Manhattan. I ended up walking across the Manhattan bridge where I saw the second tower fall. I walked to a friend's house further in Brooklyn and have been staying there since. Thank you all for love and prayers. I was very lucky."

Bob Kump, a parishioner of Immaculate Conception in Ithaca, is vice-president and treasurer for the Energy East utility corporation. He flew to New York City Sept. 11 for a breakfast meeting at Morgan Stanley, near Times Square, some distance from the twin towers.

"You could see how the smoke from the collapse just streamed up the streets," Kump said.

After his building was evacuated, Kump moved to his corporate lawyers' office on Third Avenue, a couple of miles from the World Trade Center. From there, he witnessed the second building's collapse.

As the morning wore on, Kump said, "Quite frankly, we were concerned that the Empire State Building might be next, that there might still be two or three planes up there."

In the late afternoon Kump took a Metro train out of Manhattan. He said he again grew uneasy when he boarded in Grand Central Station, uncertain if terrorists may have planted bombs. He took the train to White Plains, where he picked up a rental car and drove back to Ithaca.

"There were 15 to 20 people in line. It was amazing where the people before me were going — California, Florida, Nashville, Columbus. And I was only going to Upstate New York," he said. He reached his home at 10:30 p.m.

"Just pulling in the driveway, it was a great feeling to know you were home."

Anthony Belliard, 23, is a New York National Guardsman who traveled to the Big Apple to help with the relief efforts. Amada Belliard, a native of the Dominican Republic, said her son left on Sept. 11.

"I'm scared because I don't want him to



Reuters/CNS

A firefighter calls for more rescue workers to make their way into the rubble of the World Trade Center Sept. 15 in New York. U.S. President George W. Bush said he wanted Saudi-born dissident Osama bin Laden "dead or alive" for the previous week's attacks that left more than 5,000 people dead or missing.

be there," said Amada, who attends Holy Redeemer/St. Francis Xavier in Rochester. "But he likes it. He wants to be there."

Military personnel throughout the diocese were either sent to New York or put on alert Sept. 11. Father William B. Leone, pastor of the Northern Cayuga Cluster, and chaplain to the 1-108 Battalion of the 27th Brigade of the National Guard, expected to be sent to New York City by the end of the week of Sept. 16.

Father John DeSocio, assistant to Bishop Matthew H. Clark for vocations and priestly formation, is also a chaplain assigned to the USS Comfort, a naval hospital ship currently stationed off New York City. The priest is also a chaplain for the U.S. Coast Guard's air station in Cape Cod, Mass. He said he may be shipped out to Cape Cod to relieve the chaplains on duty there.

Father Elmer Heindl, priest-in-residence at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Greece, a commissioned Army chaplain since World War II, said he was called "by God's providence" Sept. 13-16 to Camp Perry, Ohio, when reservists were called out.

Father Heindl said he gathered reservists in prayer and offered Mass and a memorial service for them. He said he's willing to do more, but added, "I could be called in right now as a chaplain, but obviously they are not going to take a 91-year-old."

He noted in a homily, "it took an act of terrorists to realize we are slipping. ... The main job we have in this life is to pray to God."

"I'm not imposing my belief on other people, but everything that happens is God's will, it is God's permission that makes it happen. ... We put ourselves personally above the glory of God. It takes something like this to wake us up, 'Look, we are forgetting God.'"

Brian Costello, 34, a parishioner of St. John's of Rochester, Perinton, had flown into New York City on business Tuesday with Craig Cairns, 38, of Pittsford. They took a cab through Queens, and were on the 59th Street bridge when "a plane came over our heads."

Costello recalled that Cairns said aloud he was "so surprised planes were allowed to fly so low into the city."



Reuters/CNS

A woman cries outside St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York Sept. 17 during a service for uniformed victims — likely more than 300 — of the World Trade Center attack.

"We followed it right into side of building," Costello said. "We were where we could see the whole New York skyline."

"We thought initially the plane was off-course or something. Later we thought it must be a terrorist; no pilot in his right mind would fly into a building."

After the second plane struck and they learned of it in a diner, they hurried to find a hotel room but were unable to find one. They stood with hundreds of other people watching NBC-TV broadcast at the Rockefeller Center. From one point, he said, "You could see right down that street and could see both holes inside the trade center."

Yet, Costello said, "It was pretty calm in Upper Manhattan."

After hearing the Pentagon had been hit, the two rented a car and left for Rochester around 11:30 a.m.

Costello is in investment management work for Howe and Rusling, and often meets with clients in New York City.

"We have a couple of clients' offices in the World Trade Center," he said. "So we were concerned. But we found out they're OK."

"You're lucky, thankful. Thank God I had no meetings down there."

Diane Zielinski, a parishioner of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish in Rochester, was staying at the New York Marriott Financial Center, a hotel about 1½ blocks from the World Trade Center, where she'd gone twice to meet friends Sept. 10. She was with her sister Mary, who was in the city on business.

After they'd seen the TV news and heard the hotel manager announce that guests on upper floors should go to the lobby, they left for a walk, assuming they'd return. As they left the hotel, they saw internal body parts covered with a white sheet.

Getting caught up in a panicked crowd, she said, "Everybody started to head north.

Then the smoke got really bad and we put our shirts over our noses." They stayed in a shelter linked to the Staten Island ferry until the smoke began to clear. Then they walked toward Central Park.

"We ended up walking maybe 118 blocks. We literally walked all day."

That night they stayed with a friend on the upper west side. On Wednesday they caught a train back to Rochester. At the train station they met a man from Germany who had just gotten a job at the World Trade Center and an apartment across the street. "He was going to try to get a train to California, he didn't know where else to go, and knew somebody in California."

"We left clothes, a suitcase, my contact lenses and new shoes; and my sister lost her work computer," Zielinski said. "On the other hand, we left with our lives."

The morning of Sept. 11 was doubly frightening for the family of Steve and Kathie Johnson, parishioners at St. Mary's in Waterloo.

When Steve Johnson learned of the first World Trade Center plane crash, he recalled, he immediately phoned his son Mike, 31. Mike, who works for the National Development Council near 42nd Street and Broadway, told his father he could see smoke outside his office window.

Mike called his father back 20 minutes later after the second WTC building was hit, saying he was all right and that his building was being evacuated immediately.

About 40 minutes after the second WTC attack, at 9:43 a.m., American Airlines Flight 77 plowed into the Pentagon. Steve Johnson's daughter Jennifer, 26, saw the plane flying unusually low as she drove to work. Seconds later, she saw "tons of brownish white smoke," she recalled. Jennifer called her father about an hour later, he said, to say that she was safe.

Jennifer recently completed an internship with the U.S. Department of State and is scheduled to travel to Istanbul, Turkey later this month, where she will work as a diplomat in the U.S. Consulate.

"My job — its importance and the danger that could come with it — suddenly are so real," Jennifer commented. "It's going to be a challenge, and I am ready for it. I cannot wait to represent America. We need diplomacy now more than ever."

Jonathan Belke, a convert to Islam who grew up Catholic in Seneca Falls, graduated from Nazareth College, Rochester, in 1992. Belke currently lives in Cairo, Egypt, where he works for a humanitarian development organization that has projects throughout the Arab world.

"The vast majority of Egyptians were upset and sympathize fully with the victims of the terrorist attacks ...," he wrote by e-mail to the *Courier*. "Yes, as the first reports of an attack in America trickled through, there were a number of joyful people, but as the magnitude and reality of it all sank in, joy turned to sadness."

Belke added he was touched by how Egyptians sympathized with him at the mosque where he prays. He was even asked to lead the Islamic sunset prayer at "a local mosque as a show of solidarity among shocked Muslims who were reeling at this aggression against humanity," he said.

"On the street, many people have given me very sympathetic looks while some strangers have even come up and told me of their sorrow," he added.

Like many commentators from the Arab world, however, Belke noted that Egyptians point out that it took a terrible event like the terrorist attacks to make the United States realize how much its policies are detested by many Arabs. He added that, as of yet, he has no concerns for his safety as a U.S. citizen in Egypt.

"Egyptians are very kind and understanding people who don't like to blame individual people for the actions of their individual governments," he said. "However, if the United States attacks and goes on the offensive, things could change."