

9-11: A YEAR LATER

No date in American history is known by its month and date in numerical form except 9-11; the closest rival is the Fourth of July. No war is known by its date of origin; the War of 1812 expresses a year but lacks the specificity and timeless nature of 9-11. And that is how it should be—9-11 is nothing if not unique.

Catholic League members will recall that last October's edition of Catalyst gave a personal account of what happened. Our staff watched the Twin Towers collapse right in front of us and some saw the second plane hit its mark.

For those who lost a loved one in New York, Pennsylvania or Washington, D.C., September 11 will live as their day of infamy. They are certainly in the prayers of the Catholic League.

The men and women who died in the World Trade Center came from nations all over the world. But the rescuers came from the U.S.A. What is often noticed, but never mentioned (at least in public), is that the lion's share of these courageous persons were Roman Catholic (the obituaries and TV news reports made this evident).

We called several top officials at the NYPD and the FDNY to ascertain what percentage of those who lost their lives on 9-11 was Catholic. The answer: between 85 and 90 percent.

Unlike some others in our society, we are not looking for a special memorial for our group. But we cannot let this moment pass without giving due recognition to the heroic role that Catholics played in this tragic event.