



Second Annual Blue Mass Held at Sts. Peter and Paul Proto-Cathedral

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Every year on the anniversary of 9/11, people all over the country gather to remember the lives lost in the terrible attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. In the Alton

area, Monsignor Kenneth Steffen, pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Proto-Cathedral, held the second annual Blue Mass to remember the fallen and to honor area first responders.

The congregation, led by music director Martha Brokus, sang America the Beautiful as Monsignor Steffen, led by two members of the Knights of Columbus, processed into church with Mayor Brant Walker, Fire Chief Bernie Siebold, local firefighters, police officers, and sheriff deputies.

Also in attendance was Civic Memorial teacher/adviser Angela Parish who, every year, assigns her students to research and write about the events of 9/11. Students Dylan Arnold, Kiera Witschie, and Isabel Davis read moving accounts of that tragic day.

During the service, Monsignor Steffen presented each firefighter with a medal of St. Florian, patron saint of firefighters. Police and sheriff deputies were presented with medals of St. Michael, patron saint of police. Following the presentation, tenor soloist Robert Creighton sang a beautiful a cappella rendition of Ave Maria.

The service was concluded with the blessing of the first responders' vehicles followed by a reception at the church.