



September 10, 2026

Dear Friends,

As we commemorate the 25-year anniversary of September 11, we pause to remember a day that changed so much for so many. The events of that day claimed the lives of thousands of citizens, first responders, military personnel and airline passengers and crew members. Here, at The University of Scranton, 9/11's losses and lessons are forever part of our story.

For Rev. Joseph A. McShane, S.J., a native New Yorker, the tragedy was both pastoral and deeply personal. At the time, Father McShane was serving in his fourth year as president of our University and felt compelled to be present to those who were grieving.

Now the Superior of the Scranton Jesuit Community, he reflected on the call to care for others and how the University responded to tragedy. In the weeks and months that followed, Father McShane traveled to numerous funerals and memorial services for graduates, family members and friends of the University. He immediately made plans to hold a September 12 Memorial Mass at the Byron Center, and he helped organize a Memorial Mass one month later at the Church of Our Saviour in Manhattan.

Father McShane has often spoken about The University of Scranton having its own culture, one shaped by faith, compassion, service and care for one another. While these values did not start with the tragedy of 9/11, they became even more visible and deeply embraced because of it.

"Scranton dealt with this great tragedy with the characteristics that marked it throughout time," McShane said. "People looked out for one another. They sought one another out. They were pastoral with one another. We talk a lot about cura personalis, and this was a time when our students exercised the ministry of cura personalis with one another. If they knew that someone's family was affected, they would not leave that young woman or young man alone. They would take care of them and make sure they were watched over."

Like institutions across the nation, The University of Scranton was called upon to navigate a new and uncertain reality with necessary decisions about safety, communication and the daily life of the University. Father McShane recalled maintaining a sense of order and purpose while also responding to the deep grief felt across campus.

"At moments of great crisis, if you are the president or pastor of a Jesuit school, you have to respond," he said. "I made decisions about the University, but I made those decisions

with other people, knowing that Scranton would distinguish itself in its response by drawing on its own culture of care, compassion and concern.”

Twenty-five years after that terrible day, we continue to — and always will — remember those who tragically perished, including five alumni and 32 friends of the University who were related to students and graduates. They are [memorialized on a plaque](#) inside the Madonna della Strada Chapel. The University also recently launched the “[Royals Remember 9/11](#)” initiative, in which Teresa Grettano, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of English and Theatre, has reintroduced her [first-year seminar course](#) focused on teaching students about the attacks and their aftermath. I am certain others among you are remembering this anniversary in your own ways.

In the Jesuit tradition of accompanying one another in times of sorrow and hope, we invite you to join us tomorrow at 12:05pm in Madonna della Strada Chapel for a Memorial Mass.

On this anniversary, let us pray for who all died on September 11, 2001; for their families and loved ones; for all first responders; for those who continue to suffer physical and emotional pain; and for a world that remains burdened by violence. May we continue to find God in one another, and let us work toward the peace and justice that our world so urgently needs.

As Father McShane reflected, the tragedy of September 11 was met with “great sadness and sorrow,” but also with “tremendous love.” May that same spirit continue to guide The University of Scranton.

Yours faithfully,

Joseph G. Marina, S.J.
President