

May 4th, 2017 marked the 1st Annual Firefighters Memorial Day – a time to remember and honour all firefighters who have lost their lives keeping our communities safe!



May 4th has traditionally been a firefighters day, it is the day of St Florian – Patron Saint of firefighters, and also International Firefighters Day, which is a time to celebrate everyone who serves in the emergency services. This was the date chosen by The Fire Brigades Union (FBU), in association with the Firefighters Memorial Trust charity, to commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of firefighters who have died in the line of duty in this country. It is a time to remember the fallen, their families, friends and colleagues.



Chief Fire Officer, Chris Lowther, with Service Chaplain Fiona Usher & firefighters at the memorial stone TWFRS HQ

We gathered together at Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service HQ, and the Service Chaplain led a short act of remembrance to honour the selfless professionals who, as a part of their daily work – often must run towards danger, as others are running away. The day was also marked in local fire stations, both in this region and across the country.

Fiona writes, “Whilst firefighters understand the risks associated with their job – they do expect to come home safely after each shift. Sadly, however, this is not always the case and so far researchers have discovered 2,486 firefighters in the UK, who have died whilst on duty, (this figure includes those killed in the Blitz), selflessly putting themselves in the line of danger to protect and save others.

Today we gathered to show that none of us forget the sacrifice these men and women have made in order to keep people safe. In the years to come, May 4th will be a day to honour them all and to remember what they gave for their communities. We pray that it will also bring comfort and strength to their families, loved ones and colleagues”.



Firefighters at Gosforth Fire Station mark the 1st Firefighters Memorial day Photos courtesy of TWFRS

Prayer of St Florian

Oh, Almighty God, whose great power and eternal wisdom embraces the universe, watch over all firefighters.

Protect them from harm in the performance of their duty to fight fire, save lives, and preserve property.

We pray, help them to keep our homes and all buildings safe day and night.

We recommend them to Your loving care because their duty is dangerous.

Grant them Your unending strength and courage in their daily assignments.

Dear God, protect these brave persons. Grant them Your Almighty protection and unite them safely with their families after duty has ended. Amen

Fiona Usher is Chaplain Team Leader, Northumbrian Industrial Mission and Principal Chaplain Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service.

Do you feel called to chaplaincy with the Fire Service?

NIM (Northumbrian Industrial Mission) is currently looking for a Principal Chaplain for Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service, to replace Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes who is moving to Liverpool shortly. This is a voluntary role, linking with Headquarters at Belmont Business Park, Durham.

We would also love to hear from people who feel called to offer chaplaincy to their local fire station (and/or ambulance station).

If you would like to find out more about these chaplaincy opportunities please get in touch with Fiona Usher, fiona-nim@btconnect.com or 07850937236.