

World Trade Center nun dies



(New York - WABC, November 2, 2006) - The nun who spent six months blessing human remains in the rubble at Ground Zero lost her battle for life Wednesday, and her attorney believes her death is directly related to the air she inhaled at the site.

Officials say Sister Cindy Mahoney volunteered to work at the former World Trade Center site, only to develop lung disease years later.

The 54-year-old nun told attorney David Worby that she wanted her body autopsied to prove that she and her fellow Sept. 11th workers were sickened by the poisonous air at the site.

Worby's office, who was acting as her guardian, confirmed her death today.

He will oversee the autopsy, which he considers to be "God's work."

Mahoney, a former emergency-medical technician, took an ambulance to Ground Zero on Sept. 11th after the first plane hit the World Trade Center's north tower. She served as a chaplain there and at Pier 94, and years later developed the kinds of severe illnesses that have plagued World Trade Center workers.

Officials say only after spending weeks at Ground Zero was she was given a respiratory mask, but Worby said she was not told how to use it. And because her job was to pray and talk to people, he says she kept taking it off.

Worby, an outspoken advocate for the health of Sept. 11th workers, filed the first lawsuit for a leukemia-stricken NYPD detective who served at Ground Zero and the Fresh Kills landfill, a case that mushroomed into a massive class action with 8,000 World Trade Center workers.

Worby's autopsy is expected to be conducted by a medical examiner office in South Carolina.

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