

Labor Parade Turns Focus to Struggles Unions Are Enduring

By DAVID SIMS | Posted: Monday, August 29, 2011 5:00 pm

This year's Labor Day Parade will have a somber theme reflecting the 10th anniversary of 9/11, with an ensemble of grand marshals from every branch of the city's unions to reflect unity in the wake of a tumultuous year for labor.

The parade will take place on Sept. 10, following a mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral where former Police Officer Daniel Rodriguez will sing. The march begins at 10 a.m. on 5th Ave. and 44th St.

'A Tough Year for Workers'

New York City AFL-CIO Central Labor Council President Vincent Alvarez said that the event would commemorate labor's struggles and achievements while paying respects to those who lost their lives on 9/11.

"What we see and what the parade has the opportunity of doing every year for us is representing unity. It's the single biggest thing," he said in a phone interview. "We expect it to be fully on display this year on Sept. 10. It's a day where in a unified way we can get out there and recognize the contributions of all workers, and obviously it's been a tough year for our workers."

'Mindful of Lives Lost'

At the same time, the parade will be "extraordinarily mindful of the lives that were lost," he said. "We're going to have our uniformed services towards the front of the parade."

Leading the parade will be a group of representatives instead of the usual grand marshal. "We thought it would be good to have honorary grand marshals representing each sector: the public sector, the private sector and the building trades," Mr. Alvarez said. "We will be out there marching together as one city, one labor movement, to make sure we're out there united for each other."

The representatives for each sector have not yet been announced.