

Havre de Grace parish reaches out to family of fallen firefighter

Nathan Flynn, the 34-year-old Howard County firefighter who died after falling through the floor of a burning home in Clarksville July 23, left behind a wife and several small children.

Flynn lived on the other side of the Baltimore metropolitan area, in Havre de Grace, where visitors to his family July 24 included Father Dale Picarella, pastor of St. Patrick Parish.

Flynn was the father of four-year-old twins, Connor and Teagan, who were baptized at St. Patrick in March 2014. The youngest of the Flynn children, Breccan, 3, was baptized by Father Picarella in June 2016.

Father Picarella and Jen Merkel, who heads the Respect Life Committee at the parish, were among those comforting Celeste Ferguson Flynn after the death of her husband.

"We brought gift cards and condolences," Father Picarella said. "I was there to offer our prayers. Celeste felt overwhelmed, and I told her, 'it will be that way for a while.' Anything we can do for the family, we will."

Father Picarella said that parish records for the Flynns include two other sons, Alex, 18, and Gavin, 15.

Services for Flynn will be held at Mountain Christian Church in Joppa, where a viewing will be held July 27, from noon to 8 p.m., and a funeral July 28 at 11 a.m.

"We're much too small," Father Picarella said of St. Patrick and the anticipated high number of those paying their respects. "The fire department is a pretty tight family."

Flynn, a 13-year veteran of the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services, was its first member to be killed in the line of duty. The seven-alarm blaze in Clarksville wasn't extinguished until nearly 10 hours after Flynn entered the

home.

In Havre de Grace, Flynn volunteered at the Susquehanna Hose Co.

The Howard County Professional Firefighters Union, Local 2000 of the International Association of Firefighters, started an online fundraiser for the Flynn family that has surpassed its goal of \$50,000.

“Our job now, is to make sure that, for his family, our brother is laid to rest with dignity,” said Rich Ruehl, president of Local 2000. “It’s also our job to take care of his family, forever. They’re ours now, and they always will be.”