

Zachery Tims: Judge Withholds Ruling on Cause of Death Revelation

Judgment withheld. That's the latest word out of a Manhattan Supreme Court charged with deciding whether or not to release the toxicology reports of New Destiny Christian Center pastor Zachery Tims.

Tims died in a W Hotel room in New York City on Aug. 12. Madeline Tims, the megachurch pastor's mother, filed suit on Oct. 7 to keep the cause of death a secret.

News reports indicate Tims, who died at the age of 42, had a plastic bag filled with white powder in his pocket, leading many to believe his death was associated with a drug overdose. By Tims' own testimony, he was instantly delivered from drug addiction when he was saved.

"My position is that unless they have a legal authority to disclose this information, an administrative agency is restrained from doing so," the *Orlando Sentinel* quoted Madeline Tims' attorney Ricardo E. Oquendo as saying.

City attorneys meanwhile argued that the manner and cause of death are not confidential. Ave Maria Brennan, senior counsel with the New York City Law Department, said the "city has a right to release cause and manner of death upon public inquiry."

Judge Cynthia S. Kern has 60 days to make a ruling. Oquendo told the *Sentinel* no one can read the judge's mind: "Bottom line: It's a 50-50 toss-up."