



Mattie J.T. Stepanek 17th Anniversary Memorial Mass



Hosted by Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild

St. Bartholomew Catholic Church
Tuesday, June 22, 2021 | 4:00 PM

 **MattieMatters.org**

Mattie Joseph Thaddeus Stepanek
July 17, 1990 – June 22, 2004

CELEBRANT Rev. Msgr. John Enzler, President & CEO,
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of
Washington

ENTRANCE HYMN *Here I Am, Lord*

WELCOME Kathy Dempsey, Guild President

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING Kevin Reilly
Wisdom 3:1-9

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 23
"The Lord is my shepherd"

SECOND READING Amanda Cabbage
1 Corinthians 12:3B-7,12-13

GOSPEL Rev. Msgr. John Enzler
Matthew 5:1-12

HOMILY Rev. Msgr. John Enzler

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL Mary Pat Donoghue, Executive Director,
USCCB Secretariat of Catholic Education

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PREPARATION HYMN *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace*

COMMUNION HYMN *Blest Are They*

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul. Since I cannot
at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

REFLECTION Vincent Spadoni, Guild Director

RECESSIONAL HYMN *Amazing Grace*

In Gratitude

Rev. Mark Knestout, Pastor
St. Bartholomew Catholic Church
Rev. Msgr. JohnENZler, Celebrant
Carole Wysocki, Musician
Jenn Lynn, Musician
John Martino, Cantor
Tom Martino, Technology Support

Founding Directors

Eileen Donovan
Mary & Ed Donovan
Maura Donovan
Peg and Rich Kolm
Ron Kuley
Chris Lewis
Terrence Sheehan, MD

Officers and Guild Directors

Kathy Dempsey, President
Peg Kolm, Vice President
Jenn Lynn, Historian
Mary Donovan
Caitlin Keeton
Cheryl Kerwin
Vincent Spadoni
Jeni Stepanek, PhD

Advisors & Honorary Supporters

Anthony Bosnick
Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter
Chris Cuomo, JD
Fr. James Isidore Dixon
Fr. Dominic Eshikena
Timothy Shriver, PhD
Jane Frances Crisman Stack

Rest in Peace

Mary Lou Smith

Guild Founder

Raymond Arroyo

A Special Note from Mattie's Mom:

Thank you each and all for being here today. I am praying with you from Southwest Georgia where I am continuing to share Mattie's message and legacy of hope and peace, a legacy he learned from practicing his Catholic faith. I am grateful to the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild for hosting this Mass, and for continuing to honor my son so he can be an ongoing reminder to others about living with faith and ever-cultivating our relationship with God.

As his mom, I'm proud to say Mattie embraced his Catholic faith deeply, and appreciated the opportunity to serve as a lector from the age of seven, and to teach CCD to second and then sixth graders beginning when he was eight years old. Yes - he was younger than his students, but his age and his disability did not matter as he spoke so convincingly about Jesus and the Sacraments, and about God's purpose as a gift for each of us. Mattie had a deep devotion to Jesus and to Mary, and also to many saints, including St. Jude Thaddeus, St. Francis, St. Joseph, St. Anthony, and St. André Bessette.

Mattie had a special relationship with God and always tried to say YES to God. He wanted every person on earth to find the will to say YES, and to know that each and every one of us has our own unique gifts, given to us by God. He believed that we each and we all matter, and that we each and we all have a unique purpose to celebrate. Mattie wanted us to find our purpose – our *Heartsong* – and share it with the world.

Mattie died in my arms just a few weeks before his 14th birthday. I will always be inspired to live fully and in the spirit of his last word: "Yes!" I believe he was saying YES to God, and also to a life well lived. I can endeavor to do no less than follow his example, and try my best to say YES to God every day. I pray daily that this is the truth for each of us, and for all of us. ~ Jeni Stepanek, PhD

Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild

On this day, 17 years ago, Mattie J.T. Stepanek said “Yes!” to God. It was the last word he spoke before he died, just three weeks before his 14th birthday.

Mattie was, and is, a mighty inspiration.

His life had many burdens - health and disability challenges, financial struggles, and more - but he learned how to trust in the Lord and was strengthened in his life from practicing his Catholic faith.

Mattie spent most of his life in rural Maryland, hearing about Jesus from his mother, Jeni, and at his parish, Most Holy Rosary in Upper Marlboro. At an early age, his pastor noticed how he would talk about God with clarity and conviction. Around age seven, he became a lector at Mass, reading with a maturity beyond his years. By the age of eight, he made his confirmation and began teaching CCD to second and then sixth graders.

His profound relationship and spiritual conversations with God inspired his poems, prayers, speeches and other writings. Mattie believed that his purpose was to be a “messenger” — shaping with words what he said God placed in his heart. He believed that these ideas, formed by his faith, were for the good of our world.

Among his contributions is the concept that we are a “mosaic of gifts” -- echoing St. Paul in First Corinthians -- and that we each have a *Heartsong*, our God-given purpose, our reason for being.

Mattie accomplished a great deal in his “almost 14 years” on earth. He published six bestselling books of poetry and one bestselling book on peacemaking. During his many media interviews, “the boy in the wheelchair” taught a secular audience about what matters most - championing life, hope, and peace, finding and sharing our *Heartsongs*, and asking for prayers.

The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild hopes you will deepen your own friendship with God, and follow Mattie in finding your *Heartsong* - your God-given purpose.

Because Mattie’s *Heartsongs* were given to him in his childhood and early teens, the Guild especially encourages children and teens to pray their way into a deeper friendship with God.

Join us in saying “Yes!” to God, as Mattie did.

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