

The crowds asked John the Baptist, “What should we do?”

Luke 3: 10-18

Extraordinary grace on an ordinary train

One Friday afternoon a little more than a year ago, a black 16-year-old girl and her 17-year-old Muslim friend, who was wearing a hijab, were riding on a commuter train in Portland, Oregon. Suddenly, a white man on the train began screaming anti-Muslim and racist insults at the two girls. One can imagine people staring at their phones or burying their heads in newspapers, desperately trying not to hear — but three brave passengers stepped forward to protect the girls.

The three were as different as could be. One was a 23-year-old recent Reed College graduate with a mane of long hair who worked in environmental consulting. Another was a 53-year-old Army veteran with the trimmest of haircuts and a record of service in Iraq and Afghanistan. The third was a 21-year-old poet and Portland State University student on his way to a job at a pizzeria. What united the three was decency.

When they intervened, the man harassing the girls pulled a knife and slashed the three men before fleeing. Rick Best, the veteran, died at the scene. Taliesin Namkai-Meche, the recent Reed graduate, was conscious as he waited for an ambulance. A good Samaritan took off her shirt to cover him; she recounted that some of his last words were: ‘I want everybody on the train to know, I love them.’ He died soon after arriving at the hospital.

Another passer-by staunchly defended the bleeding of the student-poet, Micah Fletcher, and called his mother to tell her to go to the hospital — but played down the injuries to avoid terrifying her. Fletcher underwent two hours of surgery to remove bone fragments from his throat. Fletcher survived.

Police arrested the man, a 35-year-old white supremacist and charged him with the murders.

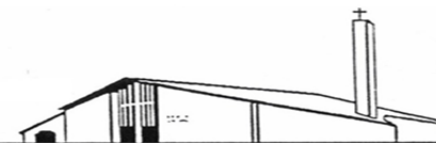
New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof writes: “In tragedy, we sometimes find inspiration. In that train car, we saw that courage and leadership are alive . . . among ordinary Americans converging from varied backgrounds on a commuter train, standing together against a threat to our shared humanity . . . “

What happened on that train is a sign of the “expectation” that “fills” every heart longing for the coming of God’s kingdom of justice and peace. As John preached at the Jordan, we can only welcome the Messiah into our lives when we move beyond ourselves to embrace the hurt and brokenness, the needs and hopes of others; we can only realize the “best” of humanity by taking on greed and arrogance and bigotry that diminish our humanity.

(www.connectionsmediaworks.com)

St. Stephen’s Parish

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PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY COORDINATOR: Theresa Dollimont

LITURGY COORDINATOR: Bernice Maddock

Knights of Columbus - Grand Knight Bob Miller **4th Degree Assembly** - Faithful Navigator Clifford Osmond

St. Anne’s Guild - President Millicent Penton

ST. STEPHEN’S PARISH SCHEDULE

<p>SUNDAY MASSES Saturday Evening - 6:00 P.M. Sunday Morning - 10:30 A.M.</p>	<p>ROSARY Saturdays from 1:30 am until 2:30 pm. RECONCILIATION Saturdays at 3:00 P.M.; anytime by request</p>
<p>MARIA REGINA PARISH SCHEDULE</p> <p>SUNDAY MASSES Saturday - 4:30 P.M. Sunday - 9:00 A.M.</p>	<p>REGULAR WEEKDAY MASSES Monday and Wednesday at 7:00 P.M. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 9:30 A.M. Thursday Adoration 10 A.M. - 12 NOON 1st Friday - Acadian Village - 2:00 P.M. 3rd Friday - Silverwood Manor - 2:30 P.M.</p>

MARRIAGES. Six months notice is required; a year’s notice is recommended.

BAPTISM PREPARATION. Last Monday of every month from Sept - May *Please call to register*

MASS FOR THE SICK. Every First Friday of the month

PRAYER MEETINGS:

St. Stephen’s Prayer Group — Wednesday at 7:45 P.M. in the Parish Meeting Room.
Word & Spirit Prayer Group — Tuesday at 8:00 P.M. in St. Anne’s Hall.

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY - 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY 8:30 am - 4:30 pm,
FRIDAY - 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM **CLOSED DAILY 12:00 - 1:00 PM**

RECEIVED WITH THANKS Dec 8 & 9

Sunday Collection	\$ 3916.60
St. Vincent de Paul (Collection)	\$ 1120.30
St. Vincent de Paul (Concert)	\$ 2664.00
Shepherd's Fund	\$ 65.00
Capital Repairs	\$ 50.00
Christmas flowers	\$ 50.00

HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS ANNOUNCEMENT:

Please join me in extending our sincere and heartfelt congratulations to His Excellency Bishop Hundt on his appointment as ARCHBISHOP OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S, NL, CANADA. The announcement was made by Pope Francis on December 12th, 2018. This is a great honor and accomplishment for the bishop. A time and date for his installation will be announced at a later date. Best wishes as he embarks on this new endeavor.

DUES: Gratefully received from: Mary & Adrian Gibbons and Marlene Fowlow. Thank you for your continued support.

SANCTUARY CANDLE: In memory of Tom & Tony Rotchford as requested by Sylvia Rotchford.

SCENT-FREE : Please be aware that some people have allergic reactions to perfumes and other scents. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated!

2019 SUNDAY MISSALS : Are now available at the back of the Church or at the office cost is \$5.00.

CHILDREN'S 2019 SUNDAY MISSALS:
Are now available at the office cost is \$10.00

CHRISTMAS CLEANING OF CHURCH: You can help on Tuesday, December 18 after mass. Bring along cloths and buckets. **LUNCH IS PROVIDED.** Many hands make light work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SCHEDULE

December 2018

Yr 3 (Group A) Monday, *December 17* at 6:00 pm
Yr 5 & 6 Thursday *December 20* at 6:00 pm

CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR Schedule:
2018-2019

Monday, December 17 -

Mass at 9:30 am Reconciliation
Service at 7 pm

Monday, December 24

Confessions at 3 pm
At Stephenville and Port au Port

Mass - Heatherton - 5:00 pm

Mass - St. Fintan's - 7:00 pm

Mass - Piccadilly - 7:00 pm

Mass - Port au Port - 8:30 pm

Mass - Stephenville - 8:00 pm

Mass - Stephenville - 10:00 pm

Tuesday, December 25

Mass - Port au Port - 9:00 am

Mass - Piccadilly - 10:30 am

Mass - Stephenville - 10:30 am

Wednesday, December 26 -

St. Stephen's Day

Mass - Stephenville - 10:00 am

Mass on December 27, 28, 2018 at 10 am

Monday, December 31, 2018 -

Mass - Port au Port - 4:30 pm

Mass - Stephenville - 6:00 pm

Tuesday, January 1, 2019 -

Mass - Port au Port - 9:00am

Mass - Piccadilly - 10:30 am

Mass - St. Stephen's Parish - 10:30 am

MANY THANKS: Our annual St. Vincent de Paul Concert was a wonderful success again this year. Thanks is extended to everyone who helped out in anyway. Special appreciation is extended to our concert coordinator, Aldonna O'Keefe, who did an amazing job, our MC for the evening, Colleen Ryan and to all the musicians without whom the concert would not be possible.

I also wish to thank everyone who came out to support this worthwhile cause. Many thanks to all. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the St. Vincent de Paul Society collection on December 9th. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Blessings, Father Chris.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

On Monday, December 17th, mass will take place in the morning at 9:30 am. There will be no evening mass that day, instead we will be celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation at 7 pm.

THE O ANTIPHONS:

Many cultures have a special Advent observance to help prepare spiritually for the birth of the Saviour at Christmas. In Catholic prayer tradition, the recitation of the O Antiphons begins on December 17 and concludes on December 23, with a different antiphon being recited each day. These antiphons are sung before and after the Magnificat, which is sung during Evening Prayer. They are called O Antiphons because each begins with the letter-word O. Each antiphon is a name or title of Christ, one of His attributes mentioned in Scripture - Wisdom, Lord, Root of Jesse, Key of David, Dayspring, King of Nations, God with Us.

As the great feast of Christmas draws near, let us rejoice in Christ's extravagant love. Let's avail ourselves of the peace He longs to give us. And let's look carefully at our lives to make sure we are indeed making of them a gift fitting for Him.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2018: To be included on 2018 Income Tax Receipt, contributions must be received by December 26th.

4YOUTH: Did you ever wonder about the pink candle on the Advent wreath? And did you notice that Father is wearing a pink chasuble today? Well, today is the third Sunday of Advent, known as Gaudete Sunday. The word "Gaudete" is the first word (in Latin) of the Entrance antiphon for today's Mass and it means "rejoice". The priest wears rose vestments today and we light the pink candle on our Advent wreath because we want to emphasize our joy that Christmas is near. This change in color from purple to pink is meant to encourage us to continue our spiritual preparation for Christmas. Keep praying as we wait for the birth of our Saviour. (Busted Halo's Advent calendar on the Internet is still a good choice!)

ASKED TO ANNOUNCE:

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CHRISTMAS

DINNER: Knights of Columbus in Stephenville in conjunction with the Newfoundland & Labrador Dental Association will prepare a Christmas Dinner with all the trimmings on Dec 25th. This will take place at the K of C building on West Street starting at 12:00pm. This will be a sit down dinner, but in special circumstances involving difficulties with mobility or advanced age, the Council will make arrangements to have a meal delivered to your home. If you are a senior couple, single Transportation to and from this dinner can be provided upon request. You must register on or before Thursday Dec. 21st 2018 by calling please call Bob Miller at 643-2632 or Irving Campbell at 643-9172 or 649-5602.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS: There will a meeting and installation of officers for the 4th degree on Thursday Dec 20 at 8 pm at the Santa Maria club. Please come out and say hello to old friends and brother Sir Knights for this is the last meeting of 2018.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS: Will be a New Years Ball on Monday Dec 31. This will be a Steak Dinner and Dance with all the trimmings. Tickets are \$30.00 single or \$60.00 double. Tickets at Debbie's Video or by calling Bob Miller at 643 2632.