

Jesus was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them . . .

ROMAN LECTIONARY: Mark 9: 2-10

[Jesus] rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."

COMMON LECTIONARY: Mark 8: 31-38

"Wonder"

"I know I am not an ordinary 10-year-old kid," says Auggie, the center of the extraordinary film Wonder. We first meet Auggie wearing an astronaut's helmet; when he takes it off, we see why he hides behind it: His young face is scarred, his earlobes are little flaps, his eyes tear-shaped slits, giving him a perpetual sad-puppy expression. He has endured 27 operations in his young life. But despite it all, Auggie is a great kid, funny and smart, good-hearted and kind, with a love for science, especially space travel.

Auggie has been home-schooled by his mom in their Brooklyn brownstone. But the time has come for Auggie to enter fifth grade at a school. This is a big step for Auggie: his first experience interacting with other kids and making a place for himself in the outside world. Mom and Dad are naturally anxious as to how Auggie will be treated by other students. And that becomes the focus of the film: Wonder is not just about a young boy coping with a congenital facial deformity - it's also about those who love him and struggle with the impact Auggie's issues have on them.

There's Auggie's teenage sister, Via, a wonderful girl beginning her freshman year. Via dotes on Auggie - she's been generous enough to allow her brother to be the center of their parent's attention at the expense of her own emotional needs.

Their mom, Isabel, is a brilliant and loving woman. She's given up a promising career as a children's book illustrator and left her master's thesis half-written in order to care for Auggie - but, somewhere along the way, Isabel lost her ability to care for her daughter Via the same way she cares for her son.

Nate is a loving dad who finds the good - and the funny - in every situation. He's the quiet rock that Auggie can always depend on - especially when Mom, however well-meaning, is in overdrive.

As expected, Auggie becomes the target of bullies, led by Julian, the mean rich kid. But Auggie strikes up a friendship with a boy named Jack Will, who feels like an outsider himself because he's a working-class scholarship student. The friendship is strained when Jack betrays Auggie in order to stay cool with Julian - but Jack soon realizes the hurt he has caused and the good friend he has lost. Auggie and Jack's reconciliation is one of the best moments in the film.

And we also find out what's really going on with Via's life-long best friend, Miranda. At the start of the new school year, Miranda inexplicably snubs Via. At first, it appears that Miranda has become a selfish teenager who has "outgrown" Via - but there's more going on than Via realizes. Miranda reveals her own struggles in an extraordinary act of selflessness.

What we would expect to be the most satisfying moment in Wonder turns out to be the saddest: The principal has suspended Julian for his bullying. The principal meets with Julian's parents, whose money and status give them an arrogant sense of entitlement. By the end of the meeting, we genuinely feel sorry for Julian.

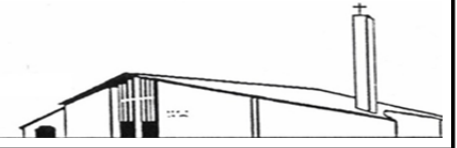
Wonder is a rarity: a family film about real families. The movie doesn't sugarcoat the pain experienced by Auggie and his family and his friends. But we also see each person discover the best of who they are, the love they are capable of giving - and receiving.

Though he doesn't realize it, Auggie is what Archbishop Desmond Tutu calls an "agent of transfiguration": the means for others to realize the "divinity" that exists within themselves that enables them to transform despair into hope, sadness into joy, anguish into healing, estrangement into community. Love that calls us beyond ourselves is transforming - such is the divinity that Peter, James and John "see" in Jesus on the mount of the transfiguration. The challenge of the disciple's call is to allow that love to "transfigure" our lives and our world in the grace of God's love in our midst, in the humble and generous example of his Christ.

(www.connectionsmediaworks.com)

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SECRETARY

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Knights of Columbus - Grand Knight Bob Miller **4th Degree Assembly** - Faithful Navigator Irving Campbell
St. Anne's Guild - President Laura Rouzes

ST. STEPHEN'S PARISH SCHEDULE

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday Evening - 6:00 P.M.
Sunday Morning - 10:30 A.M.

ROSARY

Saturdays from 1:30 pm until 2:30 pm.
RECONCILIATION
Saturdays at 3:00 P.M.; anytime by request

MARIA REGINA PARISH SCHEDULE

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday - 4:30 P.M.
Sunday - 9:00 A.M.

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.

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

BAPTISM PREPARATION. Next Session - **February 26, 2018 - Please call to register**

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT. The 3rd Sunday of the month beginning at 2:00 P.M. and ending with benediction at 4:00 P.M.

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 FEB. 10-11:

Sunday Collection	\$ 3,915.65
Initial Offerings	\$ 10.00
Capital Repairs	\$ 75.00
Catholic Missions	\$ 1,607.80

SANCTUARY CANDLE: In the Memory of The Retieffe Family as requested by Loretta & Tom Burrell.

PASTORAL DUES RECEIVED WITH

THANKS: From Antionette Aucion, Winnifred Brennan, Patrick & Betty Bruce, John Doyle, Helen Hull, Reginald & Lydia Hynes, Marie MacWhirter, Dan McCarthy, Gloria & Harris Rouzes & Isabella White.

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

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: During Lent, Stations of the Cross will take place **every Friday at 7 pm.**

2017 TAX RECEIPTS: Are available for pickup at the Parish Office during business hours.

4YOUTH: Development and Peace is the official international development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada. For over 50 years, this organization has supported programs in developing countries and has also advocated for peace and human rights. Each year, Development and Peace runs a fund-raising campaign entitled Share Lent. The theme of this year's campaign is *Together for Peace*. Once again this year, Development and Peace is pleased to offer the Lent Calendar App, entitled Lent Carême 2018, suitable for smartphones and tablets and available for free download from the App Store or Google Play. Guiding you daily through the Lenten season, the app invites you to take three simple steps: learn, pray, and act. This Lent Calendar is available on the Development and Peace website.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SCHEDULE

St. Stephen's - Parish Meeting Room

Yr 3 (Group A) Monday, **February 26** at 6:00 pm

Yr 8 Tuesday, **February 27** at 6:00 pm

Yr 1 (Group A) Monday, **March 5** at 6:00 pm

Yr 1 (Group B) Tuesday, **March 6** at 6:00 pm

Kindergarten, Thursday, **March 8** at 6:00 pm

Yr 2 (Group A) Monday, **March 12** at 6:00 pm

Yr 2 (Group B) Tuesday, **March 13** at 6:00 pm

Yr 4, Thursday, **March 15** at 6:00 pm

Yr 3 (Group A) Monday, **March 19** at 6:00 pm

Yrs 5 & 6, Thursday, **March 22** at 6:00 pm

Next Children's Mass: Easter Sunday, April 1st
(Please remember your streamers!)

THE WILD GOOSE IS LOOSE SERIES:

The theme of this session on February 28th is *The Spirit and the Desert*. Synopsis: On the day that Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit anointed him and immediately after the Holy Spirit led Jesus to the desert. The desert is a part of every Christian's life, but it does not have to be a place of despair or isolation. The Holy Spirit is present to life's deserts and when we experience his presence it changes our spiritual life. The desert is no longer a place to be feared, but can be a profound encounter with Jesus. Refreshments will be served. Newcomers are welcome. Sponsored by St. Stephen's Prayer group.

LITURGY COMMITTEE MEETING: There will be a Liturgy Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 27th at 1 pm.

NOTE OF THANKS: We would like to extend a special Thank You to the members of the Parish Council and Finance Committee who recently participated in the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Committee meeting with Bishop Hundt. Thank You for your faithful & continued support of St. Stephen's Parish.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER: Is an international movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year, and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service. World Day of Prayer, initiated and carried out by women in more than 170 countries and regions, is held internationally on the first Friday of March. In 2018 that will be March 2nd. The women of this year's host country, Surinam, have chosen the theme "All of God's Creation is Very Good" (Gen: 1-31). Please check with your parish for further details

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS: The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) posts notes regarding all the Books of the Bible. In its introduction to Paul's Letter to the Romans (our Second Reading), the USCCB says, "Of all the letters of Paul, that to the Christians at Rome has long held pride of place. It is the longest and most systematic unfolding of the apostle's thought, expounding the gospel of God's righteousness that saves all who believe; it reflects a universal outlook."

Paul's Letter to the Romans is in fact the longest of his letters in the New Testament (Romans is more than 7,000 words; that is much shorter, of course, than the shortest Gospel, Mark, which is still more than 11,000 words.) However, as stated by the Bishops, the Letter to the Romans explained in a more detailed way Paul's theology and spirituality than any other letter.

Regardless the length, today's reading contains a statement with which many of us are familiar, but which has great meaning: "If God is for us, who can be against us?" The significance of that is that if we are on the side of righteousness, which should be a major goal of our Lenten experience, there should be nothing to threaten us.

We understand that we will be judged. Paul's point is if we are judged "not guilty" by God, who can bring an additional charge with any merit? Or, if Jesus is our advocate, promoting our benefit, then who can condemn us? This is the time to place our trust in God, and in His love.

BUILDING CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS

TOLLERANCE IN LEBANNON: During this second week of Share Lent, we focus on the organization Adyan, a Development and Peace partner that contributes to peace in the Middle East by fostering cultural and religious tolerance. Adyan offers a wide range of programs, including conferences, training sessions, and workshops on peace, reconciliation, and coexistence. In this part of the world wounded by past and present wars, Adyan's work is essential and your support is indispensable to them. "At Adyan, we promote spiritual solidarity, which means integrating the other into my thoughts and prayers. I must integrate the suffering of others and understand it." – Nayla Tabbara, Director of the Institute of Citizenship and Diversity Management at Adyan.

OLD PALMS: A reminder to all Parishioners that there is a box in the back of the church to collect any old palms you may have at home.

ASKED TO ANNOUNCE:

ST. ANNE'S GUILD: There will be a meeting for members of the St. Anne's Guild on Sunday, February 25th at 2 pm.

CHASE THE ACE: Knights of Columbus are sponsoring their 4th Chase the Ace fundraiser. This event takes place on Sunday at the Santa Maria Building. Ticket sales start at 1:00 pm. and end at 3:45 pm with the draw taking place at 4:00 pm.

AL-ANON: Al-Anon is a program that offers information, support and fellowship to family and friends of problem drinkers. For information on local meetings call 643-6153 or 709-638-8311 (cell).

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP: Meetings take place at St. Anne's Hall the first Wednesday of each month, at 7:30 p.m. For more info. call Joan at 643-3425 or Joyce at 643-3021.