In June 1990, Kate’s friend Larry lay in a coma, dying of HIV/AIDS. When she came to visit, she didn’t know what to say or do, so she found herself doing what she did when faced with any difficult situation.

She sang.

For two and half hours she sang for her friend. Her music was a comfort both to Larry and to Kate herself. That was the beginning of the Threshold Choir: singers who gather to sing for the dying. The first Threshold Choir was formed by Kate and 14 friends in El Cerrito, California. Within the next year, Kate had established four other choirs. Today, there are over 200 Threshold Choirs in the United States and around the world.

Threshold Choirs are made up of three or four singers who go to hospices and hospitals to sing for the chronically ill and dying. Sometimes the singers find themselves singing a soul into eternity. Their acapella repertoire includes songs like Amazing Grace and Simple Gifts, but also includes short, uncomplicated pieces written especially for the choir, like “Hold this family in your heart” and “Rest easy, let every trouble drift away.”

A music therapist at a hospice in Nashville believes that the choir’s music is a transformative experience for the dying: “Music has the power to reach people on a deeper level than any type of verbalization or even sometimes touch can... Whether the patient has dementia and can’t remember his or her own name or their daughter’s name, they may remember the song their mother used to sing to them as a child. Taking memories from your past life and being able to experience them as you’re dying is a wonderful thing.”

Singing in such an emotional environment takes practice and the sensitivity to realize that this is a service, not a performance. While their soft harmonies can be very comforting to the dying, the Threshold Choir’s very presence can bring the immediacy of death to struggling families sitting nearby. As one veteran Threshold Singer says of their work, “We sing in a circle of love. In music we are joined.”

This is “holy ground,” another singer notes. “The music literally puts its arms around you.”

In moments of such transforming peace, in simple melodies expressing compassion and care, the Spirit of God in present. The Spirit of God is that love that enables us to do for others what we don’t believe we can do, that love that inspires the courage and generosity to endure what terrifies us, that love that reveals the strength and hope we possess to move stones to open tombs of despair and fear. May the Spirit of God lift our hearts and voices to “sing”
If you or someone you know are unable to get to Church to receive Holy Communion on Sundays, please call the parish. We can arrange to have it brought to your home.

PASTORAL DUES: Gratefully received from: Ann Sampson. Thank you for your continued support.

MEMORIAL OF MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH: This week we celebrate the Memorial of Mary, Mother of the Church, which become a new fixed celebration in the Roman Catholic calendar by a decree published by the Vatican on Saturday, March 3, 2018, This feast is to be celebrated on the Monday following Pentecost, which this year falls on June 10. The decree said Pope Francis wanted the devotion to "encourage the growth of the maternal sense of the Church in the pastors, religious and faithful, as well as a growth of genuine Marian piety."

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTIONS - June: National Leaders. That national leaders may firmly commit themselves to ending the arms trade, which victimizes so many innocent people.

THANK YOU: We want to thank Father Ray for his assistance at St. Stephen’s Parish while Father Chris was away on vacation.

CONGRATULATIONS: Fr. White is celebrating the anniversary of receiving Holy Orders on Pentecost. We thank him for his ministry, and ask that you pray for him. To any men considering a vocation to serve the Lord’s Church, come forward! Answer the Call of God. Pray for vocations to our Diocese.

ASKED TO ANNOUNCE: A Garden Workshop will be hosted by the Rotary Club of Stephenville on Saturday, June 22, 2019. It will be a great opportunity to learn more about garden safety, sun safety, composting, and container gardening. Space is limited, registration is required. Please call 643-4444.

Mass Intenions for the Week of June 10 - June 14

Monday June 10, 7:00 P.M.
- For the late Maria Delaney
- For the late Kevin Aylward
- For the intentions of Mary & Jack Budden

Tuesday June 11, 9:30 A.M.
- For the intentions of Debbie Hines
- For the intentions of Father Gale

Wednesday June 12, 7:00 P.M.
- For the late Madeline & Patrick March
- For the late Dorothy Doyle
- For the Holy souls & Purgatory

Thursday June 13, 9:30 A.M.
- For the late Jim Hogan & Family
- For the intentions of Michelle Russell

Friday June 14, 9:30 A.M.
- For the late Donald Alexander
- For the late Agnes Gallant
- For the intentions of Kenny O’Leary

Performance by the Maryland State Boychoir at Our Lady of Mercy Church on Tuesday, July 2nd at 7pm. Admission is $20 for adults and $10 for seniors/students. Tickets can be purchased at the door or in advance at Elaine’s Variety, Debbie’s Video and by etransfer (surladyofmercycc@gmail.com). All are welcome.

CHASE THE ACE: Knights of Columbus Chase the Ace will be each Sunday of the month, with ticket sales starting at 1:00 pm.

P.O. Box 70
Port au Port, NL A0N 1T0

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR MOWING OF CEMETERY

The parish is inviting tenders from persons interested in mowing the grass in the cemetery. It will also require cutting grass near headstones or monuments using a Whipper Snipper or similar instrument. It is suggested that the grass be mowed about three inches long but no shorter than two inches.

Bids are to be submitted to the parish office or mailed to the above address on or before June 11, 2019. Mowing will begin as soon as possible after June 11 and end September 30, 2019.

The contractor is to provide the equipment and fuel needed for the job and maintain this equipment.

The contractor is not required to remove any items on the graves in order to mow the grave as those items are supposed to be removed before the mowing contract begins according to a separate contract which ends June 4. The cleaning will begin after that.

Before the first mowing, a clean-up of the cemetery should be done to remove any debris or any other objects. If items are left on the graves before the mowing contract begins, they are to be removed and put in the garbage.

The full amount of the payment will be divided into equal amounts to be delivered according to an agreement with the contractor, about twice a month, if the work is satisfactory. However, if an area of the cemetery is not mowed at the end of the period when payment is due, the payment will be withheld until the grass has been mowed.

The contractor must consent to be included in the parish’s registration with Worker’s Compensation, if the parish deems it advisable in the interest of the parish.

If the contractor hires an employee to do the work instead of doing it directly, the contractor must first satisfy the parish administration that the contractor is registered with Worker’s Compensation and present the parish with a letter from them confirming that the contractor is in good standing – in arrears of payment.