Mama Peace Posts – Grit, Grace, Gratitude

…choosing to celebrate the wonderful'ness of life at "6-7"
and focus on worthy'ness over weary'ness...
#PeaceMatters #MamaPeacePost
#BlessingsAbundant #Huzzah! #Yes!

September 1-30, 2026

Day 39 of this 365-cycle (9/1/2026)



When you happen to guess
the right treat to bring for
the day's visit with Mema... huzzah!

Day 40 of this 365-cycle (9/2/2026)



The universe seemed to offer a storm of tech and logistic challenges today... but the community also offered an abundance of togetherness and love today!

I will resolve the tech issues - bit by bit across the coming days... and I will feel good about the lively and purposeful "boundaries" conversation we had during this evening's Mama Peace Chat session...

...and I will enjoy seeing and smelling the gift of fresh flowers from **Adrienne** and **Nick**...



...and MJ at **Giuseppi's Pizza Plus** will enjoy his new Mississauga Fire patches and pins (and a bit of Canadian whisky) thanks to JJ **James-Jackson** and **Robin Gray**!





Day 41 of this 365-cycle (9/3/2026)



As I ready my mind to accept that another summer has oh-so-quickly slipped past, and also ready my schedule for another fall that will oh-so-somehow unfold (too fast!) - a "throwback Thursday" photo popped up that seemed oh-so-fitting for today's post...

...time ticks by every second of every day - and we are left with shreds-and-threads of both nifty and not-so-nice realities... such remnants can drag us down with woulda-coulda-shoulda wonderings... or such essence can be food for thought that nourishes us as we wander into what-next with hope, with purpose, with choice and positivity...

...back in late summer 1981 (when this photo was taken), I could never have imagined how the next nearly-half-century would unfold - for our world, or for my personal journey... so many moments have happened since then - miserable, mundane, and mountaintop!...

...but here we are, and here I am... and somehow, I am oh-so-ready to say "here I go" into some next moment - with hope, with purpose, with choice and positivity... join me.

PHOTO: end of summer celebration with friends including **Barbara Cleary** (Barb Allen back in the day)... and yes, I did sport a sailor cap back in the 70s and into the early 80s☺..

Day 42 of this 365-cycle (9/4/2026)



Early Labor Day celebration at **Sterling Care** (Mema's nursing home) - music and food and fellowship...

...then I listened to (apparently unaware) crickets chirping as an unanticipated storm approached while waiting at the bus stop... blue skies went gray, thunder rolled my way, the insect song stopped as the giant pre-storm drops began warning of imminency... and huzzah! the bus rolled up just in time!







Day 43 of this 365-cycle (9/5/2026)



Labor Day Weekend...

For decades and decades, this meant millions and millions of folks tuning in for hours and hours of television, to watch the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon - and to be inspired enough to pick up their phones and call in a pledge to support the **Muscular Dystrophy Association**.

I remember watching this marathon show as a kid in the 1960s into 70s - which aired from Sunday evening until Monday evening. I remember doing "backyard carnivals" and then volunteering at the local phone banks and "fish bowl" collection sites, and truly wanting to "make a difference" - never having a clue that one day, in the 80s and 90s my four children, and my own self, would all be diagnosed with a neuromuscular disease and become recipients of MDA services and supports.

Mattie loved giving back as a local and then state ambassador for the MDA, and was thrilled when he was asked in 2002 to serve his first (of three!) terms as the organization's National Goodwill Ambassador. He took the opportunity seriously, and moved the role from "poster child" to "true advocate."

When Mattie passed away in 2004, Jerry Lewis grieved with millions and millions of folks tuned in to that year's broadcast - which was dedicated to Mattie.

When Jerry Lewis passed away in 2017, the Telethon was no longer a television tradition - as a result of technology and how millions of folks watch shows in a new era (aka - record for later viewing - which made "calling in a pledge" ineffective). Still, millions and millions mourned the passing of this humanitarian.

Jerry Lewis was a good man. He genuinely loved his charity work for the MDA, and Mattie was so very proud to be one of "Jerry's Kids."

This weekend, I will toast to MDA, to "the big JL" as Mattie called him, to Mattie, and to all who were or are or will be impacted by a neuromuscular disease, and to all who support the long road towards treatments and cures. I will toast to hope, and to peace, and to the gift of life - with gratitude... join me.



Day 44 of this 365-cycle (9/6/2026)



Last week, a rather unsettling experience interrupted a routine shopping trip. I have sincerely prayed for the man who was struggling that day. I do not know who he is, or his challenges, but I hope he arrives at some "okay'ness" - which is (as **Mattie** said) where peace can begin.

Yesterday, I shopped again, at the same place, ironically, for the same items (I do lots of fresh produce!). The entire trip took a matter of minutes as I gathered lettuce and tomatoes and onions and other what-not, and then checked out.

As I was rolling away, a man came running alongside - saying "ma'am! ma'am!" I paused, wondering what he needed. And he handed me a bouquet of flowers.

Why?

He simply said, thank you - for your patience last week, and for your kindness in responding to a difficult situation. We appreciate you being our customer here at **Trader Joe's** (**Rockville**).



Wow! And thank you!

On the way home, I ran into **Sylvia** and her grandson, Leo - who was delighted when I shared one of my new flowers with him.



Indeed - we encounter challenges on our life journeys. But indeed - we also encounter blessings on our life journeys. I choose to let the blessings weigh more than the challenges.



Day 45 of this 365-cycle (9/7/2026)



Labor Day is a holiday that was created to honor the historic struggles and important contributions of Americans who advocated for fair treatment, safe conditions, and basic rights for working folks.

It seems that historically, and presently, and perhaps eternally - there is always some disparity that is a struggle for some group of folks and that is worthy of advocacy, and of change for the better.



Change is difficult, but positive and purposeful change is essential for growth. It helps folks (and systems) progress and reach potential.

But even as we continue to move forthward - with change and improvements that help this group and that group and maybe one day all groups of folks - it matters that we also pause and "just connect" as local and global neighbors. In doing so, we get to know each other as people who matter. Getting to know what really matters about others, and to others, can surely help us grow and change together, with fewer and fewer disparities and unnecessary struggles.



This evening a whole bunch of ever-so-nifty folks in the **Upcounty Community Resources, Inc.** and **Main Street Connect** communities gathered to celebrate life - and toast to peace in honor of Labor Day, and in honor of progress for other positive changes in how folks are treated.



Thank you to all the amazing folks who joined me to simply celebrate life this evening... and a shout out to my **UCR** "Table Talk" group that helped with the "hosting and toasting" at this community gathering... y'all's totally rock!



























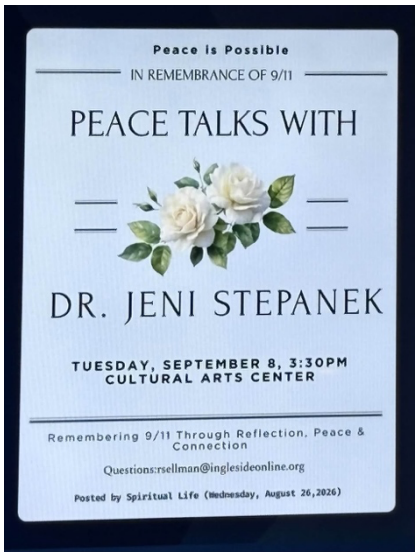








Day 46 of this 365-cycle (9/8/2026)



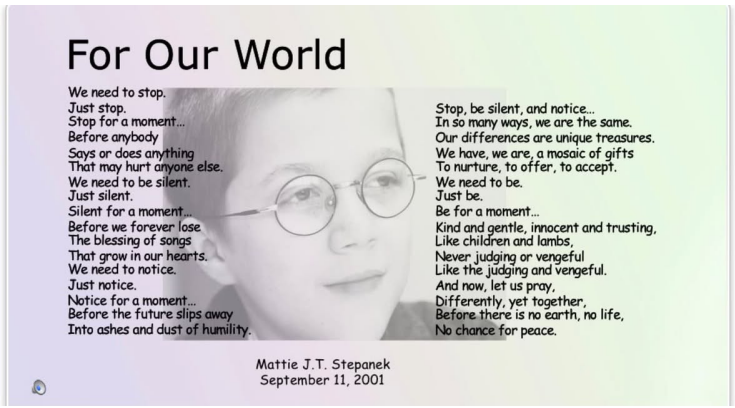
Thank you to **Ingleside at King Farm** - for renewing your community's Peace Certification, and for offering an opportunity for your community to begin a new series of conversations about how peace is possible - for individuals and communities, and even for our world - during difficult times. The 25 year anniversary of 9/11 is a perfect time to make such a commitment to peace chats, and the 25 year anniversary of Mattie's "For Our World" poem is a purposeful way to get started.

And thank you to **Holly Ange** - for driving me and being a support during the gathering.









Day 47 of this 365-cycle (9/9/2026)



Current status: packing to spend five days with some of the niftiest folks on the planet...

I've been celebrating life (and loss, and more life) with these folks at the annual **IAFF MDA Softball Championship** event for more than 30 years now.

This year will be a special year for many of us - especially those of us who said goodbye to some of our friends back on September 10, 2001 - as that tournament ended... and we didn't get the chance to say hello again after September 11, 2001....

We will honor them this week, and also the too many others who have also passed away due to 9/11 illnesses and trauma... but we will also toast to hope, and to peace, and to continuing to rebuild the mosaic of humanity.





For Our World
by Mattie J.T. Stepanek
September 11, 2001

We need to stop.
Just stop.
Stop for a moment...
Before anybody
Says or does anything
That may hurt anyone else.

We need to be silent.
Just silent.
Silent for a moment...
Before we forever lose
The blessing of songs
That grow in our hearts.

We need to notice.
Just notice.
Notice for a moment...
Before the future slips away
Into ashes and dust of humility.

Stop, be silent, and notice...
In so many ways, we are the same.
Our differences are unique treasures.
We have, we are, a mosaic of gifts
To nurture, to offer, to accept.

We need to be.
Just be.
Be for a moment...
Kind and gentle,
Innocent and trusting,
Like children and lambs,
Never judging or vengeful
Like the judging and vengeful.

And now, let us pray,
Differently, yet together,
Before there is no earth, no life,
No chance for peace.

In *Just Peace: A Message of Hope* (AMP 2006)

#NeverForget - the love, why folks matter, the hope, how we can make a difference, the chance to choose peace... **#PeaceIsPossible #ChoosePeace** - For Our World.

Day 48 of this 365-cycle (9/10/2026)

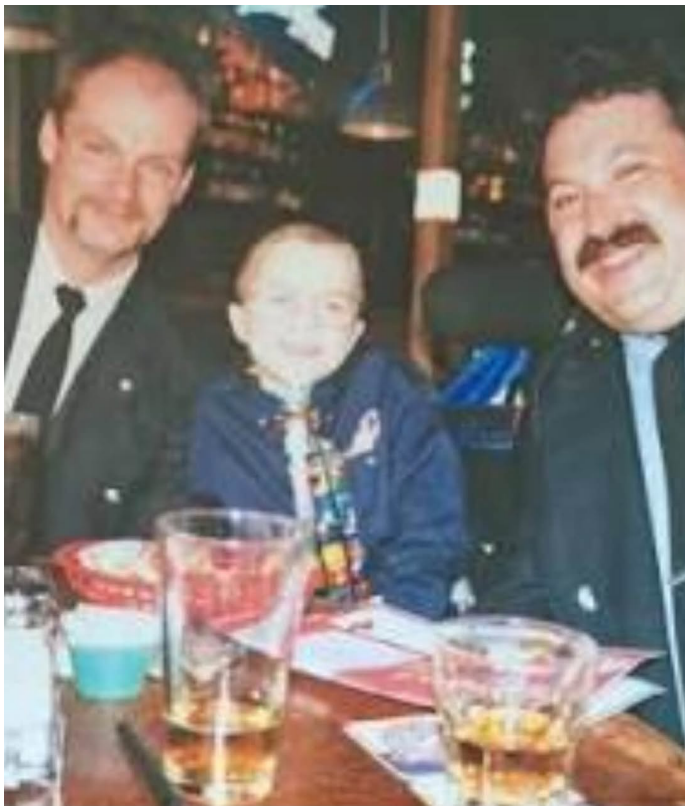


Tonight **EWTN The World Over** - retired firefighter **Kevin Reilly** and I share reflections of 9/11 and the ongoing impact of **Mattie**'s "For Our World" poem...

Thank you **Mattie Matters - Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild** for sharing Mattie's poem and message with local schools.

Watch the interview here…



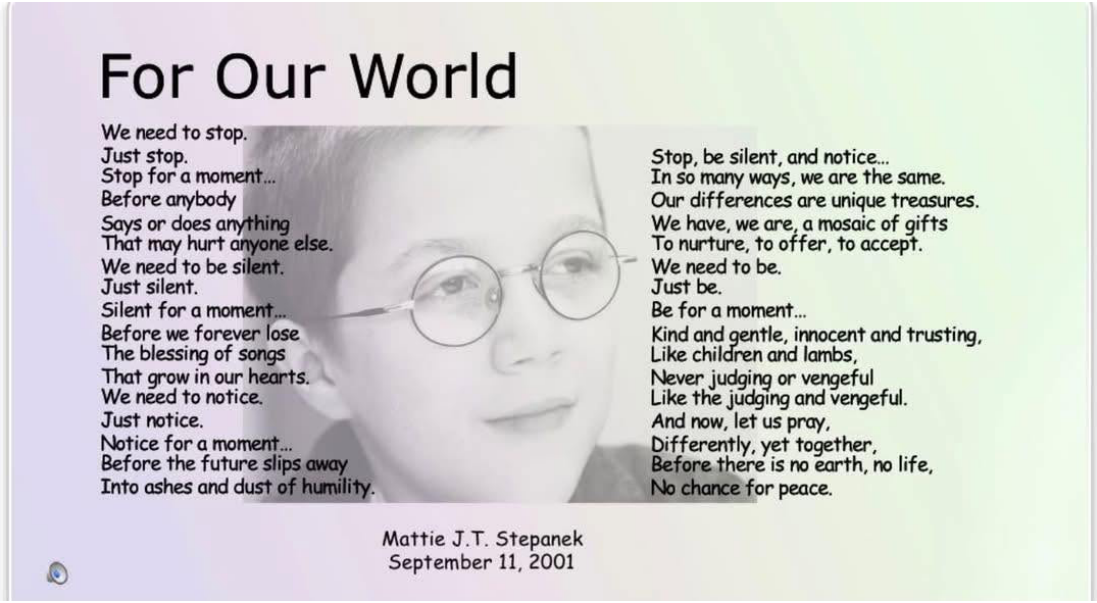


Day 49 of this 365-cycle (9/11/2026)



Penned by Mattie - just before midnight on 9/11 2001 - after watching friends perish. It is okay to be sad and angry. It is not okay to continue the cycles of violence and revenge. Choose to rebuild the mosaic of humanity - rather than resort to retaliation and revenge.

#PeaceIsPossible. **#ChoosePeace**.



Day 50 of this 365-cycle (9/12/2026)

Mattie's Boys and **Jeni**'s Boys - **Greenburgh** - **Yonkers** - **Mississauga**

(& other nifty folks) combined teams who choose to **#JustShowUp** with purpose. ❤️



Days 51 & 52 of this 365-cycle (9/13/2026 & 9/14/2026)



The 52nd Annual **IAFF MDA** International Softball Tournament (30+ years for me) had ball playing, fundraising, beer drinking, campground fireside chats and toasts, and a reputation for many shenanigans...

But honestly, tournament weekend is really a mega family reunion that reconnects us year after year... a gathering that helps us cope with challenges and losses, and that reminds us of the important matter of celebrating life, and that affirms in us that hope is real... and that love is powerful.



There is little (to no) cell reception at the ballfields and in the campgrounds, so I am way behind in posting photos and my daily "6-7" messages about choosing to witness life as being more worthy than it is weary. In the coming days, I will post a photo album with highlights of this ever-so-nifty five day event (and adventure).

Today though, as I return home after camping in my van since last week (really 🙂) - I take a real shower, and sleep in my own bed, and shift back to daily routines of work and play - and I also am already oh-so-very-much missing my firefighter family, again... such amazing and good folks...

Photos - some "**Mattie**'s Boys" and "**Jeni**'s Boys" team members and other folks who choose to **#JustShowUp** - with purpose.









Day 53 of this 365-cycle (9/15/2026)



In the 1970s, I was a teenager struggling to cope with a (quite) dysfunctional home situation, and I was searching to find meaning and purpose and perhaps even peace in my life. I was pretty private about my situation, and spent most of my time running and playing sports, or focused heavily on academics, or writing poetry and playing folk music on my guitar.

Two teachers though - my French teacher (**Judy**) in one school, and then my psychology and social studies teacher (Barb) in another school - somehow sensed or realized I needed someone to remind me that every next moment holds opportunity, and that I can shape that opportunity with hope and purpose.

They also read my poetry and letters, they played guitar and sang with me, and they taught me the value of volunteering and serving others - which doesn't change the unpleasant realities, but can shift the focus from within to with others. They helped me feel like I mattered, and had worthiness.

When I graduated high school, Barb gave me a little stuffed elephant with a message: "Never forget that you matter." I still have the elephant.

I kept up with both of these amazing ladies - off and on - across the passing decades. As I earned all my academic degrees, and as I became a mom, and as I began mentoring and serving others in professional work and pauses to play - I loved being able to thank them for choosing to give an introverted and insecure (and lonely) teen a connection that nurtured the resilience that has carried me through a rough life. And as I began burying my children, they were among the handful of folks who didn't give up on me, and who supported my spirit without trying to "fix" things. They simply gifted me with presence, and acceptance, and hope.

When Covid shut the world down, my connection with Barb faded away - as she was beginning to face memory challenges and was no longer comfortable with technology. Then in recent months - through a new "Mama Peace Chat" opportunity at a retirement community - we reconnected. We were both overjoyed to hug each other. Our bond goes beyond words.

Last month, for her birthday, I gave her a little stuffed elephant with a message: "Never forget that you matter."

I had the gift of seeing her today, and learned from staff that she treasures this gift of connection and keeps it close. She may not remember or be able to put into words the details or stories of our friendship across the years, but the essence of the bond is strong in her heart. And in mine.

We do not always know the details of the need, or the rippling impact, or the ongoing essence of any kindness we offer folks who happen along in our life journey. But such goodness and positive connections matter. Because all folks matter. Keep being kind. Keep nurturing belonging. Keep believing in goodness.

Day 54 of this 365-cycle (9/16/2026)



Last week, I shared for the first time during a tv interview - two stories about Mattie's relationship with and impact on his International Association of Fire Fighters friends - including Tommy (who perished on 9/11) and Jack (who crawled out from under the collapsed buildings hours after the collapse). The stories are not stuck in "loss" - but they move survivors to "hope."

The interview isn't very long, but it does go deep into faith and Mattie's legacy. Also being interviewed is retired firefighter Kevin Reilly - who knew Mattie as a little guy at the IAFF MDA Softball Championship events.

Please pause - and watch... link → https://youtu.be/OyZyMfcpyvY?si=2HR-2V8fTKS11VtQ

Day 55 of this 365-cycle (9/17/2026)





When reflecting on "only a week ago" - I guess it's more of a "toss back Thursday" than a throw back... but it's a worthy toss back...

The 52nd annual **IAFF MDA Softball Championship** Tournament took place Thursday Sept 10 through Sunday Sept 13 this year - with an abundance of both sunshine and rain, of ball playing and shenanigans, of burgers and Canadian bacon and 'gator gumbo, of remembrance and rejuvenation, of beer drinking and beer drinking (and a bit of midnight moonshine for many in the campground), and most of all - an abundance of camaraderie and connections raising funds for the **Muscular Dystrophy Association** and raising spirits and hope for all who choose to **#JustShowUp** for this amazing event.





Enjoy this hefty album of (shareable) highlights...

Nifty shoutout of gratitude to **Jimmy Danyko** for "powering" my "minivan camper" all weekend!

And raise a glass or grateful hands to those who were with us this past weekend in spirit, enjoying our work and play from some heavenly realm.

To enjoy the dozens (and dozens of nifty photos in the album for this day – click here...



September 18, 2026
So sudden. So soon. So huge a loss
for his amazing family and
for so many communities he touched...
rest in peace Chuck Short.
I pray that **Mattie** was on your welcome Home committee.

Chuck Short's reflections on Mattie J.T. Stepanek
20th Anniversary Gathering (June 2024)

Day 56 of this 365-cycle (9/18/2026)

Sorry folks - still in a bit of shock over the sudden passing of Chuck Short - who was a huge presence for so so so many folks.

Yes - good things happened today.

But also yes - sometimes, that "here today but not tomorrow" truth shakes up thoughts.

I don't have a photo to share today. Just prayer. And hope. And belief in goodness, and the truth of something lovely that awaits us in the next realm...

Day 57 of this 365-cycle (9/19/2026)



Perhaps when words and thoughts fail us, memories deep in the heart carry us through our ongoing moments...

Mema misses her beloved Henry / Papa so very much... he loved his boat back in the day, and was always ready to go fishing...

Mema was not one to enjoy the boat, or to find joy by fishing in a lake or an ocean... yet her painting reflects her longing, and her ongoing love...

Sterling Care of Rockville



Day 58 of this 365-cycle (9/20/2026)

"And now, let us pray - differently, yet together - before there is no earth, no life, no chance for peace." - Mattie Stepanek

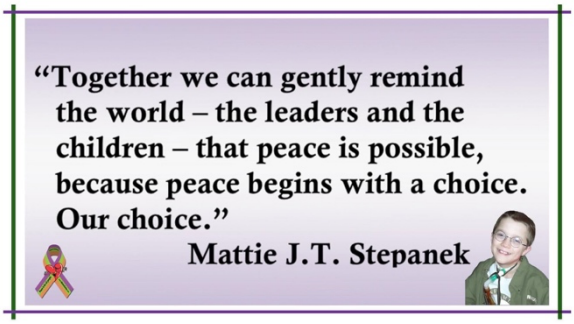
Blessings to my Jewish friends and neighbors around the block and around world. You matter.

September 21, 2026

So very proud to be a part of the team mentoring these amazing young people.
And thank you **Mattie Stepanek** - for the clear message of a "Just Peace"
that continues to shape new generations, and our world.



Day 59 of this 365-cycle (9/21/2026)



When we pause to grow in understanding of what peace is and what peace is not, and when we purposefully explore how to choose peace for ourselves and for our world - we are tending to the roots of peace. Ending war matters, but knowing how to make and keep peace - even amid inevitable conflict - is a critical need and truth.

International Day of Peace 2026.

Day 60 of this 365-cycle (9/22/2026)



My annual "Stevie birthday post" -

Another year... same thoughts... eternal love...

I share this message each year on this day... it offers a simple truth about a beautiful little being — my blue eyed, red haired, deep dimpled, Irish leprechaun "teeny little super guy"...

September 22 is both Elephant Appreciation Day and the birthday of my firstborn son (second child of my four), Stevie. He would be 39 this year. I love that this little spirit - who was here on earth only 6 months & 2 days and who never weighed more than 6 pounds & 2 ounces - shares his special day with such a grand being — the elephant.

I have cited elephant truths in many grief- and life-related presentations and #MamaPeaceChat sessions. And some of my favorite journal entries across the years have been late September ones, with me wearing relevant-elephant clothing and bringing these two amazing creations together in personal reflections.





Today - a toast of appreciation to elephants — who are sometimes more human in community-and-compassion than "we the people" are. And a toast of celebration and gratitude to Steven "Stevie Bear" Michael Stepanek — who matters, and who blessed me with his "being" (and his being "mine") — if only for a handful of months on earth, but an eternity in spirit.

#StevieMatters #ElephantsMatter #RememberingMatters #GriefMatters #HopeMatters #CelebrateLife #ThankYou #Amen

September 22, 2026





Remembering our friend Jay today on the anniversary of his passing, and offering prayers of peace for his wife Nancie... mortality may fade, but the eternity of love and worthy essence lasts...

Celebrating the life of Chuck Short
– all are welcome
St. Raphael's in
Rockville, MD - 9/22 11am



Day 61 of this 365-cycle (9/23/2026)



Last week - sweat-weather.
Today - donned a sweater.
I guess fall fell - like all of a sudden!
Welcome!

September 24, 2026 – From "Mattie Matters' (Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild)

Messengers of Life

By Chuck Short



Chuck Short

Wishing our readers a restful and restorative summer break. Before our sigh of relief after another active year, let's give thanks to the lifeblood of our local parishes, those individuals who support and enhance our Catholic life through service, example and enduring commitment to parish life. We are grateful to dedicated clergy for showing the way to holiness; parish staff and volunteers for leading in the path to service; to all who educate our children as

Take a moment to read and reflect upon the words about Mattie written by our dear friend, Chuck Short, who passed away last week at the age of 79.

#MattieMatters #MattieTestimonial #CatholicFaith #MattieStepanek

SHORT

Con't from page 1

future citizens and Catholic leaders; and to each of the OPT parish editors and others who contribute to make this uniquely informative parish publication possible.

A theme of this year's columns has been to honor the fullness of human life. In October, we joined the Bishops in reflecting on life from conception to natural death. In other reflections, our focus was seeing each person as dignified individuals and gifts from God deserving of our love and appreciation. In this final reflection, let's bring faces to our appreciation of human life, remembering that faith without action is dead.

Please allow me a related information break. Please support Centro Tepeyac's Annual Gala on June 1 at 6:00 p.m in St Jude's parish hall. We reflected on Tepeyac's blessed work as a Catholic pregnancy center located at the Catholic Charities offices in Wheaton. This is an opportunity for each of us to act for life. For information, go to https://centro-tepeyacs-gala.mailchimpsites.com/ or call (301)587-9516.

A couple of weeks ago I attended the Mass of Celebration of Life of a young child. I'm not going to reveal names to respect the family's privacy. I'm compelled to share the moving example of a family's commitment to life through a child I call Hope. A loving family chose to adopt Hope, an abandoned child from overseas. The family knew Hope had severe disabilities likely to take Hope's life at a very young age. Yet, with deepest love, the family, including extended members, adopted Hope and loved Hope joyfully with all their hearts for six years until his death. Hope and the family are messengers of God who inspire us with the Lord's clear message that the respect and love for human life comes with challenging obligations.



On June 22, I plan to attend the twentieth anniversary Memorial Mass for Mattie Stepanek at St. Rose of Lima church in Gaithersburg at 10:00 a.m. Just as Hope and family were God's messengers, so too are Mattie and his mother Jeni. Mattie died twenty years ago at thirteen of a rare neuromuscular disease, one that had taken the lives of his siblings in their infancy. Mattie's loving mother, Jeni, was advised to seek an abortion when she became pregnant with Mattie. With the support and counseling of Fr. John Enzler, she chose life for Mattie. God blessed her with a brilliant, loving and cheerful child who accepted his severe disability with remarkable faith and grew in holiness each day of his brief life. Jeni responded to her son with deepest life-long love.

Mattie's faith matured despite his constant health complications, the breakup of his family and periods of challenging financial burden for his mother and him. His faith evolved into a loving friendship with God leading to a clear understanding of his earthly purpose. Mattie realized his purpose through writing inspiring poetry about peace and love for which he became internationally recognized. While the publisher of his six best-selling books of poetry markets Mattie's work as inspiring literature, Matie wrote them as messages he received from God. The messages became the song of his heart and his purpose in life. He called them Heartsongs and in them he encouraged each of us to seek our own special relationship with God, our own Heartsong.

As the twentieth anniversary of Mattie's death approaches, his life will receive much publicity. He is one of our area's most famous writers. He was a media star appearing on radio and television programs including the Oprah Winfrey program. His best-selling book, *Heartsongs*, remained on her list of most influential books longer than any other. Former President Jimmy Carter, an admirer and friend of Mattie's, gave the eulogy at Mattie's funeral at St. Catherine Laboure church in Wheaton. However, these are not the accomplishments for which Mattie wished to be remembered. He was, above all, a loving servant messenger of God.

Remarkable in his spirituality, Mattie served as a lector and religious education teacher for second and sixth graders. During his many hospitalizations, Mattie showed unselfish concern for his family and the children and families alongside him in the ICU. He wrote prayers and poems for the medical staff and patients experiencing crises. With profound holiness, Mattie accepted his own suffering and responded joyfully to the call from his friendly Lord to love others and seek peace in the world. Mattie died of complications of his disability shortly before his fourteenth birthday. God gave him far more years of life than expected, with which Mattie purposely responded.

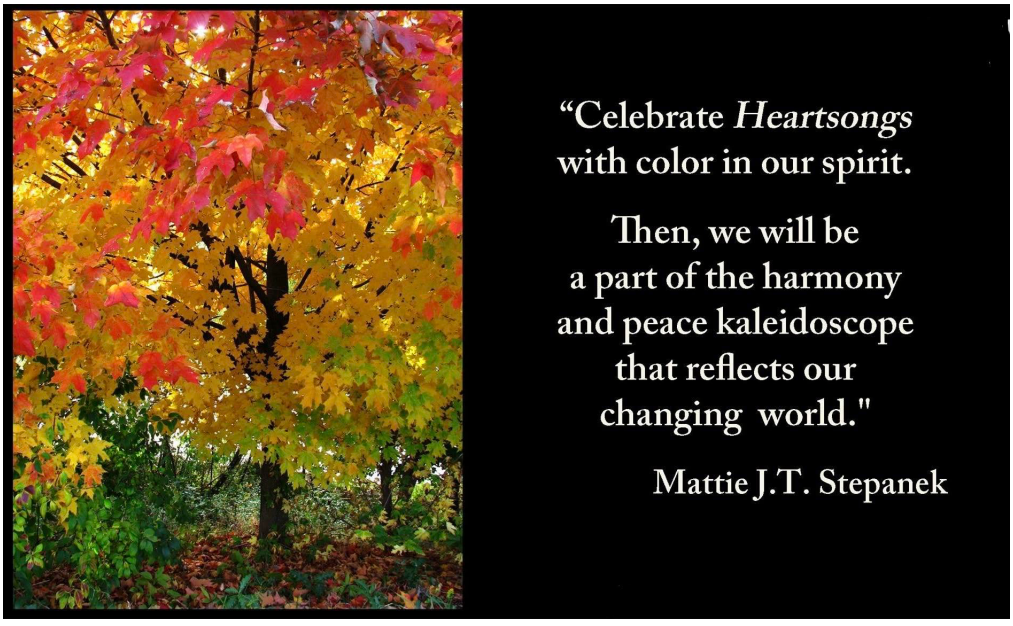
In my twenty years of writing this column, I have discovered and written of four people I believed to be "Street Saints." Now there are five, and our first Children's Street Saint. Mattie Stepanek's sacred message will bring listeners closer to God. Because of Mattie's achievements, it is easy to forget that he was a child. He is among the finest examples of saintly life for children everywhere. Among Catholic saints, there are few whom children can relate to in their own lives. Mattie's life is a sacred message to all children about the true meaning of the sanctity and dignity of human life.

Space in this column limits me to this brief introduction to the life of Matti Stepanek. I'm grateful to my friend, Peg Kolm for her help forming our reflection on Mattie. For more of the message, go to the website established by the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild at mattiematters.org. Read his poetry and especially read his mother, Jeni's book, *Messenger: The Legacy of Mattie JT. Stepanek*.

OPT

God Bless
Chuck Short
Cshort5@verizon.net

Day 62 of this 365-cycle (9/24/2026)



"Celebrate Heartsongs with color in our spirit.

Then, we will be a part of the harmony and peace kaleidoscope that reflects our changing world."

Mattie J.T. Stepanek



Day 63 of this 365-cycle (9/25/2026)

My daughter.

#DaughtersDay

PS - I know this was a late post.
It was not an easy post.
But it is a worthy post.

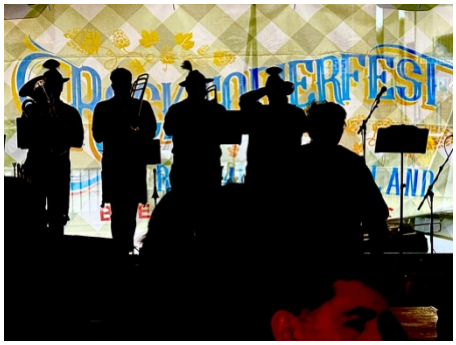
Day 64 of this 365-cycle (9/26/2026)



A bit of rain abbreviated my roll, but it didn't dampen the spirit of celebration and community during the City of Rockville's Rocktobierfest 2026!

















Day 65 of this 365-cycle (9/27/2026)



A rainy day...

so I piddled around the Mama Peace Pad - tending to a few tasks and just hanging out (a rare pleasure!)...

...so today, I am sharing a semi-recent'ish photo of **Faith** with her pup Snowball - visiting the **Mattie Stepanek Park** - where there will be a "Halloween Doggie Pawrade" on October 17 at 1 pm... if you have a pup, dress it up!



Day 66 of this 365-cycle (9/28/2026)



A bit chilly and misty before the sun finally appeared through gray clouds, but none of that lessened the joy and camaraderie of the 7th Annual **Main Street Connect** Golf Outing and **Happy Hour** tastes and toasts that followed. So much love and support for such a good organization and so many good folks.

Sen. Cheryl C. Kagan Councilmember Adam Van Grack Jillian Copeland Jennifer Marcano Tara Kasper Owens David Godoy Faith Mcluckie Russ **Ramsey**






























Bogle Bourbon
$100+ Donation




Main Street

Day 67 of this 365-cycle (9/29/2026)



Spent the morning learning about "the State of the City" and the many good things happening now - and also being planned purposefully for the future - here in the **City of Rockville**. I do wish there had been specific talk about cultivating peace - as who and how "we are" as neighbors, and not just what "we do" in different times and ways. Still, I am so happy that **Mattie** and I chose to call this space "home" a quarter century ago. And I hope to spend the next quarter century right here... and yep - that would put me at 92 years of age, nearly a decade beyond my "when I grow up, I want to be 83" endeavor! But I'm okay with that - and "okay'ness" is where peace can begin.







September 30, 2026 – from “Mattie Matters” Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild



The prognosis for Mattie’s medical and developmental future was grim, and many professionals disagreed with or questioned Jeni’s choice to offer Mattie life-prolonging treatment. Like his siblings, Mattie needed a tracheostomy tube, ventilator, oxygen, central lines, feeding tubes, monitors, medicines, routine blood transfusions, a wheelchair, and other life supporting medical interventions. Especially during his early and final years, he spent many months at a time living in hospital Pediatric Intensive Care Units. Mattie defied medical and developmental odds; not only did he live almost 14 years rather than the handful of hours anticipated early on, he was also developmentally and academically advanced, becoming a gifted writer, a respected teacher, and a spiritual and inspirational speaker.

mattiematters.org

Day 68 of this 365-cycle (9/30/2026)



What a lovely fall day - perfect temperature and weather, purposeful work and meetings, opportunities to connect with local leaders and nifty friends...

Thank you **Adam Van Grack** for the lunch chat (whoa and wow - four days of connecting in a row!). Thank you to all the folks who chose to **#JustShowUp** for today's Mama Peace Chat sessions. Thank you **Sylvia Sgambati Jones** for serving up the Aug/Sept **UCR** birthday cake. And thank you **Jenn Lynn** for the rooftop moonlight (and apple pie moonshine) toast and talk (and laughter).





#GoldenHandsShenanigans!





