

Saint Stephen's News

SAINT STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

3 March 2015

FROM THE RECTOR

U.S. media should face the facts about terror

The American mainstream media's reportage of the horrific Islamic terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen is illustrative of its long-standing antipathy to Christianity and its concomitant unwillingness to distinguish between ethnic conflicts and wars genuinely inspired by religion.

Ironically, until the War on Terror hit the radar screen, conflicts were routinely defined in religious terms. The strife in the former Yugoslavia is described as being between Orthodox Christians and Catholics against each other and Moslems. The slaughter in Northern Ireland is portrayed as Catholic against Protestant.

Take Yugoslavia: Communists ran the place for half a century. The leaders who provoked the fighting in Serbia and Croatia weren't really Christian.

They were, in most cases, simply opportunists who would profess any belief, from atheism to animism, that would further their careers. They were no more inclined to frequent churches than their counterparts in Bosnia are inclined to frequent mosques.

The conflicts in the former Yugoslavia were over much more earthly matters than the issue of salvation. They were a manifestation of territorial disputes, fuelled by ethnic hatreds that have festered for millennia. Indeed, the region's reputation for inter-ethnic conflict long pre-dates Julius Caesar, who prized troops recruited in the Balkans for their ferocity.

Similarly, in Northern Ireland, the people who were actively engaged in the blood-letting were not the sort one might expect to encounter in an adjoining pew on Sunday morning – either in a Roman Catholic basilica or Presbyterian chapel.

The killers the media referred to as 'Catholics' were, in fact, Marxists, who funded their murderous activities by preying upon decent law-abiding people – running protection rackets, robbing banks and the like. Paradoxically, most of their victims are Roman Catholic.

They were fighting not for a united Roman Catholic Ireland, but a 'United Socialist Ireland.' This explains why the IRA was outlawed in the Irish Republic as well as the 'Protestant' North and why its gunmen and bombers were considered excommunicate by Ireland's Roman Catholic hierarchy.

The killers referred to in the media as 'Protestant extremists' were similarly misnamed. They were no more religiously inclined than their IRA counterparts, but espoused no animating political philosophy. They were simply gangsters. The victims of their organised crime operations were mainly Protestants.

Actually, the terms 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' in the Northern Irish context ascribed ethnic origins rather than genuine religious affiliations. 'Protestants' are descendants of Scots immigrants who settled in Ireland during the 16th and early 17th centuries. 'Catholics' are descendants of the native Irish.

These two Celtic peoples have slaughtered each other intermittently since Roman times. The most recent wave of bloodshed has been, in many respects, simply a continuation of a territorial grudge match that has lasted for more than 1500 years.

Ironically, until the emergence of the War on Terror, the recent conflicts in the Middle East were ethnic rather than religious in nature.

The Jordanians, for example, are the Ammonites who fought the Israelites. The Palestinians are Philistines. The Iranians are regarded with general suspicion because they are the descendants of the Medes and Persians, who destroyed Babylon (modern Iraq) and subjugated the entire region, including Israel. Similarly Israel's dispute with its neighbours is not about religion, but about territory.

By contrast, the war being waged by ISIS and its confreres is, quite plainly, a religious war. It is being prosecuted solely by militant Muslim fundamentalists for the solitary purpose of imposing their religious beliefs on the rest of mankind. They are open neither to reason nor to negotiation. There are only two ways in which they can be appeased – either by our conversions to Islam or by our deaths.

Despite the manifest fact that this terror campaign is all about Islamists attempting to impose their faith on the rest of mankind, it is rarely if ever described in the media as a religious war. Rather its origins are ascribed to such things as poverty, a lack of jobs, 'American cultural imperialism' (whatever that might be), the evils of capitalism and the like.

This creates the impression that all we need do is inundate the Islamist proponents of terrorism with the trappings of the American dream – computers, cell phones, TVs, fridges, automobiles, etc. – and withdraw to fortress America and our troubles will be over.

This is sheer nonsense. The terrorists have all that stuff already. They use it against us. And they already have jobs – slaughtering those who do not subscribe to their faith, including Muslims who do not share their bloodthirsty beliefs. What they want is for the rest of mankind to convert to fundamentalist Islam or die. Nothing else will satisfy them.

Certainly, analysing and accepting the true origins of conflicts in no way diminishes the suffering of the victims. But it is essential to understand the origins of the violence in order to put an end to it.

In earlier centuries, the media's curious unwillingness to face facts probably wouldn't have mattered too much. Folks like Lincoln, Lord Palmerston, and Bismarck did not take much notice of media opinion.

Today, however, the media plays a major role in defining the problems our political leaders must solve. The pundits, thus, need to set aside their prejudices and call a spade a spade. **GPH**

The Parish Prayer List

Our Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List as well as the guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the prayer list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the parish office at 410 560 6776.

FOR RECOVERY: Hilarie, Vivian, Jack, Donald, Evelyn, Cal, Finton, Fran, Edie, Oona, Cary, Janna, Martina, Leela, Isabelle, Julie, Ray, Mary, Phyllis, Liz, Joe, Indra, Marjorie, Steve, Wendy, John, Joy, Walt, Nina, James, Nancy, Janet, Connie, Hobie, Nathan, Matthew, Adele, Starr, Kathleen, Ned, Mark, Don, Linda

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Stephen, Lydia, Ann, Melba, Donna, Josh, Kim, Shane, Susan, Paula, Hannah, Scott, Charles, Vinnie, Doug, Rusty, Ian, Carolyn

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt Benjamin Schramm, USMC; Lt Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Explore the foundations of the Christian Faith

The first five books of the Old Testament are known to the Jewish people as The Torah. The Church refers to them as the 'Books of Moses'. Surprisingly, perhaps, few Christians today study them in the depth they deserve. This is a pity, for they are the very foundation of our Faith.

It is hoped that this year's Lenten Study, 'Exploring The Torah', will go some way towards rectifying this. So why not join us to learn what the books have to tell us about who we are, where we come from, and how we should live.

We shall investigate claims by fashionable theologians that The Torah should be largely ignored because it promulgates racism, slavery, revenge killing, capital punishment, and the subjugation and exploitation of women. And we shall explore what archaeology has to tell us about the books and the events they record.

The studies – by Fr Guy Hawtin and Fr Mike Kerouac – will offer plenty of time for discussion. Each study will be self-contained, so if you miss one or two – or even more, for that matter – you'll not be left dangling.

Why not join us at 6.30pm after Evening Prayer on the five Wednesday evenings in Lent (25 February and 4, 11, 18 & 25 March) for body and soul. We're offering beverages, hearty soup and the best bread in Baltimore, not to mention plenty of food for thought. If you think you need more, bring a sandwich.

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

The Ladies will lunch on 18 March

This month the Ladies Who Lunch will meet at Barrett's Grill on Wednesday, 18 March at noon. Barrett's is located on the second level of the Hunt Valley Town Center. Why not join us for a convivial get-together over a delicious meal? Good food and good fellowship – what more could you want? Please ring Joyce Perlberg on **410 252 2680** to make your reservation; she will need a final count by the 16th.

FROM THE CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School: Savannah Safari

Saint Stephen's will be offering Vacation Bible School once again this summer for children ages 4–10. Vacation Bible School will take place from Monday, 22 June to Friday, 27 June from 9am–12noon. This year's theme is 'Savannah Safari – Where Kids Discover How Love H.E.L.P.S. Others'. It is themed around life in an African village and is based on the Parable of the Good Samaritan. There will be a modest \$20 fee to cover snacks, crafts and supplies. To process your child's registration, please telephone the church office on **410 560 6776** and speak to Happy Riley.

SAINT STEPHEN'S CHOIR ACADEMY

A fun and rewarding experience promoting artistic and intellectual development in a highly select team of boys

BENEFITS

- Gain a formal classical music education from an accomplished Peabody Conservatory graduate
- Develop discipline, social skills, and self-confidence
- Earn credentials which score high on high school & university applications, leading to scholarships
- Regularly perform alongside professional musicians

TUITION

- Full-scholarships and half-scholarships are available
- Choristers are paid stipends to foster a professional commitment to rehearsals and performances

Talented boys of all faiths are encouraged to apply.
To schedule an interview, please contact the Admissions Director, Mrs Cheryl Nickol: admissions@choiracademy.org • 410-329-6399

ChoirAcademy.org

Saint Stephen's Anglican Church

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Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Ven. Canon Guy P. Hawtin, *Rector*
The Ven. Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*

The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki, *Associate Rectors*
The Rev. Mr M. Wiley Hawks, *Deacon* · Adric, *Magister Chori*
Mrs Happy Riley, *Director of Pastoral Care & Wedding Coordinator*

SUNDAY SERVICES

8 AM: Said Eucharist

9.15 AM: Choral Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

11 AM: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)

6 PM: Choral Evensong (as announced: evensong.ststeve.com)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6 PM: Evening Prayer

Friday 12 NOON: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5 PM: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Mondays, 6.30 pm: Bridge Club

Tuesdays, 7 am: Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)

Thursdays, 10 am: Knitting Circle

Fridays, 10.30 am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Wednesday, 18 March, 12 noon:

The Ladies Who Lunch meet at Barrett's Grill,
Hunt Valley Town Center, 2nd level

Thursday, 19 March, 2 pm:

Afternoon Tea

Wednesday, 25 March, 6.30 pm:

Lenten Study I

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Saint Stephen's Anglican Church
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