

St Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

Volume XXVIII, Number 7

A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

February 28th, 2017

OBITUARY

Michael Novak: Advocate of democratic capitalism

Christians of all persuasions owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the philosopher and theologian Michael Novak, who died this month aged 83. Though born a Roman Catholic, Novak's scholarship and prolific literary output has provided a vigorous defense of the faith that serves all branches of Christianity.

Novak – born in the gritty steel making and coal mining community of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, started out his intellectual life as a socialist. Gradually, he came to realize that, while the theoretic economic appeal of socialism was attractive, the system didn't work in practice.

Far from serving the workers at the bottom of the heap, the only people who seemed truly to benefit from the system were the industrial and political elite.

Novak's conversion on the road to Damascus came with his realization that free market capitalism, though underpinned by little in the way of noble principle, appeared to serve the interests of all classes of society.

The revelation inspired him to write his seminal work *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, a book that according to The Wall Street Journal, "changed America's public debate" when it was published in 1982.

In it, Novak declared: "Democratic capitalism is neither the Kingdom of God nor without sin. Yet all other systems of political economy are worse. Such hope as we have for alleviating poverty and for removing oppressive tyranny – perhaps our last, best hope – lies in this much despised system."

As a consequence of his defense of free markets and democratic capitalism, Novak's relationship with the Vatican and "progressive" Christian denominations and jurisdictions was often far from smooth.

Too many religious leaders, he believed, lacked an understanding of how economics worked. Many appeared to imagine it was a zero sum game and, as a result of this misapprehension, advocated the redistribution of wealth with no regard for the way it was created.

Business leaders, on the other hand, should be encouraged to think of their careers as a "calling" – much as clergy, doctors, teachers and the like. And the rest of us should recognize that capitalists are "the main hope" for billions around the world enmeshed in poverty.

Novak's interests were, however, by no means confined to economics and the advocacy of democratic capitalism. He was also a shrewd observer of the general religious scene.

Some years ago, for example, in an article in the journal *First Things*, he argued that, on a worldwide basis, atheism is on the defensive.

Detecting "an odd defensiveness" in a spate of books attacking God and all his works by a slew of well-known unbelievers – including Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, Daniel C. Dennett and Sam Harris – he pointed out that very few people outside Western Europe are listening to them.

Everywhere else, according to Novak, religion was surging. To back his assertion, he cited a Princeton Survey Poll for *Newsweek* that showed 97 per cent of Americans said they believed in God, while only three percent claimed to be atheists.

Novak theorized that the atheists' defensiveness – "the odd

feeling they give of making one last stand" – probably arose from two major events that have undermined the fundamental premises upon which atheism is based.

The first cataclysmic event was the death of socialism as an ideal and a political program. The second was the collapse of secular humanism as an ideal.

To Novak's painstaking analysis of why atheism, as a philosophy of life, has failed, one might add the recent scientific discoveries that tend to call into question the assumptions that underpinned theories that our vastly complicated universe was brought into being by some super colossal cosmic accident

What's more, archaeological discoveries are continually undermining atheist claims that the Gospels are simply an accumulation of myths and legends, unprovable by modern "scientific" investigation.

Recent discoveries demonstrated St. Luke knew First Century Jerusalem far better than the critics who claimed that he made up his descriptions of the Holy City out of whole cloth.

Characters who supposedly never existed come crawling out of the grave to greet us. Skeptics claimed Pilate was an imaginary

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, ring the parish office on 410 560 6776.

FOR RECOVERY: Timothy, Peter, Hilarie, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Bill, Alan, Terry, Helen, Jim, Linda, John, Judy, Neal, Aida, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Eunice, Tom, Robert✕, David, Jan, Susie, Sophia, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Courtney, Marie, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John, David, Adrian & Michell

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Stephen, Melba, Sam, Vinnie, Doug, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Cindy, Jacob, Casey & Beth

IN MEMORIAM:

THOSE WHO MOURN:

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; Lt Cdr Emma Hawkins, RN; MSGT Michael Holter, USAF; Cpt Fiodor Strikovski, US Army

figure until archaeologists started digging up inscriptions bearing his name.

Similarly until they dug up his grave a couple of years ago, critics questioned the existence of Caiaphas, the Chief Priest who engineered Jesus's crucifixion when he said: "It is expedient that one man die that the nation not perish."

Doubtless Novak would find it richly ironical that Caiaphas who in life condemned Jesus as a deceiver, in death bears witness to his truth. GPH✕

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Eat your fill at our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Make sure you don't miss Baltimore's super inflation buster – St Stephen's grand 2017 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. It will take place in the Parish Hall on February 28th, from 5.30 PM to 8.00 PM.

Prices have remained unchanged for 28 years. For adults,

admission is a mere \$5 each. For children under 12, the price is \$2.50 each for the first two in the family. The other children under 12 eat free.

It is a truly unique occasion -- and one of the top gastronomic events of the year: All members and friends of St Stephen's are invited to partake of traditional Shrove Tuesday fare: Home made American and English pancakes, smothered in butter and syrup or lemon juice (for those who prefer it), accompanied by generous helpings of succulent sausage and apple sauce. A wide selection of soft drinks will be available. Come one! Come all! This is dining at its best!

LENTEN SERIES

Study the roots of the faith

The Books of Genesis and Exodus go to the very core of our faith. Over the past 100 years, however, their value both historically and doctrinally has been increasingly questioned. Indeed, many clergy who consider themselves cutting edge theologians shun them as the literary equivalent of mad aunts in the attic. This year's Lenten Study will examine the first two "Books of Moses" to assess them as historical documents and to consider the contribution they have made to the development of the Christian faith.

Join us for a series of five Wednesday evening studies on this fascinating subject. They will begin at 6.30 pm from March 8th and continue at the same time until Wednesday in Passion Week, April 5th. Each study will be self-contained so you can miss a couple and not feel out of it. So join us to hear what Adam and Eve have to teach about human nature. Find out about Ur,

Abraham's hometown and why he told Pharaoh that his wife, Sarah, was his sister. Learn how Joseph's economic policies condemned the children of Israel to slavery. Discover why the Israelites worshipped the Golden Calf.

In addition to food for thought, we shall as ever be offering a hearty soup, the best bread in Baltimore and beverages of your choice. Feel free to bring a sandwich.

FROM ANNE HAWKINS

Inviting you to a Tea Party

Tea parties are wonderful affairs for meeting new friends and renewing old acquaintances. It has been a very long time since we have had tea party. Things have been so busy of late we just haven't had the time to prepare for one.. However we will be holding a Tea Party on at 2.00 PM on Thursday, March 9th. Reservations: Happy Riley in the Parish Office. Tel: (410) 560-6776.

PARISH YOUTH

Youth Play Group meets

Mark your calendars! The first Parish Youth Play Group will be on Saturday, March 4th, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. Weather permitting, there will be lots of outdoor activities, such as free play with soccer balls, basketball, and four square. We'll have indoor activities planned if there's rain or snow. There will also be a table set up outside (weather permitting) for fellowship time for the parents. We're currently lplanning to have a play group every other Saturday,. Questions: email Carolyn Kerouac at carolyn.kerouac@gmail.com, or Rachael Odengo at raqueloke@yahoo.com.

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Rev. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*
The Venerable Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*
The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki and
The Rev. Robert Ludwig, *Associate Rectors*
The Rev. M Wiley Hawks, *Pastoral Care Chaplain*
Mrs Happy Riley, *Director of Pastoral Care & Wedding Coordinator*

SUNDAY SERVICES

8am: Said Eucharist

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

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

6pm: Choral Evensong (as announced) –

evensong.ststeve.com

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6pm: Evening Prayer

Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5pm: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Monday, 6.30pm: Bridge Club

Tuesday, 7am: Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)

Thursday, 10am: Knitting Circle

Friday, 10.30am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday February 28th, 5.30-7.000 pm

Ash Wednesday Services,

March 1st: Holy Communion, Imposition of Ashes

Parish Church: 10 AM & 7 PM

Union Memorial Hospital: 12 Noon

Parish Tea Party

Thursday, March 9th, 2.00 pm

RSVP: Happy Riley (410) 560-6776

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