



November 2018

During the month that the Church honors All Saints and All Souls, the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild invites you to pray to Mattie Stepanek, the late teen poet and peacemaker.

Most know Mattie from his bestselling books of spirit-filled poetry, and his many appearances on television. Yet what nourished and inspired him was his devotion to God, and the daily practice of his Catholic faith. Mattie's rare form of neuromuscular disease presented many health challenges; he died of complications from his disability just before his 14th birthday.

At an early age, living in rural Maryland, Mattie began receiving what he called "messages" from God, messages he shaped into his poetry and written work. These became the song of his heart – his *Heartsong* – and he encouraged others to find their *Heartsong*, their unique purpose given to them by God.

As a Catholic, Mattie attended Mass often and was a lector and religious education teacher for 2nd and 6th graders. Throughout his life, even while critically ill, Mattie showed unselfish concern for his family, friends, and especially the infants and children alongside him in the ICU. When given money to buy himself Christmas gifts, he used it instead to purchase movies and games for them, to lift their loneliness while in the hospital. He also wrote prayers and poetry for patients, families and medical staff, especially in times of crisis and loss.

Mattie endured lifelong disability, constant health challenges and ongoing financial difficulties, choosing not to be defeated by them but instead turning his face to God, responding to the purpose God gave him, and living out his life as a faithful Catholic. The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild invites you to pray *Mattie's Prayer*, asking the Holy Spirit to guide us in our God-given purpose. Because Mattie's *Heartsongs* were given to him in his childhood and early teens, the Guild especially encourages children and teens to pray to Mattie.

Please stay in touch as we continue to share Mattie's work, and our belief that he is a saint for our times.

The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild
www.Mattie4Sainthood.org



Mattie's Prayer

God Our Father, I thank You for giving us each a life with a good and holy purpose, and for giving me a song in my heart that reminds me of my purpose every day.

I thank You for the gift of my neighbor, Mattie Stepanek, who lived his *Heartsong*, the grace-filled purpose You placed within him.

Mattie's *Heartsong* was to spread a message of hope and peace, and I, too, ask for that – for myself, my family, my friends, and for our world.

Help me remember to listen to and share the special *Heartsong* You have given me, today and every day of my life.

Help me to be strengthened in faith as I face daily challenges, just as Mattie was, choosing to use his gifts while living at peace with his disability and illness.

If it be Your Will, Father, allow Mattie's cause for sainthood to move forward, so that people everywhere will be inspired by Mattie's courage and kindness. Help me to trust in You as Mattie did, as I make this petition:

(mention your request).

We give glory to the Holy Trinity as we pray: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.



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