



# FCPO - CANADA

## The Peacemaker

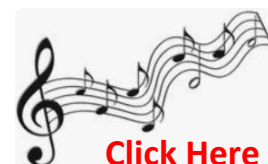


February, 2021

From the President's Desk



**2020 - Here's to the memories →**



*"Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation." Habakkuk 3:17-18*

*"Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." Romans 5:3-5*

There's lots we do not understand, but we do know that God is in control. Let us look forward to a better year.

Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, our [Project Sword](#) continues to go very well. I want to thank everyone for their prayers and generous financial support for this project. We are almost halfway through our distribution goal. Please continue to pray for this important project. We look forward to further distributions this year - officers need to have this life-changing book now more than ever.

My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

(Ps 73:26)

Ma chair et mon coeur peuvent se consumer: Dieu sera toujours le rocher de mon coeur et mon partage.



*"So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor." 1 Corinthians 3: 7*

God bless,

Ron

**Fellowship of Christian Peace Officers - Canada**

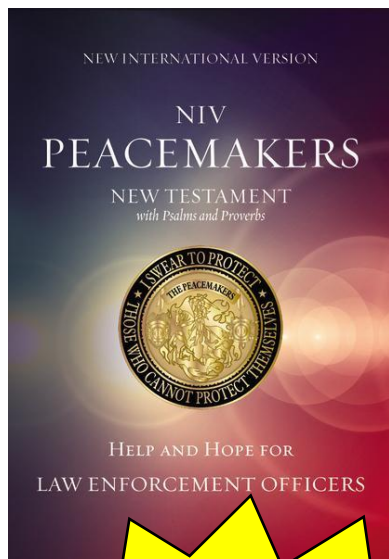
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# PROJECT SWORD



The Bible tells us to put on the whole armour of God, which includes the “sword of the Spirit” (which is the word of God). Our vision is to proactively offer a free “sword” in the form of this pocket-sized PEACEMAKERS book to every peace officer in Canada.

*Critical incidents, car chases, domestic violence, drug gangs, highway fatalities-all police men and women face daily. This is not to mention changing sleep patterns and odd family schedules. Let this NIV Peacemakers New Testament give police officers hope, courage, and wisdom as they face dangers everyday. Includes the New Testament and Psalms with Proverbs from the New International Version, helpful articles by cops and chaplains, and a clear gospel message.*

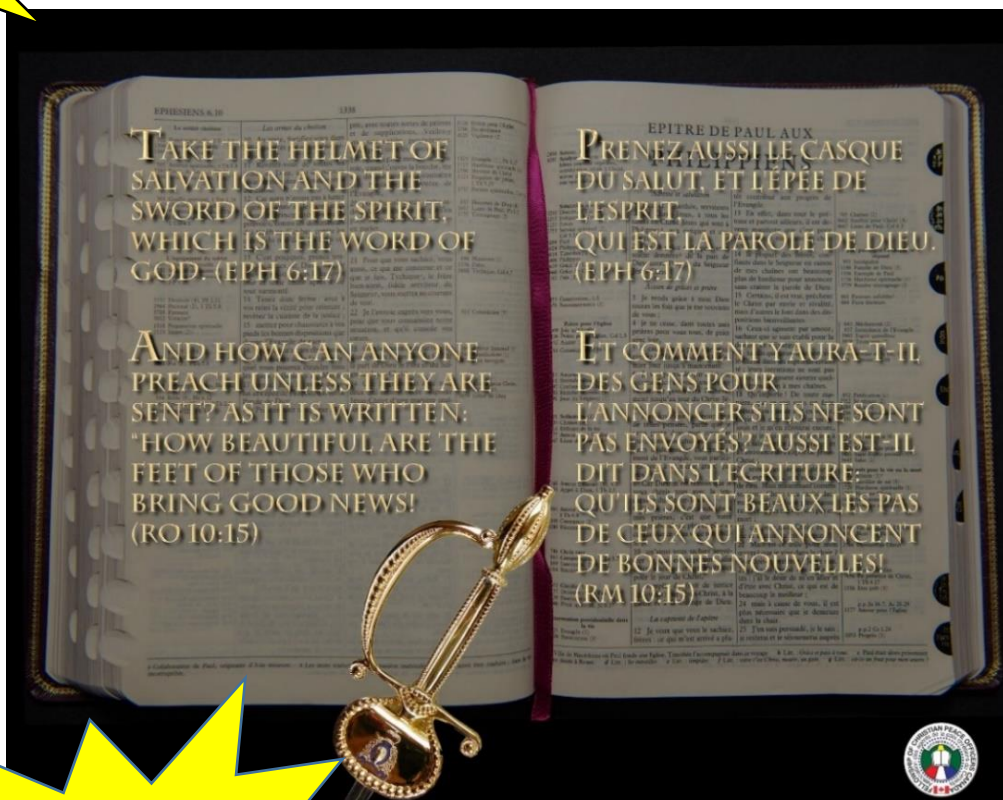
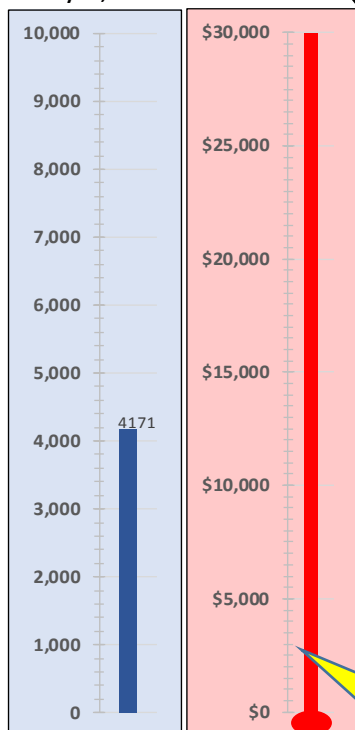
Fundraising goal achieved  
December 31, 2020  
**THANK YOU!**

Distribution started July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019. **Please pray for this project.**

To get your copy, or to give a copy to a Canadian serving peace officer, just sent an email to: [fcpo.aapc@gmail.com](mailto:fcpo.aapc@gmail.com) with your name, address and the number of copies you would like.

Peacemakers distributed to officers as of:  
January 17, 2021

Donations received



[Click here to see current distribution points](#)

If you would like to help arrange for the offering of these books at your service or agency, please let us know at: [fcpo.aapc@gmail.com](mailto:fcpo.aapc@gmail.com). 2

# Peace Be With You

By: Dino Doria, Ontario Director



Sgt. Dino Doria (Ret'd)

*“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” John 20: 19-21 (NIV)*

As we read these passages and prayerfully meditate on God’s word, the Holy Spirit reminds us what was happening with the apostles as they were locked down and fearful for their future.

Although they had spent 3 years following Jesus they were not focussing on what they had experienced with Jesus. Their mental well being was not focussed on His promises instead they allowed their fears to rule over everything especially this moment in time.

Take a moment to imagine the mental anguish, the anxiety, the fear and the many unknown factors that they were facing. Over 2000 years have passed since these events took place. So I prayed and asked the Holy Spirit - what do these passages mean to me today?

In John 14, Jesus told his disciples that he would be leaving them. And they were frantically trying to figure out who, what, where, when, and why. The idea of Jesus leaving and them and not being able to go with him was enough to wreck them. But Jesus said, “My peace I give you.” The peace he is referring to is the Holy Spirit. It’s the Holy Spirit who would teach them and remind them of the things Jesus said to them. This is the same promise we have. The Holy Spirit will work in our lives to bring peace in the midst of trouble. We need him to teach us peace.

We often desire an ‘action step’ that we can physically enact. But finding peace is not our own doing. We need the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts and minds to teach us peace. In John 16:33, we are reminded of His Promise of Peace. *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

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***We often desire an ‘action step’  
that we can physically enact.***

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*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15 (NIV).*

In closing may the peace of Christ reign in your heart.

God bless,

Dino



# Where the rubber meets the road

By: Rev. Bernard Crepault



Rev. Bernard Crepault

This popular phrase is defined as the point at which a theory or idea is put to a practical test and becomes truly challenging. As I look back at the year 2020, aside from the deaths due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I have been saddened by the untimely deaths brought on by a few law enforcement officers. But what has saddened me even more is the outrageous and blunt physical and verbal attacks on law enforcement officers and their families, and the growing protests to defund the police in several cities in the US and Canada. Some cities have unfortunately gone ahead with the defunding. I have a lot of respect for police officers and the sacrifices they and their families make. My father had two brothers who were police officers, and my father-in-law finished a 25-year career in the 70's as Assistant Director of the Montreal Police force<sup>1</sup>.

The News and Media coverage can cause us to be bitter and resentful against those who protest and attack police officers and their families. Left unchecked they will certainly affect our wellbeing. We need to heed to Hebrews 12:14-15: "See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled." For us Christians our reaction to these attacks and protests is where our rubber meets the road. This is where we face a practical test that is becoming truly challenging: Can we forgive them? We are reminded in Mark 11:26; "But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your transgressions." Quite the challenge indeed. Forgiveness is a decision and a process that will set us free from bitterness and resentment. Unforgiveness

Forgiveness is a decision and a process that will set us free from bitterness and resentment.

will negatively affect our soul and prevent us from experiencing healing, freedom and peace with God.

Last Spring, a man in our congregation came to see me for counselling. He was suffering from ulcerative colitis and had to stop working as a long-haul truck driver. As he was telling me about himself and his family, he mentioned that he had a lot of bitterness and resentment, especially towards his mother. I gave him a book to read by Samuel and Dorothée Hatzakortzian titled: *Forgive and be free*. He called me a few days later and wanted to meet and share what he had read on page 68: "*for Doctor McMillen, speaking with patients in a hospital, suffering from colitis, it was obvious that resentment was, by far, the major cause of their illness. In 96% of the cases, resentment was at the root of their suffering.*" That morning he made the decision, that with God's grace, he was going to start the process of forgiving his mother and reconnect with her. He did just that over the next months and he was gradually healed from ulcerated colitis. This summer his doctor gave him the green light to go back to work - What a great testimony. 3 John 1:2 "*Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.*"

We do not know what will change in 2021 but we are reminded in Proverbs 4:23 "*Guard your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*" John 10:10 "*The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life, life in all its fullness.*" Jesus gave us all we need for our rubber to meet the road.

Be blessed with forgiveness,

Rev. Bernard Crepault  
Hawkesbury, ON

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Bernard is an FCPO Associate member. His father-in-law was Pierre Laforest.

# Thoughts for the Day

By: Sgt. Jesse Weeks, GTA Director



Sgt. Jesse weeks

I haven't been to a physical church since last February. Since then, life has changed for all of us in many ways.

I have found myself going down rabbit holes of research trying to understand the truth surrounding issues of our time: How big of a threat is the Coronavirus actually? To me, to my neighbourhood, to Canada, to the world? Is it safe for my kids to go to school? What is systemic racism? Does my organization have it? Do I harbour racist attitudes and prejudices? Is violent protest ever justified? Is our Government corrupt? Should I even care about US politics?

Admittedly, many sources of information I have consumed while seeking understanding to these questions have been men and women who are flawed, biased, imperfect - human.

I find the more I return to God's words in the Bible, the more I am reminded of steadfast truths that provide me with a sense of stability and peace. The Bible is God's manual for human living.

Designers and creators of new cars include a manual outlining proper maintenance and care. In similar fashion, God provided us a manual for proper maintenance and care of our soul, mind, heart, and relationships.

In consultation with the designer, through my readings of His life manual today, I was reminded of the importance to not be conformed to this world but rather, to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. And the reason for this renewing is so that I am ABLE TO TEST AND APPROVE what God's will is. (Rom 12:2)

In other words, if I conform my mind to the "wisdom" of this world, I lose perspective on God's wisdom and God's will. I lose sight of what the proper care and maintenance for my soul is. I am consuming the wrong life manual. It's like filling up a Diesel engine with regular unleaded fuel. Not good. Or worse yet, filling up the gas tank with oil and expecting normal performance.

God's manual also tells us that we should keep ourselves from being polluted by this world (James 1:27). I think of what pollutes...toxic substances that don't belong. In the physical sense I think of poison - drugs, alcohol, even sex outside of marriage. Spiritually speaking, could this also be referring to toxic (Godless) opinions and ideas, fake news, biased reporting?

1 John 2:13 expands on this topic telling us not to love the world OR anything in it. John goes even further to say that if we love the world, the Love of God is NOT IN US. He goes on, "Everything in the world, the cravings of sinful men, the lust of the eyes, and boasting of what he has done, come NOT from God but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever."

The answers to the list of questions at the start of this article are certainly important. There is nothing wrong with seeking answers. Often,

answers can be clarified by listening to other humans, in spite of their flaws. Certainly God calls us to live in community. This includes sharing ideas and communicating about these topics.

The illuminating thing about these passages from God's manual is that:

1. we should be cautious about how much time we spend trying to understand what the world thinks is true;
2. we should stay grounded in God's truth (Bible/life manual) so we may TEST

AND APPROVE God's will and not be polluted by the world.

We as officers, are trained to understand what a real piece of Canadian currency looks like in order that we may be able to spot a fake.

As believers, let us remind ourselves often of God's truth in order that we may be able to spot the world's lies.

And as fellowship with other believers continues to be challenging, let's make every effort to stay connected to the source of our hope through regular time reviewing His life manual.

# WHEN EVIL COMES

## Why Does God Permit Evil? Tragedy?

By: Police Lt. (Ret'd) & Chaplain MC Williams



Lt. MC Williams (Ret'd) & Chaplain

**As police officers, dealing with evil and tragedy is a daily part of what we do. But, especially in the wake of all we're dealing with in 2020, we need to take a second look at the "Why, God?" question.**

Why does God, a good God, allow evil? Why did He allow my husband (dad, police partner, etc.) to be killed? Why COVID-19? Cancer? Fires? Storms? The hatred towards our God-ordained (**Romans 13:1-4**) profession? Rest assured, God has THE answers to ALL these questions, and more! Accordingly, I am again sharing an updated version of police Commander **Travis Yates'** outstanding (meaning wholly biblical) message on this subject that he wrote in the wake of a major tragedy (evil) that took place just over 11 years ago:

I am a police Commander for a large Oklahoma police department and I have done this job since 1993. Before that, I grew up with my father who retired after doing the same job for 27 years. As a police officer, I am keenly aware that every day of the year will be the worst day of someone's life.

I have in my lifetime seen first-hand as a police officer what tragedy does to those in our profession and the impact it has on the family of those officers.

I was just five years old on September 24, 1976, but I remember my father weeping when he found out his good friend and co-worker was brutally murdered when he stopped a man that was wanted for murder. Fort Smith Patrol [Officer Randy Basnett](#) died that day. He left behind a wife that was pregnant, parents and siblings.

Almost two years later, May 26, 1978, my wife was just four years old and she has similar memories when her father, Oklahoma Highway Patrol [Second Lieutenant James Pat Grimes](#) was ambushed by two cowards with a rifle. He died that day and left behind his daughter, wife, parents and siblings. We are reminded daily of the pain and struggle that tragedy has caused.

And on June 10, 1996, I was a 24 year old Tulsa Police Officer and was less than one mile away when [Senior Patrol Officer Dick Hobson](#) was shot and killed by a robbery suspect. I helped load Dick into an ambulance that night and several hours later he was pronounced dead. I collapsed and wept.

Then, on the morning of Sunday, **November 29, 2009**, I was made aware of the tragedy in the State of Washington. Four officers from the Lakewood Police Department, a 100-member force, were sitting in a coffee shop doing paperwork on their laptops. Something I have done many times, something that probably you have done, whether in law enforcement or not.

A man entered the coffee house and brutally murdered all four officers. Early reports revealed that while two of the officers were likely killed instantly, the other two may have fought back and one even firing rounds at the suspect.

Tragically, four officers laid dead: [Sergeant Mark Renninger](#), [Ronald Owens](#), [Tina Griswold](#), and [Greg Richards](#). Their ages ranged from 37 to 42. They left behind multiple children, spouses, parents, siblings and a community and country in mourning. It was the fourth multiple officer fatality by gunfire in 2009 alone and the second ambush in the Seattle area in the previous 30 days.

It is unimaginable tragedy and it is in this tragedy that one may ask **where was God?** Why did it have to happen? **Why does God permit suffering and tragedy?**

These are all valid and legitimate questions and quite frankly our minds simply cannot grasp all of these answers. It is OK to say I don't know but to say I don't know does not mean that God is not present, that He is not completely sovereign in everything.

**Hebrews 1:3** tells us that God *"...upholds the universe by the word of His power."* The Greek word for "upholds" means "to carry".

This concept of "carry" brings the concept of movement or progress. Jesus Christ is directing and carrying all things towards His sovereign purpose. God carries and is responsible for the entire universe.

The **Book of Job** gives us the ultimate lesson in regards to tragedy and God's Sovereignty. Here we have Job, who was held in high esteem for his righteousness and was even compared to Noah and Daniel and here he is going through unimaginable suffering and it is God who is doing it.

**Job 23:13-14** says: *“But He is unchangeable, and who can turn him back? What He desires, that He does. For He will complete what he appoints for me, and many such things are in His mind.”*

There it is, **“What He desires, He does.”** God does exactly what He desires.

**Psalms 22:28** says, *“For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations.”*

**Isaiah 46:10** says that God declares *“the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.’”*

God is in control. He always has been and He always will be. He is in control on your best days, your bad days and your worst day. And He has a purpose in all of it.

God does permit tragedy and yes, He is in control.

Now, this may not be comfortable to you. You may say I don’t want that God. I want nothing to do with a God that would permit this sort of tragedy, this sort of pain.

Let me be clear about this. You have no choice. This is indeed the God of the Bible, the Only God, The God that came to earth, lived a perfect life, was crucified and rose on the third day. You may say that you don’t want that God but there is no other God. A rejection of this God means punishment in hell, an eternity separated without Him.

John Stott, a highly respected Christian author, said this about suffering: *“The fact of suffering undoubtedly constitutes the single greatest challenge to the Christian faith and has been in every generation. Its distribution and degree appear to be entirely random and therefore unfair. Sensitive spirits ask if it can be reconciled with God’s Justice and love.”*

It is true; it will not take you long when talking to an unbeliever for the issue of evil and suffering to be brought up. It has been described as the “ultimate trump card.”

For some, evil is absolute proof that God does not exist. Atheists grab on to it. Agnostics grab on to it and, for the professing Christian, suffering will test whether you trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior or whether you are simply a religious or moral person. You see religion and morality will not sustain you in the midst of trials, pain and suffering. Only Christ will. Jesus Christ is the only one who can sustain you.

Pastor John Piper prophetically said, “Wimpy Christians won’t survive the days ahead.”

Of course there is no such thing as a wimpy Christian. He is referring to those that claim the Christian faith but do not have Jesus as their Lord. He is not the center of their life. Christ is merely a "Genie" in a bottle that we bring out when we need Him. This is not saving faith.

Now that we know that God does indeed permit tragedy, why does He allow it to occur?

**Romans 8:28** is our model for this question. It says *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”*



Now here is the Apostle Paul saying essentially that ***all things*** that occur are working together for good. Paul was keenly aware of tragedy and suffering. Prison, shipwrecks, beatings, hunger and eventual martyrdom. This was Paul's life.

Surely he can't mean tragedies such as the one in Lakewood, Washington? How else should you interpret the word "**All**." I am not a theologian but I know what that word means. It means everything that happens and in this context of scripture it means that everything that happens, will be for the good for those that are chosen to be saved by God.

Could that mean, God's children could suffer? Could that mean His people could die? Could lose love ones, could suffer enormous pain? Yes, that is what "All" means.

And "*Working together for good*"?

It is OK to say "I don't know" here. We don't always know. What good came out of the death of my dad's partner? What about my wife losing her father at the age of four? What good could come out of that tragedy in Washington?

It isn't always clear to us and God owes us no explanation. But sometimes it is clear:



Det. Vicky Armel

On May 8, 2006, Fairfax County, Virginia Police [Detective Vicky Armel](#) was just 40 years old when she was gunned down in the parking lot of her police station. [Master Police Officer Michael Garbarino](#) was killed in the same incident.

Vicki left behind a son, a daughter and a husband. And just like this morning, you may ask, "**WHY!?**"

And our God, in the most gracious manner, showed us a little of **Romans 8** in this incident.

You see, two years earlier in the spring of 2004, Vicki came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as her Savior. God used a faithful saint by the name of **Mike Motafches**, Vicki's partner, to tell her about Jesus Christ and upon being converted to Christ [Vicky gave a moving testimony](#) at her home church.

Vicki's funeral occurred during National Police Week in Washington D.C. For those outside our profession, once each year in the Month of May, thousands of police officers gather in Washington D.C. to pay tribute to the fallen officers from the previous year. In May 2010, we paid tribute to the four officers that paid the ultimate sacrifice for their community that late November morning in 2009.

I was there that year, in 2006. I knew officers who actually went to Vicki's funeral. Because Fairfax County was so close to Washington D.C., thousands of officers from around the world went to Vicki's funeral and that testimony she gave a few years earlier. It was taped and it was played back for thousands of officers to hear.

Thousands of Police Officers heard the [Gospel of Jesus Christ](#) through the mouth of a slain Police Detective that day. At that very moment, Vicki was in Heaven with her Savior, with God and thousands here on earth heard her words, heard the Gospel from her.

Vicki's death was tragic but God in His love and mercy and kindness, works all things together for good.

Now these "*all things*" that the Apostle Paul discusses includes **evil** things and that brings us to the final question. Why evil persists and why God permits this evil to affect so many lives?

Evil is anything that violates God's moral will. The first human evil occurred when Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden and that original sin is passed down to all of us. Indeed, **Romans 3:10-12** says that "*no one is righteous, no one seeks for God, no one does good.*" Verse 12 finishes with these words, "*not even one.*"

Now that is hard to take isn't it? **No one, not even one is good.** That includes me. That includes you.

While our evil will likely not manifest into the actions of the coward who slew our police brethren that morning in the State of Washington, we are indeed evil. It is our nature.

**Jeremiah 17:9** says, "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it*".

You see we are quick to see what happened that morning and say that it is evil...that it is pure evil. But do we see that evil in ourselves? We minimize our sin because, unlike that horrific morning, we don't actually see the pain that it causes. It is easy to see this or another tragedy and identify the behavior as evil but our actions, our behaviors, while not as high profile or outrageous to the world, they are absolutely an abomination to a Holy God.

Anything that violates God's nature is evil and that includes our sin. Now some of us, including myself, have committed sins that have hurt others, hurt those we love and we see very clearly the evil that we do but we must understand that whether we see the results of our sin in others or not, our sin is an outrage to God.

Now we can't afford to get this wrong and trust me there are many, many that have this wrong. Just about anyone you ask will tell you that they are basically a good person. Millions are walking the earth thinking that if they do more good than bad, they will find favor with God. This is **not true** and these false beliefs will damn more to hell than all the bars in this world combined.

Do you still think you are a good person? Let's take a look at just some of God's standards.

Have you ever lied? Have you ever stolen anything? Have you ever used God's name in vain? Have you always honored your parents? Jesus said that if you look with lust, you have committed adultery in your heart (**Matthew 5:28**) and he elevates anger to murder (**Matthew 5:21**).

The point here is that, without Christ, you and I are evil. And while your evil may not manifest itself into suffering that you can see, it is nevertheless hated by God and will be punished by God.

At the age of 25, in the year 1750, **John Newton** was the commander of an English slave ship. He anchored his ship off the African coast and purchased slaves. As many as 600 slaves would lay down like logs at the bottom of his ship as they would sail to the Caribbean sold.

John Newton raped female slaves, he permitted his employees to rape them. Hundreds would die in the journey and John Newton reveled in hating God and everything He stood for. That is of course until he experienced a conversion to Christ. God radically changed his heart and saved him for the judgment that was awaiting him for his evil deeds. Newton spent the last half of his life pastoring a church and speaking out against the slave trade.

Just before his death, at the age of 82, Newton said this: *"My memory is nearly gone but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Savior."*

You may recognize the famous hymn written by John Newton: "Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost, but now I'm found, Was blind but now I see."

What about you? Are you blind? Are you lost or can you see?

If you can see the evil and the sin that you are guilty of, then God is working in you. He has made you aware of your need of a Savior. Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation and He saves wretches like John Newton, like me and like you.

The incident that morning in Washington was horrible. It was tragic. It was unthinkable and while we may search for answers, there really is only one answer. His name is Jesus Christ. He is the sovereign God over all of the Universe and he came to earth on a mission. To save sinners and to redeem our evil deeds. He was perfect, spotless and He was slain on a tree.

Jesus, the God Man rose from the grave three days later and today He sits at the right hand of the Father and is calling for you to repent, turn from your sins and believe in Him. To trust Him.

Call on the Lord Jesus Christ. Call on Him to save you and follow Him the rest of your days, during the good times and the bad.

MC

The Centurion Law Enforcement Ministry



[The Centurion Law Enforcement Ministry](#) is a non-denominational, evangelical Christian outreach by, for and about law enforcement (police, deputies, investigators, probation/parole, corrections, etc.) and military personnel. TCLEM is affiliated with the Fellowship of Christian Peace Officers (FCPO) and provides Bible-based support, fellowship and accountability for officers worldwide. We also seek to infuse Christian servant-leadership into our profession and equip the Christian officer to boldly share and live the Gospel.

**Let your colleagues, family, and friends know about FCPO!**

**Membership is free! Members receive this quarterly newsletter.** We have 2 types of membership: Regular Membership (voting) is for current or retired peace officers, while Associate Membership (non-voting) is for any Christian who agrees with our [Statement of Faith](#).

**Join online at: [www.fcpocanada.com](http://www.fcpocanada.com)**

# A Glimpse at the Inside

By: Herman Russell, Acting Secretary, Newfoundland & Labrador Chapter

Greetings,

I thought I would drop you a short note to tell you about a great recent event we had.

Unless one is involved in corrections, it is sometimes easy to forget about what happens to a “client” after we have dealt with them at them “pointy end of the stick”.

We realize that we are all sinners saved by grace alone. Some sins end up with the perpetrator being incarcerated. Although our ministry is uniquely focused on encouraging and supporting officers to find and grow a personal relationship with Jesus as their saviour, it’s always good to remember the other souls we deal with in our calling.

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*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. Romans 3:23-24 (NIV)*

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In November, our chapter held a function at the Roman Catholic Basilica in St. John’s where approximately 40 Peace Officers, Associate FCPO Members and friends attended and were spellbound by our guest Speaker, Mr. Gerry Phelan, a chaplain from [Her Majesty's Penitentiary](#) (HMP) in St. John's.

Cst. Morrissey, our chapter president, welcomed Mr. Phelan, who in turn gave a very interesting



*Her Majesty's Penitentiary, St. John's.*

*Photo credit: CBC News*

presentation he called “Diary of a prison chaplain: stories of hope from inside & outside the walls”.

Mr. Phelan spoke of his work over the past eleven years as a chaplain to the inmates there.

In his talk he outlined the many programs which are available to those incarcerated and many of the projects they have done. He also showed a video of HMP and the on-going work it provides. He spoke of the camaraderie he has with staff, prison officials and inmates alike and how interested they become in the programs provided. A cash donation box was placed at the main entrance and the sum of \$535.00 was realized and presented to Mr. Phelan to be used for his Ministry at HMP.

Cst. Morrissey thanked Father Critch, Priest in Charge of the Basilica who graciously offered the Basilica to FCPO NL. for our function as well as thanking all for taking part and attending. Cst. Morrissey closed the evening with prayer.

## In Memorium [Marc](#) and [Andrew](#).



Cst. Marc Hovingh  
End of Watch:  
November 19, 2020



Sgt. Andrew Harnett  
End of Watch:  
December 31, 2020





## From our Vault

Articles from [past Peacemakers](#) make for a great second read. And for many of you - the first read. They are timeless. We opened the vault for this issue, and hope you will be blessed again by this contribution.

## Guided by the Holy Spirit

By: Cst. Jerry Michalski, Estevan City Police Dept.

*This article is reproduced from our Peacemaker [archives](#): 1991 – Summer issue*

Although I've been a Christian all my life, and have had numerous occasions to see God's Spirit work in my life and others', I am continually amazed at the power of the Holy Spirit. On March 31st (Easter Sunday, 1991), I was suddenly placed in a position to minister to a 36 year old man who was about to commit suicide.

He stood at a street intersection at approximately 11:15 P.M. with a .458 Magnum rifle (loaded) pointing to the left side of his head, with his thumb on the trigger. He had already pressed the trigger once, only to find he had forgotten to put a live cartridge in the chamber. He had done this a short time earlier in front of the headlights of a police car, with two of my fellow police officers taking cover behind the car. He had pointed another

loaded rifle at them and then tossed it on the ground in front of them. He then chambered in a live round from the magazine in the .458. He had already fired several shots into the air from the first rifle. He told his girlfriend he was ending it all and had started three suicide notes before leaving a residence with these rifles and a large quantity of ammunition.

Being a canine handler, I had gotten a call-out to assist in the dramatic events that were unfolding. I had practiced this type of scenario before with my police service dog, the intent being to have the dog take him down with a bite, without having to shoot the subject if at all possible. Suddenly, I realized I couldn't use the dog. He had the muzzle of the barrel against his head. With his thumb on the trigger, it could be over for him before the dog took his first leap towards him! If I released the dog, and he squeezed the trigger, I could be held accountable for aiding his cause. Unless he pointed the firearm towards me or the other members present, or even in some direction other than his head, I couldn't release

my partner. There were several guns pointed at him by other members -- ready to take his life too, if he made the wrong move to fire at us.

Contrary to good police procedure, I put myself within a

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proximity of less than ten yards from him. Strange as it may sound, I knew I had to talk to him as a vulnerable human being with compassion -- not as an armed policeman hiding behind the door or fender of a police car. It probably wouldn't make much difference anyway, because the .458 Mag. Cal. is the second largest bullet made. It's used to hunt elephants, rhino, and water buffalo in Africa. The vehicle engine block might stop it, but not much else.

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During the 25 to 30 minute negotiating conversation that followed, I asked him why he was bent on blowing himself away. "Bob" replied he had nothing left to live for. He was at the bottom of the barrel in life. Nobody cared about the state of affairs he was in. Everything had gone wrong. When I asked him if he had asked God to help him, he replied he had lost any faith he might ever have had in Him. After all, look at the mess the world was in. He accused God of making it this way. God didn't care about him or his circumstances in life. God hadn't helped him before.

I have no hesitation in saying that I was scared. Things were tense. In those moments I prayed to God to help this man and the rest of us in the unique time and place of this desperate situation. I prayed that God would give me the words to convince him to give God another chance -- to

put his life on the right track -- to put that rifle down.

I can't remember everything I said to Bob, but I could feel God's Spirit taking control and filling my mind with what Bob needed to hear. I remember telling him that God didn't make this world a mess -- we (man) had done that without any help from Him. God has given us our own free will to do and choose as we wish. Man has made a lot of bad choices! I shared with Bob briefly that things in my life that hadn't always gone well. I had often despaired too. But God has helped me and, with full faith, I promised God would help him too. God doesn't give us the right to take our lives and doing so is a grave sin. He would have no hope for eternity if he squeezed that trigger. When he asked me how I knew about these things I was telling him, the answer was simple -- The Bible -- the Word of God.

Bob could obviously see that I believed in what I was saying. This was no cop trick to get him to do what we wanted. Bob was a Catholic and so was I. I told him about a close friend, Father Prince, a priest in our local church. Father Prince used to be

an oil field worker, in the oil patch (common occupation around Estevan). I promised Bob we could go to him immediately and talk to him about Bob's desperate situation. I had no idea Bob was also Catholic and an oil worker! God knew!

Bob took the rifle from his head, ejected the 500 grain cartridge from the chamber and let it fall to the pavement. He handed the gun over to me as I walked up to him. We shook hands, and I felt a deep surge of love -- God's love between us. I kept my promises to Bob and I have no doubt God will keep His.

If Bob wants to change his life, I know God will be there every step of the way. I will be praying for him and I hope all who read this will do so too. I pray that the other members who witnessed this event will also open their minds to God's Spirit and know that it was Him and not I that cheated the devil from getting Bob's soul that night!

With Christian Love,

Jerry Michalski, Cst.  
Estevan City Police Dept.,  
Saskatchewan.

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Sgt. Jerry "Mitch" Michalski had a great career in law enforcement, which included stints as a conservation officer, RCMP, Estevan Police Service and the [File Hills First Nations Police Service](#), and continues to serve his Lord and Saviour!