

St. Mary of the Purification Parish

230 Queen Street East, P.O. Box 128, Mount Forest, ON N0G 2L0

Tel: 519-323-1054, Fax: 519-323-0117, www.stmarymountforest.ca

St. Peter's Mission, 943 Caroline Street, Ayton, ON N0G1C0

St. Thomas the Apostle Mission, #5800, HW 89, Harriston, ON N0G1Z0

Pastor: Rev. Michael Anderson, P.P.

Email: manderson@hamiltondiocese.com

Bookkeeper: Annette Connolly

Email: stmarybookkeeper@wightman.ca

Secretary: Katarina Smolkova

Email: stmarymtforest@wightman.ca



New Parishioners - WELCOME! - Please introduce yourself to the priest.

OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Closed, Tuesday - Friday: 9:30 am - 1:00 pm

LORD'S DAY LITURGIES:

SATURDAY:

St. Mary: 4:00 pm Mass

St. Thomas: 5:30 pm Mass

SUNDAY:

St. Mary: 9:00 am Mass

St. Peter: 11:00 am Mass

WEEKDAY LITURGIES:

Please refer to schedule inside.

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Tuesday: 5:30 pm-6:30 pm or by appointment.

MARRIAGE: Please notify the Pastor at least 6 months in advance.

*Deadline for all announcement for the bulletin is on Wednesday.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM:

Please contact the parish office.

PASTORAL CARE NEEDS:

Please contact the Parish Office - for a priest to administer the Sacrament of the sick (best to call at the onset of illness)
- Holy Communion to the sick.
- Home, hospital and nursing home visits.

FUNERAL: When death occurs in the family, please contact the parish office.

PRIESTHOOD & RELIGIOUS

LIFE: For information or assistance, see

www.HamiltonVocations.com

DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER:

For information about home activities & events of interest in Diocese of Hamilton, subscribe to the online diocesan newsletter at: www.hamiltondiocese.com

SCHOOL:

St. Mary Catholic Elementary School, 390 Parkside Drive, Mount Forest ON N0G 2L3
Telephone: 519-323-2586
Fax: 519-323-9446

PARISH BEQUESTS:

Keep your love for parish alive in your will & expression of sympathy.

The Nativity of the Lord- Dec 25, 2022

ST. MARY PARISH

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tues. Dec 27– NO MASS

Wed. Dec 28– NO MASS

Thur. Dec 29– NO MASS

Fri. Dec 30 – NO MASS

Sat. Dec 31 - 4:00 p.m. The People of the Parish

Sat. Dec 31 -8:00 p.m. **Mary, Mother of God**

Sun. Jan 1 - 9:00 a.m. The People of the Parish

LECTORS

Sat. Dec 31- 4:00 p.m. Luis Arruda

Sat. Dec 31- 8:00 p.m. Colleen Dalla Costa

Sun. Jan 1 - 9:00 a.m. Marian Flanigan

ST. THOMAS, Harriston

Sat. Dec 31 - 5:30 p.m. The People of the Parish

ST. PETER'S, Ayton

Sun. Jan 1 - 11:00 a.m. The People of the Parish

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

The Parish Office will be closed over the holidays from Dec 27, 2022 to Jan 2, 2023. The office will be re-open on Wed. Jan 3, 2023.



The Nativity of the Lord Mass at Dawn

First Reading: *Isaiah 62:11-12*

Say to daughter Zion, your savior comes.

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalm 97:1-6, 11-12*

A light will shine on us this day: the Lord is born for us.

Second Reading: *Titus 3:4-7*

He saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Gospel Reading: *Luke 2:15-20*

So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph and the infant lying in the manger.

Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Vigil Mass

First Reading: *Isaiah 62:1-5*

The Lord delights in his people.

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalm 89:4-5,16-17,27,29*

The goodness of the Lord is praised.

Second Reading

Acts of the Apostles 13:16-17,22-25

God chose the people of Israel, and from them he raised up Jesus, the Savior for all people.

Gospel Reading: *Matthew 1:1-25*

After being visited by an angel in a dream, Joseph takes Mary as his wife.

The Nativity of the Lord Mass at Midnight

First Reading: *Isaiah 9:1-6*

To those in darkness, a child will be born who will have dominion over the earth.

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalm 96:1-2,2-3,11-12,13*

Sing a new song to the Lord.

Second Reading: *Titus 2:11-14*

God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

Gospel Reading: *Luke 2:1-14*

Jesus is born in a manger in Bethlehem as the angel appears to the shepherds.

Background on the Gospel Reading

During the Christmas season, our liturgy invites us to consider the birth of the Lord from many vantage points. As we begin this season, it is useful to remember that the stories of Jesus' birth and childhood are found in only two of our Gospels, Matthew and Luke. Throughout this season, we will hear stories from both Gospels. Those Gospels tell different but complementary stories about Jesus' birth, highlighting items of theological importance about the Incarnation and the salvation that Jesus brings.

On this day, the Feast of Christmas, we are given the details of Christ's birth as found in the Gospel of Luke. Here we learn about the census that brings Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem, where Jesus is born. We also hear about the angel's announcement of this good news to the shepherds. In these details, we find two of Luke's particular concerns: (1) to locate the coming of Christ in the wider framework of salvation history as good news

for all people, Gentiles and Jews, and (2) to show the Lord's favor upon the poor and lowly.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus is born as one of the poor. Laid in a manger in a stable, because there was no room at the inn, he comes into the world through obscure and surprising means. Yet, as the angel proclaims this good news to the shepherds, this infant is announced as the Messiah and Lord. In the song of the angels, all are invited to give glory to God for this miraculous birth, in which God comes to share our humanity.

The angels sing that Jesus' coming brings peace. Yet there is little in the details of this Gospel that gives evidence of peace. Jesus is born as a traveler away from home, born in a stable in a crowded city under the occupation of foreigners. The appearance of the angel to the shepherds frightens them. When the angels proclaim Jesus' birth as the harbinger of "peace on earth," the evangelist Luke clearly wants us to take the long view. The shepherds are invited to claim a faith that will enable them to see this infant as a sign God's promise of a messiah. It is through such faith that one finds the peace of which the angels sing.

Family Connection

Christmas has come to be associated as a season of peace. This association and our familiarity with the Christmas story sometimes make us forget about the difficult circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth. As a family, gather around your nativity and carefully read Luke's story of Jesus' birth, Luke 2:1-14.

Recall that the manger you see in the nativity set is not in a house, but a stable. The animals you see might have been noisy and may even have smelled unpleasant. Joseph and Mary were far from home in a city that was crowded and under the occupation of foreigners. The shepherds may have been unclean from their time in the fields. Invite each family member to say one thing about the Christmas story that makes an impression upon them.

Conclude by praying together for people in today's world who may experience circumstances like those found in the story of Jesus' birth. Pray for those who are far from home, those who live in fear, those who live in need. Sing together one or more Christmas hymns, such as "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" or "Angels We Have Heard on High."

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Mass **During the Day**

First Reading: *Isaiah 52:7-10*

God's salvation is announced to the world.

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalms 98:1-6*

A prayer of praise for God's salvation.

Second Reading: *Hebrews 1:1-6*

God now speaks to us through his Son.

Gospel Reading: *John 1:1-18*

John announces that in Jesus, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Background on the Gospel Reading

There are four Masses that are celebrated for the Feast of Christmas and each is given its own set of readings to help us contemplate Christ's birth. The Gospel for the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve is taken from the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew. The Mass at midnight proclaims the birth of Jesus through the Gospel of Luke. The Mass at dawn on Christmas morning continues the story of the birth of Jesus as found in Luke's Gospel, ending with the shepherds' visit to the infant Jesus. In each of these Gospel readings, we hear portions of the infancy narratives with which we are familiar.

The Gospel for the Christmas Mass during the day is taken from the beginning of John's Gospel, but this part of John's Gospel is not an infancy narrative like those found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Instead, John's Gospel starts at the very beginning and presents the Creation story as the framework for announcing the Incarnation. John's opening words echo the first verse in the Book of Genesis. This framework invites us to view Jesus' birth from God's perspective. Each of the Gospels makes clear that Jesus' birth was the result of God's initiative. John's Gospel, however, emphasizes that Jesus' birth was the divine intention from the moment of Creation.

As we observe in today's reading, the Gospel of John includes highly philosophical and theological language. One example that particularly stands out in this Gospel is John's repeated references to "the Word" in the opening verse. This expression (logos in the Greek) borrows from a concept found in both Jewish and Greek thought. Jews used this phrase to describe God's action in the Creation story, for example, and in the Wisdom literature. In Greek thought, the logos was understood as an intermediary between God and humanity. John and

others in the early Church adopted this language to describe God's incarnation in Jesus. As the term was used to express the Trinitarian faith of Christians, the Word came to be equated with the Second Person of the Trinity.

In this prologue to the Gospel of John, we also hear the main themes that will be developed in his Gospel. These are often presented as dualities: light and dark, truth and falsehood, life and death, and belief and unbelief. We also hear in this prologue a unique aspect of John's Gospel, the theme of testimony. John the Baptist was sent by God to testify to Jesus, the light. Others in this Gospel will also offer testimony about Jesus. The reader is invited to accept this testimony, which bears witness to Jesus, the Son of God. But even more directly, Jesus' action and words will testify to Jesus' identity as God's Incarnate Word.

Thinking about Jesus' birth in these theological and cosmological terms is particularly appropriate as we celebrate the Feast of Christmas in the darkness of winter. At this time, nature itself seems to remind us of the darkness of sin. Into this darkness, in the midst of our sinfulness, God comes to dwell among us. John's Gospel reminds us that through the Incarnation, God saves us from the darkness of sin and makes us his children.

Family Connection

At Christmas we celebrate the great mystery that God became flesh and dwelt among us. We call this mystery the *Incarnation* (the word means "to take on flesh"), and it changes everything. Today's Gospel reminds us that we can also look upon the Nativity from God's perspective to better appreciate the significance of the Incarnation. The mystery we proclaim at Christmas is that God, the very God who created all things from nothing and who is light itself, took on our humanity in order to transform us. Through his birth among us, we have seen the face of God and have become nothing less than God's own children. At this awesome mystery, we adore.

Gather as a family around your Nativity set. Keep this image before you and talk about how familiar we are with this scene. Invite members of the family to recall the details of Jesus' birth that we hear in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Observe that the

Gospel of John invites us to consider Jesus' birth from a different perspective. Read together today's Gospel, John 1:1-14.

John's Gospel reminds us that the image we see in our Nativity set is a most remarkable sight: God made himself at home with us by taking on flesh and becoming a human person. We call this mystery the Incarnation. What are some of the things that John's Gospel says happened for us because Jesus came to dwell among us? (Light overcame darkness; we see God's glory in Jesus; we became children of God.) Together thank God for this mystery of the Incarnation and the salvation that we received because Jesus was born among us. Sing together a Christmas hymn, such as "O Come, All Ye Faithful" or "Silent Night."

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/>

CWL

Dues: 2023 CWL dues must be in before the end of 2022. It is now \$40.00. Please leave in the collection basket addressed to CWL.

The 2023 offering envelope boxes

are available for pickup in our 3 churches this weekend. Please ensure that the address shown on your label on the top of the box is correct since that is the address that will be used when mailing tax receipts in the New Year. If your address is not shown on your label, please provide it to the office so that we can update your record. At the end of December, please discard any unused envelopes that are dated prior to 2023. Some givers' envelope numbers have changed and using old envelopes could result in your donation being credited to someone else. Thank you.

If you are new to our Parish and would like to use offering envelopes, please call the church office at (519) 323-1910, x6 and we will get a box ready for you.

