

# St. Mary of the Purification Parish



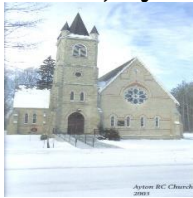
**230 Queen Street East, P.O. Box 128, Mount Forest, ON N0G 2L0**  
**Tel: 519-323-1054 Fax: 519-323-0117 [www.stmarymountforest.ca](http://www.stmarymountforest.ca)**  
**OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Closed, Tuesday - Friday: 9:30 am - 1:30 pm**

**Pastor: Rev. Michael Anderson, P.P. Email: [manderson@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:manderson@hamiltondiocese.com)**

**Bookkeeper: Annette Connolly Email: [stmarybookkeeper@wightman.ca](mailto:stmarybookkeeper@wightman.ca)**

**Secretary: Dee Dee Eurig Email: [stmarymtforest@wightman.ca](mailto:stmarymtforest@wightman.ca)**

**St. Peter's Mission,  
943 Caroline Street, Ayton ON N0G 1C0**



**St. Thomas the Apostle,  
#5800 Hwy 89, Harriston ON N0G 1Z0**



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

## **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.

**Please note: The deadline for Bulletin submission is Wed. a.m.**

### **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 ( please 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](http://www.hamiltonvocations.com)

### **DIOCESAN**

**NEWSLETTER:** For information about home activities & events of interest in the Diocese of Hamilton, subscribe to the online diocesan newsletter at: [www.hamiltondiocese.com](http://www.hamiltondiocese.com)

### **SCHOOL:**

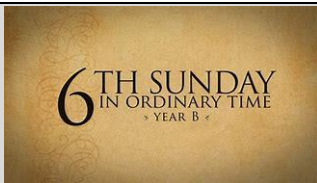
St. Mary Catholic Elementary School, 390 Parkside Drive, Mount Forest ON NOG 2L3  
Telephone: 519-323-2586  
Fax: 519-323-9446

### **PARISH REQUESTS:**

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

*"Prayer is the soul of hope"*

*~ Pope Francis*



**February 11, 2024**

**Tue. Feb. 13** – 7:00 p.m. Loretta Caughlin Req'd by the Estate

- 7:00 pm. Blanche Mulhall Req'd by CWL

**Wed. Feb. 14**– 9:00 a.m. Wayne Sluys Req'd by Dorothy DeJong

- 7:00 p.m. **ASH WEDNESDAY** 

**Thur. Feb. 15** – 9:00 a.m. Stephen Zurav Req'd by the Family

**Fri. Feb. 16**– 9:00 a.m. Joseph Sullivan Req'd by Dale Williams

7:00 p.m. **STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

**Sat. Feb. 17** – 4:00 p.m. The People of the Parish

**Sun. Feb. 18** – 9:00 a.m. The People of the Parish **Lectors**

**Sat. Feb. 17** - Maxine Schmidt

**Sun. Feb. 18** - Debra Ross

**CONFESSION:** Tue. 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. or call Fr. Mike at 519-323-1054 ext. 7

**ST. THOMAS, Harriston**

**Sat. Feb. 17** – 5:30 p.m. Krystal Rogelj Req'd by Bogden Rogelj

**ST. PETER'S, Ayton**

**Sun. Feb. 18**– 11:00 a.m. Anna Marie Raftis Req'd by the Estate

**\*\*STATIONS OF THE CROSS EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT AT 7:00 pm DURING LENT\*\***

**This Sunday's Reading:**

**First Reading**

Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46

The Law regarding leprosy is given to Moses and Aaron.

**Responsorial Psalm**

Psalm 32:1-2,5,11

A prayer of contrition and confession for sin.

**Second Reading**

1 Corinthians 10:31—11:1

Paul urges the Corinthians to imitate him as he imitates Christ.

**Gospel Reading**

Mark 1:40-45

Jesus cures a person with leprosy, who reports his cure to everyone.

**Background on the Gospel Reading**

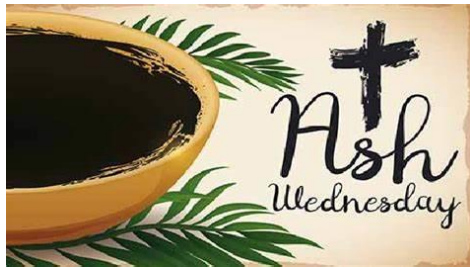
In today's Gospel, we continue to hear Mark report the miraculous healings that Jesus performed in Galilee. The Gospel begins with Jesus healing a man with leprosy. Leprosy is a disfiguring, infectious skin disease that has been surrounded by many social and religious taboos throughout history. In 1873, the cause of leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, was identified. We now know that leprosy is caused by a bacterial infection. Although it is infectious, modern medical studies have shown that transmission is more difficult than previously thought. Since the 1940s, medical treatments have been available, and the patient no longer needs to be isolated once long-term treatment has begun.

In Jesus' time, however, religious and social taboos dictated the behavior of those with leprosy and other skin diseases. The Law of Moses provided for the examination of skin diseases by the priests, and if leprosy was identified, the person was declared unclean. People with leprosy lived in isolation from the community. They were instructed to rip their clothes and to announce their presence with loud cries when moving in the community. If the sores of leprosy healed, the Law of Moses provided a purification rite that permitted the person to return to the community.

In today's Gospel, the man with leprosy took the initiative, approaching Jesus and asking for healing. In doing so, the leper violated the religious customs of the day by approaching a person who was clean. His request to Jesus can be interpreted as a courageous and daring act. The confidence of the leper in Jesus' ability to heal him is evident in the words of his request. But his words can also be read as a challenge to Jesus, asking just how far Jesus was willing to extend himself in order to heal someone. While healing the man, Jesus touched him, which also violated established social norms. This is an important sign of the depth of Jesus' compassion for the man and an important statement about Jesus' interpretation of the Law of Moses. Although Jesus touched the leper, he did not break completely with the Law of Moses. He instructed the man not to tell anyone about the cure and told him to present himself to the priests as prescribed by the Law of Moses. The first instruction sounds nearly impossible to honor. Certainly, the man would want to share the good news of his healing, and his quick improvement would require an

explanation. The second instruction honors the Law of Moses.

Mark's Gospel tells us that after this healing, it became difficult for Jesus to travel freely. There are several possible explanations for this. There might have been concern about the repercussions of Jesus' breach of social and religious norms. In touching the man with leprosy, Jesus made himself unclean. Mark's narrative, however, leads to the conclusion that Jesus' movement was hampered by his popularity. Despite his instructions, the cured man spread the word about Jesus' healing power. Even when Jesus was in deserted places, people sought him out in search of his healing. [www.loyolapress.com](http://www.loyolapress.com)



### Wednesday February 14

#### **First Reading**

*Joel 2:12-18*

Return to the Lord for he is merciful.

#### **Responsorial Psalm**

*Psalm 51:3-6b,12-14,17*

Create a clean heart in us, O God, and be merciful.

#### **Second Reading**

*2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2*

Be reconciled to God; now is the day of salvation.

#### **Gospel Reading**

*Matthew 6:1-6,16-18*

Jesus teaches that almsgiving, prayer, and fasting should be done in secret.

#### **Background on the Gospel Reading**

Today we celebrate Ash Wednesday, the first day of the liturgical season of Lent. In this season, we prepare ourselves to celebrate the high point of our Christian life, Easter. Each year, the readings for Ash Wednesday are the same. They call us to a change of heart and teach us about the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These disciplines are to be part of the Christian life during every season, but during the season of Lent, we renew our commitment to them.

The meaning behind tracing a cross on our foreheads with ashes (the liturgical sign of Ash

Wednesday) is a summary of our Christian life. On one level, the ashes remind us of our origin and our death. (In the words of the prayer said when we receive ashes: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.") The ashes are also the sign of our victory: the cross of Christ. In his death and resurrection, Christ conquered death. Our destiny as Christians is to receive the victory over death that Christ won for us. We acknowledge that victory when we "[t]urn away from sin and [are] faithful to the gospel," words from the alternative prayer when we are signed with ashes.

Today's reading is part of the Sermon on the Mount. In the sermon, Jesus warns his followers against acting for the sake of appearance. When Jesus' disciples give alms, pray, and fast, they are to do so in such a way that only God, who sees the heart and knows what is hidden, will know. Although our Lectionary reading omits the Lord's Prayer, we can recall that Matthew presents that prayer as a model for the disciples' prayer (Matthew 6:9-15).

[www.loyolapress.com](http://www.loyolapress.com)

**Please note that the Feb. 13 CWL meeting has been cancelled. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday March 13, 2024 at 1pm.**

***WELCOME St. Mary School Students and Staff!***  
**Dear Parishioners,**

Classes have resumed for the students of St. Mary's School this week in our Parish Hall. The folks at the Wellington Catholic District School Board have been working around the clock to provide the students with this new learning environment. It has been eye opening to see how all of this has come together. May God keep blessing them through the rest of the school year.

#### **Clarification**

While we are sharing space with the school, we will not have use of the Parish Hall or the recreational area in the basement of the hall (shuffleboard area). This means that though we will still celebrate Funerals in the Church as usual, we will not be able to host receptions held after. With this, the England Room is also not available for family viewing before a funeral. Thank you for your continued patience and please keep the school community in your prayers.

Your servant in Christ,  
Fr. Mike



**Sacramental Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation**

A special **Reconciliation Service** will be held on **Saturday February 24, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.** This is for children receiving this Sacrament for the first time.

On **Sunday June 2, 2024**, we will celebrate **First Holy Communion** with a special Mass being held at 3:00 p.m.

**Sunday April 14 at 3:00 pm** we will celebrate the **Sacrament of Confirmation**

If you have a child who **does not** attend St. Mary's School in Mt. Forest, and who has reached the age of discernment, please contact the parish office for registration. 519-323-1054 or email [stmarymtforest@wightman.ca](mailto:stmarymtforest@wightman.ca)

**SAINT STORIES**

**Our Lady of Lourdes Feast day Feb 11**

Each year over 2 million people make their way through the mountainous country of southeastern France to Lourdes. They come seeking cures, hoping to find answers, believing, and praying. At Lourdes, people recall the Lady dressed in white, with a blue sash, yellow roses at her feet, and a Rosary on her arm—the Blessed Virgin Mary. On February 11, 1858, Mary appeared to 14-year-old Bernadette Soubirous. This was the first of 18 visits, many of them with 20,000 people present. When Bernadette asked the Lady's identity, she replied, "I am the Immaculate Conception." Just four years earlier, the pope had proclaimed it a dogma that Mary was conceived immaculate without original sin. The Blessed Virgin, through Bernadette, had come to call sinners to a change of heart. Her message was a request for prayer and penance. She also instructed Bernadette to tell the priests that a chapel was to be built on the site and processions held. On February 25, 1858, the Lady told Bernadette to dig in the dirt and drink of the stream. Bernadette began to dig, and after several attempts she was able to find the water to drink. The water continued to flow from where she had dug with her hands until it was producing over 32,000 gallons of water a day—as it still does. There have been over 5,000 cures recorded but less than 100 of them have been declared miraculous by the Church. Most of these have taken place during the blessing with the Blessed Sacrament. Today we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. We may never travel to Lourdes and join in the processions, but we can know always that we have a Mother to help us and lead us to her Son, Jesus. And so we pray to her: Grant us, O merciful God, protection in our weakness, that we, who keep the Memorial of the Immaculate Mother of God, may, with the help of her intercession, rise up from our iniquities. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever. [www.loyolapress.com](http://www.loyolapress.com)

**Tax Receipts**

The 2023 donation tax receipts will be available for pick up the weekend of February 17/18. Any receipts that are not picked up, will be mailed the following week. Thank you



**WHAT IS LENT?**

Lent is a time of **prayer** and **penance**, when Christ wants to lead us back to our baptismal promises of **dying to sin** and of **living for God**.

**WHEN IS LENT?**

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and continues until the afternoon of Holy Thursday. It runs for about 40 days.

**WHY 40 DAYS?** The "40 days" (not including Sundays) of fasting, prayer, and penance before Easter reflect Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness.

**WHAT SHOULD WE DO DURING LENT?**

- 1. Turn away from our sins and turn back to God. Detach from habits and tendencies that are contrary to God's will. Lent is a time of conversion.
- 2. Open our hearts to our Father, so that we may live with Christ for God. Jesus is calling us to be people of praise and prayer, and living signs of his love for all.

**"This time of fasting opens the gates of heaven to us. Let us welcome it and pray that when Easter comes we may share the joy of the risen Lord."**  
LENTEN RESPONSORY