

Welcome to St. Mary of the Purification Parish

We are delighted you could join us for today's Mass

Tel: 519-323-1054 www.stmarymountforest.ca  

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

Parish Staff

Pastor Rev. Michael Anderson, P.P.
Bookkeeper Annette Connolly
Secretary Dee Dee Eurig
Custodian Virginia McComiskey
Music Dir. Rick Wildeman
Organist Melissa Van Stavern

Email:

manderson@hamiltondiocese.com
stmarybookkeeper@wightman.ca
stmarymtforest@wightman.ca

St. Mary of the Purification
 230 Queen St. E, Box 128 Mt.Forest



St. Peter's Mission
 943 Caroline St, Ayton NoG 1Co



St. Thomas the Apostle
 #5800 Hwy 89, Harriston NoG 1Zo



OUR 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 page 2 of the bulletin

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

Tuesday: 5:30 pm-6:30 pm or by appointment. Kindly contact the parish office.

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

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM:

Please contact the parish office.

PASTORAL CARE NEEDS:

Please contact the parish office if you require:
 - 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 of a loved one occurs in the family, please contact the parish office.

VOCATIONS &

RELIGIOUS LIFE: For information or assistance, see www.hamiltonvocations.com

DIOCESAN

NEWSLETTER: Visit the Diocese of Hamilton to subscribe to the online diocesan newsletter visit www.hamiltondiocese.com

PARISH SCHOOL:

St. Mary Catholic School



Mount Forest
 Building Character
 Through Christ

390 Parkside Dr, Mt Forest 519-323-2586

www.stmarymountforest.wellingtoncdsb.ca

PARISH REQUESTS:

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

ADORATION: 1st Friday every month after Mass. All are welcome!

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

Week of **March 30, 2025**



Fourth Sunday of Lent

Fri. Apr 4 7:00 pm *Stations of the Cross*
Sat. Apr 5 4:00 pm † People of the Parish
Sun. Apr 6 9:00 am † People of the Parish

Lectors

Sat. Apr 5 Susan Thurston
Sun. Apr 6 Debra Ross

CONFESSION: **Cancelled this week** Tue. 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm or call Fr Mike at 519-323-1054 ext.

ST. THOMAS, Harriston

Sat. Apr 5 5:30 pm † People of the Parish

ST. PETER'S, Ayton

Sun. Apr 6 11:00 am † People of the Parish

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

This Sunday's reading:

First Reading

Joshua 5:9a,10-12

The Israelites celebrate the Passover in the promised land.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalms 34:2-7

A prayer of praise to God.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Paul preaches our reconciliation with Christ.

Gospel Reading

Luke 15:1-3,11-32

Jesus teaches about forgiveness in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

Background on the Gospel Reading

The parable Jesus tells in today's Gospel is unique to the Gospel of Luke. Jesus has been teaching the crowds as he journeys to Jerusalem. As he teaches, the Pharisees and scribes complain and challenge Jesus because he is welcoming sinners at his table. Today we hear the third of three parables that Jesus tells in response to his critics. These three familiar parables—the lost sheep, the lost coin, and today's

parable of the prodigal son—invite us to consider the depth of God's mercy and love.

The Pharisees taught a scrupulous observance of Jewish Law. In their interpretation and practice, observant Jews who shared table fellowship with sinners would be made unclean. Like Jesus, the Pharisees hoped to lead sinners back to God. The Pharisees, however, required that sinners first become ritually clean—observant of the Pharisees' interpretation of Jewish Law—before sharing table fellowship. This appears to be one of the major differences between the Pharisees and Jesus. Jesus reaches out to sinners while they are still sinners, inviting them to conversion through fellowship with him. Jesus is God acting among us; by befriending us, he is inviting us to return to friendship with God. Through friendship with Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we, in turn, bear fruit for God. Recall last Sunday's Gospel and the barren fig tree.

Our familiarity with today's parable risks dulling us to its tremendously powerful message. We call this the parable of the lost son or the prodigal son. Any focus on the younger son, however, must also be balanced by an examination of the unusual behavior of the father.

First we must imagine our first response to the audacity of a son who asks for his inheritance before his father has died. Indignation would certainly be a justifiable response to such a request. Yet the father in this parable agrees to honor the son's request and divides his property among his two sons. How might we describe such a father? Foolish comes to mind, but so does trusting. Without property of his own, the father must rely upon his sons to provide for his well-being.

The younger son takes his inheritance and leaves home. The older son remains, continuing to provide for the father and the household. Having been disgraced by the younger son, the father spends some time watching the road for the return of the lost son. When he eventually sees his wayward son returning, the father not only welcomes him but also runs out to greet him and then honors him with a party. We say that this father is loving and forgiving. Yet these adjectives only begin to describe the depth of love and mercy that characterize the father.

We find no surprise in the anger of the older son. Yet the father appears sad and even confused by the older son's indignation. He says in reply that they should celebrate because the lost son had returned. The father is filled with gratitude and love for the

older son's faithfulness. This love is in no way diminished by the father's rejoicing at the return of the younger son. Yet the older son's jealousy reveals his limited understanding of the depth of his father's love.

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is traditionally called Laetare Sunday. Laetare is a Latin word that means "rejoice." Today's Gospel describes the reason for our joy: God's great love for us has been revealed in Jesus. Through his Passion, Death, and Resurrection, Christ has reconciled us with God and one another.

Family Connection

"Hey, that's not fair!" How many times have we heard this spoken in our family? Family members challenge one another's generosity, operating from the perspective of limited resources. If we have given to one, perhaps there won't be enough for the other. Jesus wants us to understand that this is not how it is with God's mercy and forgiveness. God offers his love to all of us in abundance. The forgiveness of the father in the parable is an image of God's love for us, generous beyond measure in his love for both of his sons. Can we truly believe that God acts this way towards us and accept his mercy without jealousy, knowing that God's love for another does not diminish his love for us?

As you gather as a family, talk about the words and phrases you speak to one another when angry. Identify words or phrases that reflect jealousy towards one another. Talk about why we sometimes feel jealousy towards one another. Read aloud today's Gospel, Luke 15:1-3,11-32. Talk about why the older brother is jealous of the younger brother. Identify words that the family members in the parable might say to one another to begin to heal their broken relationships. Make a family commitment to say these types of words and phrases to one another with greater frequency. Pray together the Lord's Prayer. www.loyolapress.com

The Month of March is Dedicated to St. Joseph



"A faithful man, shall be greatly praised; and he that is the keeper of his Lord, shall be glorified"



COFFEE SUNDAY

Please join us in the TD Smith Parish hall following mass on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of every month. All are welcome !



Holy Week Mass schedule

St. Mary of the Purification, Mt. Forest

Holy Thursday 7:00pm - Mass of the Lords Supper
 Good Friday 3:00pm - The Passion of the Lord
 7:00pm - Stations of the Cross
 Holy Saturday 8:00pm - Easter Vigil
 Easter Sunday 9:00am - Resurrection of the Lord

St. Peter's Mission, Ayton

Easter Sunday 11:00am -Resurrection of the Lord

Reconciliation

St. Mary of the Purification

By appointment only , please call the Parish office 519-323-1054

St. John's, Arthur

Confession is available after daily mass and first Friday of every month, and Saturdays from 2:30-3:00

Sacred Heart, Kenilworth

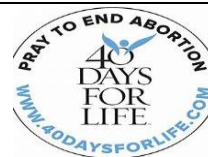
First Sunday of each month

St. Peter's , Durham

Tuesday 6:00 pm and Thursdays 8:45 before mass



DIocese of HAMILTON



40 Days for Life

Mass with Bishop Lobsinger

Wednesday, April 9 7:00 pm

40 Days for Life is a 40 day prayer vigil to pray for the ending of abortion from March 5-April 13, 2025

MINISTERIAL FORMATION THROUGH VLCCF

We are currently taking enrollment for the **Youth Ministry Certification Program** and the **Catechist Formation Program** for the Diocese of Hamilton, which begins in September 2025. Three and five-week e-seminars are also available at a discounted rate for all adults in the Diocese looking to further their learning. For more information about our programs, and how to register, visit us at www.hamiltondioceselearns.com.

VBS TRAINING FOR YOUTH LEADERS Many of our parishes are blessed to have teens and young adults involved in the preparation and leadership of Vacation Bible School experiences. The Office for Youth Ministry and the Office for Evangelization and Catechesis warmly welcome all youth leaders to a day of formation and training on Saturday, May 3rd, 2025. For more information please email: youthministry@hamiltondiocese.com

THE DIOCESAN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS – SAVE THE DATE! Are you celebrating your 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th, or 60+ Wedding Anniversary in the year 2025? You are cordially invited to join Bishop Crosby and couples from across the Diocese of Hamilton for a Wedding Anniversary Mass on **Sunday, June 1, 2025**, at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King in Hamilton at 1:30 pm. (Space allows room for Anniversary couples only - those married 60 years or more may bring one guest if you require assistance). Registration is found under Upcoming Events on the home page at hamiltondiocese.com.



Saint Francis of Paola Feast Day April 2nd

When Francis was 13, around the year 1429, he made a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi with his parents. He was so impressed that he eventually became a hermit in a cave overlooking the sea. Other men joined him. They took the name Hermits of Saint Francis of Assisi and followed the practices of the Franciscans, or the Franciscan Minim Friars. Minim meant they were “the least in the household of God.” To the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, Francis added a fourth vow: a perpetual Lenten feast. This order attracted many candidates.

Francis later felt God calling him to defend those who were poor and oppressed. He scolded King Ferdinand of Naples and his sons for their wrongdoing. In 1482, when King Louis XI of France was dying, he begged that Francis come to cure him. Francis at first refused, but Pope Sixtus IV ordered him to care for the king and prepare him for death. When the king saw Francis, he pleaded for a miracle. Francis rebuked him, saying that the lives of kings are in the hands of God. Francis restored peace between France and Great Britain and between France and Spain.

Francis died in the French court. Though his miracles were numerous, he was canonized for his humility and discernment in blending the contemplative life with the active one. www.loyolapress.com

What (is the Law of Fasting?)

1 Regular **meatless** meal and 2 small **meatless** collations which if added together would not exceed the main meal in quantity

No snacking between meals

What (is the Law of Abstinence?)

No meat (i.e., flesh and organs of mammals and fowls)

Fish and shellfish are allowed

Catholic Fortress
facebook.com/catholicfortress



Why do we Pray the Stations of the Cross?

The Stations of the Cross are an ancient tradition in the Catholic Church going back to the fourth century when Christians went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Like many of our Catholic traditions, the Stations of the Cross can be rich, deep, and meaningful, but at the same time we can lose sight of their significance and how to relate them to our everyday lives. Although the Stations of the Cross is a popular devotion, and while you may pray it with your parish every Lent, it's helpful to understand how praying the Stations of the Cross can affect not just your own faith, but your daily life.

