



# Welcome to St. Mary of the Purification Parish

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

Please visit our website [www.stmarymountforest.ca](http://www.stmarymountforest.ca)   Tel: 519-323-1054

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

### **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](mailto:manderson@hamiltondiocese.com)  
[stmarybookkeeper@wightman.ca](mailto:stmarybookkeeper@wightman.ca)  
[stmarymtforest@wightman.ca](mailto:stmarymtforest@wightman.ca)

**St. Mary of the Purification**  
 310 Parkside Drive ,Mt.Forest NOG 2L0



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



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



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

### **DIOCESAN**

**NEWSLETTER:** Visit the Diocese of Hamilton to subscribe to the online diocesan newsletter visit [www.hamiltondiocese.com](http://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](http://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 Wednesday before noon.**

## MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK



**Tue Dec 23 7:00 pm** † Arthur, Mary & John  
McDonald Req'd by The Family and  
† Intentions of Al Nolan  
**Wed Dec 24 8:00 pm** Christmas Eve Vigil  
**Thur Dec 25 9:00 am** Nativity of Our Lord  
**Fri Dec 26 9:00 am** No Mass  
**Sat Dec 27 4:00 pm** † People of the Parish  
**Sun Dec 28 9:00 am** † People of the Parish

### Lectors

**Sat Dec 27** Cesar Arruda  
**Sun Dec 28** Debra Ross

**RECONCILIATION:** Tue. evenings 5:30 - 6:30  
pm or by appointment, please call Fr. Mike at the  
Parish office 519-323-1054 ext.7

### ST. THOMAS, Harriston

**Wed Dec 24 5:30 pm** Christmas Eve Vigil  
**Sat Dec 28 5:30 pm** † People of the Parish

### ST. PETER'S, Ayton

**Thu Dec 25 11:00 am** Nativity of Our Lord  
**Sun Dec 29 11:00 am** † People of the Parish

## **This Sundays Reading:**

### **First Reading**

*Isaiah 7:10-14*

Ahaz proclaims the sign that the Lord will give: a virgin shall give birth to a son, Emmanuel.

### **Responsorial Psalm**

*Psalm 24:1-2,3-4,5-6*

The Lord is the King of Glory who established the earth.

### **Second Reading**

*Romans 1:1-7*

Paul greets the community at Rome and declares himself a servant of Christ Jesus.

### **Gospel Reading**

*Matthew 1:18-24*

An angel appears to Joseph, directing him to take Mary as his wife and telling him that the child she will bear will be called Emmanuel.

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

Finally, on this the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel Reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we

celebrate at Christmas: "Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about" (Matthew 1:18).

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective. Today's Gospel passage is the second movement in this story. In the preceding verses of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the Evangelist has listed the genealogy of Jesus, tracing his lineage through King David to Abraham. In the chapter to follow, Matthew tells of the visit from the Magi, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, and Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem. (The other stories which we associate with Christmas, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the angel and the shepherds, are found in the Gospel of Luke).

We must not gloss over too quickly the difficult circumstances described in today's Gospel. The way that Joseph and Mary face these circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their faith in God. Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married. This is sometimes described as an engagement period, but it is more than that. Betrothal in first century Jewish culture was in fact the first part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. Mary is found to be with child. If adultery is proven, the punishment might be death. Joseph has rights under Mosaic law, but chooses to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract, so as to protect Mary. Then God intervenes.

The message of the angel of the Lord given to Joseph in his dream tells us much about the child that Mary bears and his role in God's plan. He is conceived by the Holy Spirit. His name will be Jesus, which in the Hebrew means "Yahweh saves." He will be the fulfillment of the prophecy heard in today's first reading from Isaiah: ". . . The virgin shall be with child . . . and shall name him Emmanuel [God with us]."

Joseph does as the angel of the Lord directs. He takes Mary to be his wife and accepts the child in her womb as his own. Joseph and Mary are both cooperative with God's plan. They are both models for us of what it means to be faithful servants of God.

### **Family Connection**

Joseph and Mary are our models for family life and for service of God. Even when the circumstances seemed unclear, Joseph trusted God. Healthy family life is built upon trust, trust in God and trust of one another.

Spend some time talking as a family about the importance of trust in your family life, including the ways in which the children trust the adults in the family as well as the ways in which the adults trust the children. Then read today's Gospel. Talk about Joseph's trust of God and reflect together on how your family trusts in God.

Pray together that your family life will be built on trust, as was the family life of Joseph and Mary. Pray and sing together an Advent song, such as "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." [www.loyolapress.com/resources](http://www.loyolapress.com/resources)



Join us every 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month after mass in the parish hall for coffee and fellowship. All are welcome!

### **CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE**



#### **Christmas Eve - Wednesday Dec 24**

**St. Thomas, Harriston 5:30 p.m.**

**St. Mary of the Purification, Mt. Forest 8:00 p.m.**

#### **Christmas Day- Thursday Dec 25**

**St. Mary of the Purification, Mt. Forest 9:00 a.m.**

**St Peter's, Ayton 11:00 a.m.**

#### **New Years Eve - Tuesday Dec 31**

**St. Mary of the Purification, Mt. Forest 4:00 pm**

**St. Thomas, Harriston 5:30 pm**

#### **New Years Day Wednesday Jan 1<sup>st</sup>**

**St. Peter's, Ayton 11:00 am**

***HOPE-PEACE-JOY-LOVE***

### **CWL NEWS**

Please note that your CWL Dues are to be paid by January 15, 2026 \$40 per person. Thank you.

#### **Contributions December 14**

**St. Mary of the Purification: \$2342.75 ;  
Maintenance \$345**

**St. Peter Mission: \$320**

**St. Thomas Mission: \$160**

***Thank you for your continued donations. Your contributions are greatly appreciated as we seek to encourage all with God's Love and Word.***



**DIOCESE OF HAMILTON**

**CHRISTMAS YOUNG ADULTS NIGHT** During the Christmas Season, Fr. Mark Morley invites all young adults (ages 20s and 30s) of our diocese to attend an evening of prayer, fellowship and praise music in support of your vocations. The Young Adults Night includes a Holy Hour (6:30pm-7:30 pm), social with food (7:30pm-8:00pm), praise night with vocations testimony (8:00pm-9:00pm), and Compline (9:00pm) on **Saturday, January 3rd at Annunciation of Our Lord (280 Limeridge Road West, Hamilton)**. Sponsored by the Vocations Office of the Diocese of Hamilton: <https://hamiltondiocese.com/vocations/> For more information, please contact: [vocations@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:vocations@hamiltondiocese.com)

**RESTART: MOVING FORWARD** Have you experienced a divorce or separation? Are you looking to learn ways to cope, for support from others and to gain a feeling of moving forward? Our 10 week program offers education and support to anyone seeking to heal or simply learn more. The sessions will run **Tuesdays from Feb. 17 – April 21, 2026** from 7-9 pm and are held at the Chancery Office at 700 King St. West in person. Cost is \$35 for materials, but no one is turned away. Registration online can be found by going to [hamiltondiocese.com](http://hamiltondiocese.com) and looking for the date under Upcoming Events, or by contacting Sarah at 905-528-7988 ext. 2249 or at [familyministry@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:familyministry@hamiltondiocese.com).

**ENHANCING SELF-ESTEEM** This program provides the opportunity to increase awareness of yourself and to learn specific skills for building a positive self-esteem. It can help you to feel stronger in all areas of your life. Issues covered during the course include taking responsibility for your own thoughts and feelings, positive ways to behave assertively and setting realistic goals for your future. The program will run **Tuesdays from Feb. 17 – April 21** from 7-9 pm at the Chancery Office at 700 King St. West Hamilton. Cost is \$35 for materials. Registration online can be found by going to [hamiltondiocese.com](http://hamiltondiocese.com) and looking for the date under Upcoming Events, or by contacting Sarah at 905-528-7988 ext. 2249, or at [familyministry@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:familyministry@hamiltondiocese.com).



## Saint Peter Canisius Feast Day December 21

If you have too much to do, with God's help you will find time to do it all.

—Peter Canisius

For a half-century Jesuit Father Peter Canisius led the Catholic Reformation in Austria, Bavaria, and Bohemia. For that reason he is reckoned an apostle to Germany, second only to St. Boniface. With stupendous energy he preached and taught in parishes, reformed and founded universities, wrote many books including popular catechisms, restored lapsed Catholics, converted Protestants, preached retreats, and found time to care for the sick. In his last 30 years traveling more than 20,000 miles on foot or horseback, St. Peter Canisius spearheaded the renewal of the Catholic faith in southern Germany.

Peter Canisius revitalized Catholic life and teaching at universities in Ingolstadt and Augsburg. He founded new ones at Prague and Fribourg. In all four cities his preaching and catechizing won the hearts of Catholics and attracted nominal Protestants to the church. In Vienna his personal care for plague victims made him a most popular figure. Thus, when appointed diocesan administrator, he was in a position to revive the city's long decadent Catholic community.

After 1555, Peter Canisius published his famous Summary of Christian Doctrine and two smaller catechisms. These books generated the Catholic Reformation as Luther's catechism had spread Protestantism. Canisius's catechisms also helped launch the Catholic press. During the saint's lifetime they were translated into 15 languages and reprinted more than 200 times.

In the late 16th century, when open hostility typified relations between Catholics and Protestants, Peter Canisius advised charity and moderation. He opposed theological debates with Protestant leaders and, in general, discouraged discussion of Catholic distinctives such as indulgences, purgatory, and monastic vows with Protestants. He believed such efforts only heightened division and embittered relations. He articulated his views in this letter to his Jesuit superior:

It is plainly wrong to meet non-Catholics with bitterness or to treat them with discourtesy. For this is nothing else than the reverse of Christ's example because it breaks the bruised reed and quenches the smoking flax. We ought to instruct with meekness those whom heresy has made bitter and suspicious, and has estranged from orthodox Catholics, especially from our fellow Jesuits. Thus, by whole-hearted charity and good will we may win them over to us in the Lord.

Again, it is a mistaken policy to behave in a contentious fashion and to start disputes about matters of belief with argumentative people who are disposed by their very natures to wrangling. Indeed, the fact of their being so constituted is a reason the more why such people should be attracted and won to the simplicity of the faith as much by example as by argument.

In 1591, Peter Canisius suffered a stroke that nearly killed him. But he recovered and devoted himself to writing for six more years until his death in 1597.

## Celebrating Christmas until January 11, 2026

**The Christmas season continues until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord celebrated this year on Sunday January 11, 2025. We are all invited to celebrate the season of Christmas and to remember the many ways that God is made present in our midst and world. From Christmas Day until the Baptism of the Lord, the following prayer can be prayed when your family gathers for a meal.**

***“Father in heaven, you so loved us that you sent Your Son, among us as Savior and Lord. Fill us with Your blessing, that we may grow in love and continue to live our Christian faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.”***



**Merry Christmas! May the peace & blessings of Christmas be yours, and may the coming year be filled with happiness.**



**The Parish office will be closed December 25 until January 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will re open January 6th**