

# AVE

Newsletter of Saint Mary the Virgin Church

Hamilton Ontario      March 2026

Dear friends:

Ave! We bring you greetings and news from our parish, including the schedule of services through the coming months.

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends and acquaintances. We hope to see you and your friends at St. Mary's!

If you would like to receive the Newsletter through email; likewise if you would like to contribute information, news or stories to future newsletters, please contact the editor, Rt. Rev. William Renwick, [renwick@mcmaster.ca](mailto:renwick@mcmaster.ca).





As we move through Lent, Passiontide, and Holy Week we are engaged in an ever increasing spiritual purifying of our bodies and souls in preparation for the Easter feast. At the same time, though it often happens without our notice, we experience ever increasing hours of daylight. I encourage you to mindfully mark this increasing daylight as a symbol of your increasing spiritual purification, saying in that extra time each morning and evening, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of Light!"

Fr. Brandon Wild +

### In your Prayers

Of your mercy, please pray for: Brian Munro, John Burrows, Cynthia Renwick, Brian and Maribeth Curry, Andrew Span, Walter Raybould, James Gilroy, Erin, Fr. Richard Dove, Bonnie-Jean Foulds, and all those suffering and dying in wars and disasters, particularly in Ukraine.



## St. Mary's Regular Service Schedule

At St. George's Church, 134 Emerson Street

First Sunday of the month, 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer

Second through fourth (or fifth) Sundays of the month, 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion

### Special Services

(Traditional Mass in Latin and English unless otherwise noted)

Friday March 27, 10:30 a.m.: The Annunciation (Sarum)

Thursday, April 2, St. George's is hosting a Potluck at 5:00 p.m. followed by BCP Holy Communion at 7:00 p.m.,

Friday April 3 1:00 p.m. : The Passion according to Saint John and the Adoration of the Cross

Saturday April 4, 7:30 p.m.: The Vigil of Easter

Friday April 17, 10:30 a.m.: The Commemoration of St. Thomas./or feria (Sarum)

Thursday May 14, 10:30 a.m.: The Ascension (York)

Friday May 29, 10:30 a.m.: Friday in the Octave of Pentecost (Sarum)

# Extendicare

St. Mary's worships at Extendicare Nursing Home, 90 Chedmac Drive

First Thursday of the month, 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion and Anointing

NOTE: In April the service will be on the second Thursday, April 9

## Repentance

A sermon preached on the First Sunday of Lent, 2026, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

ON Septuagesima Sunday, in preparation for the season of Lent, I spoke about repentance, and divided it into 4 parts: firstly, contrition, which is recognizing that we have sinned, and feeling truly sorry for it; confession, that is, acknowledging our sins before God and others; faith, having trust in God's promises of forgiveness; and lastly, amendment of life, that we, accepting his forgiveness, turn from our wicked ways. Today I wish to revisit and put particular focus on the last two, faith and amendment of life.

There is a concept in psychology known as priming. If we prime some idea or concept or image in our mind, we can't help but think of it more, and also notice it more in the world around us. If a person is told not to picture a white bear, can you guess what is the first thing they conjure up in their mind? This is because the concept of a white bear is primed, so we automatically think on it and picture it, even though we were directed not to. Or, you may have noticed this happen to you: you learn a new word, and suddenly you see it every where and hear everyone saying it, even though you had never noticed any of this before. Again, this is because that word is primed in your mind, and so you notice it with ease.

Returning to repentance, I want to caution you against spending too much time on contrition and confession. I think there is a temptation, certainly for myself, to condemn and re-condemn myself for a bad thing done, or a good thing left undone. I know well the seven deadly sins; I go through them often, sometimes getting stuck in a loop. Like the white bear, or the new word, eventually, the sins are all I can think about, they become all I see and hear in the world; all I see in myself. And it is depressing.

Now I am not saying to give up on entirely on contrition and confession, rather reminding myself, and you, that when we have done those steps, we need to allow ourselves to move on from it.

There is a funny but appropriate moment that comes to my mind from one of my favourite TV shows, the Simpsons. Marge is talking to her husband Homer, and tells him how she still feels terrible for a thing that happened at a dinner party they hosted. She blames herself for it, and begins wondering if she should have served a different dessert, and so on. Homer says to her, “Marge you can’t keep blaming yourself, just blame yourself once and move on.”

It’s played for humour in the show, but Homer’s statement is profound to me. We need only recognize a particular sin once, we need only develop that particular feeling of contrition once, and we need only confess it once. Then it is done. Then it is time to immediately put our minds to faith in God, by recounting his promises. If we acknowledge our sin unto the Lord, he will forgive them (Ps. 32). As far as the east is from the west, so far hath God removed our transgressions from us (Ps. 103). I am he, saith the Lord, that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins (Isaiah 43. 25). As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways (Ezekiel 33. 11). And so many more like these can and ought to be remembered, and said aloud!

It is especially that last one, “Turn ye from your evil ways”, which compels us to the fourth step of repentance: amendment of life. I mentioned the seven deadly sins, but I deliberately did not name them—I don’t want them primed in our minds! But I will name the seven virtues: humility, charity, chastity, gratitude, temperance, diligence, and patience.

With these words primed in your minds, I hope it will be easier to recall how Jesus embodied them, and follow his example. How he, almighty and eternal God, humbled himself to become a frail and temporal man. To recall the charity he bestowed upon his hungry followers, letting them eat even on the Sabbath day. His moral chastity that was ever on display. The gratitude he expresses to God for the five loaves and two fish which became enough for five thousand, and when breaking bread and sharing the cup at the Last Supper. The temperance and self-control he displayed against the tempter as we heard in the Gospel lesson today (Matt. 4. 1). His diligence in carrying out only the will of his Father, as he said in the Garden of Gethsemane, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And lastly, his ultimate display of patience when he suffered for us upon the cross.

Humility. Charity. Chastity. Gratitude. Temperance. Diligence. Patience. Prime these words in your minds, that you may see these qualities everywhere in the acts done by others, and be encouraged to emulate them. Make your vow to God, that you wish to see these qualities in yourself, and beg for his help in giving you the strength to make that so.

Lent is a time of increased call for repentance. But do not mistake this, like I have sometimes done, as a call for carrying an increased burden of guilt. Reflect on your thoughts and actions, and move yourself to contrition over sins. Confess your sins to God. Then let the matter be entirely in God's hands. Have faith in his saving power, in his boundless capacity for forgiveness, and in his own desire for each of us make amendment of life.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Fr. Brandon Wild+



## Hamilton Schola Cantorum: Tenebrae

Wednesday April 1. 7:30 p.m. Hamilton Schola Cantorum will be singing Tenebrae (music of Healey Willan) at St. Jude's Church, 160 William Street, Oakville. All are welcome.



*O God, Lord of my heart,  
Live in me and help me to impart  
Goodness to everyone I meet,  
Help me your commandments to keep.*

*O God, Lord of my mind,  
Make my thoughts and words be always kind.  
Keep me always in your righteous way,  
And to be a help to others day by day.*

*O God, Lord of my soul,  
You shed your blood to make me whole;  
Keep my soul from sin, forever free,  
So I will dwell in you, and you in me.*

Enid M. Burrows

# Saint Mary the Virgin Independent Anglican Church

[stmarythevirginhamilton.com](http://stmarythevirginhamilton.com)

Please contact the clergy if you would like a call or a visit.

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