

AVE

Newsletter of Saint Mary the Virgin Church

Hamilton Ontario

August 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.



Ave! Greetings to all in the name of the risen Christ! All blessings are of the Lord, and we return thanks to him at all times. May God continue to bless each of you as we live in the light. You will now be noticing that each succeeding day is a little shorter than the previous one, and the night is a little longer. Let us take this as an encouragement to daily seek for spiritual guidance to follow the will of God in all things, and to more and more surrender all our difficulties to him each night, as we await the dawn that never ends.

Many thanks to all those who have expressed condolences on the death of my mother, Cynthia. Fr. Bandon conducted a most beautiful and fitting Requiem Mass in her honour, supported by the voices of Hamilton Schola Cantorum. Beautiful flowers were generously offered by the Luth family. Delicious refreshments were served after the mass. The Requiem Mass was of the Use of York; this was probably the first use of that mass in almost 500 years.

Fr. William Renwick +

In your Prayers

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





The Holy Ghost

A sermon preached on Pentecost, 2026.

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

WITH these words we invoke the all-powerful Trinity, our eternal God. Most of us, I believe, have a good idea of who the first person of the Trinity is, God the Father. Although the Father is beyond our comprehension in all ways, yet we can appreciate that somehow God the Father is fundamental to the existence of the universe, to the creation of heaven and earth, and to the existence of our souls. We see the beauty of the Creator reflected in nature all around us, and especially at this time of year. Yea, the trees of the forest and the flowers of the field themselves praise him as rejoicing they reach upward towards their Maker. And somehow the Father ensures the continuation and life of the universe for as long as it pleases him to do so.

Most of us, too, have a good idea of who the second person of the Trinity is, Jesus Christ, the Son. To be sure, Christ is literally the crux of our faith. Christ is the person by which God makes personal contact with mankind, the pride of his earthly creation. Christ is the person by which God declares his love for us. Christ is the person by which our redemption is made possible by the blood of the

Cross. Christ, begotten of the Virgin Mary, being fully God, was also fully man. Christ Jesus walked the earth, ate and drank with his disciples, spoke the wisdom of God, and healed the sick. He is represented in his humanity in countless images in paint, wood, stone, precious metal, and here in this church, in glass. We can form a picture of who Christ is.

But I dare say that few of us have such a clear idea of who the third person of the Trinity is. Yes, we can declare that he is the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit, but he seems vague and mysterious. He is hidden from our outward senses, and I would suggest that he is comparatively less thought of and less understood than the Father, the Creator, and the Son, the Redeemer. But the doctrine of the Holy Trinity proclaims him to be of equal glory, majesty and power with the Father and the Son.

Much could be said of the Holy Ghost, but today I would like to share with you some thoughts that I hope will make him more understandable and tangible to you.

I would like to suggest that the Holy Ghost typically manifests himself to us not as a thing, not as an object, but as dynamic action, by its nature intangible, but none the less real.

The Holy Ghost is a breath, a spirit, a feeling, an experience. In the beginning the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. The Holy Ghost is a spirit in the way that we humans have spirits. Our spirits are indefinable and intangible, and yet they are real.

And as we read this morning in the Acts of the Apostles, there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind . . . and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

Notions of this Holy Ghost can be as vague and mysterious as the descriptions are; cloven tongues of fire; strange tongues. But in order to form a clear and useful understanding of the Holy Ghost we need to take to heart the details and the implications of what we read, and more, we need to make them part of us.

We are not God, but when we act in the spirit of God, that is, when we surrender to the will of God, and become his servants: then the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost is within us and is real. We are not gods, but we serve God as his arms and legs, his tongue, his heart. God is love, and the Holy Ghost dwells in us when we show forth God's love to those around us.

Thus Jesus says of the Comforter, Ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him.

But this Holy Ghost is not always fully active in us in this world. We are constantly beset by challenges to fall away from the right path; to succumb to the temptations of the devil; to be less godly than we might be. Indeed, here on earth we exist in a spiritual battlefield between good and evil. And when through the grace of God we are winning the fight . . . when we are truly showing forth God's love in the world, and following his commands as our captain, then is the Holy Ghost working within us. The reality of this struggle as the principal object of our life was the impetus for C. S. Lewis to write his well-known novel *The Screwtape Letters*, in which a senior devil named Screwtape writes letters of advice to his nephew Wormwood, an apprentice devil, instructing him in the arts of temptation into wickedness, sin, and hell. In order to fully receive the power of the Holy Ghost, we have to fully relinquish our individual wills to that of God. We continue to fight this battle until our last breath.

The context of this spiritual battlefield is conveniently summed up for us in the seven heavenly virtues, that fight in opposition to the seven deadly sins: they form a basis for contemplation, repentance, and renewal.

Humility as against Pride; kindness against envy; patience against wrath; temperance against gluttony; chastity against lust, diligence against sloth, charity against greed.

In any one of these battles, the key to success is the giving over of our own will to the will of God; abandoning our reliance on our own powers, and resting in the power of God. And I think it is most helpful, in this battle, not simply to say that we should fight against those sins, by resisting, by defending; but more that we attack those evils with the heavenly virtues themselves; and so we can fight against our feelings of envy not just by repressing envious thoughts, but by actively engaging in kindness. We can fight against our feelings of selfishness and greed by acts of charity. When we do this, the Holy Spirit truly comes upon us, and we are empowered to follow the Lord, to do his will, to accept our own weakness for what it is, and to take hope and faith in the boundless mercy of God.

I encourage each of you, this day, and every day, to let the power of God work in you through the Holy Spirit, and that especially in the smallest of our actions, such as a friendly greeting, a helping hand, a word of encouragement, a silent prayer; because by building on these small actions of God's will, we allow ourselves to be more fully filled with the Holy Spirit, to do the greater things that we are called upon to perform in love: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, taking in the stranger, clothing the naked, visiting the prisoner, and for the sake of our God, suffering graciously, glorifying him in our lives, praising his holy name always.

I beseech you especially to recognize the working of the Holy Spirit when you come to church, and abandon all, giving yourself entirely to God in the adoration of the Holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

May ye know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. And unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

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

Fr. William Renwick +



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)

Tuesday September 8: The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Friday September 18: feria in the Ember days of September

Tuesday September 29: Saint Michael and all Angels

Friday October 16: Votive mass of the Cross

Wednesday October 28: Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles

Friday November 20: Saint Edmund, King and Martyr

Monday November 30: St. Andrew, Apostle

Friday December 18: feria in Advent

Christmas Eve Holy Communion (BCP English), Thursday December 24, 7:30 p.m.

* Note: St. George's will observe Christmas Day with Morning Prayer at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome.

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

Hamilton Schola Cantorum

Monday, October 26, 7:30 p.m.: Evensong, music of Richard Farrant (1525-1580)

Monday, December 7, 7:30 p.m.: Evensong, music of Charles Wood (1855-1926)

*Let God be your armour,
Let God be your shield:
Let Him help you always
To temptation not yield.*

*Cling to His words,
Hold on to His grace:
Fill your life with purpose
And at a steady pace.*

*For Jesus promised that
He should never leave nor forsake us:
So believe in His promises,
Especially when grief, or despair overtake us.*

*Put on God's armour
Each day of your life:
Then you will truly cope
With all troubles and strife.*

Enid M. Burrows

Saint Mary the Virgin Independent Anglican Church

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

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