Let us go forth in peace: In the name of Christ. Amen

My dear People:

Wrapp’d in His swaddling bands,
And in His manger laid,
The hope and glory of all lands
Is come to this world’s aid:
No peaceful home upon His cradle smiled,
Guests rudely went and came,
Where slept the royal Child.
—John Keble

It is really quite incredible how rapidly time passes us by. As I write these words I cannot believe that I am approaching my second Christmas at St. Mary’s, or that, within another month, I shall have been with you for two full years. In a sense the events of these past months have been as incredible as the passing of the time-span in which they have occurred. I could not have guessed almost two years ago that in such a short time the pulse of this parish would be so quickened, or that the evidence of new life would be so apparent. God has been exceedingly good, and the proofs of his goodness are all around us. Most significantly they are visible in the renewed spirituality of this parish, and in the deep seeking after holiness which is apparent in so many lives here. St. Mary’s has never minced any words in declaring the reasons for her existence, and God on his part has used this place as a means of calling men and women into a deeper relationship with Himself. The most marvelous realization of all is that He is doing it still. How wonderful it is that we can realize
this now, during the course of another Advent, and as we prepare for
the Feast of the Incarnation. And it is about that Feast that I want
to say a few words to you in this letter.

And the first thing I want to say is that the Feast of the
Incarnation is at its heart a celebration of the divine generosity of
our God. The Jewish and Christian experience of God's love is that
His arm is never shortened, and that, despite human weakness, grace
and redemption are freely given to mankind. Thus Malachi spoke
divine words to the people of his time: "I am the Lord, unchanging;
and you, too, have not ceased to be sons of Jacob. From the days of
your forefathers you have been wayward and have not kept my laws.
If you will return to me, I will return to you, says the LORD of
Hosts." Always it is the same, and God's word is never broken. And
so God is generous to a fault, for the divine generosity knows no
bounds.

And the second thing I want to say is that each one of us can
experience God's generosity in his own life. We can do this because
in Jesus Christ all that is of God has become visible in this world.
Christmas is our time of rejoicing that the very life of God has come
dwelt among us. God became Man. He did it once, and His doing
of it was for all time. And so John Keble could indeed write
that "the hope and glory of all lands is come to this world's aid." You
and I can find hope for the human condition because Incarnate
God has lived among us. We can aspire to heaven because Jesus in his
glorified humanity has raised our human nature into the life of the
Godhead Himself. Does God love you? Does He really care? The
Feast of Christmas is God's proclamation that He does. His is a love
which surpasses anything you have ever known. It can bring you
hope, and it can give you peace.

And the last thing I would say to you is that you should keep
Christmas with the Church. For the Feast we shall soon celebrate is
indeed "Christ's Mass." It does not begin until Christmas Eve, and it
continues until Epiphany. This Advent can be your opportunity to
engage in that spiritual preparation without which Christmas cannot
be known. Perhaps you will be attending our Advent Quiet Day with
Sister Carol Andrew, OSH. Perhaps you will go on retreat. At the
very least for Catholic Christians there is the matter of sacramental
Confession before the great feasts of the Church. Your preparation
for Christmas must surely take account of this.

My prayer for every member of this parish family, and for our
many friends, is that the Saviour of the world may renew your lives
this Christmasstide. God bless you always.

With my love in Christ,
EDGAR F. WELLS

"PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD"

The following is taken from the December, 1955, issue of AVE.
Written by the rector, Father Taber, it is a marvelous summary of
the character of the Advent season in the life of the Church.

By God's mercy we have come to another season of Advent. The
keynote sounded throughout this season might be said to be
preparation, - preparation for the coming of our Lord and Saviour
Jesus Christ. When He first took His journey from heaven to earth
and became Incarnate, the God-man, He was heralded by blessed
John Baptist who cried out "Prepare ye the way of the Lord: make
his paths straight." Now, since the Incarnate Lord came to be the
Redeemer for all mankind, His way is indeed the way of salvation.
We ourselves entered on that way when we were baptized and the
path continues until we reach journey's end in heaven itself.

It is possible, though not probable, that any of us might leave the
way of salvation. We are free to do so. All we need to do is to
despair of God's grace and to give up hope in His promises and to
determine to live as of ourselves and for ourselves in utter disregard
of God's honor and glory. It is essential therefore that we prepare
for our most holy Redeemer's coming to us that He may keep us
with Him in the way of salvation. He comes to lift us back again
onto that happy way in the Sacrament of Holy Penance when He
places at our disposal the merits of His Passion in the forgiveness of
sins, thereby restoring us to the highway from which we have deliberately slipped through our mortal sins. He comes to bring us home again when we have lost our way in the confusion and darkness of this world as He relights the path of salvation through fresh revelations from His Holy Gospel. He comes in each offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to give us Himself, His Body and His Blood, that we may be made strong enough to continue on the way of salvation through a necessary sacrifice of self and of self-love.

True, during the season of Advent, Holy Church reminds us of those great future realities, - death, judgment, heaven (by way of purgatory), or hell. None of us can avoid death or judgment but we may avoid hell and so be admitted to heaven which is the end of the way of salvation. We may avoid hell, everlasting damnation, by preparing for death and judgment. The best way to prepare for judgment is to prepare for our next confession and the best way to prepare for death is to prepare for our next communion. If we as faithful Catholics constantly, and not only occasionally, prepare for our confessions and communions, then we shall prove ourselves worthy of the application of the merits of the Passion of our blessed Saviour to our own souls. Whether here, or hereafter in purgatory, we shall be getting ready for the bliss of heaven and for the joy at the Last Great Day of hearing Jesus our Judge say “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” All this because with a series of good confessions and good communions and good meditations on the good news of the Gospel of Christ we shall be strengthened to love God as well as our neighbors and ourselves for God’s sake.

The Clergy and Staff of The Church of Saint Mary the Virgin extend to all our parishioners and friends their best wishes for A Most Happy and Blessed Christmastide.

LITURGICAL CHANGES THIS FALL

Now that Advent is here, it is perhaps time to make some comments on our liturgical usages at St. Mary’s, and to explain some of the minor changes that have occurred in our parish liturgy this fall. For more than a decade, St. Mary’s has led the way among Catholic churchmen in adapting the ceremonial usages of a venerable past to the new, and in some instances restored, rites of our Prayer Book. In doing this we have identified ourselves with liturgical reform throughout the Western Church. Ritual, of course, has to do with the things we say. It is a word we use to describe the set words or rites that are employed in the Church’s public worship. By contrast, ceremonial has to do with the things we do, and the ceremonies of the Church are the liturgical actions by which our rites are enfleshed and given form. The words we use at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in public worship are in the language of what our Prayer Book calls Rite I, and the ceremonies which provide the liturgical setting for that rite have over the years been refined to a beautiful simplicity in our usage here. To a remarkable degree, our worship at Solemn Mass combines formality with simplicity, and it does this while maintaining the essential dignity of all that we do. And it is a noteworthy achievement, I think, for a parish with the rich traditions of our own to be able to avoid fussiness where the details of our ceremonies are concerned. Our first job always is to maintain the excellence of our worship, and our second task is to ensure the intelligent participation of our people in this endeavor. The few changes that are taking place this fall will, hopefully, point in that direction.

The first area of change in our Sunday worship has to do with the introduction of periods of silence in the liturgical action. We have done this at two points in the Liturgy of the Word, after the singing respectively of the Lesson and the Epistle. Quiet and silence are not understood by our world today. If anything, we avoid them whenever we can. In Christian worship, periods of silence are used to induce reflection and meditation, and our use of silence in the liturgy should enable our people to reflect on the Word of God in
the readings for each week. And, after a half to three quarters of a minute of meditation, the words of the Gradual and Alleluia provide a further commentary on what we have just heard. I hope that this small change will be helpful to our people, and I should appreciate knowing your reactions to it.

Our second change involves something new and something old, and is intended to enrich our understanding of, and our participation in, the action of the Offertory. In the Western Rite today the laity share increasingly in this action, and we have had an Offertory Procession of both the elements and our alms for some years, with members of the congregation bringing the gifts to the Altar themselves. Beginning this Advent, the Offertory prayers are being said aloud by the Celebrant, and I am asking our people to respond to them in the following way:

Celebrant: Blessed art thou, Lord God of all creation.
Through thy goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the Bread of Life.

People: BLESSED BE GOD FOR EVER.

Celebrant: Blessed art thou, Lord God of all creation.
Through thy goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

People: BLESSED BE GOD FOR EVER.

In introducing these prayers, we shall be adopting custom now in use in many parishes like our own both in this country and in England, and hopefully their use will enhance our corporate sharing in the Offertory action. With this intention I am restoring as well the ORATE FRATRES which many of us will remember as part of Catholic usage many years ago. It is used extensively in Britain today, and will be used here immediately before the singing of the Sursum Corda.

Celebrant: Pray, brethren, that this my Sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty.

People: MAY THE LORD RECEIVE THIS SACRIFICE AT THY HANDS, TO THE PRAISE AND GLORY OF HIS NAME, BOTH TO OUR BENEFIT AND THAT OF ALL HIS HOLY CHURCH.

A third change, and last one for the present, has to do with the geographical locations where the Word of God is proclaimed to our people. For a long while we have been singing the lessons, including the gospel, at that place in choir which is closest to the people, and in general this has worked out very well. One senses that our main problem in any altering of this arrangement will be acoustical. At the same time it seems desirable for our readers to be placed as close to the congregation as possible, so that in actual fact God’s Holy Word can be proclaimed not only to but among his people. This we are attempting to do, and you will notice that a lectern has been placed part way up the nave for the singing of the Lesson and the Epistle. We will see over the next month or two how well this works out. And, most significantly of all, we are bringing the Book of the Gospels into the nave as well, and will be singing the Gospel therefore in an appropriate place in the midst of the people. As with the Lesson and the Epistle, we will see how this new positioning of things works out. If desirable, we can change things again, or even return to our former custom in this regard. In any case, please know that these and any other changes are not taking place just so that we can experiment with the liturgy. In all that we do here, we are mindful of the quality of our worship and the intelligent participation of our people.

EDGAR F. WELLS

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DO YOU MAKE A PARISH PLEDGE to St. Mary’s? Our parishioners should, and your pledge card should have been sent to you. We are grateful as well for the supplementary giving by our Friends over and above their commitments to their own parish churches.
MUSIC FOR DECEMBER

Dec. 7 – ADVENT II
Missa Brevis . . . . . . . . . . . William Walton (b. 1902)

Dec. 8 – CONCEPTION BVM
Messe de Nostre Dame . . . . Guillaume Machaut (1300-1377)

Dec. 14 – ADVENT III
Missa in dei tribulationis . . . . . McNeil Robinson (1979)

Dec. 21 – ADVENT IV
Missa Brevis . . . . . . . . . . . Lennox Berkeley (b. 1903)

Dec. 24 – NATIVITY – MIDNIGHT MASS
Messe de Minuit . . . . . . . . . . . Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1634-1704)

Dec. 25 – NATIVITY
Studentenmesse . . . . . . . . . . . Antonio Lotti (1667-1740)

Dec. 28 – CHRISTMAS I
Missa Ich stund an einem Morgen . . . Jacob Handl (1550-1591)

The season’s retrospective of 20th century English settings of the Eucharist, in which Nicholas Jackson’s Mass was presented in October and William Howells’ Missa aedis Christi in November, continues in Advent with Masses of Sir William Walton and Lennox Berkeley. These two composers, both born at Oxford at the beginning of this century, achieved their characteristic musical expression through continental rather than British influences. Their Masses, presented on Advent II and IV, are in both cases works of maturity.

At the Feast of the Immaculate Conception the Messe de Nostre Dame of Guillaume de Machaut will add sonorities from the 14th century to St. Mary’s patronal celebration. The hockets and isorhythm which characterized the new style (ars nova) of this earliest signed setting of the ordinary of the Mass when it was written 600 years ago have become new again to our unaccustomed ears.

McNeil Robinson’s Missa in die tribulationis, first performed in Lent last year, is the Mass for Advent III; and the fresh and joyful setting based on a folksong, Ich stund an einem Morgen, by Jacob Handl, is the Mass for the First Sunday of Christmastide.

For Christmas Eve, the kindest feast, Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s Messe de Minuit will be presented with the organ improvisations which are a structural element of this elegant baroque composition. Other special music for the First Mass of Christmas is marked festive, do not open before. You will remember from other Christmas Eves, however, that starting with the organ prelude at eleven p.m. there will be a great outpouring of Christmas spirit in music as in all aspects of this happy time. Music at the Third Mass of Christmas will be a traditional Christmas morning presentation – the Studentenmesse of Antonio Lotti.

St. Mary’s musicians add their love to the spirit filling the worship of all the parish as Advent waits the coming of Christmas in joyful expectation.

N.S.

CONTRIBUTIONS to AVE are gratefully acknowledged:
Mr. John Britt, $5; Clarice Van de Geer, $6; Mr. Francis Jones, $5; Mr. T. F. Davies Haines, $5; Margaret Johnke, $5; Mr. Gary Williams, $5; Mr. Leroy R. Sharer, M.D., $10; Nellie Small, $10; Mr. Richard Rodgers, $10; Aricha T. Harker, $7; Mr. Richard Weiss, $20; Mr. Emil Denworth, $5; Miss Katherine Sherwood, $3; Mr. John Vilchek, $5; Mrs. Joseph Conti, $5; Mr. Philip Parker, $2; Miss Mabel Lewis, $2; Miss Elizabeth Sherwood, $5; Mrs. Ruth Brower; Mr. J. Harrison Walker, $5; Florence MacKay Kopko, $10; The Rev’d Whitney W. Gilbert, $5; The Rev’d Richard Shields, $6; Mrs. Dorothy T. Hall, $10; Mr. William H. Decker, $10.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

RECEIVED BY CANONICAL TRANSFER

"And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread and the prayers.”

September 30 – Doris J. Weller
ANGELUS DOMINI

Recently, a clerical visitor to Saint Mary's remarked on how wonderful it was to hear the Angelus being rung from Saint Mary's tower bell as he walked through the secular bustle of Times Square one noontime. The Angelus is an ancient devotion centered on the Incarnation, which is said morning, noon, and evening to the accompaniment of church bells. It only takes a few moments, but they are moments dedicated to the central facts of our existence as Christians. The angel of the Lord announced unto Mary... With this angelic salutation, Mary - and with Mary all humanity - first became aware of God's amazing plan of redeeming mankind: that He should Himself become man. The first act is God's. He takes the initiative to bring us back to Him. The Incarnation is not something man could have thought up on his own, much less done anything about. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost... What God has announced by His angel, He does by Himself. His word is His act. Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it unto me according to thy word... This is the human response to God's act. Mary - and with her all of us - yields herself to God to accept his offer of salvation. She might have said, “Find someone else.” But she did not: by her obedience she undid the disobedience of Eve, by her consent allowing God to become incarnate. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us... Jesus, man and God, is God's act and Mary's response. Our salvation is manifest in Jesus. We know God; we know that we are loved by God; we are brought to God to dwell with Him, in Jesus, the Word made flesh. The Angelus sums up all this as we recite it publically or privately day by day. We recall our being as Christians, based as it is on Jesus, God Incarnate. And in these moments of recollection, we rededicate ourselves to our calling, that “like as He did humble Himself to share in our humanity, so we may be made worthy to share in His divinity.” Pause and recite the Angelus should you hear it being rung someplace. And if you do not regularly hear it rung, make it a part of your regular daily devotions, when you arise in the morning, or when you hear the clock strike noon or six, or before supper, or at some other time of your day. If you should hear the bells when you are in Times Square, know that Saint Mary's proclaims Christ, the Word made flesh, has come to redeem the world.

The Reverend Philip Bradley is scheduled to be ordained to the Sacred Priesthood at Saint Mary's on the first Sunday after Christmas, December 28th, at the 11 o'clock Mass. Father Bradley has been serving at Saint Mary's as a Deacon for more than a year. He is to be ordained by the Right Reverend J. Stuart Wetmore acting for the Bishop of Oregon. We most cordially invite all our parishioners and friends to come and celebrate with Father Bradley on this occasion.

A CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPE is being enclosed in this issue of AVE. Will you use it, please, as a means of thanking God for all that this parish means to our Church and in your own life? Your generous gift will mean more to us than we can say.

ALTAR FLOWER MEMORIALS

December 8 - Conception BVM, Departed Trustees of Saint Mary's; Virgil Evans Pyle
December 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY, Thomas McKee Brown, priest, founder, and first Rector
December 28 - The First Sunday after Christmas Day; Viola Sadowsky; The Cadney & Stringham Families

1981 Ordo Kalendar

For the 1981 Ordo Kalendar, we are returning to the Ashby Calendar Company because Father Donald L. Garfield, our Rector Emeritus, was the editor instead of the American Church Union, which had previously been responsible. Father Garfield was on the Standing Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Church and had much to do with the Rite I services in the new Book of Common Prayer. The photograph, in two colors this year, will be of the large calvary just inside the doors of St. Mary's. Order from St. Mary's Bookshop; price $2.00; add 50 cents for mailing and postage. New York residents, please add appropriate sales tax.
PARISH NOTES

The Trustees of Saint Mary's are pleased to announce the election of Mr. Courtlandt Nicoll to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Nicoll is an attorney, formerly Assistant District Attorney of New York County, and presently in private practice.

Saint Mary's Patronal Feast, the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, will be celebrated with a Solemn Pontifical Mass and Procession at 6 p.m. on December 8th. The retired Bishop of New York, the Right Reverend Horace Donegan will pontificate. We look forward as well to welcoming as preacher the Reverend Leslie Lang, an old friend of Saint Mary's, currently an honorary assistant at Saint Thomas Church, Manhattan.

An Advent Quiet Day has been scheduled for Saturday, December 13th, 10-3, in the Church. Addresses will be given by Sister Carol Andrew of the Order of Saint Helena. This is an opportunity for all our parishioners and friends to take a little time out from the pre-Christmas rush, to be quiet and prepare for our Lord's coming.

Moving ahead, the annual parish Christmas party is to be held in the Rectory on December 27th. All of our parishioners, and any of our Friends who might be in town at that time are most cordially invited.

DONATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Donations, given in addition to regular and Christmas contributions, will be gratefully accepted to help offset the extra expense incurred in producing the special music at the Christmas services. Please make payment to the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin — Special Music Fund, in care of the Church. Those who have pledge envelopes will find a special envelope provided for this purpose.

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER

1. M. SAINT ANDREW THE APOSTLE
2. Tu. Channing Moore Williams, Missionary Bishop in China & Japan, 1910
3. W. St. Francis Xavier, Priest, 1552
4. Th. St. John of Damascus, Priest, c. 760
5. F. Clement of Alexandria, Priest, c. 210
7. Su. ADVENT II
8. M. THE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Procession & Solemn Pontifical Mass, 6
9. Tu. Requiem
10. W. Requiem
11. Th. The Consecration of the Church, 1895 (Our Lady of Guadalupe)
12. F. St. Lucy, Martyr in Sicily, 304
13. Sa. ADVENT III
14. Su. Requiem
15. M. Requiem
16. Tu. Ember Day
17. W. Ember Day
18. Th. Ember Day
19. F. Ember Day
20. Sa. Ember Day
21. Su. ADVENT IV
22. M. SAINT THOMAS, APOSTLE (transferred)
23. Tu. Vigil
25. Th. SAINT STEPHEN, DEACON AND MARTYR Abstinence dispensed
26. F. SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST
27. Sa. FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS Procession & Solemn Mass, 11
28. Su. THE HOLY INNOCENTS (transferred)
29. M. St. Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, 335
30. Tu.
31. W.
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<td>9,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Purposes</td>
<td>-0-</td>
<td>-0-</td>
<td>1,183.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>-0-</td>
<td>-0-</td>
<td>2,062.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</td>
<td>$195,220</td>
<td>$146,415</td>
<td>$185,777.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Deficit</td>
<td>$(20,220)</td>
<td>$(15,165)</td>
<td>$(49,612.36)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Organ Renovation for which funds are being raised through a special appeal. $5,000 of the raised funds was temporarily invested in capital funds.

GIFTS TO CAPITAL - January 1, 1980 - September 30, 1980

SUNDAYS
- Morning Prayer: 10:30 a.m.
- Mass: 8:00, 9:00, 10:00 a.m., and 5:00 p.m.
- Church School: 9:50 a.m.
- Solemn Mass with Sermon: 11:00 a.m.
- Evensong and Benediction: 6:00 p.m.

WEEKDAYS
- Morning Prayer: 7:40 a.m. (11:45 a.m. Saturdays)
- Mass daily: 8:00 a.m.,* 12:10 and 6:15 p.m.

*Except Saturdays
- Evening Prayer: 6:00 p.m.

FIRST THURSDAY
- Holy Hour: 7 p.m.

CHRISTMAS CONFESSIONS

Wednesday, December 24th
- 5-6 Father Ousley
- 10-11 Father Wells, Father Scott

CORRECTION

In the November AVE item on wills, the legal address of Saint Mary's for use in making bequests was given as 133 West 46th Street. It should be 145 West 46th Street.
DIRECTORY

CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
139 West 46th Street, New York
(East of Times Square, between 6th and 7th Avenues)
Church open daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
except Saturday, open from 11 a.m.

RECTORY
144 West 47th Street, New York
THE REVEREND EDGAR F. WELLS, Rector
THE REVEREND DAVID A. OUSLEY, Curate
(212) 757-6750

PARISH OFFICE
145 West 46th Street, New York, New York 10036
Office hours from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday-Friday, except legal holidays
(212) 757-6750

The Rev'd John L. Scott .......................... 575-9214
Mr. J. Henson Markham, Treasurer ............ 757-6750
Mr. McNeil Robinson, Director of Music ...... 921-2939
Mr. Benjamin B. Mayo, Head Usher .......... 982-6016
Mr. George H. Blackshire, Hospitality .... 858-5797
Mr. Otto Meyn, Sexton ......................... 757-3962
Mr. Martin Moore, Tours ..................... 834-1565
Miss Virginia O. Greene, Bookshop .......... 673-0159
Mr. Ralph M. Morehead, Funeral Director .... 744-2500

The Church of Saint Mary the Virgin depends on the offerings of parishioners and friends. Pledge envelopes may be obtained from the Parish Secretary. Your support is appreciated.

THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
New York City

CLERGY

THE REVEREND EDGAR F. WELLS, Rector
THE REVEREND DAVID A. OUSLEY
THE REVEREND JOHN L. SCOTT
THE REVEREND DONALD L. GARFIELD, Rector Emeritus

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

THE REVEREND EDGAR F. WELLS, President
G. EDWARD MUELLER, Vice President
PHILIP W. CALLANAN, Secretary
J. HENSON MARKHAM, Treasurer
IRVING P. GRAEB, JR.
JAMES P. GREGORY
JOHN Z. HEADLEY
RAY KIRBY
COURTLANDT NICOLL
CHARLES ARTHUR SCHAEFER

Parish founded 1868
Church built 1894

***

REMEMBER SAINT MARY'S IN YOUR WILL
BEQUESTS may be made in the following form:
"I hereby give, devise, and bequeath to the Society of the Free
Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, a corporation organized and
existing under the laws of the State of New York, and having its
principal office at 145 West Forty-sixth Street, New York City,
[here state the nature or amount of the gift]."