

July-Aug., 1985

AVE

VOL. LIV, No. 4



THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
New York City

AVE

Church of Saint Mary the Virgin
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New York City 10036

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A Bulletin of
THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
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VOL. LIV

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July 1st, 1985

My dear People:

As you know, the Easter Vigil is made especially wonderful for us at St. Mary's because of the Visitation that one of our bishops makes to the parish each year on that occasion. There are always people to be confirmed or received, and on several Vigils in recent years there have been children or adults to be baptized. This year our Visitor was the Rt. Rev'd Stuart Wetmore, the senior Suffragan of our Diocese, and his coming to us was the more joyful because of his recent celebration of twenty-five years in the episcopate. Perhaps, too, there was a hint of sadness, for Bishop Wetmore has retired this spring, and with his retirement there passes from the scene a man who has always been extraordinarily sensitive to the pastoral needs of the clergy and people of New York.

Moreover, Bishop Wetmore preached an Easter sermon at St. Mary's this year that was incredibly beautiful and complimentary where St. Mary's was concerned, and he wrote me later that he had meant every word of it, and he sent me a copy of what he had said, asking that it be preserved for our parish archives. I reprint it for you here.

On this Holy Night I greet you all in the name of the Risen Lord - in the name of the clergy and people of the Diocese of New York in this our 200th Anniversary Year - and in the name of the clergy and people of this congregation of St. Mary the Virgin.

A large percentage of the people who make up this congregation for this Easter Vigil are not regularly here and have not taken part in the struggle that has gone on in recent years to assure the present and future ministry of the Church in this historic place. What has happened is remarkable

nothing short of a miracle on Forty-Sixth Street. It has been accomplished by much caring, much hard work, much loving, much giving and much careful administration. And all this struggle needs to be continued. It needs your help.

The miracle is continuing, and on this Holy Night I greet Father Edgar Wells and the many clergy and laity who are working together to make this miracle come alive. What is happening here deserves much more attention than it has so far received. I invite you to study the facts, the hopes, the growth, and take your part in this miracle.

Bishop Wetmore wrote me these words in a letter dated April 25th, and this therefore is the first opportunity I have had to share them with you in the pages of *AVE*. I know they will thrill you as much as they have me, and I believe deeply that all of us together must thank God for his renewal of this place, and for his grace in each of our lives that has enabled this miracle to occur among us. Grace, though freely given, is never bestowed without an end in view, and I am sure that you and I must see this evidence of God's favor among us as a sign that in this parish the Catholic faith is deeply believed, the Catholic life is truly lived, the worship of the ages is beautifully and unfailingly offered, and our Christian mission to serve the world is accepted and made evident by our presence in this city. And if all of this is the case, and if our Bishop Suffragan can speak as graciously of us as he did this Easter past, then I can only think that the vision of our Father Founder, Thomas McKee Brown, is in some degree a reality in our midst. And for it all we must indeed thank God.

And now of course we are once again in the middle of a long, hot, New York summer, and it is, as usual, an exciting one for us. The point of transition from spring to summer seems always for me to be the Feast of Corpus Christi in June, and our celebration this year was unusually lovely, with Brother John Charles coming to us from the Franciscan Friary at Little Portion to celebrate Pontifical Mass and to preach. I always think, as we carry Our Lord in procession around the Church, how much the people of this city need the grace and healing that only he can bring. Which of course is why we are here. Corpus Christi reminds us that our Lord's Eucharistic Presence is part of the mystery of the Church itself, for in both we see the power of the Incarnation in the world of time and space. Yes, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, lifted

among us and worshipped by the faithful. And, yes also, Jesus in the streets of our city, in lives of loneliness and often despair, reaching out always to the world which he has redeemed.

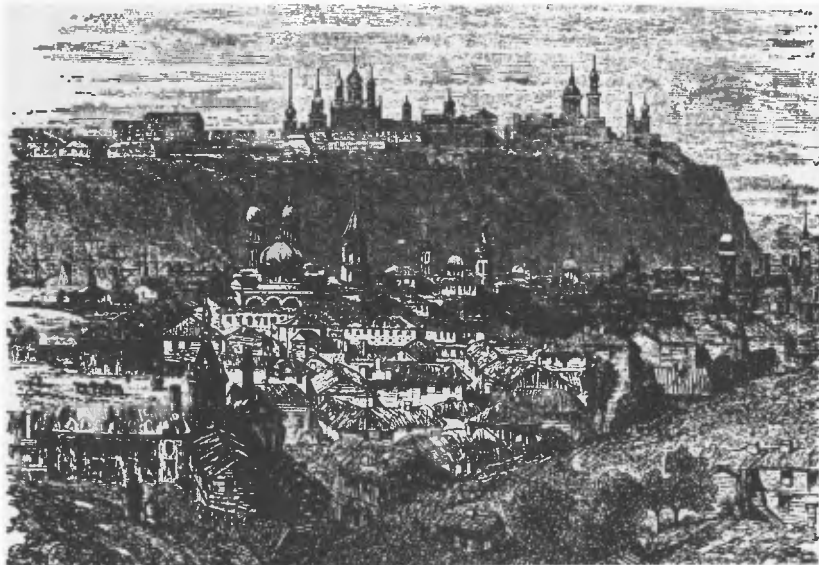
Let me finish this epistle by reminding you of the great liturgical event of the summer months here, the Feast of Our Lady's Assumption, August 15th. As usual, our Solemn Mass will be at 6 PM, and I am grateful to Father Sloane for having invited my former pastor, the Bishop of Chicago, to preach for us on the occasion. It is the case of the curate having beaten the rector to the punch, in this instance (having been asked by the rector in the first place to arrange for our Assumption Day preacher this year!). But I am delighted that Bishop Montgomery will be with us. He was the mentor of my seminary years, he has been my Father in God during much of my priesthood, and he continues as one of my dearest and finest friends. I hope that many of you will be here on August 15th.

With this letter go my love and prayers for you all.

Ever faithfully,

Edgar F. Wells





A JOURNEY OF FAITH

This past Eastertide a group of Anglican clergy and laity went to the Soviet Union as guests of the Metropolitan of Odessa for the prime purpose of sharing in the celebration of the Orthodox Easter by the Russian Church. Their journey took them first to Leningrad, where they visited the Orthodox Theological Academy and Seminary in that city, then on to Odessa, where they kept Easter and visited with Metropolitan Sergey and some of the faculty of the Theological Academy there, and finally to Moscow, from which they made the short trip to the great Monastery of the Holy Trinity at Zagorsk, venerating the relics of St. Sergius in that place and meeting with one of the seminary faculty members there. The trip, itself a pilgrimage and journey of faith, was organized by Trinity Church, Wall Street, in New York, though the participants came from various parishes across the country. One of them, our good friend Father Robert Hunsicker, suggested to Father Wells that he join the pilgrimage, and ultimately Father Wells and Louise Garmy represented St. Mary's on the tour. The following is Father's account of that trip.

It was a cold, clear day, with the temperature in the mid-50's, when our Intourist bus brought our group of twenty-two pilgrims

from Moscow to the town of Zagorsk, located along one of the outer rings of the modern Soviet capital. The journey, probably no more than forty-five minutes in duration, took us along a modern road through relatively flat but heavily forested countryside, mostly deserted but occasionally providing a view of several *dachas*, small homes that are privately owned on public land, and to which many city dwellers like to retreat for their weekends when they are able. I could not help but think of how remote Zagorsk must have been in the Fourteenth Century when, in 1340, a young man named Sergius went into the forests with his family to escape the recurrent civil strife of Medieval Russia, and at Zagorsk established a monastery that became the center of renewed religious life among the Orthodox population. St. Sergius, as he eventually became, was one of Russia's greatest mystics, and in the course of his life he rallied the Russian people to a new devotion both to the Orthodox faith and to what today we would call a kind of Russian nationalism. An illustration of the intimate connection between the development of Russian national unity and Russian religious belief can be found in the use of a single Russian word, *pravoslavnye*. In its modern usage it simply means *Orthodox* in the sense of belonging to the Orthodox Church. Up until the Russian revolution it was synonymous with the word, *Russian*, so that to be Russian was ipso facto to be Orthodox. Perhaps, I thought, this is why the Monastery of St. Sergius has outlasted Czars and Commissars, and continues as the focal point of Russian Christianity to this day.

All of this went through my mind as we approached Zagorsk, but even with this I was not prepared for what awaited us. Approaching the town, with uninteresting textile factories on either side as we grew closer to our destination, I could see in the distance the onion domes of the various churches within the monastery complex, all of them gilded and gleaming in the sun, and towering above them was the slender spire of the great belfry, with three tiers of bells at the top. And then suddenly we were there, and all of us, the priests in cassocks (as we were for our visits to each of the three "working" seminaries, and to the Cathedral of the Dormition in Odessa for the Easter Vigil), walked towards the great pilgrims' gate through which countless men and women before us had gained access to this holy place. At the gate itself we stopped, and together we read the 122nd, the 134th, and the 100th

psalms, beginning with the words, *I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord.* We then prayed the Collect of St. Sergius from *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*:

O God, whose blessed Son became poor that we through his poverty might be rich: Deliver us, we pray thee, from an inordinate love of this world, that inspired by the devotion of thy servant Sergius of Moscow, we may serve thee with singleness of heart, and attain to the riches of the age to come...

and, finishing the Collect, proceeded through the great gate into the holiest shrine in Russia. I wish I could describe for you the emotions of that moment. As we entered the monastery grounds bells began ringing all over the place. I really had never heard anything quite like it. Of course we thought at first that perhaps this was a welcome for the Anglican pilgrims, but very quickly we learned otherwise. During Easter week, and during the daylight hours, the bells are rung every hour on the hour in celebration of our Lord's resurrection. And they are rung manually, for we could see seminarians high up in the belfry who had been appointed to this task.

Once inside the monastery grounds we were escorted to a reception center where we were greeted by one of the priest monks, Father Vladimir. He was young, as had been the faculty members we met in Leningrad and again in Odessa, and we became aware in the course of our travels that many young people in the Soviet Union today are finding in the Church the source of their religious and national roots. Father Vladimir spoke to us in Russian, with the aid of an interpreter, and in the end quoted a long series of scriptural verses to us in the English of the Authorized Version of the Bible. We were delighted. But the thing that touched us most was his understanding of the historical links between Anglicanism and the Russian Church going back to the Eighteenth Century. We were obviously representatives of a Christian Communion that has been held in deep affection by the Orthodox Church in Russia.

Leaving the reception center, Father Vladimir took us on a tour of the monastery grounds, during the course of which several of us stopped at the holy well near one of the chapels, from which pilgrims have drawn waters of healing since St. Sergius's lifetime.

Louise and I brought some of that water home with us, and it has been used during the Asperges at High Mass here on several occasions since then.

But most wonderfully of all we were able to visit the Shrine of St. Sergius itself, and there to venerate the relics of Russia's patron saint. I wrote in our last issue of *AVE* of my desire to visit Lenin's tomb, a place that is visited with some of the same devotion, and by millions more people, than the Christian shrine at Zagorsk. I never did get to Lenin's tomb. The lines of people were too long, we ourselves did not have the time, and I could only marvel that so many people could wait for endless hours to view the mortal remains of a man whose political philosophy has brought such turmoil to our world. Perhaps it was just as well. Our trip was not undertaken for political purposes. And Zagorsk, removed from Moscow and current political ideologies, will no doubt still be there when our causes of international tension have long since passed into history.

At least that is the way it seems to me. Through revolution and civil war, and continuing on through the Second World War itself, known to Russians as the Great Patriotic War, devotion at the Shrine of St. Sergius has continued unabated. It continues to this day. All day long, every day, the pilgrims arrive, and at the Shrine itself all one hundred fifty psalms are chanted over and over again by those who have journeyed to this spot. St. Sergius does indeed intercede for Russia. Leaving his shrine, we moved on to the seminary chapel where the student body was in the process of singing *Great Vespers*. I think I have never heard such singing in any seminary chapel before. It was magnificent. And pointing to the choir gallery at the rear of the chapel, and indicating there the presence of a large group of young seminarians, Father Vladimir told us that we must not for one minute worry about the future of the Russian Church. "There," he said, "is our future."

There is so much else that I could write you at this time about our Journey of Faith this spring. The Shrine of St. Xenia in the Smolensky Cemetery in Leningrad is but one case in point. So far as we could discover, Blessed Xenia was a bag lady in St. Petersburg who lived at the turn of the last century, and she went about the great metropolis caring for the sick and the indigent. Though not yet canonized by the Russian Church, she is the

unofficial patron saint of the city of Leningrad. Her burial spot is in the Smolensky Cemetery. No guides took us there but Father Hunsicker and I were able to find it, hidden away among other grave markers, surrounded by a wooden fence to which people had attached prayers and petitions. No signs pointed to it, and the Leningrad city authorities have as yet made no move to destroy it, and yet people know about it by word of mouth. Snow still covered everything when we visited the place, and yet there were fresh flowers at various points along that fence, and one or two people were saying their prayers when we arrived. Word of mouth is the means of religious communication in the Soviet Union today. Religious proselytizing is absolutely forbidden. And yet, out of a population of 276,000,000 people, it is estimated that there are 50,000,000 active members of the Russian Orthodox Church today.

Is there, then, religious freedom in the Soviet Union today? As with so many questions asked by Westerners, the term has no meaning whatsoever within the context of Soviet life. We mean different things entirely when we use identical words and phrases. One thing the members of our small group of pilgrims learned very quickly to do, though not always without some difficulty, was to suspend judgment entirely where our own views and presuppositions were concerned. Only in that way could we assimilate even rudimentally some of the realities of that extraordinary complex and mysterious society.

The real question, then, ought to be, is there religious belief in the Soviet Union today? And the answer must be a resounding yes. What I think we witnessed during our short time in that country was the persistent durability of the things of the spirit in a society which ostensibly has ridden itself of the supernatural preoccupations of its past. The very fact that religion exists, the very fact that we were able to share in the religious encounter of people who have survived experiences that are beyond our ken, is in itself proof of the power of the Christian gospel within that country today.

Would I return to the Russian Church for another visit, should the opportunity present itself? Indeed I would. And I will carry with me for many months to come the experience that was shared by the priests in our group as we departed from the Cathedral of the Dormition of Our Lady in Odessa that Easter

night. People, of course, had seen us. They knew we were Westerners, and they knew we were priests. As we passed through the crowds of worshippers at the conclusion of the Easter liturgy, many men and women reached out to touch us, and sometimes to receive our blessings. And as they did so they called out the ancient Easter greeting, *Christos voschresnye*, Christ is risen! And as we blessed them, and as we handed out Easter holy cards that had been printed at the Convent of our Sisters of St. Mary at Peekskill, we returned their greeting as best we could. *Voyistinyu voschresnye*, He is risen indeed!



THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION



Thursday, August 15

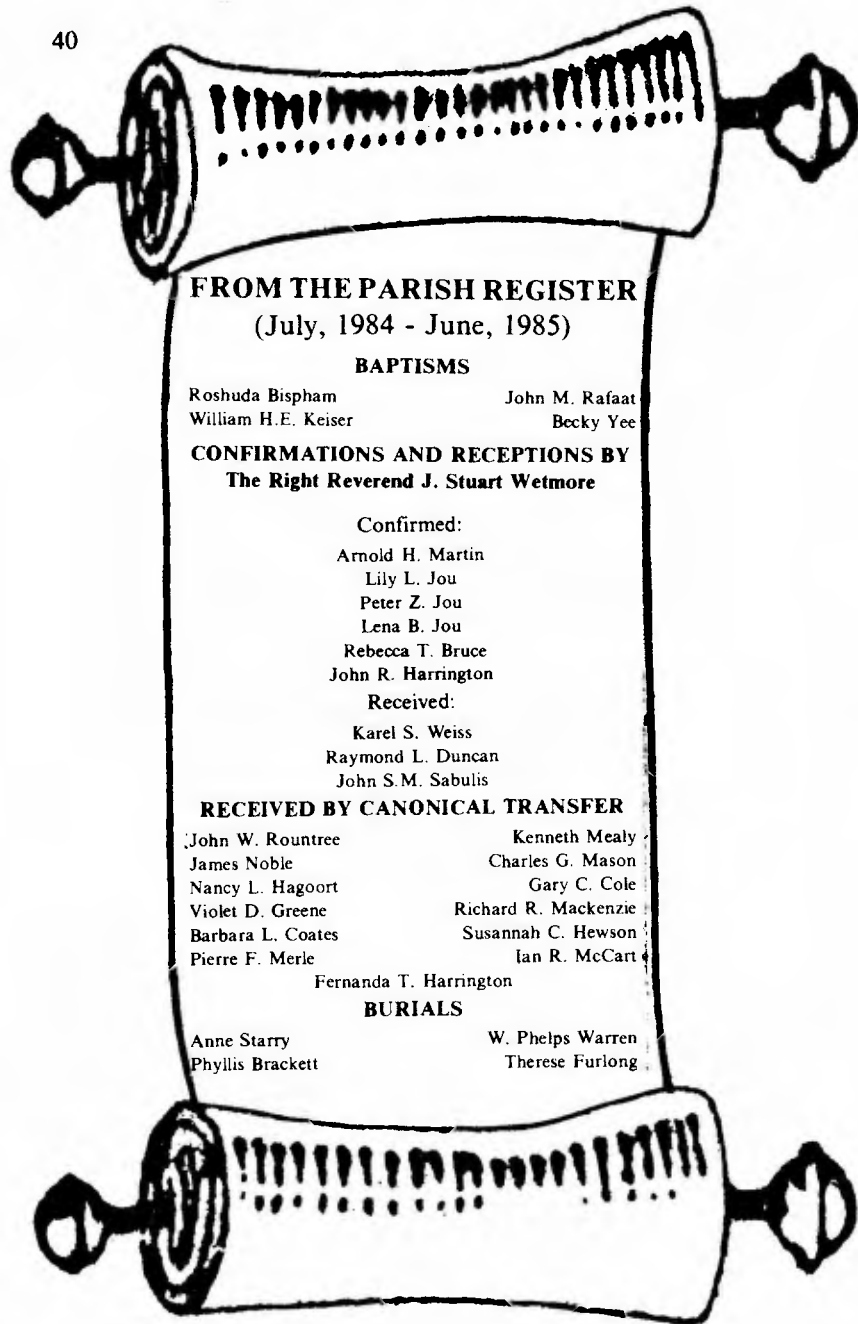
PROCESSION and
CONCELEBRATED PONTIFICAL
MASS

6:00 pm

Preacher

The Rt. Rev'd James W. Montgomery,
Bishop of Chicago

Mass Setting: *Messe G-dur, D. 167*
Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828)



CALENDAR FOR JULY

| | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 1 | M. | <i>Requiem</i> |
| 2 | Tu. | |
| 3 | W. | |
| 4 | Th. | INDEPENDENCE DAY |
| 5 | F. | <i>Abstinence</i> |
| 6 | Sa. | Thomas More, Martyr, 1535 |
| 7 | Su. | THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST |
| 8 | M. | |
| 9 | Tu. | <i>Requiem</i> |
| 10 | W. | |
| 11 | Th. | Benedict of Nursia, Abbot of Monte Casino, c. 540 |
| 12 | F. | <i>Abstinence</i> |
| 13 | Sa. | <i>of Our Lady</i> |
| 14 | Su. | THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST |
| 15 | M. | Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, 862 |
| 16 | Tu. | Our Lady of Mount Carmel |
| 17 | W. | William White, Bishop of Pennsylvania, 1836 |
| 18 | Th. | <i>Requiem</i> |
| 19 | F. | <i>Abstinence</i> |
| 20 | Sa. | Margaret, Martyr of Antioch, 3rd C. |
| 21 | Su. | THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST |
| 22 | M. | SAINT MARY MAGDALENE |
| 23 | Tu. | |
| 24 | W. | Thomas a Kempis, Priest, 1471 |
| 25 | Th. | SAINT JAMES THE APOSTLE |
| 26 | F. | The Parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary (<i>Abstinence</i>) |
| 27 | Sa. | William Reed Huntington, Priest, 1909 |
| 28 | Su. | THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST |
| 29 | M. | Mary and Martha of Bethany |
| 30 | Tu. | William Wilberforce, 1833 |
| 31 | W. | Joseph of Arimathea |

CALENDAR FOR AUGUST

| | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 1 | Th. | Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop and Doctor |
| 2 | F. | <i>Abstinence</i> |
| 3 | Sa. | <i>of Our Lady</i> |
| 4 | Su. | THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST |
| 5 | M. | |
| 6 | Tu. | THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST |
| 7 | W. | John Mason Neale, Priest, 1866 |
| 8 | Th. | Dominic, Priest and Friar, 1221 |
| 9 | F. | Jean Marie Vianney, Priest (<i>Abstinence</i>) |
| 10 | Sa. | Laurence, Deacon and Martyr of Rome, 258 |
| 11 | Su. | THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST |
| 12 | M. | <i>Requiem</i> |
| 13 | Tu. | Jeremy Taylor, Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore, 1667 |
| 14 | W. | |
| 15 | Th. | ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY <i>Procession & Solemn Pontifical Mass, 6 PM</i> |
| 16 | F. | <i>Abstinence</i> |
| 17 | Sa. | <i>of Our Lady</i> |
| 18 | Su. | THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST |
| 19 | M. | |
| 20 | Tu. | Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, 1153 |
| 21 | W. | <i>Requiem</i> |
| 22 | Th. | |
| 23 | F. | <i>Abstinence</i> |
| 24 | Sa. | ST. BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE |
| 25 | Su. | THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST |
| 26 | M. | |
| 27 | Tu. | <i>Requiem</i> |
| 28 | W. | Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, 430 |
| 29 | Th. | Beheading of Saint John the Baptist |
| 30 | F. | <i>Abstinence</i> |
| 31 | Sa. | Aidan, Bishop of Lindisfarne, 651 |

DIRECTORY

CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
 139 West 46th Street • New York • New York • 10036

The Church is open for prayer and meditation
Mondays-Fridays: 7 a.m.-9 a.m., 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Saturdays: 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sundays: 8:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

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 THE REVEREND EDGAR F. WELLS, Rector
 THE REVEREND ANDREW L. SLOANE, Curate
 (212) 869-5831

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The Church of Saint Mary the Virgin depends for its operating expenses on the sacrificial giving of its clergy, parishioners, and friends. Pledge envelopes may be obtained from the Parish Secretary by phoning (212) 869-5830. We need and are grateful for your support.

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ALTAR FLOWER MEMORIALS

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| July 7 - PENTECOST VI: | Robert Brennan |
| July 14 - PENTECOST VII: | Martha Viola Schaefer |
| July 28 - PENTECOST IX: | Alfred and Catherine Handy |
| August 11 - PENTECOST XI: | Edgar and Isabelle Wells |
| August 18 - PENTECOST XII: | Eliphah Beard; Carrie Briggs Streeter |
| August 25 - PENTECOST XIII: | John Alexander Lewis |

MAY THE SOULS OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED REST IN PEACE AND MAY LIGHT PERPETUAL SHINE UPON THEM

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 Joan F. Wetzel, \$10.00; Mrs. Helen Keller, \$10.00; The Rev'd & Mrs. F.W. Phinney, \$25.00; Warren M. Doolittle, \$15.00; Amelia E. Fletcher, \$10.00; James W. Cherry, \$25.00; R.O. Watson, \$25.00; The Rev'd Stuart K. Frane, \$20.00; Robert P. Christman, \$5.00; C.L. Tyler, \$10.00; Louise B. Garmy, \$20.00; Francis J. Kafka, \$10.00; R.H. Malanaphy, \$25.00; Stephen T. Marshall, \$15.00; The Rev'd John S.F. MacLean, \$25.00; The Rev'd George Bowen, \$25.00; Arnold Martin, \$10.00; The Rev'd W. Steven Thomas, \$15.00; The Rev'd Samuel Outerbridge, \$20.00; Marjorie E.F. Yates, \$5.00; The Rev'd Ralph T. Walker, \$25.00; The Rev'd Arthur R. VanDeventer, \$10.00; Miss Charlotte Grant, \$10.00.

PREACHERS FOR JULY & AUGUST

| | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| July 7 | Pentecost VI | The Rev'd Mr. Berge |
| July 14 | Pentecost VII | Father Wells |
| July 21 | Pentecost VIII | Father Sloane |
| July 28 | Pentecost IX | Father Wells |
| August 4 | Pentecost X | Father Sloane |
| August 11 | Pentecost XI | The Rev'd Mr. Berge |
| August 15 | Assumption of Our Lady - 6 PM | The Rt. Rev'd James W. Montgomery, |
| August 18 | Pentecost XII | Bishop of Chicago |
| August 25 | Pentecost XIII | Father Wells |
| | | Father Sloane |



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139 West 46th Street • New York • New York • 10036

The Reverend Edgar F. Wells, Rector
The Reverend William Willoughby III

The Reverend Andrew L. Sloane, Curate
The Reverend Mr. Clark Berge

Parish founded 1868

Church built 1894

SERVICES

SUNDAY

Morning Prayer 8:40 am
 Masses 9:00, 10:00 am, and 5:00 pm
 Sunday School 9:45 am
 Solemn Mass with Sermon 11:00 am

— Nursery Care Provided —

Evening Prayer and Benediction 4:00 pm

WEEKDAYS

Morning Prayer 8:30 am
 Noonday Office 12:00
 Daily Masses (except Sat.) 12:15 and 6:15 pm
 Saturday 12:15 pm
 Evening Prayer (except Sat.) 6:00 pm
 Saturday 5:30 pm

COUNSELING

A priest is available in the church daily, 12-1 pm

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 11:30-12:00 noon (Father Wells)
 1-1:30 pm (Father Sloane)
 Sunday 10:30-10:50 am (Father Wells)
 (Father Sloane)
 Major holy days .. 5:30-5:50 pm (Father Wells)
 (Father Sloane)

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CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN

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Signature

Date

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____