My dear People:

Can you believe it? This letter comes to you at the beginning of another Advent, and as we move from the triumph of the Feast of Christ the King into a period of quiet and a time of waiting. For whom do we wait during Advent? Very simply, we wait for the Lord of Glory, for Jesus who was once born in a stable and who will one day return to gather the whole creation to himself. The Church is in one sense poised at a point in time between the First and Second Coming of our Lord, and even as we long for his return we remember with Thanksgiving his first Advent among us. Very shortly it will be Christmas. Soon some of your friends will be sending you cards on which will be written the words, Season's Greetings! The season towards which Advent points is a season in which we have far more to offer one another than banalities of this kind. Your gift to your fellow Christians, and their gift to you, is very simply the incarnate life of Almighty God. It was a life very much like your own, and yet it surpasses your wildest dreams. It is in fact the earthly life of Jesus Christ.

And Joseph went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary....who was with child....and she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. Luke ii.3ff.

The story is as old as the hills. So old in fact that many people consider it simply a beautiful example of religious folklore. And yet the writers of the gospels thought otherwise. St. Luke records our Lord's birth as a matter of historical fact. He describes it without fanfare, locating it in the most modest of circumstances.
The Incarnation was simplicity itself. It was ordinary, it was direct, and it accorded with human experience. That is the way it always is with God. He comes into our lives quietly and unnoticed, and the very simplicity of his appearing can almost pass us by. The Mother of God gave birth, she wrapped her child in swaddling cloths, she laid him in a manger. And he was Almighty God!

Perhaps as this Christmas draws near you find yourself worn out and disappointed with life. It can happen to all of us. And perhaps you have discovered that in a city like New York holiday time can be a time of loneliness and despair just as easily as a time of joy. The secret of Christmas is that God comes to us in the day to day affairs of our lives, at times when we least expect him. Thus in his helplessness the Child Jesus is at one with our own moments of inadequacy and despair. When we are feeling most unloved, or when we for our part are incapable of love, he takes our human nature to himself and accords it a new loveliness and true dignity. In the end the Incarnation is an exaltation of the human condition, and we are reminded at Christmas that, as God once came to us, so finally we will go to God. We were created for him, and our destiny is to know him and love him forever.

And perhaps most embarrassingly of all, Christmas in the end is not what we deserve. Have you ever thought about that? God, who is infinite goodness, could never treat his children as they have treated him, or indeed as they have treated one another. His response to human sin is to come among us as the sinless One. His response to broken lives and human estrangement is to make friends with us again. All of this provides us with hope during Advent, and at Christmas hope became incarnate.

My prayer for you this Advent is that hope may find a new place in your life. My prayer for you this Christmas is that Jesus may be born in your heart again.

Affectionately in Domino,

Edgar F. Wells

This mission statement was developed by a committee of parishioners to help represent our life at Saint Mary's to the wider Church and to the city of New York. It has been used to document the goals and purposes of the parish as we seek funding for our parish programs, especially those of our Mission House.

A PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

If you take away from the midst of you the yoke, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. (Isaiah 58:9b-10)

In the name of Jesus Christ, the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin seeks to heed the call of Isaiah. We are an economically, ethnically, and socially pluralistic parish, committed to maintaining and encouraging this freedom by providing a welcoming environment for all people. The main interest of our corporate life is to share the light of Christ with one another and to seek Him in the lives of the people with whom we share the Times Square neighborhood.

As central to our life together, participation in the Mass is an encounter with the Kingdom of God; Christ's presence in the Sacrament is the focus of hope in this world and the pledge of our redemption. From the altar we seek Christ in the needy. In our service we recognize each person as a potential instrument of the Holy Spirit and we are enabled in our personal commitment to our ministry by the grace of God shared in the sacramental life of the Catholic faith.

The center of our parish outreach to the people of this community is our Mission House, which is an alternative to other shelters in the City for women and children. It is the intention of the parish to serve the whole person in our reaching-out, working with other organizations to provide meals, shelter, educational opportunities for youth, the opportunity for personal growth by counselling and spiritual direction, and giving assistance towards obtaining permanent housing and employment for our guests. This is part of our three-fold commitment to the Catholic religion.
THE NATIVITY
OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Wednesday, December 25th
SOLEMN MASS OF MIDNIGHT
(Preceded by Procession at 11:45)
Sermon: Father Wells
Missa brevis D-dur (KV 194)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

SOLEMN MASS OF THE DAY 11:00 a.m.
Sermon: Fr. Willoughby
Mass in F
Harold Edwin Darke (1888-1976)

Masses of the Day, 9:00 & 10:00 a.m.
(No afternoon service)

combining worship, study and action.
Through this witness, Saint Mary's declares to the larger urban community the Church's role in the salvation of the world, and offers to God our praise and adoration of His Holy Name.

Fr. Wells' Anniversary Assumption, 1985

The following is a sermon preached by the Right Reverend James W. Montgomery, Bishop of Chicago, on the Feast of Assumption 1985 in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin. That date also marked our observation of Father Wells' twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination to the Sacred Priesthood.

"Let me rejoice in the Lord with all my heart,
Let me exult in my God:
for He has robed me in salvation as a garment
and clothed me in integrity as a cloak."

It is a deeply moving experience to stand in the pulpit of this great parish, which I first visited as a teenager and which has been for me, as for thousands of others, an inspiration and a beacon of witness over the years.

We celebrate tonight the Feast of Our Lady's Assumption and pay highest honor to her who by her willing cooperation with the plan of God was the human instrument which made the Incarnation possible.

Mary has always borne a special relationship to the ordained ministry, for she is the Mother of the Great High Priest. The text from Isaiah could be uttered by Our Lady and also by every priest. And so it is fitting that we honor a great and faithful priest, Edgar Wells, on his Silver Jubilee of ordination. Twenty-five years ago, in a village church in Wisconsin, I had the privilege of preaching at that ordination and therefore I am doubly honored to be here tonight.

It is not my intention, however, to eulogize Father Wells, but rather to say something of the priesthood in the world today.

For some years now questions have been asked about the priesthood. In a way, that is nothing new, but until relatively recently the priest himself knew, or thought he knew, what his own role in society and in the Church was.

By and large the world, at least that section of it which claimed to be Christian, however superficial that claim may have been, has accepted the priest in this role — either self-defined or
Church defined. At worst the priest has been thought of as a harmless, well-meaning fellow, sometimes annoying to be sure, but on the whole representative of values worth conserving.

But in late years there has been a feeling that the Church has been more and more removed from areas of decision-making, less and less of a real force in the world. Many of the clergy have felt this strongly and some of them have been saying so quite openly. One can hardly pick up a magazine or a newspaper now without some reference to the ecclesiastical scene and the ferment within it.

There is much value in the fact that the problems of the Church and the clergy are once again news. It may be that this is a sign of renewal and vitality. Interest in our affairs is a gain over indifference to them.

But only if we can work through some of our current problems. A confused clergy is not going to be much help to a confused world. If we ourselves are not sure of our role—of how we should go about our business or indeed what that business is, how can we expect anyone else to be?

One of the questions which seems integral to the meaning of priesthood is the problem posed by the familiar phrase, “God is where the action is.” If this is so, God’s priests had better be where the action is too, if they are to be anywhere near to Him.

In truth they have always been. The early Evangelicals in our own tradition were deeply involved in social reforms such as the abolition of slavery in the British Empire. The great Anglo-Catholic priests of the late 19th and 20th centuries labored in the worst slums of London and left a legacy that is part of our heritage. There was plenty of action in those places! The Church may have come too late and with too little to some of the social crises of our own day, and some of us may have exchanged the world for the altar, but the best of us have always known that the altar was set in the midst of the world. We as Anglicans can be justly proud of the courageous witness that Bishop Tutu is making in South Africa. He certainly knows that the world and the altar are linked closely together.

I recall speaking to one of our young clergy some years ago, at the height of the Civil Rights movement. The subject of his prayer life came up, and he exclaimed, “Oh, Bishop, I’m too busy picketing to have time for prayer!” An amazing statement—and really so unnecessary. For in reality both are needed—the picket line and the prayer. They are two sides of the coin of priesthood.

Have you ever considered how Peter and John, two of Our Lord’s closest disciples, reflect this fullness of priestly ministry? How very different in character they were!

Peter is a man of evident strength and courage—a man very much in the limelight. A man of faith, to be sure—the one who bore witness to our Lord’s divinity. He is a man we readily understand, for his weaknesses are our own—his sure confidence that he would never betray the Lord, that confidence that so rapidly melted away when it was tested. But how sincere his repentance! Jesus gave Peter a name—Cephas—the Rock. And how the Church has treasured the memory of this man, recognizing his position of leadership in the apostolic band. Peter, the Rock. There can be no question of his devotion, love and consecration. “Simon, do you love me?” “Yes, Lord, you know I love you.”

How often do we read of Peter in the Book of Acts—preaching in the streets of Jerusalem, acting in the councils of the apostles. If anyone was ever “where the action is” it was Peter.

Peter and John were united in many things. They were, according to John’s Gospel, the first of the Apostles to reach the tomb of the risen Christ. John looked into the tomb. Peter, with that impetuosity which displayed itself when he cut off the ear of the high priest’s servant, rushed right into the tomb.

In most of the experiences which they shared, Peter seems to overshadow John. It is he who stands at the foot of the Cross, John who never seems to be in the limelight, John the retiring one, the one who accepts responsibilities, to whom Jesus on the Cross said “Behold, your mother.” Apparently John’s vision was to be the faithful servant and to stay in the background. Peter’s name has deservedly been recognized throughout the ages—John’s name was magnified by his Master, who recognized his love and his devotion—Peter has become known as the Rock; John as the Beloved.

The Church we serve and the Master we serve needs both—the man of leadership and the man of love. And we are foolish and ill-
advised to make the distinction between them that some seem to make today—to play one off against the other, as it were. Both have their place in the world.

Of course, God is where the action is. But that does not mean that action necessarily guarantees His presence, or that He is present in every sort of action that there is. Nor does it mean that He has abandoned that which for centuries has guaranteed His presence—the still small voice, the altar, the tabernacle. I venture to say that those who cannot find Him here are just as wrong as those who cannot find Him in action, in the cause of justice and righteousness, and in the needs of men and women.

We have not, as priests of the Most High God, always been involved in those causes as we ought to have been. Sometimes we have let others fight those battles for us. If the world is confused today about our role we are in part to blame for this, for we have not always fulfilled it as we might have.

None of us know just how the priesthood will look or what form it may take fifty years from now, or even five or ten. Somewhere down the road we will know for sure whether it is God's will that there be women priests. If it is, He will bless their ministry and it will spread. If not, the Church will give it up as something which was not to be part of its ongoing life. The fact that it is given to us at this particular time to test it, causes pain and tension for some, but it does not destroy our Catholicity! There will be a priesthood as long as there is a Church on earth. Within whatever framework it may function it will be in essence what it has always been—the priesthood of Christ the Son of the Living God.

We may not be proud of ourselves as human beings. We can be proud of ourselves as priests. Can we not wave our priesthood, not because it is ours, but because it is Christ's,—like a banner in the sky, wear it like a suit of shining armor in the defense of the poor, the neglected, the weak, the afflicted and the oppressed, as well as in ministry to the confident, the strong and the secure of this world, who are likewise God's children and need Him too?

I doubt if John Calvin is quoted often from this pulpit but these words of his on priesthood are worth repeating: "For neither are the light of the sun, nor meat, nor drink as necessary to sustain and cherish the present life, as the apostolic and pastoral office to preserve a Church on the earth."

If there is to be a Church on the earth, there must be priesthood, the ordained priesthood, within it. We honor one tonight who has demonstrated throughout these twenty-five years that he knows the true meaning of this vocation. To be a priest is to partake of the mercy of God; to accept His call is to take one's place in the long line of saints and sinners whom God has found essential—essential, not just convenient to the preservation of His Church.

And so we join with Father Wells and with all who have tried to be obedient to the will of God, as we say with Isaiah the Prophet these words which mirror the pattern of perfect conformity to the Divine Plan as exemplified in Blessed Mary:

"Let me rejoice in the Lord with all my heart
Let me exult in my God;
For He has robed me in salvation as a garment
and clothed me in integrity as a cloak."

**THE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**
(Transferred)
**Our Pastoral Feast**

**Monday, December 9th**
**PROCESSION & SOLEMN MASS, 6:00 p.m.**

*Sermon: Fr. Sloane*

*Missa Festiva (1958)*

*Flor Peeters (b. 1903)*

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO *AVE* are gratefully acknowledged:**
Charles C. Lore, Jr., $10.00; Loving H. Phillips, $10.00; The Rev'd E. Lawrence Lacher, $25.00; William P. Baumgarth, $10.00; Mrs. Isabel Dailey, $50.00; Mr. Charles Catlin, $25.00; The Rev'd Robert S. Downs, Jr., $10.00; Eileen Whittle, $10.00; Harold V. Toop, $10.00; Howard Silberer, $25.00; Mr. & Mrs. Norman Cram, $50.00; The Rev'd A. Michael Singer, $10.00; Cheryl L Steiner, $20.00; The Rev'd Cannon D. H. Palmer, $10.00; The Bishop of Fulham, $20.00; The Rev'd B. McK. Williams, $25.00; The Rev'd Christopher D. Kelly, $10.00.
MUSIC FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

November 1 - (All Saints)
Missa O quam gloriosum est regnum
Tomas Luis de victoria (c. 1548-1611)

November 2 - (All Souls)
Requiem, Opus 48
Gabriel-Urbain Faure (1845-1924)

November 3 - (Pentecost XXIII)
Missa brevis
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594)

November 10 - (Pentecost XXIV)
Missa brevis "Organ Solo Mass" (KV 259)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

November 17 - (Pentecost XXV)
Missa brevis Giovanni Francesco Arieio (c. 1567-1630)

November 24 - (The Feast of Christ the King)
Messe a Ste. Cecile (1882)
Charles Francois Gounod (1818-1893)

November 27 - (Thanksgiving)
Mass (Short Service)
Thomas Tallis (c. 1505-1585)

December 1 - (Advent I)
Mass (Short Service)
Adrian Batten (1591-1637)

December 8 - (Advent II)
Missa in die tribulationis
Roland de Lassus (1532-1594)

December 9 - (Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary)
Missa Festiva (1958)
Flor Peeters (b. 1903)

December 15 - (Advent III)
Messe solemnelle
Jean Langlais (b. 1907)

December 22 - (Advent IV)
Mass for four voices
William Byrd (c. 1543-1623)

December 24 - (Christmas Eve)
Missa brevis D-dur (KV 194)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

December 25 - (Christmas Day)
Mass in F
Harold Edwin Darke (1888-1976)

ALL SAINTS' DAY
Friday, November 1st
Procession and Solemn Mass, 6 p.m.
Sermon:
Fr. Sloane
Missa O quam gloriosum est regnum
Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)

PREACHERS IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

Nov. 1 All Saints - 6 PM
Father Sloane
Nov. 2 All Souls - 11 AM
Father Wells
Nov. 3 PENTECOST XXIII
The Rev'd Austin Day, Rector, Christ Church St. Laurence, Sydney, Australia
Nov. 10 PENTECOST XXIV
The Vy Rev'd Jack Knight, Dean, Nashotah House
Nov. 17 PENTECOST XXV
Father Wells
Nov. 24 THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING
Father Sloane
Nov. 27 THANKSGIVING - 6 PM
Father Wells

Dec. 1 ADVENT I
Father Wells
Dec. 8 ADVENT II
Father Willoughby
Dec. 9 CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY - 6 PM
Father Sloane
Dec. 15 ADVENT III
Father Wells
Dec. 22 ADVENT IV
Father Wells
Dec. 24 CHRISTMAS EVE - MIDNIGHT
Father Sloane
Dec. 25 CHRISTMAS DAY - 11 AM
Father Willoughby
Dec. 29 CHRISTMAS I
Father Wells
CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER

1 F. ALL SAINTS Solemn Mass with Procession, 6 (Abstinence dispensed)
2 Sa. COMMENORATION OF ALL FAITHFUL DEPARTED Solemn Requiem with Absolution, 11
3 Su. THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
4 M. Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, 1584
5 Tu. Requiem (Commemoration of Priests, Trustees & Benefactors of St. Mary's)
6 W. Requiem (All enrolled in the Chantry Book)
7 Th. Willibrord, Archbishop of Utrecht, Missionary to Frisia, 739
8 F. Abstinence Requiem (Friends of St. Mary's)
9 Sa. of Our Lady
10 Su. THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
11 M. Martin, Bishop of Tours, 397
12 Tu. Charles Simeon, Priest, 1836
13 W. Requiem (All who have died for our country)
14 Th. Consecration of Samuel Seabury, First American Bishop, 1784
15 F. Albert the Great, Bishop of Ratisbon, and Friar, 1280
Abstinence
16 Sa. Margaret, Queen of Scotland, 1093
17 Su. THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
18 M. Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, 680
19 Tu. Elizabeth, Princess of Hungary, 1231
20 W. Edmund, King of East Anglia, and Martyr, 870
21 Th. Requiem (Departed Members of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament & The Guild of All Souls)
22 F. Cecilia, Martyr at Rome, c. 230 Abstinence
23 Sa. Clement, Bishop of Rome, c. 100
24 Su. THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING Solemn Mass with Procession, 11
25 M. of the Holy Trinity
26 Tu. of the Holy Angels
27 W. Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving Day, 6
28 Th. THANKSGIVING DAY Low Mass, 10
29 F. Requiem Abstinence
30 Sa. SAINT ANDREW THE APOSTLE

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER

1 Su. THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
2 M. Channing Moore Williams, Missionary in China and Japan, 1910
3 Tu. Francis Xavier, Priest, Missionary to Japan, 1552
4 W. John of Damascus, Priest, c. 760
5 Th. Clement of Alexandria, Priest, c. 210
6 F. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, c. 342 Abstinence
7 Sa. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, 397
8 Su. THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
9 M. THE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (Patronal Feast, transferred) Solemn Mass with Procession, 6
10 Tu. of the Second Week of Advent
11 W. of the Second Week of Advent
12 Th. of the Second Week of Advent
13 F. Lucy, Martyr in Sicily, 304 Abstinence
14 Sa. John of the Cross, Priest and Friar, 1605
15 Su. THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
16 M. of the Third Week of Advent
17 Tu. of the Third Week of Advent
18 W. of the Third Week of Advent (comm. Ember Day)
19 Th. of the Third Week of Advent
20 F. of the Third Week of Advent (comm. Ember Day) Abstinence
21 Sa. SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE (comm. Ember Day)
22 Su. THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
23 M. of the Fourth Week of Advent
24 Tu. of the Fouth Week of Advent (No 6:15 Mass)
25 W. THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST Solemn Mass of Midnight, preceded by Procession at 11:45; Masses of the Day, 9 & 10; Solemn Mass of the Day, 11; No afternoon services
26 Th. SAINT STEPHEN, DEACON AND MARTYR
27 F. SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST Abstinence dispensed
28 Sa. THE HOLY INNOCENTS
29 Su. THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY Solemn Mass with Procession, 11
30 M. Monday of Christmas
31 Tu. Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, 335
COMMEMORATION OF ALL FAITHFUL DEPARTED
Saturday, November 2nd

Solemn Requiem Mass, 11 a.m.
Sermon: Fr. Wells
Requiem, Opus 48
Gabriel-Urbain Fauré (1845-1924)

ALTAR FLOWER MEMORIALS

Nov. 1 - ALL SAINTS: Inex Louise Blackshire; The Departed Members of Saint Mary's Guild.
Nov. 3 - PENTECOST XXIII: Wallace & Florence Brackett, Phylis Brackett.
Nov. 10 - PENTECOST XXIV: Gaude Wright Gassin & Dorothy Gassin Wray; Constance T. Earle, John Gilbert Winant.
Nov. 17 - PENTECOST XXV: Frances Burton & Frederick George Murray Burton
Dec. 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY: Thomas McKee Brown, Priest, Founder & First Rector.
Dec. 29 - CHRISTMAS I: Frederick D. Blackshire.

May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace and may light perpetual shine upon them.

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.

RECTORY
144 West 47th Street • New York • New York • 10036
THE REVEREND EDGAR F. WELLS, Rector
THE REVEREND ANDREW L. SLOANE, Curate
(212) 869-5831

PARISH OFFICE
145 West 46th Street • New York • New York • 10036
Office Hours from 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday, except legal holidays
(212) 869-5830

Mr. Jack R. Cortner, Treasurer .................. 869-5830
Mr. Quentin Lane, Director of Music .................. 869-5830
Mr. Emil Denworth, Head Usher .................. 263-6385
Mr. George H. Blackshire, Hospitality .................. 858-5797
Mr. Philip Parker, Tours .................. 582-0807
Miss Doreen Swan, Bookshop .................. 431-3568
Mr. Ralph M. Morehead, Funeral Director .................. 744-2500

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.

Produced by Mission Graphics
48 Henry Street • New York, N.Y. 10002 • Tel. (212) 227-6715
After prayerful consideration of the needs of my church and of God's gifts to me, I pledge for 1985:

$ __________  □ weekly: □ monthly: □ annually.

I □ want envelopes: □ do not want envelopes.

NAME: (please print) ________________________________

ADDRESS: ________________________________________

I am a □ Parishioner of St. Mary's  □ Friend of St. Mary's

Please check □ within each appropriate box. This pledge may be changed by notifying the Treasurer.

__________________________________________  __________________________
Signature  Date

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Please check the address label on the other side of this page. If your address is incorrect, or if you plan to move, please fill in the portion below and return it to us as soon as possible.

Name ________________________________

New Address ________________________________

City ___________  State ___________  Zip ___________

Former Address ________________________________

City ___________  State ___________  Zip ___________