SERVICES
The Church is open for prayer and meditation: Monday-Friday: 7 a.m. - 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. - 7 p.m; Saturdays: 11:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m; Sunday: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

SUNDAY
Morning Prayer 8:40 am
Masses 9:00, 10:00 am
Solemn Mass with Sermon 11:00 am
Evening Prayer 4:00 pm

WEEKDAYS (Monday-Friday)
Morning Prayer 8:30 am
Noonday Office 12:00 Noon
Daily Mass 12:15, 6:15 pm
Evening Prayer 6:00 pm
Saturday mass: 12:15 pm

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
Saturday 11:30-12:00 noon and 4:00-5:00 pm (Parish Clergy)
Sunday 10:30-10:50 am (Fr. Wells) Major holy days 5:30 -5:50 pm (Fr. Wells)

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of women in the Sacred Priesthood, our Mass on February 2nd will not only be a statement of continuing loyalty where our own Church is concerned, it will also be a message of encouragement to our many Roman Catholic friends who have lived faithfully in hope since the Second Vatican Council, and whose continuing prayer is that Rome may follow at least partially along the path on which our Anglican Communion has begun to travel.

And of course, once February has arrived, we are never very far from the beginning of Lent. Ash Wednesday this year falls on February 21st, and I suspect that our Lenten devotions will provide us with some needed refreshment after the heady atmosphere of the earlier part of the winter. In the end it is the nourishing of our spiritual lives that is most at stake in our daily existence. St. Mary's is a place where that nourishment is always at the heart of things.

Affectionately in Christ,

Edgar F. Wells

Contributions to Ave

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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]:

The following sermon was preached on the Eve of our Feast of Dedication by The Rev. Victor Stock of St. Mary Le Bow Church, London, England.

I work in the City of London just behind St. Paul's Cathedral in the church of St. Mary Le Bow, the new church which is only 300 years old built by Christopher Wren between 1688-1690. Down below me is the Norman Crypt built in 1080 which we use everyday. Our day begins there with Morning Prayer down in the foundations, foundations laid by Archbishop Lanfranc at the time of William the Conqueror. The other day I was thinking about you all and what I might say to you at the beginning of your Centenary and I decided that you'd like history, you expect that from an Englishman with an ancient church. I went to the Victoria and Albert Museum and on my way out visited two of the pieces of church plate which the museum displays in its Tudor Gallery. I have two churches in the City of London; St. Mary le Bow and St. Mary Aldermary and one piece of plate in the Tudor Gallery at the V & A comes from St. Mary le Bow and was made in 1568. It's a fine example of an Elizabethan chalice but more interestingly next to it stands a chalice made in 1549 with on its paten a beautiful Champleve enamel coat of arms of Edward VI and round the rim of the paten are the words "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for you preserve your soul unto everlasting life." It is one of the very first chalices made at the Reformation for the people to receive the wine from. For until then of course only the priests were allowed to receive the Precious Blood. So part of the history of my parish in the City of London on display in the famous Victoria and Albert Museum is a symbol or emblem of Reformation.

But I was on my way to look up the details of another piece of plate I wanted to tell you about.

I want to tell you about it because this Solemn Evensong concludes with Benediction and Benediction is one of the glories of catholic worship and for it you need a monstrance. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are a number of wonderful monstrances but my favorite was made in 1690 in Augsburg by Johann Zeckel. It portrays seated around and upon the sunburst the apostles at the Last Supper. Our Lord's place in the center is occupied by the crystal lunette to display the Host, what a marvelous idea. The Disciples in silver around the Lord's Table borne up on golden rays of glory display in their midst the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here in this Augsburg monstrance of 1690 is an emblem of the life and work and usefulness of St. Mary the Virgin in New York.

Let us consider how this is so. St. Mary the Virgin exists to be a place of life and work, the life of God displayed to the people in this part of this teeming city and far beyond. Day by day the mass is offered here and people come in to this great, dark, wonderful, glorious cavern to be still before the mystery of God.
They come to be still in the midst of so much deprivation and need.

For gathered round the presence of God in this dark holy cavern is the work of St. Mary the Virgin which issues day by day from its life of prayer and worship. Your catholic evangelism is grounded in work with those with HIV and AIDS in a couple of the city hospitals and a program working with kids from the West Side who’ve been in prostitution. Where once appropriately there were nuns up here beyond that wall there’s now this marvelous work with the most needy. St. Mary the Virgin stands four square in the life-bearing catholic tradition of service - and service to children caught up in prostitution, to people with HIV and AIDS, to any other form of real deprivation is exactly what the glory of the catholic church is about - we are part of a great tradition.

And what of the future? For a centenary should be a springboard for the future. The future is to be open to what God is saying about justice, the planet, freedom, human sexuality and all those things that are the world's agenda, for the world is God's and God writes the agenda.

The catholic faith and life of St. Mary the Virgin must never be lived in the past, God does not intend you to be the New York equivalent of the Tudor Gallery of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. And if at this point I may say how fortunate you are to enter your centenary with Edgar Wells as your parish priest you will know what I mean for here is a man rooted in the tradition, nourished and fed by it who himself embodies openness to the agenda God is writing on the planet, not fossilized catholicism.

We begin our centenary with worship and praise and blessing, blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ displayed before our worshiping gaze in the monstrance. Think again for a moment of the 1690 Zeckel monstrance from Augsburg, the disciples gathered round the Lord's table, the Host occupying the position of Christ, that is a marvelous emblem for St. Mary the Virgin as it looks towards the next hundred years and into the next millennium. You will be doing the work of God if this church, its life and work is seen as a group of disciples gathered round their Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ occupying the throne of glory which is also the place of intimacy and friendship, those apostles reclining as the close friends of a greatly loved teacher. And here is the paradox of catholic faith and life. On the one hand the intimacy of friendship, open exchange, easy conversation, anxieties shared, doubts and fears discussed, that is one aspect of the life and work of St. Mary the Virgin which will draw people towards God. And the second aspect of our life and work is that we are always gathered in these conversations around Jesus, Jesus who shows us the glory of God in the self-giving of the eucharist and in the sacrifice which opens heaven to earth in New York as in London, the cross of Calvary and the Garden of Easter morning.

Catholic faith and life as we look back on it here with thanksgiving and as we look forward towards its development in confidence is grounded in our belief as catholics in Jesus, God and man. Who as the Athanasian Creed has it "suffered for our salvation: descended into hell, rose again on the third day from the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again and they that have done good shall go into life everlasting.... This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved."

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THE HOLY NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Monday, January 1st
SOLEMN MASS, 11:00 AM
Sermon: Fr. Wells
Congregational Setting

VIGIL OF THE EPIPHANY
ORGAN RECITAL 5:30 PM
PROCESSION, STATION AT THE CRECHE,
SOLEMN MASS 6 PM
Friday, January 5th
Sermon: Sonja von Kleist
Mass for four voices William Byrd

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Saturday, January 6th
Low Mass 12:15
The following Sermon was preached on the FEAST OF THE DEDICATION OF THIS CHURCH by The Rev. Victor Stock, Rector of the Church of St. Mary Le Bow, London, England.

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband."

This is a wonderfully Jewish image and as the Jewish community is one of the things for which New York is famous I thought we'd begin by looking at our common origin - we Christians and we Jews, who are all the children of Abraham. It's not always easy for us to notice - just through over-familiarity - how our religion is so permeated with wonderful Jewish imagery.

Just look at the beautiful bride "all dressed for her husband" that's the Ancient Near East, the Semitic world of the veiled bride ready for the consummation of marriage. It's an extraordinarily human image that the writer to the Revelation uses when he wants us to think about the end for which we are all destined. For one thing it's marvelously sexual and for another it's wonderfully human - this heaven for which we're destined. Notice also that strange line "and there was no longer any sea". Why would heaven mean the abolition of the sea? - YAM in Hebrew. For the people of the Ancient Near East the sea was the great symbol of chaos. All the ancient civilizations of the Middle East which produced the Bible and its people were land locked, there was no seafaring. It was only ancient Israel and ancient Egypt that had a bit of sea coast. And what happened beyond it, where it led to, no one knew. The sea was the synonym for destruction, on it Paul was shipwrecked, from it Jonah's whale vomited Jonah up. It was the image of chaos for the ancient world as New York has been an image of chaos for the modern world, so in heaven the readers of the Revelation were pleased to note that there would be no sea. We shall return to these images later.

Last night I put before you a piece of 1690 silverware, a monstrance made in Augsburg by a master silversmith, Zeckel, in which, those of you who were here last night will remember, the place of Jesus at the Supper is taken by the Host, the disciples are gathered round their Lord. I said last night that part of the work of St. Mary the Virgin was to be such a place where those who come in recognize that the Blessed Sacrament at the heart of your life in Adoration and in Holy Communion means that Jesus is at the heart of your life. You are his friends gathered round him welcoming new friends to join you.

I said that this was the Catholic faith, this belief in Jesus, God and Man which "except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved." This morning we will look at the two treasures now here in New York in the Frick Collection. In one room on each side of the fireplace is a portrait of Thomas More and a portrait of Thomas Cromwell, both chancellors of England. Thomas More who wore the collars of 'S's' which is now worn, that very same collar, by the Lord Mayor of London. I know this because one of my churchwardens was Lord Mayor a couple of years ago and wore Thomas More's chain. But I'm not going to say anymore about jewelry, I want to say something about portraiture. Thomas Cromwell the destroyer of the monastic houses of England in 1536 was man as he is, go and look at it. The dedicated Wall Street financier, shrewd, objective, extremely hard working ending up on the block. On the other side of the fireplace hangs Thomas More, a saint in the Roman Catholic Church and in many ways an attractive and holy man, man as we would like to be, you might say, but he too shared the narrowness of outlook, the prejudices and distortion of his age. He was not all opposed to the use of torture or burning at the stake for heresy, he wasn't as absolutely perfect as partisan ecclesiastical historians have cracked him up to be.

You can learn a lot about heaven and hell, the Christian religion, its meaning and usefulness, by a visit to the Frick and as part of your centenary celebrations I recommend it.

Last night thinking about the Augsburg monstrance made us think about Jesus and his disciples and the ideal of Christian life in fellowship, relationship, love and worship. Today these two portraits from the Frick make us think a bit more realistically perhaps about ourselves. For the truth is that we are all of us a mixture of Thomas Cromwell and Thomas More. We can't KEEP destructive YAM at bay. Catholic Christians tend to hang on to the past, to think that objectivity, single mindedness and hard work is the same as holiness, and to think that obedience in all things is more important than freedom of intellectual enquiry or conscience. Thus Cromwell did what Henry VIII wanted him to do, though it was wrong and yet that obedience did not save him. Thomas More believed in a Catholic Christendom which was even then past its sell-by-date. The great movements of radical reform, the enthusiastic acceptance of new knowledge in the sciences, philosophy, economics, the discovery of the new world, not least the new world in which we stand here in New York, all that was crowding in upon the European Catholic consciousness, was in many ways resisted by More. Now, Thomas Cromwell, Thomas More, you, Fr. Edgar Wells, me, all of us are called by God to a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth are always disappearing, the only constant bit is that we're always afraid of the sea - Yam; the ancient world that saw the sea as a metaphor for chaos, a chaos we sometimes experience today in a city like New York. There's always something to make us afraid. When we're feeling afraid we Catholic Christians, just like
everybody else, tend to retreat into the past. We draw up the drawbridge, we make secure our fortress mentality but it won't do for God is always drawing us onwards and upwards into a new heaven and a new earth and this new Jerusalem is always coming down to us as beautiful and attractive and exciting as the Middle Eastern bride veiled before her expectant and desiring husband.

So the message for the centenary of St. Mary the Virgin is this. Be open to the new Jerusalem that is always coming down from God out of heaven. Be ready yourselves to be on the move. Thus the changes of the last years culminating in this diocese in the appointment of a women Suffragan Bishop are to be seen, I firmly believe, as demonstrations of the power of God who makes all things new. Do not let your Catholicism fossilize or atrophy, see your faith as living water, as river of life, as a tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, as a bride ready for her husband. If we live in this kind of lively faith where tradition is not a dead but a living thing, where we affirm Catholicism rather than deny the world, where we welcome the friends of Jesus whoever they are, whatever their race, color, sexual orientation, economic status, then we will be here in this street a gate which opens into the real heaven. The prophets of doom, and there are always a few about in Christian circles, are always warning against change. The earth is flat was followed by the sun and the stars are going round us, we were at the center, that was the orthodoxy at the time of Holbein's paintings of Cromwell and More. A revived Christian fundamentalism based on an uncritical misunderstanding of ancient biblical text is alive and flourishing sadly in the United States today. Resist these siren calls for the only place the siren calls you to is shipwreck. Give thanks as you enter your centenary year that young people and old, straight and gay, ordained women as well as ordained men are welcome in St. Mary the Virgin, welcomed by our Blessed Lady the patron of St. Mary the Virgin.

Encourage each other to expect the new Jerusalem to come crashing down through the roof of this church any minute. That's a lively faith not the faith of the museum, the fortress or the prison but the faith of the citizens of heaven.

Recognize too that when you make your pilgrimage to the Frick and look at Holbein's penetrating portraits of Thomas Cromwell and Thomas More you're going to something more than a museum, for the Frick collection itself is an outpost of the heavenly places, there you will see truth, beauty and faith displayed through the very questions your examination of the portraits, landscapes, sculpture and furniture raise for you.

In all I said last night and in what I have tried to say today I've been describing the Catholic faith which is faith in Jesus "who suffered for our salvation: descended in hell, rose again on the third day from the dead. At whose coming all shall rise again."

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first
CALENDAR FOR JANUARY

1 M
THE HOLY NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Solemn Mass, 11 AM. Preacher: Fr. Wells Music: Congregational Setting

2 Tu
of Christmas

3 W
of Christmas

4 Th
Elizabeth Ann Seton

5 F
VIGIL OF THE EPIPHANY
No Abstinence
Procession, Station at the Creche, Solemn Mass, 6 PM. Preacher: Sonja von Kleist
Music: Mass for four voices William Byrd

6 Sa
THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
12:15 Low Mass

7 Su
THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Procession and Solemn Mass, 11 AM. Preacher: Fr. Wells
Music: Canterbury Mass Anthony Piccolo. Altar Flowers: Helen Elizabeth Butler

8 M
Requiem

9 Tu
Julia Chester Emery

10 W
William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, & Martyr, 1645

11 Th

12 F
Aelred, Abbot of Rievaulx, 1167 Abstinence

13 Sa
Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, and Doctor, 367

14 Su
THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
Preacher: Fr. Carlson
Music: Missa in C Major Antonio Lotti Anthems: Jubilate Deo Benjamin Britten

15 M
Holiday: Martin Luther King Day

16 Tu

17 W
Antony, Abbot in Egypt, 356

18 Th
THE CONFESSION OF ST. PETER THE APOSTLE

19 F
Wulfsatan, Bishop of Worcester, 1095 Abstinence

20 Sa
Fabian, Bishop and Martyr of Rome, 250

21 Su
THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
Preacher: Fr. Wolsoncroft
Music: Missa in 4 vocum Francisco Anerio Motet: Teach me, O Lord David Hurd

22 M
Vincent Deacon of Saragossa, and Martyr, 304

23 Tu
Phillips Brooks, Bishop of Massachusetts, 1893

24 W
Francis de Sales, Bishop & Doctor

25 Th
THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE

26 F
Timothy and Titus, Companions of St. Paul

27 Sa
John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, 407

28 Su
THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
Motet: Prayer of the Venerable Bede Richard Proulx

29 M

30 Tu
Charles I, King and Martyr

31 W
John Bosco, Priest

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY

1 Th
Brigid, Abbess of Kildare, c. 523

2 F
THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE
Candlemas Procession, Solemn Pontifical Mass, 6 PM.
Preacher: The Rt. Rev. Catherine Roskam
Music: Mass in G Major Franz Schubert.
Motet: Sweet Mary to the temple fares Johann Eccard No Abstinence

3 Sa
Blaise, Bishop & Martyr (comm. Anskar, Bishop, 865)

4 Su
THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
Motet: Sacerdotes Domini William Byrd

5 M
The Martyrs of Japan, 1597

6 Tu

7 W

8 Th
Jerome Emiliani, 1537

9 F

10 Sa
Scholastica, Virgin, 543 Abstinence

11 Su
THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
Preacher: Fr. Wells. Music in e Adrian Batten.
Motet: Laudate Nomen Domini Christopher Tye

12 M

13 Tu
Absalom Jones, Priest, 1818

14 W
Cyril, Monk, and Methodius, Bishop, Missionaries to the Slavs, 869,885

15 Th
Thomas Bray, Priest and Missionary, 1730

16 F
Requiem Abstinence

17 Sa
Of Our Lady

18 Su
THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
Motet: God be in my head John Rutter

19 M
Holiday: Washington's Birthday Observance - Mass, 12:15 only

20 Tu
Peter Damian, Bishop & Doctor

21 W
ASH WEDNESDAY Low Masses: 8 & 12:15. Strict Fast and Abstinence
Solemn Mass: 6 pm. Preacher: Fr. Wells
Music: Messe Basse Gabriel Fauer. Motet: Lay up for yourselves Ned Rorem

22 Th
Lenten Weekday

23 F
Polycaup, Bishop and Martyr of Smyra, 156

24 Sa
SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE

25 Su
THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT
Motet: Call to remembrance, O Lord Richard Farrant

26 M
Lenten Weekday

27 Tu
Lenten Weekday George Herbert, Priest 1633

28 W
EMBER DAY

29 Th
Lenten Weekday
GUILDS AT ST. MARY'S

THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
One of the oldest devotional guilds of the Catholic Revival, our St. Mary's Ward was the first Ward established in the American Church. Dedicated to the centrality of the Eucharist and devotion to the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, the Guild currently meets four times a year for the purposes of study, reflection, and adoration.

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