



# The harvest of the earth is ripe.

REVELATION 14:15

*St. Mary's 2019 Harvest Letter*

Dear friends,

We can all look at the changing of the seasons and the progression of life with many ways of reflecting on them. We might remember the highs, maybe laugh at our own stumbles or perhaps we find a feeling of resentment has wormed its way in. Resentments seem to hang-on a little longer though, don't they? Maybe it is because of those perceived feelings of 'missing out' on something we'd really wanted or maybe even coveted. As we look ahead to the Fall though and anticipate the bounty that will be provided in the upcoming harvests, I pray that in our own ways, we may all recollect our own individual blessedness. And then from that place, look out into our lives and enjoy the good that has grown and been shared in love with others.

There is a story about an old farmer who was about to pass away. The elderly man called his two sons to his bedside and said, "My boys, my farm and the fields are yours in equal shares. I leave you a little ready money, but the bulk of my wealth is hidden somewhere in the ground, not more than eighteen inches from the surface. I regret though that I've forgotten precisely where it lies."

When the man died and was buried, his two sons set to work to dig up every inch of ground in order to find the buried treasure. They failed to find it, but as they had gone to all the trouble of turning over the soil, they thought they might as well sow a crop. So as they went along they planted seed and at the end of the year they reaped a good harvest.

In the Fall after the harvest, as soon as they had an opportunity, the brothers went out again to dig for the treasure, turning over all the soil again, but with no better results. The brothers keep doing this for a number of years, but never finding any buried wealth. Yet, as their fields were turned over more thoroughly than any of their neighbours, every year they reaped better harvests than anyone else.

When the brothers had gotten older and wiser they finally realized what their father had meant. Real treasure comes from the result of hard work.

If we are cheap with our labour, or seeds of any kind, we'll miss out on many things. If you plant one bushel of grain seed, the average return is about 30 bushels. Thirty-to-one is not a bad return, if we are ready to believe in what we are doing and commit to investing in it. God encourages us to live in this wisdom and reminds us as the prophet Hosea says; *'Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you.'* (Hosea 10:12)

This harvest season, may we live into this godly wisdom of knowing that our holy labour and self-sacrifice to God's ways will yield a rain of righteousness upon us all. As Robert Louis Stevenson put it, 'Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant.' J. R. R. Tolkien also reflects on this idea in a different, yet equally powerful way. Tolkien says, 'It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till.'

As we prepare to gather around a Thanksgiving Table, looking ahead to new blessings, or treasuring past ones, may we find space to give thanks to God for His goodness shared with us. May we all have the grace to embrace our blessings and use them for God's good work. And may we always find joy in any labours that allow us to plant seeds of blessings.

May you and yours have a Blessed and Happy Thanksgiving!

Yours in Christ,

*Matthew* †

The Reverend Matthew H. McMillan  
Rector, St. Mary's Richmond Hill

## **Announcements & Updates**

***Weekly Afternoon Bible Study – Starts Wednesday, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> @ 1:30 pm***

***Lunch Reception for Fr. Matthew – Sunday, Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>***

This September marks the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Fr. Matthew's arrival at St. Mary's. To celebrate this event and to celebrate with him, please join us after our 10:30 am service for a lunch reception. All are welcome.

***Festival of Harvest Home – Sunday, Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>***

Join us for the 1<sup>st</sup> of our Fall Festivals as we give thanks for this year's harvest from the earth.

***Thanksgiving Sunday – Sunday, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>***

This weekend we give thanks for the blessings bestowed upon us, our community and country.

***Brass Band Concert – Friday, Oct 25<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30pm***

Join us at St. Mary's for Upper Canada Brass's fall concert, featuring popular & light classical music. Tickets \$10.

***St. Mary's Harvest Feast – Saturday, Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>***

Join us on October 26<sup>th</sup> from 6 – 10pm for St. Mary's Harvest Feast Dinner. Adults \$30, Students \$15 & Under 10 years of age, free. Tickets are available at the office or Sunday mornings after church!

***Blessings of the Costumes – Sunday, Oct 27<sup>th</sup> @ 10:30 am***

Our young people are invited to wear their costumes to church to bless them for Halloween.