



# St. Columba's, Culloden

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Parish Priest: Fr Domenico Zanrè



## ~ PARISH NEWSLETTER ~

### 10 DECEMBER 2017: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## Sunday Mass Readings

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 84 (85): 9-14

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: 2 Peter 3: 8-14

Gospel: Mark 1: 1-8

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 10 December	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am
Tuesday 12 December	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Sacrament of Reconciliation Evening Prayer Mass	6.30 pm 7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Wednesday 13 December	St Lucy, Virgin and Martyr	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	10.30 am 11.00 am 11.30 am
Thursday 14 December	St John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Sunday 17 December	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 'GAUDETE' / 'BAMBINELLI' SUNDAY	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am

### SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT: BEING CONSOLED BY GOD

This Sunday marks the second stage of the Season of Advent, a marvellous time that reawakens in us the expectation of Christ's return and the memory of his historical coming. Today's Liturgy presents us with a message full of hope. It is the Lord's express invitation from the lips of the Isaiah: " 'Console my people, console them', says your God" (40:1). These words open the *Book of Comfort*, in which the Prophet addresses the joyous proclamation of liberation to the people in exile. The time of tribulation has ended; the people of Israel can look trustingly toward the future: at last they can return to their homeland... Sorrow and fear can be replaced with joy, for the Lord himself will guide his people on the way to liberation and salvation. How will He do all this? With the solicitude and tenderness of a shepherd who takes care of his flock. He will in fact provide unity and security and feed his flock, gather the lost sheep into his sure fold, reserve special attention to the most fragile and weak (v. 11). This is God's attitude toward us, his creatures. For this reason, the Prophet invites those who hear him — including us, today — to spread this message of hope: that the Lord consoles us. And to make room for the comfort which comes from the Lord.

We cannot be messengers of God's comfort if we do not first feel the joy of being comforted and loved by Him. This happens especially when we hear his Word, the Gospel, which we should carry in our pocket: do not forget this! The Gospel in your pocket or purse, to read regularly. And this gives us comfort: when we abide in silent prayer in his presence, when we encounter Him in the Eucharist or in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. All this comforts us.

Let us therefore allow Isaiah's call — 'Console my people, console them' — resound in our heart in this Season of Advent. Today there is need for people to be witnesses to the mercy and tenderness of God, who spurs the resigned, enlivens the disheartened, ignites the fire of hope. He ignites the fire of hope! We don't. So many situations require our comforting witness. To be joyful, comforting people... We are all called to comfort our brothers and sisters, to testify that God alone can eliminate the causes of existential and spiritual tragedies. He can do it! He is powerful!

Isaiah's message, which resounds in this second Sunday of Advent, is a salve on our wounds and an impetus to prepare with commitment the way of the Lord. Indeed, today the Prophet speaks to heart to tell us that God condones our sins and comforts us. If we entrust ourselves to Him with a humble and penitent heart, He will tear down the walls of evil, He will fill in the holes of our omissions, He will smooth over the bumps of arrogance and vanity, and will open the way of encounter with Him. It is curious, but many times we are afraid of consolation, of being comforted. Or rather, we feel more secure in sorrow and desolation. Do you know why? Because in sorrow we feel almost as protagonists. However, in consolation the Holy Spirit is the protagonist! It is He who consoles us, it is He who gives us the courage to go out of ourselves. It is He who opens the door to the source of every true comfort, that is, the Father. And this is conversion. Please, let yourselves be comforted by the Lord! (Pope Francis, *Angelus*, 7 December 2014)

## PARISH NEWS

**Receiving Holy Communion: A Gentle Reminder** – please note that **self-intinction** – the action of dipping the Host into the Precious Blood and self-communicating – is **not permitted** in the Roman Catholic Church. This is made clear in the Congregation for Divine Worship's 2004 Instruction 'Redemptionis Sacramentum' (*On certain matters to be observed or to be avoided regarding the Most Holy Eucharist*), paragraph 104: "The communicant must not be permitted to intinct the host himself in the chalice, nor to receive the intincted host in the hand." This is a reiteration of a previous Instruction, "Inaestimabile Donum", a 1980 document of the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship. Here, too, it is evident that self-communication is to be avoided: "Communion is a gift of the Lord, given to the faithful through the minister appointed for this purpose. It is not permitted that the faithful should themselves pick up the consecrated bread and the sacred chalice, still less that they should hand them from one to another." (paragraph 9)

What is wrong with the practice of taking the Host and dipping it in the Precious Blood? The answer lies in the very action of taking. We do not 'take' the Sacrament, it is given to us as an 'inestimable gift', and we receive it and make an Act of Faith by saying "Amen" ("so be it"). We see this demonstrated in Holy Scripture when Jesus multiplies the loaves and bids the Apostles to distribute it. We can see in this a sign of Holy Communion.

I hope that this clarification is useful for everyone. Many thanks indeed for your understanding and support.

**Next Week: 'Bambinelli Sunday'** – Each year on Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, children in Rome bring their Baby Jesus figures from the cribs in their homes to St. Peter's Square where the Pope blesses both them and the figurines during the Angelus. I would like to encourage our families here at St Columba's to participate spiritually in this tradition by bringing their 'Bambinelli' – if they have them – to be blessed at next week's Sunday Mass. *'This beautiful tradition helps to focus children's minds on the real reason for Christmas: the birth of our Lord Jesus.'*

**Preparation for First Holy Communion in 2018:** if your child is of approximately P3 age at Primary School, and you would like to discuss the possibility of him/her being prepared to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion in Summer 2018, please see Fr Domenico.

**Christmas Flowers:** Would you like to help prepare the church for Christmas? Please speak to Helen or Mary in the sacristy if you would like to provide an arrangement or to contribute holly, etc. from your garden.

**ST COLUMBA'S CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE** – **Wednesday 13 December, 7.00pm – 8.00pm.** Back by popular demand – a date for your diaries! We will be hosting a service of favourite Christmas carols, with community singing and seasonal Scripture readings, together with festive food and drink provided (non-alcoholic mulled wine, mince pies, and other goodies). Donations at the door will be gratefully accepted – suggested offerings are: £5 for adults; kids go free! All

proceeds go towards the Building Fund. Why not invite some friends and come along? Spread a little festive cheer!

**FIRs (Friends in Retirement):** the next meeting of the group takes place in the Meeting Room at St Columba's on **Thursday 14 December, 2.00pm-4.00pm.** Come along and join us for a cup of tea, some home bakes, and a good chat!

**"CATHOLICISM: THE PIVOTAL PLAYERS"** – our **final** evening together will be in **two week's time, Wednesday 20 December at 7.00pm**, as we look at the figure of **MICHELANGELO ('The Artist')**. This celebrated master of sculpture and painting is not a saint, but he serves as the privileged representative of the creative potential engendered by the Catholic Faith. The Church professes that beauty is a route of access to God, and through humanity's creative artistry we glimpse the power and glory of the Lord.. Come and join us as we learn about this fascinating pivotal player!

**ST COLUMBA'S HOGMANAY DANCE, from 9.00pm until 12.30am.** Come along to St Columba's on Hogmanay and bring in the New Year with us in style! Tickets are priced **just £5.00, in aid of the Church Building Fund.** Music is provided by John Gordon. Please feel free to bring your own refreshments! Tickets are now on sale – why not treat yourself and your family this Hogmanay?!! For details phone the parish on the number listed overleaf, or e-mail.

**Cleaning Team:** Monday 11th December at 3.30pm – Don. Can you also help? Come along and give us a hand! We are always looking for volunteers! An hour a month is all we ask!

**Next "90 Club" Draw: Sunday 31 December.** Would you like to be a winner? There are still a few numbers left; only £2 monthly. Ask Don for details.

**Prize Bingo:** our first fun-filled fundraiser evening of the new year will take place on **Friday 26 January 2018 at 7.00pm.** All welcome! Please note that our Bingo moves to the last Friday of the month. Items to give as prizes are always needed (we are particularly short of chocolates, and of wines and spirits; we'd also appreciate scented candles, toiletries, gift vouchers, tins of sweets/biscuits..). Thank you for your support of this important fund-raiser.

**Annual Christmas Hamper Draw: TICKETS ON SALE – only £1 for a strip of five tickets!** Please include your name and phone number on the back of the tickets. The Draw will take place after Mass on Christmas morning.

## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

**Sick:** + Anna Black + Audrey O'Connell + Ewen Macdonald Senior + Rose Corbett + Amelia & John Drew + Murray Mackay + Peter Simpson + Morag MacIntyre + Angus Johnson + Johnny Gallagher

**Anniversaries:** + Kathy Douglas + Margaret Donnelly + Michael Giubarelli + William MacKenzie + Shirley-Anne MacKenzie + Marion Wynne + George Smith +