



# St. Columba's, Culloden

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## ~ PARISH NEWSLETTER ~

**13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2016**  
**THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY**  
**OF THE YEAR, C**

## Sunday Mass Readings

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Malachi 3: 19-20

Psalm: Ps 97: 5-9

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: 2 Thessalonians 3: 7-12

Gospel: Luke 21: 5-19

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 13 November	THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (Second Collection: Deacon Andrew Niski)	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00am 9.30am
Tuesday 15 November	Tuesday in the Thirty-Third Week of the Year	Mass	7.30pm
Wednesday 16 November	FEAST OF ST MARGARET OF SCOTLAND	Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	11.00am 11.30am
Thursday 17 November	Memorial of St Elizabeth of Hungary	Mass	7.30pm
Sunday 20 November	SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE (Second Collection: Seminarians' Appeal)	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00am 9.30am

### Reflections on the Year of Mercy: Closing the doors doesn't close our hearts to mercy

The Jubilee Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis will come to a close on 20 November this year. In terms of publicity and awareness, there has been quite a lot of traction gained, and credit has to be given to the social media for bringing to all and sundry that one of the ways through which the Catholic Church wanted to her members to encounter the mercy and love of God was through the declaration of such a Jubilee year.

**Has mercy been understood better by us Catholics as we lived out the Year of Mercy this year?** I'd very much hope so. After all, if we really think about it, **it is really God's mercy that will finally give us the ability to experience the eternal joys of heaven at the end of our earthly lives. None of us is ever going to be in heaven's eternal embrace simply by our having lived spotless and faultless lives.** John Bradford, an English Evangelical preacher who lived in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century is known to have written this pithy statement that has been somewhat immortalised – "there I go but for the grace of God." It sums up pretty well what all of us should always remember – **that if not for God's grace (and mercy), there is nothing that we can personally do to gain us entry into the halls of heaven's eternity.**

**Have there been ways that we may have misunderstood God's mercy and thereby not having practiced mercy ourselves?** Perhaps. There are many ways in which mercy and forgiveness is either used as a weapon against our adversaries, or when it is beheld in fear instead of awe and love. Of course, much of it is done in ignorance, but they probably find their roots in the ways that we ourselves have been conditionally loved and accepted in our younger days, causing us to do the same when it came time for us to be the face of mercy and forgiveness when we are asked for it later in life. Here are some of the ways in which we have perhaps wrongly understood mercy:

- 1) When we believe that the hurt has to stop *before* it is met with forgiveness.
- 2) Mercy given needs to be an extension of mercy received. We can't give what we haven't got.
- 3) Be prepared to be hurt. Again and again.

Faith allows us to see these not as stumbling blocks but stepping-stones – to further growth and knowledge of others and of ourselves. Faith also enables us to appreciate our differences in community as means through which we become better people.

With the Year of Mercy coming to a close soon, it would be prudent to relook at the ways that we may have misunderstood mercy and used it to harm rather than to heal. **Seize the opportunity to be bathed anew in the grace of God that is being lavished on us through the Jubilee.** Some people have asked me what the Holy Father is going to declare the next year to be. I don't think it should matter much because **if mercy is at the heart of God, it never should end even if it the jubilee does.** In the depth of winter, the frozen river may give the appearance that everything has stopped moving and living, but the flow of the river beneath the layer of ice still continues, with life still teeming under the hard and seeming lifeless surface. So too must **mercy be the flowing undercurrent of our Christian lives** even though Pope Francis officially closes the Year of Mercy on November 20. **Mercy, and the call to be merciful simply must not have a use-by date, because God's love and mercy is eternal.** We simply gave this dimension of God's love added emphasis this year.

**The closing of the doors of mercy all over the world should never close any of the doors of our hearts to those who need to see Christ and his unconditional love in us.**

(Adapted, and with added emphasis, from an article by Fr Luke Fong)

## GENERAL NEWS

**CLOSING OF THE HOLY DOORS OF MERCY:** – the Jubilee Year of Mercy formally ends on the Solemnity of Christ the King, on 20 November; in order to avoid liturgical confusion, **the Holy Doors of Mercy will be closed at St Mary's, Inverness, at the 6.30pm Mass TODAY, Sunday 13 November.**

**“Take One ACTION!” Film Festival at Eden Court, Friday 18 November – Sunday 20 November.** “Take One Action” is Scotland's global change cinema project, and it premieres the most acclaimed international cinema focusing **on social and environmental justice.** See the flyers and poster in the foyer, or check out the list of films at: [www.takeoneaction.org.uk/](http://www.takeoneaction.org.uk/)

## PARISH NEWS

**The Ordination to the Priesthood of Deacon Andrew Niski** is at 3.00pm on Friday 6 January 2017. The Ordination, as you may know, will be at St Mary's, Inverness. It would be good if every parish in the deanery were to be represented by priests and people. As there will be guests from other parts of the Diocese, and from further afield, it would be helpful for planning purposes to have an idea of likely numbers, even at this stage. \*\*\*Please would you let me have a reply on this point asap – even a ‘guesstimate’ would help. **If you would like to attend the Ordination, could you please sign the sheet in the foyer TODAY, please.** Many thanks.

**Mary's Meals Fundraiser: £1,000 and rising!** – thanks to the great generosity of so many people, **we are now over the £1,000 mark!** What a wonderful donation to such a worthy charity! I am awaiting further donations, before sending off a cheque to Mary's Meals at the end of this month. A huge “THANK YOU” to everyone who has helped in any way to make this such a successful parish fundraiser.

**Morning of Renewal for Readers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion – Saturday 19 November, 10.00am – 1.00pm.** This is an opportunity for ALL Readers and Extraordinary Ministers – **from St Columba's and further afield** – to come together for a morning of reflection and renewal. There will be several short presentations, time for prayer, and Question-and-Answer Sessions. Please spread the word.

**Faith in Film Evening: Wed 23 Nov – CANCELLED** – Please note that our next film will be screened on **Wednesday 21 December, at 7.00pm, and is entitled *The Nativity Story* (2006).** Critics have described this adaptation as “beautifully directed and portrayed” – “a truly wonderful film that conveys great spiritual power, even as it brings home the humanity of Mary and Joseph to a degree few of its predecessors ever even attempted. Keisha Castle-Hughes is wonderful as young Mary, but [...] Oscar Isaac is more than up to the task of bringing this humble carpenter to vivid life” (Certificate: PG – 97 minutes).

**Safeguarding Training Session: Saturday 26 November at 10.00am at St Columba's.** This will last 1-2 hours only. This is for anyone who has undergone a PVG check or is due a PVG check for the Church, and has not previously attended a training session. Anyone who has previously attended a training session is also welcome to attend for a refresher, if they wish. **This training is regarded as mandatory by the Church.** If you are uncertain if you should attend please speak to Helen Macdonald, Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY – Saturday 10 December, 2.00pm – 4.00pm.** Santa has been notified, and has promised us that he will come to visit St Columba's on Saturday 10 December! There will be music, games, surprises, and much more! All children very welcome!

**CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE – Wed 14 December, 7.00pm - 8.00pm.** Back by popular demand – a date for your diaries! As per last year, we will be hosting a service of your favourite Christmas carols, with community singing (that means you!) together with seasonal Scripture readings, here at St Columba's, with festive food and drink provided (mulled wine, mince pies, and other goodies). We have invited a few school choirs to join us, plus several other special guests!! Donations at the door – all proceeds go towards our Building Fund. Why not invite some friends? Spread a little festive cheer!

**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 Church Funds. Music is provided by John Gordon, and there will be stovies, oatcakes and other delights all night long! Please feel free to bring your own refreshments! Tickets are now on sale - why not treat yourself and your family this Hogmanay?!!

**Church cleaning** – Monday 14 November at 9.30am: Margaret and Marie (Nairn). New volunteers are always welcomed – please consider offering some of your spare time to help clean our beautiful church!

**“90 Club” – next draw Sunday 27 November.** We have a few numbers still available; it might be your turn to win! Please ask Don about joining in.

**PRIZE BINGO** – The next Fundraiser Bingo will be on **FRIDAY 2 DECEMBER, at 7.00 pm!! We will have a Christmas theme, with crackers, mince pies, and sweet treats!!** Items to give as prizes always needed, your generosity is greatly appreciated, without your help we would not be so successful in our fund raising efforts. Thank you!!

## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

**Sick:** + Anna Black + Audrey O'Connell + Amelia Drew + Leslie Murray + Rhona MacGregor + Cath and Roddy Mackenzie + Ellen Williams

**Anniversaries:** + Alex MacDonald + Margaret Anne Welsh + Michael and Manji Dannish + Pat Grout + Jack Johnstone + Effie Kennedy