



St. Columba's, Culloden

Tower Road, Culloden, Inverness, IV2 7PW

Tel: (01463) 794619 / (01463) 233519

E-mail: stcolumbasculloden@outlook.com

Website: www.stcolumbasculloden.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stcolumbasculloden

Parish Priest: Fr Domenico Zanrè



~ PARISH NEWSLETTER ~

17 DECEMBER 2017: THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sunday Mass Readings

1st Reading: Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11

Responsorial Psalm: Luke 1:46-50, 53-54

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Gospel: John 1: 6-8, 19-28

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 17 December	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 'BAMBINELLI' SUNDAY	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am
Tuesday 19 December	Of the Day	* <u>Hour of Mercy: Sacrament of Reconciliation</u> * Evening Prayer Mass	6.00 pm 7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Wednesday 20 December	Of the Day	* <u>Hour of Mercy: Sacrament of Reconciliation</u> * Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	10.00 am 11.00 am 11.30 am
Thursday 21 December	Of the Day	* <u>Hour of Mercy: Sacrament of Reconciliation</u> * Mass	6.30 pm 7.30 pm
Sunday 24 December	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT CHRISTMAS VIGIL	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass Sacrament of Reconciliation Christmas Carols Christmas Vigil Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am 10.30pm 11.00pm 11.30pm

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION DURING ADVENT: CLEARING THE WAY FOR THE LORD

"A voice is calling, 'Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.'" (Isaiah 40:3) This verse reminds all of us that the liturgical season leading up to Christmas is a time for preparation and purification.

Amid the many ways Catholics get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the sacrament of reconciliation is often overlooked. Yet a good confession can be one of the best ways to enter into the joy of the nativity with a clean heart, light and love.

The Hawaii Catholic Herald asked diocesan adult faith formation coordinator Kristina DeNeve to share some of her insights on penance during Advent.

Why is it important for Catholics to go to confession?

Well, I could answer this in terms of how this is one of seven sacraments, one of the most amazing ways that God literally, physically comes to us and becomes part of our lives, changing us forever. I could answer this in terms of how our church fathers and mothers for the past 2,000-plus years have spoken about the importance of confession if we want to grow in the spiritual life. But, ignoring all these incredibly good reasons, I can share that the sacrament of penance and reconciliation is critical because it brings healing to the parts of our lives that are broken.

Why is Advent a good time for Confession?

Advent brings to mind hope, love, joy and peace. But, December is also the darkest month of the year, and not just because of our distance from the sun. In Advent, we also cannot ignore that nagging feeling that all is not perfect in our lives. In a deep way that we can scarcely articulate, we long for the completeness that can only come from Jesus Christ. Advent is a perfect time for reconciliation and penance because of two reasons: One, it allows us to ritually (and) sacramentally acknowledge our own incompleteness. Second, it allows God to touch us, and give us the completeness, the healing, the fullness, that only he can give.

What advice would you give Catholics who want to make a good confession this Advent?

Go! Just do it! Tell the priest it has been a long time. Tell the priest you don't know the prayers. Tell the priest you are scared or that you can't remember everything you've done. And trust that he has heard lots worse than you will share.

There is a saying that we are only as sick as our deepest secret. Well, if that is true, then God obviously wants us to be healthy. When the priest, in the name of Christ, says, "You are forgiven," there is very little in life to compare to that feeling.

PARISH NEWS

Reconciling ourselves to the Lord this Advent – this is a special season of preparation and purification for the joyful Solemnity of Christmas. Many of us are busy cleaning and preparing our homes to welcome family and friends. Surely we should be preparing our ‘spiritual homes’, too, by coming to the Lord in the **Sacrament of Reconciliation?** With this in mind, **Fr Domenico will be offering an ‘Hour of Mercy’ on Tuesday 19 December – Thursday 21 December.** The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available in the Lady Chapel, during the times listed overleaf.

‘Thank You!’ to all of you who contributed in any way to make our two recent events – the Children’s Christmas Party and our Christmas Carol Service – such a success. There were even more children this year at our party, and from what Fr Domenico saw, the ‘grown-up children’ also enjoyed it! The time and commitment invested by our Mums and Dads is greatly appreciated. Likewise, a dedicated group of volunteers helped to make our Carol Service another memorable evening – you know who you are! Thank you most sincerely for your support and commitment to the parish.

Today: ‘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. Fr Domenico would like to introduce this custom to St Columba’s, and he will bless all ‘Bambinelli’ at today’s Mass. *‘This beautiful tradition helps to focus children’s minds on the real reason for Christmas: the birth of our Lord Jesus.’*

Gift Aid Rebate: we have received an early Christmas present from Mr. Taxman. A cheque was paid into our account for the sum of **£ 3,712.80**, representing our Gift Aid rebate for the tax year 2016-17. As you can see, it certainly pays to contribute to the parish using Gift Aid if you are a tax payer! Please do make use of the yellow envelopes on the table in the foyer!

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.

“CATHOLICISM: THE PIVOTAL PLAYERS”

– our **final** evening together will take place this week, on **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?!!

Cleaning Team: Monday 18th 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: + Desmond Harrington + Joe Smith + Kerry Green + George Innes