



# St. Columba's, Culloden

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Parish Priest: Fr Domenico Zanrè



## ~ PARISH NEWSLETTER ~

**18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2016**  
**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**YEAR A**

## Sunday Mass Readings

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Isaiah 7: 10-14

Psalm: Ps 23 (24): 1-6

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Romans 1: 1-7

Gospel: Matthew 1: 18-24

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 18 December	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am
Tuesday 20 December	Mass of 20 December	Sacrament of Reconciliation ** Evening Prayer ** Mass	6.30 pm 7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Wednesday 21 December	Commemoration of St Peter Canisius, SJ	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	10.30 am 11.00 am 11.30 am
Thursday 22 December	Mass of 22 December	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Saturday 24 December	CHRISTMAS VIGIL MASS	** SYRO-MALABAR MASS ** Sacrament of Reconciliation Carols Vigil Mass	3.00 pm 10.30 pm 11.00 pm 11.30 pm
Sunday 25 December	CHRISTMAS DAY	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass – <u>NOTE TIME</u>	10.00 am <u>10.30 am</u>

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR A) – POPE FRANCIS, *ANGELUS*, 22 DECEMBER 2013

“On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, the Gospel tells us about the events preceding the birth of Jesus, and the Evangelist Matthew presents them from the point of view of St Joseph, the betrothed of the Virgin Mary. Joseph and Mary were dwelling in Nazareth; they were not yet living together, because they were not yet married. In the meantime, Mary, after having welcomed the Angel’s announcement, came to be with child by the power of the Holy Spirit. When Joseph realized this, he was bewildered. The Gospel does not explain what his thoughts were, but it does tell us the essential: he seeks to do the will of God and is ready for the most radical renunciation. Rather than defending himself and asserting his rights, Joseph chooses what for him is an enormous sacrifice. And the Gospel tells us: “Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly” (1:19). This brief sentence reveals a true inner drama if we think about the love that Joseph had for Mary! But even in these circumstances, Joseph intends to do the will of God and decides, surely with great sorrow, to send Mary away quietly. We need to meditate on these words in order to understand the great trial that Joseph had to endure in the days preceding Jesus’ birth. It was a trial similar to the sacrifice of Abraham, when God asked him for his son Isaac (cf. Gen 22): to give up what was most precious, the person most beloved. But as in the case of Abraham, the Lord intervenes: he found the faith he was looking for and he opens up a different path, a path of love and of happiness. “Joseph,” he says, “do not fear to take

Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 1:20). This Gospel passage reveals to us the greatness of St Joseph’s heart and soul. He was following a good plan for his life, but God was reserving another plan for him, a greater mission. Joseph was a man who always listened to the voice of God, he was deeply sensitive to his secret will, he was a man attentive to the messages that came to him from the depths of his heart and from on high. He did not persist in following his own plan for his life, he did not allow bitterness to poison his soul; rather, he was ready to make himself available to the news that, in a such a bewildering way, was being presented to him. And thus, he was a good man. He did not hate, and he did not allow bitterness to poison his soul. Yet how many times does hatred, or even dislike and bitterness poison our souls! And this is harmful. Never allow it: he is an example of this. And Joseph thereby became even freer and greater. By accepting himself according to God’s design, Joseph fully finds himself, beyond himself. His freedom to renounce even what is his, the possession of his very life, and his full interior availability to the will of God challenge us and show us the way. Let us make ourselves ready to celebrate Christmas by contemplating Mary and Joseph: Mary, the woman full of grace who had the courage to entrust herself totally to the Word of God; Joseph, the faithful and just man who chose to believe the Lord rather than listen to the voices of doubt and human pride. With them, let us walk together toward Bethlehem.”

## PARISH NEWS

**CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE: "THANK YOU"!** – to everyone who assisted us in making the Christmas Carol Service such a memorable event! Over 200 people came along, and took part in a very enjoyable evening! The children from the Gaelic School were superb, as was Fr Andrew Harden, playing the clarinet. His virtuoso piece entitled "Por una cabeza" was outstanding – surely the first time a tango has been performed in St Columba's, in tribute to our Argentinian pope! As for the 'Three (Highland) Priests', and their rendition of "When a Child is Born".. Johnny Mathis can be assured that he has no competition!

**'Thank You'** to all of you who made last Saturday's Christmas Party go so well. A terrific afternoon's fun for more than 30 children – not to mention the 'grown-up children'! It was good for parents to have the chance to meet and chat with one another. Perhaps we might think of more opportunities like this?

**TODAY: CHRISTMAS ON THE AVENUE: Sunday 18 December from 2.00pm until 3.00pm.** Carol singing organised by Smithton/Culloden Community Group. Open to everyone willing to sing a few Carols or play an instrument. No charge; just go along. Hot drinks, festive foods, fresh popcorn.. and maybe even Santa! Come along!

**First Holy Communion classes** will start on **Thursday 12 January at 5.30pm.** Families are invited to attend the first session, which will last for 30 minutes. **If any children are yet to register, please collect a form from the Sacristy and return it as soon as possible.**

**Blythswood Trust Shoe Box Appeal** – Update: thanks to everyone's efforts, Ainsley was able to make up **27 boxes**, to give to the Blythswood Trust. Thank you – your generosity is very much appreciated!

**The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is available at St Columba's before EVERY Mass in this Advent Season, in the Lady Chapel.** Just come along and see Fr Domenico, or ask at any time. Remember the words of Pope Francis: "Even if the Holy Door closes, the true door of mercy, which is the heart of Christ, always remains open wide for us". Deo gratias!

**Faith in Film Evening: *The Nativity Story* (2006), Wednesday 21 December, at 7.00pm.** 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**).

**\*\* Evening Prayer: 7.00pm every Tuesday \*\***  
Why not join us as we pray together the Universal Prayer of the Church? An ideal preparation for Mass, and for Christmas!

**Sick, or in Hospital?** Please contact Fr Domenico if you require a visit or know of anyone who is sick and housebound or in hospital and wishes a visit during this festive season.

**HOME ALONE THIS CHRISTMAS?** If you're spending Christmas by yourself this year, why not join some of our other parishioners for a Christmas meal together? If you would like to do this, please speak to Fr Domenico, or to Magda Maclean.

**The new edition of "LIGHT OF THE NORTH" magazine** has just arrived; be sure to collect your copy. Lots of photos and features on Inverness and the Highland Deanery. Please consider making a donation towards the cost of each copy.

**GRAND CHRISTMAS RAFFLE: DRAW TODAY, Sunday 18 December!** Good luck to all!

**FANCY A CHRISTMAS HAMPER?!! You'd be a turkey not to! Only £1 a ticket**, available in the foyer, for our fabulous festive hamper – **drawn on Christmas Day! Don't miss out!**

**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, 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?!!

**Cleaning Team: on holiday.**

**"90 Club" December draw: TODAY.** Good luck to all who have a number. We still have a few available; please ask Don about joining in – **ONLY £2 MONTHLY!**

**PRIZE BINGO – 27 January** is the date of our next 'eyes down' – thereafter every last Friday until June. Your help in donating items to give as prizes is always greatly appreciated. Thank you very much.

## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

**Sick:** Anna Black + Audrey O'Connell + Amelia Drew + John Drew + Leslie Murray + Jane Green + Frances Boyle

**Anniversaries:** George Innes + Kerry Green