



St. Columba's, Culloden

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~ PARISH NEWSLETTER ~

**18 FEBRUARY 2018:
FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

Mass Readings

1st Reading: Genesis 9: 8-15

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 24 (25): 4-6, 7b-9

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 3: 18-22

Gospel: Mark 1: 12-15

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 18 February	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT Second Collection: Building Fund	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am
Tuesday 20 February	Tuesday of Week 1 in Lent Mass Offering: Donor's Intentions	Sacrament of Reconciliation Evening Prayer Mass	6.30 pm 7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Wednesday 21 February	Wednesday of Week 1 in Lent Mass Offering: Donor's Intentions	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	10.30 am 11.00 am 11.30 am
Thursday 22 February	Thursday of Week 1 in Lent Mass Offering: Donor's Intentions	Sacrament of Reconciliation * Stations of the Cross * Mass	6.30 pm 7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Sunday 25 February	SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT Second Collection: Building Fund	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am

First Sunday of Lent: Journeying Out into the Wilderness

As we start Lent once again we turn our minds to what we might give up. Sometimes these can seem trivial things, like chocolate or alcohol, tokens of abstinence. Yet, whatever we give up we usually find that, as the weeks go by, we come to realise how much we miss them and how dependent we are on them. We come to realise how important a role they play in our lives and come face to face with the reasons why: the other stresses and strains in our lives that make such 'creature comforts' a way of managing and coping with the demands placed on us. At the same time, it is often also the case that by the end of Lent, if we persevere, we find that we have no appetite for the things we have given up. We have become liberated from them and we feel much better for it. So, giving up things for Lent can teach us much about the ambiguities in our own positions. It can make us realise that we face more fundamental challenges and temptations, but it can also show us that it is possible to be free of things that otherwise control us.

In the Gospel passage from Mark we hear how the Spirit drove Christ into the wilderness, where he remained for forty days, tempted by Satan. As we begin this Lent, we are invited to enter our own wilderness during these coming forty days. We are invited to enter a wilderness of contemplation, in which we find time to think about our lives and about the need we have of God and of the salvation he gives us in Christ. Lent is a time for us to think about what we really want of God. Just as the things we give up for Lent tend to reveal to us our deeper needs, so the period of forty days as a whole can be an opportunity for us to step away from the busyness of our

ordinary lives, in which all the things we do for work or leisure, all the routines we have in place, often distract us from facing what is really important in life, that is to say, from the deeper temptations we face to give in to patterns and habits of sin that damage us and damage those around us, but also from the deeper hunger we have for the life Christ offers to us and which can really make us free.

The three practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving that Christ teaches us and which we make a central focus each Lent are wonderful tools to help us as we seek to enter the wilderness of contemplation this Lent. If we pray for what we really want, we are brought face to face with our needs and, if we persist in this prayer, we will also find ourselves schooled by God, as our desires are tested and refined. Silent prayer, or prayerful, attentive reading of the Bible, causes us to reflect more deeply on the reality of God and of what God offers to us. Fasting in all its forms, whether from food or giving up other things, makes us pause a while in the busyness of our lives. Almsgiving, again in the many different forms this can take, whether giving money, material goods, or our time to others, shows us the capacity we have for love. In each of these practices we experience little realities of death and life, of struggle and sacrifice, but also of a freedom to be more than we were, better than we were. They open us up to hear again and more fully the Good News of the Kingdom that Christ proclaims to us, the deliverance from death and the fullness of life he promises and makes real for us. (Fr. Martin Ganeri OP)

GENERAL NEWS

“Let it be done unto me according to your word: how Mary helps us to be filled with God” – a Marian course for Lent, taking place in the Marian Room, at 32 Huntly Street, **on Tuesday evenings at 7.00pm. First meeting: Tuesday 20 February.** 40 places available; £1 per person to cover the cost of the course-book. Please register your interest beforehand, or come on the night. For enquiries and further information, please contact PJ in the St Mary’s Office, on 01463 233519.

Fundraiser Indian Buffet Night, with Raffle and Silent Auction – at George’s Restaurant, Queensgate, Inverness, on Wednesday 28 February, at 7.00pm. In aid of the forthcoming youth pilgrimage to Lourdes. Tickets: £20/Adult; £10/child. For further information, or to reserve a ticket, please contact Iona on 07851 420948.

Lent Station Masses 2018 – Fridays at 7.00pm:

23 February: St Mary’s, Nairn
2 March: St Aidan’s, Aviemore * (coach)
9 March: St Lawrence’s, Dingwall
16 March: Christ the King, Brora * (coach)
23 March: St Duthac’s, Dornie (coach)
* Principal Celebrant: Bishop Hugh Gilbert, OSB.

Coaches are available to Aviemore (£7), Brora (£8), and Dornie (£10). If you would like to reserve a seat on any of them, please contact PJ in the St Mary’s Office, on 01463 233519.

St John Ogilvie Mass 2018: Saturday 10 March, at St Thomas’, Keith. Mass begins at 2.00pm. Principal Celebrant: Bishop Hugh Gilbert OSB; Homilist: Fr Domenico Zanrè. All welcome.

Chrism Mass 2018: Thursday 22 March, at St Peter’s, Buckie. Mass begins at 6.00pm. All welcome.

PARISH NEWS

Stations of the Cross: each Thursday evening during Lent – beginning Thursday 15 February – we will pray the Stations of the Cross, from 7.00pm, before the Evening Mass.

FREE Daily Lent Reflections - Would you like a deeper, more powerful Lent this year? Then sign up for Bishop Robert Barron’s FREE daily Lent reflections at LentReflections.com.

Each day, from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday, the creator and host of the CATHOLICISM Faith Formation programme will send you a short reflection, straight to your inbox. There’s simply no better way to super-charge your Lent. Be sure to sign-up at LentReflections.com!

‘From the Dark Wood to the Beatific Vision: Journeying Through Lent with Dante’. This Lent, at St Columba’s, we’ll journey down through the ever-narrowing circles of Hell, up the seven-terraced Mount Purgatory, and finally ascend to Paradise! Our guide will be the fourteenth-century Florentine poet, Dante Alighieri, and we’ll look together at his literary masterpiece, *The Divine Comedy*, using it as a means to examine the nature of sin, the healing love and mercy of God, and the redemption of humanity. **The weekly meetings will run throughout Lent, and begin on Wednesday 21 February at 7.00pm.** Please spread the word – all welcome!

St Columba’s Mothers and Toddlers Group: Mondays at 9.30am-11.30am, in the Meeting Room. Please note that there is **NO MEETING tomorrow** (19 February), due to the School Holidays; we return on Monday 26 February.

Cleaning Team: Monday 19th February, at 12 noon – Marie and Don. Can you help? We are always looking for volunteers – only one hour a month! See Don for details.

“90 Club”: DRAW NEXT SUNDAY, 25 February. You too could be a winner if you have a number! Only £2 a month. See Don for details.

Prize Bingo: THIS FRIDAY, 23 February – ‘eyes down’ at 7.00pm. A warm welcome awaits you. Many hands make light work; can you help? Anyone passing the church at 9.15pm might like to come in and give a hand to re-arrange the furniture when Bingo is finished! Thank you!

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Sick: + Anna Black + Audrey O’Connell + Rose Corbett + Amelia & John Drew + Murray Mackay + Peter Simpson + Morag MacIntyre + Angus Johnson + Johnny Gallagher + Denise Maclean +

Anniversaries: + Jack Hastrick + Jim Murray + Moira McGoogan + John Armstrong + Margaret and William Donnelly + Donald John Macmillan