



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 ~

27TH NOVEMBER 2016
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
YEAR A

Sunday Mass Readings

1st Reading: Isaiah 2: 1-5

Psalm: Ps 121 (122): 1-2, 4-5, 6-9

2nd Reading: Romans 13: 11-14

Gospel: Matthew 24: 37-44

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 27 November	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Second Collection: Building Fund)	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00am 9.30am
Tuesday 29 November	Tuesday in the First Week of Advent	** Vespers (Evening Prayer) ** Mass	7.00pm 7.30pm
Wednesday 30 November	SOLEMNITY OF ST ANDREW	Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	11.00am 11.30am
Thursday 1 December	Thursday in the First Week of Advent	Mass	7.30pm
Sunday 4 December	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00am 9.30am

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available 30 minutes before EVERY Mass during Advent and Christmas.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR A) – JOURNEYING WITH JESUS

Today, on the First Sunday of Advent, we begin a new liturgical year; that is, *a new journey of the People of God* with Jesus Christ, our Shepherd, who guides us through history toward the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, this day has a special charm, it makes us experience deeply the meaning of history. We rediscover the beauty of all being on a journey: the Church, with her vocation and mission, and all humanity, peoples, civilizations, cultures, all on a journey across the paths of time.

But where are we journeying? Is there a common goal? And what is this goal? The Lord responds to us through the prophet Isaiah, saying: "It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths'"(2:2-3). This is what Isaiah says regarding the goal toward which we are travelling. It is *a universal pilgrimage toward a common goal*, which in the Old Testament is Jerusalem, where the Temple of the Lord rises. For from there, from Jerusalem came the revelation of the Face of God and of his Law. Revelation found its fulfilment in *Jesus Christ*, and he, the Word made flesh, became the "Temple of the Lord": he is both guide and goal of our pilgrimage, of the pilgrimage of the entire People of God; and in his light the other peoples may also walk toward the Kingdom of justice, toward the Kingdom of peace. The Prophet continues: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (2:4).

Allow me to repeat what the Prophet says; listen carefully: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more". But when will this occur? What a beautiful day it shall be, when weapons are dismantled in order to be transformed into tools for work! What a beautiful day that shall be! And this is possible! Let us bet on hope, on the hope for peace, and it will be possible!

This journey never comes to an end. Just as in each of our lives we always need to begin again, to get up again, to rediscover the meaning of the goal of our lives, so also for the great human family it is always necessary to rediscover the common horizon toward which we are journeying. *The horizon of hope!* This is the horizon that makes for a good journey. The season of Advent, which we begin again today, restores this horizon of hope, a hope which does not disappoint for it is founded on God's Word. A hope which does not disappoint, simply because the Lord never disappoints! He is faithful! He does not disappoint! Let us think about and feel this beauty.

The model of this spiritual disposition, of this way of being and journeying in life, is the Virgin Mary. A simple girl from the country who carries within her heart the fullness of hope in God! In her womb, God's hope took flesh, it became man, it became history: Jesus Christ. Her *Magnificat* is the canticle of the People of God on a journey, and of all men and women who hope in God and in the power of his mercy. Let us allow ourselves to be guided by her, she who is mother, a mamma and knows how to guide us. Let us allow ourselves to be guided by her during this season of active waiting and watchfulness. (Pope Francis, *Angelus*, 1 December 2013)

GENERAL NEWS

Calling all teenagers! – Saturday 3 December: “St Francis Xavier Day” at Stratherrick. A day of fun, faith, and fellowship for young people (c. 12 – 16+ years old). Beginning at 10.00am (departure from St Mary’s, Huntly Street, at 9.15am), and concluding at 4.30pm. Please do encourage our teenagers to attend. For more details, please speak to Fr Domenico.

PARISH NEWS

COLLECTION FOR DEACON ANDREW NISKI – thanks to your great generosity, we have raised **£353.71** for Deacon Andrew! I have purchased a green chasuble (of his choice) on your behalf, together with some other very useful ‘priestly’ items, and we will have a presentation for him here in St Columba’s, once he returns from his pre-Ordination retreat. Please do continue to keep him, and all our seminarians, in your prayers.

FUNDRAISING – Again, ‘thank you’ for all your support of the Parish. We had a tremendous result for our recent Mary’s Meals fundraiser. It would be good to organise other coffee-mornings and similar events in 2017 for ourselves! **Our outstanding loan to the Diocese is currently some £261,00.00.** However, we’ve seen how successful we can be in organising fundraising events; all that is required is prior advertising, good will, and the support of one another.

No Second Collections in December and January: the Christmas season can be both a busy and a costly one; accordingly, there will be no more Second Collections until February, apart from a mandatory Special Collection at the beginning of January for the work of Justice and Peace. However, please do feel free to continue contributing to our Building Fund, if you can, preferably via Gift Aid. Every little bit helps!

NEW: Evening Prayer: 7.00pm every Tuesday – from **Tuesday 29 November onwards**, we will be introducing Evening Prayer in St Columba’s. Why not join us for the Universal Prayer of the Church? Ideal preparation for Mass!

Snow/ice clearing: our list of volunteers needs updating. Can you help? Please sign up in the foyer.

Drama Group for Children (approx. 5-10 years old): This initiative has been suggested to me by one of our parishioners. If you would like to help with a simple drama group for our younger children, with the aim of putting together a small production at Christmas and Easter-time, please speak to Fr Domenico.

Have you seen our new Facebook page?! Feel free to contribute news items (local, national, and international), share information on what is happening in the Church and the world, make comments and suggestions, etc. You can find the site here: www.facebook.com/stcolumbasculloden

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**).

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 also invited a few special guests to join us!! Donations at the door – all proceeds go towards our Building Fund. Why not invite some friends? Spread a little festive cheer!

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.

GRAND CHRISTMAS RAFFLE: Take a few books home for friends and neighbours! **Only £1 a ticket** – available in the entrance foyer.

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?!!

Church cleaning – Tuesday 29th November Shona & GiGi.

CHRISTMAS CLEAN: Monday 12th December at 6.30pm. All hands on deck! – Extra support would be very welcome; if you’re free, please do come and help us to prepare the church for Christmas!

“90 Club” – DRAW AFTER MASS TODAY! We have a few numbers still available; it might be your turn to win! **3 GOOD PRIZES!** Please ask Don about joining in – **ONLY £2 MONTHLY!**

PRIZE BINGO – The next Fundraiser Bingo will be on **THIS FRIDAY, 2 DECEMBER: eyes down at 7.00 pm!!** **We will have a Christmas theme, with crackers, mince pies, and sweet treats!! Fun for all the family – come and join us!** 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.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Sick: + Anna Black + Audrey O’Connell + Amelia Drew + Leslie Murray + Cath and Roddy Mackenzie +

Anniversaries: + Martin Regan + Alice Keeler + Lorna Macdonald + Cath MacLeod + Rita Harkins + Angela Deans