



# St. Columba's, Culloden

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## ~ PARISH NEWSLETTER ~

**29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**  
**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT,**  
**YEAR C**

## Sunday Mass Readings

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Psalm: 24: 4-5. 8-9. 10. 14

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2

Gospel: Luke 21:25-28. 34-36

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 29 November	First Sunday of Advent, Year C	Sacrament of Reconciliation (Lady Chapel) Mass	09.00 09.30
Tuesday 1 December	Tuesday in the First Week of Advent	Mass	19.30
Wednesday 2 December	Wednesday in the First Week of Advent	Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	11.00 11.30
Thursday 3 December	St Francis Xavier - Memorial	Mass	19.30
Friday 4 December	Friday in the First Week of Advent	Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	11.00 11.30
Sunday 6 December	Second Sunday of Advent, Year C	Sacrament of Reconciliation (Lady Chapel) Mass	09.00 09.30

**The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) will be available 30 minutes before each Mass.**

## Advent Pastoral Letter from Bishop Hugh

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Advent is here. It turns us to the coming of Christ, his three-fold coming: as the child of Mary born in Bethlehem; as the glorified Son of man at the end of time; and, in between, in our daily lives.

Advent has its own atmosphere and character, symbols, words and music. It's a season with its own content, beauty and grace. It shouldn't be swamped by premature Christmases. It's like a hand stretched out, eager to take our hands and lead us beyond "the cares of life" into the presence of the God who comes.

Our diocese currently has seven (7) students for the priesthood. Many of you will know one or more of them. They are good news. But our resources are strained. It costs us just short of £200,000 per year to cover the formation of seminarians. There is an annual collection on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter for the Bursary Fund which meets these expenses. But this collection is not adequate in our present circumstances, nor are our other normal means of funding. I am therefore asking for your help – for any help, in fact, small or great. It is much needed. **There is a leaflet available this Sunday with some suggestions as to how to contribute. Please take a copy.**

We know the clergy are not supermen. We know that in all matters of the soul each of us stands alone before God. But we also know we need each other's help. We are blessed to belong to a community of faith and love, the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. Just as Christ came to Israel in the humanity he took from Mary, so now he comes to us

through the Church, our Mother, by way of word and sacrament. And priests are the ordained ministers of these things. In this sphere, in union with the bishop, they can act "on the authority of the Lord Jesus." Priests are a good thing. For myself I can say that I have been blessed, often decisively, by many of the priests I have known. They really can be helpful! The ministry of priests is one of the ways the mercy, truth and peace of God the Father can touch our lives. Through it, Christ baptizes, confirms, feeds, forgives and anoints us. He blesses our marriages. He accompanies our dying. He, our Redeemer, keeps his Sacrifice before us in the Mass. He prays for us. He teaches, counsels, comforts, corrects and strengthens us, often, through his priests, in very human, heartfelt, even humorous ways. Our whole life, with its hardships and happiness, turns into a real Advent and we are gradually prepared for a final, merciful meeting with the Lord.

In a world with some very dark corners to it, we need people who will keep relighting the candles - the candles of faith, hope and love. This is the mission of the priest.

It is a sign of life that the Church in this diocese has priestly vocations to nurture. May there be still more! They are a sign of the divine mercy Pope Francis wishes us to rediscover this coming year. So, I thank you in advance for all you can do to support our seminarians, present and future.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

+ *Hugh OSB*, Bishop of Aberdeen

## GENERAL NEWS

**Catenian Christmas Dinner: Friday 4 December:** 7.00pm for 7.30pm, until midnight, at the Inverness Golf Club, on Culcabock Road. Licensed Bar and Raffle. £25.00 per head. For tickets, please contact Tony Lightfoot (tel: 236495) or Joe Campbell (tel: 790888).

**Jubilee Year of Mercy: Inaugural Opening of the Holy Doors at St Mary's, Inverness, on Monday 14 December at 7.00pm.** Bishop Hugh Gilbert OSB will be presiding at this Mass, together with Priests from throughout the Deanery. All welcome.

## PARISH NEWS

**Welcome to Fr John!** Today we are joined by Fr John McCluskey MHM. Fr John is a Mill Hill Missionary priest. After Ordination, he studied for a Master's degree in History at Cambridge, and a Doctorate in Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame (USA). He spent ten years in Cameroon, where he taught Philosophy and Church History, before serving as the Director of Studies at the Missionary Institute, London (MIL). After a period of Scripture Studies in Jerusalem, he facilitated a renewal programme for Missionaries in Midlife in Rome. He is currently teaching at the Institute of St Anselm in Margate.

**FREE Daily Advent Reflections!** Would you like to enter more deeply into the spirituality of Advent, and prepare for the great Solemnity of Christmas? Why not sign up at [adventreflections.com](http://adventreflections.com), and from today until 25 December, Bishop Robert Barron will send you a daily e-mail with an uplifting spiritual reflection, based on the Scripture Readings at Mass. Join over 275,000 people around the world, on this journey through Advent!

**Day of Reflection at Stratherrick:** led by Fr Domenico on **8 December (Immaculate Conception)**, to mark the beginning of the Year of Mercy. The Day will begin at 10.00am, and conclude at approx. 4.00pm. The format is as follows:

- 10.00am - Tea and coffee in the house
- 10.30am - Introduction to the Day and Talk 1
- 11.00am - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Adoration; Rosary; opportunities for the Sacrament of Confession
- 12.00pm - Angelus and Mass
- 1.00pm - Lunch, followed by the opportunity to pray the Stations of the Cross, or walk to the shrine of Our Lady of the Highlands
- 2.30pm - Talk 2
- 3.00pm - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; Divine Mercy Prayers; Adoration
- 4.00pm - Benediction

Please note that lunch will be provided. If you would like to attend, please contact Therese Finlay on 01456 486678, for catering purposes. All welcome!

**Christmas Carol Service, Wednesday 9 December, 7.00pm-8.00pm:** 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 our very special

guests... "The Priests"! See the posters for further details. Why not invite some friends and come along? Spread a little festive cheer!

**Children's Christmas Party: Saturday 12 December, 2.00pm – 4.00pm.** Santa has confirmed that he is coming to visit our children! This will be a fun-filled event for our children. Please do come along, if you can!

**Christmas Penitential Service: Tuesday 15 December, 7.00 pm.** We will have a Penitential Service here at St Columba's, with plenty of opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Apart from myself, Fr Maximilian Nwosu and Fr James Anyaegbu from Beauuly will be hearing Confessions throughout the service. There will also be time for personal prayer and devotions in front of the Blessed Sacrament. What better way can there be to prepare spiritually for the birth of Our Saviour? *"Coming out of the confessional, we will feel God's strength, which restores life and returns the enthusiasm of faith"* (Pope Francis).

**Christmas Hamper Raffle tickets are on sale in the foyer:** £1 for a strip of five tickets. Please write your name and phone number on the back of EACH ticket! The draw will be held after Christmas Morning Mass. Good Luck!

**Church cleaning:** the cleaning team are coming in together on Monday 14th December at 4.30pm; they will then have a break until the New Year.

**'90 Club** – the draw takes place today, after Mass. Good luck to all who have a number. You can still join in this fund-raiser: only £2 monthly! Please ask Don for details.

**Prize Bingo: eyes down this Friday, 4th December, at 7.00pm.** Items to give out as prizes are always required. Thank you, as always, for your support. **HELP FROM MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION WHO ARE FREE FOR 15 MINUTES AT 9.15pm TO CLEAR AWAY THE TABLES AND RESET THE CHURCH WOULD BE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.** Please let Don know if you'll be coming. Thank you.

## FINANCES

No. 1 Account	£ 220.65
Building Fund	£ 209.60
– Thank you for your generosity and support –	

## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

**Sick:** Audrey O'Connell + Anna Black + Leslie Murray + Michelle Campbell + Laura Johnstone + Amelia Drew

**Anniversaries:** Andrew MacDonald + Martin Regan + Alice Keeler + Lorna MacDonald

## A THOUGHT FOR ADVENT – POPE FRANCIS

The season of Advent restores ... a hope that does not disappoint, for it is founded on God's Word. A hope that does not disappoint, simply because the Lord never disappoints! ... Let us think about and feel this beauty.

<b>GROUPS AND DEVOTIONS</b>
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**The Secular Franciscan Order** meets at 2.00 pm on the second Saturday of each month at St Columba's, Culloden. Contact Helen MacGilp (01463 792149). Visit [www.ofsgeb.org.uk](http://www.ofsgeb.org.uk).

**Prayer and Praise Group** every Thursday at St Columba's after 7.30pm Mass in the Lady Chapel. Call Brian (01463 790255) for details.