



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 ~

**3 DECEMBER 2017:
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Sunday Mass Readings

1st Reading: Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1,3-8

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 79 (80):2-3, 15-16, 18-19

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel: Mark 13:33-37

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 3 December	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am
Tuesday 5 December	Tuesday of Week 1 in Advent	Sacrament of Reconciliation Evening Prayer Mass	6.30 pm 7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Wednesday 6 December	Optional Memorial of St Nicholas, Bishop	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	10.30 am 11.00 am 11.30 am
Thursday 7 December	Memorial of St Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	7.00 pm 7.30 pm
Sunday 10 December	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Sacrament of Reconciliation Mass	9.00 am 9.30 am

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: SETTING THE STAGE FOR OUR ADVENT JOURNEY

Getting in Touch with Myself: One of the best ways to prepare for the very special season of Advent is to “get in touch with ourselves.” It may sound odd, but one symptom of our contemporary lives is that we can often be quite “out of touch” with what is going on in our very own hearts. We are about to begin our Advent, right at the time our Western culture begins Christmas preparations. It is a busy time, and our heads are filled with details to remember. And, it is a time of emotional complexity that is part of this holiday season - with all of the expectations and challenges of family and relationships: who we want to be with and who we struggle to be with. So, our hearts are a bit tender, if not completely defended from experiencing anything deeply.

We are about to hear some very powerful and stirring readings from Isaiah, the Prophet. We will re-enter the ancient tradition of a people longing for the coming of a Saviour. We may remember the days of our childhood when we longed for Christmas to come, because it was a magical time of receiving gifts. As adults, we have to ask ourselves: “What is it I long for now?” The answer won’t come easily. The more we walk around with that question, and let it penetrate through the layers of distraction and self-protection, the more powerfully we will experience Advent.

Our Need for Salvation: We are about to read and pray about the expectant hope of Israel, as expressed through Isaiah. The images we will be using are about darkness and gloom - about thick clouds covering the people - and about hunger and thirst. They are images that attempt to capture a

sense of what we feel when we are distant from our God. There are many images about war and conflict. They express the powerlessness and anxiety we experience when we feel vulnerable and defenceless. Most of all, there are images of a future day - a day that can only be called the Lord’s - when all the tears will be wiped away, when there will be plenty to eat and drink, and when there will be no more conflict and no more war. God’s salvation will be made known. God’s victory will be complete.

These are very precious days for us to come into intimate contact with our own need for salvation. It is a time to make friends with our tears, our darkness, our hunger and thirst. What is missing? What eludes my grasp? What name can I give to the “restlessness” in my heart? What is the emptiness I keep trying to “feed” with food, with fantasy, with excitement, with busyness? What is the conflict that is “eating at me”? What is the sinful, unloving, self-centred pattern for which I haven’t asked for forgiveness and healing? Where do I need a peace that the world cannot give?

I can Prepare for Advent by Coming to Know that I Need a Saviour: I am preparing to listen to the promises, listen to these rich texts announcing the liberation I can truly long for. When my heart is open, when my hands are open, when my mouth is open and ready to ask for freedom, healing and peace, then I am ready to begin Advent.

[<http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/>]

GENERAL NEWS

Friday 8 December: Day of Recollection at Stratherrick (Sat Nav: IV2 6UL) for the **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**. The programme is as follows:

10.00am: Gather and Register
10.30am: Introduction: Prayer & Praise (Fr J. Bell)
10.40am: 'The Healing Power of Mary' (Fr D. Zanre)
11.00am: Exposition: Guided Meditation (Fr J. Bell)
11.30am: Confession & Conferences (all priests)
1200 noon: Angelus (Daughters of Divine Love)
12.15pm: Mass, with Laying on of Hands & Anointing with Balm of Mercy (Celebrant/Homilist: Fr A. Niski)
1.00pm: Relaxation
1.30pm: Lunch
2.45pm: Spiritual Groups (Faith Sharing)
3.30pm: Exposition & Benediction (Fr A. Niski)
4.00pm: Tea and depart

PARISH NEWS

Light of the North: the new Advent issue is now available. There is a wealth of good information in its pages from throughout the diocese, with many interesting articles. Please do pick up a copy, and consider making a **donation**, which goes to our **Parish Building Fund!**

Would you like to get involved in St Columba's Mothers and Toddlers Group? The group, which meets **every Monday, from 9.30am-11.30am**, is looking for volunteers to assist on an informal basis (as and when you can make it). Can you help with any of the following: arts and crafts; music time; help with snacks and tea and coffee? If you would like to get involved, please contact Clare or Sara at: clareoke@yahoo.com, or sara@culloden.net.

"CATHOLICISM: THE PIVOTAL PLAYERS" – our next evening together will be **Wednesday 6 December at 7.00pm**, as we look at the figure of **G. K. CHESTERTON** ('The Evangelist'). How does one engage a culture that is befuddled by Christ and suspicious of the Church? The life and witness of this nineteenth-century literary convert shows that the fundamental disposition of effective evangelisation is joy, and life in Christ is a day-to-day encounter with an abundant and surprising offer of grace. Come and join us as we learn about this fascinating literary figure!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY – Saturday 9 December, 2.00pm – 4.00pm. Santa has been notified, and has promised us that he will come to visit St Columba's! There will be music, games, surprises, and much more! All children very welcome! See our poster in the foyer! **NB. Parents: please remember to lend Santa a hand by bringing a wrapped, labelled present (e.g., selection box) for their child of around £5 in value to go into Santa's sack.** Many thanks.

ST COLUMBA'S CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE – Wednesday 13 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, with festive food and drink provided (non-alcoholic mulled wine, mince pies, and other goodies). We have invited special guests to join us!! Donations at the door will be gratefully accepted – suggested offerings are: £5 for adults; kids go free! All proceeds go towards our Building Fund. Why not invite some friends and come along? Spread a little festive cheer!

FIRs (Friends in Retirement): the next meeting of the group takes place in the Meeting Room at St Columba's on **Thursday 14 December, 2.00pm-4.00pm**. Come along and join us for a cup of tea, some home bakes, and a good natter!

Cleaning Team: Tuesday 28th November Mary and Karen. Would you like to join the parish cleaning team? We are always looking for volunteers! An hour a month is all we ask!

"90 Club" Winners of the November Draw – First Prize: No.27 (Jessica McGlade); Second Prize: No.43 (Jock Shaw); Third Prize: No.30 (Jean Hay). Next Draw: Sunday 31 December. Congratulations to our winners! Would you like to be a winner too? There are still a few numbers left; only £2 monthly. Please 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 all your support of this fund-raiser.

Annual Christmas Hamper Draw: TICKETS NOW 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 + Amelia & John Drew + Rose Corbett + Murray Mackay + Peter Simpson + Morag MacIntyre + Angus Johnson + Johnny Gallagher +

Anniversaries: + Martin Regan + Alice Keeler + Angela Deans + Lorna MacDonald + Rita Harkins + Tim Grout + Anna Kitty Mathew +