



# St. Columba's, Culloden

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## ~ PARISH NEWSLETTER ~

**6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2015**  
**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT,**  
**YEAR C**

## Sunday Mass Readings

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Baruch 5:1-9

Psalm: 125:1-6

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Date	Details	Service	Time
Sunday 6 December	Second Sunday of Advent, Year C	Sacrament of Reconciliation (Lady Chapel) Mass	09.00 09.30
Tuesday 8 December	Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Mass	19.30
Wednesday 9 December	Wednesday in the Second Week of Advent	Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament CAROL SERVICE	11.00 11.30 19.00
Thursday 10 December	Thursday in the Second Week of Advent	Mass	19.30
Friday 4 December	Friday in the Second Week of Advent	Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	11.00 11.30
Sunday 13 December	Third 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.**

## Saints for the Year of Mercy – St Nicholas (“Santa Claus”) – 6 December

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara. At this time the area was Greek, but is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to “sell what you own and give the money to the poor,” Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. He died in Myra on 6 December, in AD 343, and was buried in his cathedral church. The anniversary of his death became a day of celebration. Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand his extraordinary character and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need.

One story tells of a poor man who had no money to provide dowries for his three daughters. Without a dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry, and this poor man's daughters were

therefore destined to be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home – providing the needed dowries. The bags of gold, tossed through an open window, are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from St Nicholas. Sometimes the story is told with gold balls instead of bags of gold. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols for St. Nicholas. And so St. Nicholas is a gift-giver.

The tomb of St Nicholas in Myra became a popular place of pilgrimage. Because of the many wars and attacks in the region, some Christians were concerned that access to the tomb might become difficult. For both the religious and commercial advantages of a major pilgrimage site, the Italian cities of Venice and Bari vied to receive the relics of Nicholas. In the spring of 1087, sailors succeeded in spirited away the bones, bringing them to Bari, a seaport on the southeast coast of Italy. An impressive church was built over St. Nicholas' crypt, and many faithful journeyed there, to honour the saint who had rescued children, prisoners, sailors, famine victims, and many others through his compassion and the countless miracles attributed to his intercession. By his example of generosity to those in need, St. Nicholas continues to be a model for the Christian life.

[Adapted from: [www.stnicholascenter.org](http://www.stnicholascenter.org)]

## GENERAL NEWS

**Jubilee Year of Mercy:** Fr James Bell will be offering two talks on “**St Luke’s Gospel of Mercy**”. These will take place in the **Marian Room**, at 32 Huntly Street, on the following **Fridays: 11 December and 18 December, both at 7.00pm**.

**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.

**Hogmanay Party!** – Come along and usher in the New Year in style, at the grand Hogmanay Party in St Mary’s Hall, on Thursday 31 December, from 8.00pm until 2.30am! Live music from The Brothers Band and DJ Coli. Food will be available, but please feel free to bring along something to eat and drink (NO bar). Dress code: formal. Ticket prices: £20.00 per person. Tickets are available at the back of St Mary’s church, after each Sunday Mass, and also from the Parish Office; contact PJ on 01463 233519.

## PARISH NEWS

### Mass Times over the Festive Season:

Thurs 24 December: Carols 11.00pm; Vigil Mass 11.30pm

Fri 25 December: Christmas Day Mass 10.30am

Sun 27 December (The Holy Family): Mass at 9.30am

Friday 1 January (Mary, Mother of God): Mass at 11.00am

Sunday 3 January (The Epiphany): Mass at 9.30am

**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!

**F.I.R.s (Friends In Retirement): Thursday 10 December, 2-4pm**, in the Meeting Room. Mrs Heather Taylor will demonstrate Christmas Table Decorations. New members are very welcome. Contact Chris Hamilton on 790970.

**Children’s Christmas Party: Saturday 12 December, 2.00pm – 4.00pm.** Santa (St Nicholas!) has confirmed that he is coming to visit our children! This will be a fun-filled event for them. 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 Beaulieu 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).

**Classes for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion** – In January 2016, we will be starting classes for children in P3 and above. Can parents please check that their child has been registered or collect a form from the sacristy. We will be holding a brief meeting for families on **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm** to introduce the programme and to decide on class day/time.

**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 14<sup>th</sup> December at 4.30pm; they will then have a break until the New Year.

**“90 Club” Winners** for November: 1<sup>st</sup> – Duncan; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Margaret; 3<sup>rd</sup> – Joe. Well done all our lucky winners. You could be a winner next month if you have a number! £2 monthly, with 3 prizes to be won. Ask Don for details.

**Prize Bingo:** No Prize Bingo until Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January. Thanks to everyone who has given items in and help to make this fundraiser an ongoing success. I’ll be bothering you again in the New Year!

## FINANCES

No. 1 Account	£ 286.38
Building Fund	£ 165.75

– 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:** Cath MacLeod + Rita Harkins + Angela Deans + Anna Kitty Matthews + Cathy Douglas.