

# **St. Columba's, Culloden**

Tower Road, Culloden, Inverness, IV2 7PW

Tel: (01463) 794619 / (01463) 233519

E-mail: [stcolumbasculloden@outlook.com](mailto:stcolumbasculloden@outlook.com)

Website: [www.stcolumbasculloden.org](http://www.stcolumbasculloden.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/stcolumbasculloden](http://www.facebook.com/stcolumbasculloden)

Parish Priest: Fr Domenico Zanrè

## **EASTER 2017 PARISH NEWSLETTER**



Titian, *Risen Christ* (c. 1511), Private Collection

## **HE IS RISEN! ALLELUIA!**

## Easter 2017 Parish Newsletter

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

*“Behold the Good News that we are called to take to others and to every place, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Faith in the Resurrection of Jesus and the hope that he brought us is the most beautiful gift that the Christian can and must give to his brothers and sisters. To all and to each, therefore, let us not tire of saying: Christ is Risen!”* (Pope Francis, 6 April 2015).

May these timely words of our Holy Father serve as both an encouragement and an impetus to us in this grace-filled season to never tire of living out the Gospel message of love and hope, here in Culloden, and in the surrounding areas of Inverness, Nairn, and the Highlands!

### **Station Masses**

This has been a particularly eventful and spiritually rich season for us. Following on from the joy of welcoming a new Priest into our Diocese – Fr Andrzej Niski, who was ordained at St Mary’s on the 6 January – the Highland Deanery was blessed with a full programme of Station Masses during Lent, which were exceptionally well attended. This has become a real feature of our Lenten devotional life, and it is good to see such support and solidarity throughout the Highlands, as we gather together in our different parishes to worship and socialise. I know that this pastoral initiative is one that is much appreciated by all concerned. It also serves as a stimulus to us in our own personal Lenten journeys. Thank you for your support!

The highlight for us here at St Columba’s was surely the ‘guest appearance’ of the Most Reverend Mario Conti, Archbishop Emeritus of Glasgow, who took time out of his busy schedule in the Highlands to act as the Principal Celebrant at our own Station Mass. Almost 200 people packed in to the church to enjoy the liturgy, and I know that Archbishop Mario was both gratified and impressed with the numbers in attendance, and with the traditional post-Mass refreshments. He certainly took time to have a cup of tea and to chat with to everyone!

### **Adult Faith Formation and Parish Sacramental Life**

Our recent Day of Recollection for Holy Week, entitled “Behold the Lamb of God”, was well received, with members from various parishes and local St Vincent de Paul groups present throughout the day.

One of the notable features, from a personal perspective, was the large number of people availing themselves of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This is always a grace-filled encounter between ourselves, with our all-too-human frailties and brokenness, and our loving, merciful Father. As Pope Francis instructed us in one of his Wednesday Audiences in St Peter’s Square, “Everyone say to himself: *‘When was the last time I went to confession?’ And if it has been a long time, don’t lose another day!*”

*Go, the priest will be good (!). And Jesus will be there, and Jesus is better than the priests - Jesus receives you. He will receive you with so much love! Be courageous, and go to confession!"*

Here at St Columba's, there are more and more people coming to reconcile themselves. Thanks be to God indeed! Remember that Confession is available before *every* Mass. If I am not hearing Confessions, simply ask me – I am always happy to oblige. Let's never tire of asking for the Sacrament of Mercy!

With regard to the Sacraments, I am grateful to our new Extraordinary Ministers – Caroline, Magda, Marie, and Rosie – for their generosity of spirit and their support in their new ministries. It is always good to see parishioners offering to assist in our liturgies in such a selfless way. Your contribution is greatly valued.

Our main faith formation initiative during Lent has been the *Catholicism* course, hosted by Fr (now Bishop) Robert Barron. These weekly meetings have been richly rewarding. Each episode / theme has provoked lively discussion, and attendance has certainly been very consistent. It is wonderful to see so many people who are keen to learn more about their faith; to discover *what* we believe as Catholics, and *why* we believe it. There has already been discussion – and a real desire – to continue faith formation initiatives at St Columba's, and I am very happy to take this forward. If you have any particular ideas in this regard, please do speak to me, or send me an e-mail. Our final *Catholicism* meeting will take place on Wednesday 26 April at 7.00pm, and our focus, appropriately enough, will be on the 'Last Things'. Would you like to know what these are? Then come along.

## **Children**

St Columba's has the reputation for being a 'family-friendly' parish, and this is certainly borne out by the number of tiny tots and youngsters attending Mass with their parents! Our children are our most precious resource – someone once described them as "the future of the Church", but here at St Columba's they are very much "the present" as well as the "future"! It is touching to see so many children of pre-Communion age coming forward to receive a Blessing during the Mass. We should do all we can to encourage this. Speaking of which, after our Good Friday Liturgy of the Passion, various parishioners commented how moving it was to see so many children come forward to venerate the Cross.

Our excellent children's liturgy team do a wonderful job each and every Sunday, gently encouraging and instructing our children in the faith. We have had up to 26 kids in the meeting room, and consequently we may have to think about forming another group, meeting in the Lady Chapel as well. This is a happy problem!!

We currently have seven children who are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Holy Communion: Molly Anderson, Caitlyn Doherty, Thomas Fraser, Ava Marshall, Keira McGroarty, Joel Reid, and Olivier Ulas. Please do keep these children in your thoughts and prayers at this time. It is a great consolation for us

to be able to support them in their spiritual journeys; in this way, we truly grow as a community of faith.

Our younger parishioners are involved in various ways in our parish liturgies: as readers at Sunday Mass, Hospitality, and Altar-Serving. A special 'thank you' to our Altar Servers – Jobe, Logan, Percy, Sophie-Maree, and Jessica – who have been such a huge help to me in our liturgies. We are grateful for their contribution to the life of the Parish. However, we are always keen to welcome more budding young Servers! In this regard, can I remind parents that any child who has made their First Holy Communion can come forward and offer themselves as Altar Servers? Full training will be given, and they will support our present Servers in their work.

### **Plans for the Presbytery**

Speaking of children, we have virtually concluded our sale of the plot of land at the bottom of the car park. This will become a children's nursery, and we are excited at this opportunity to have such a resource literally 'on our doorstep'. Work should begin on the nursery after Easter, and its opening is planned for the end of the year. More about this later.

Our house plots have attracted a fair degree of attention, and given recent interest, as well as conversations with our solicitors, I am hopeful of a sale in the very near future. This will allow us to proceed with the construction of the Parish House (Presbytery) on site, which is sure to make a real difference to the life of St Columba's. Please continue to pray for the success of this initiative.

### **Thanks**

Last, but by no means least, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who contribute in any way to the smooth running of the Parish. A special debt of thanks goes to our Sacristans, particularly during the Triduum. Everything is attended to in an effortless manner! I am similarly grateful to our Catechists, our Children's Liturgy Team, our Musicians, our Readers, our Extraordinary Ministers, our Servers, those who take the time and effort to clean the church and make it look so beautiful, to our Piety Stall representatives, to our Safeguarding Co-ordinator, to our Fundraiser Bingo Team, to those who provide the flowers for our liturgies, to our Passkeepers, our Catering Team, our 'Media Advisors', our Treasurer and Money Counters, our Parish Pastoral Council, and our Parish Planning Team. If I have forgotten anyone, please do forgive me! Finally, a debt of gratitude is due to each and every one of you, dear Parishioners, for the support that you give to me and to St Columba's. Your assistance is vital in helping to make this Parish grow. Please continue to support us in our endeavours!

Wishing you and your families every grace and blessing in this Holy Season.

Yours in Christ,

*Fr Domenico.*