



St. Columba's, Culloden

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~ PARISH NEWSLETTER ~

17 DECEMBER 2023:
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(Year B (II); Psalter: Week 3)

Mass Readings

1st Reading: Isaiah 61: 1-2; 10-11
Resp. Psalm: Luke 1: 46-50, 53-54
2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24
Gospel: John 1: 6-8, 19-28

Date	Details	Liturgies	Time
Sunday 17 December	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B (pp. 53 ff.) GAUDETE / BAMBINELLI SUNDAY	Live-Streamed Holy Mass	9.30am
Tuesday 19 December	Of the Day	Sacrament of Confession Eucharistic Adoration Live-Streamed Holy Mass	6.15 pm 6.45 pm 7.30 pm
Thursday 21 December	NO MASS	NO MASS CAROL CONCERT	--- 7.00 pm
Saturday 23 December	Of the Day Mass Intention: Anne Davidson, RIP (Anniversary Today)	Sacrament of Confession Eucharistic Adoration Live-Streamed Holy Mass	8.15 am 8.45 am 9.30 am
Sunday 24 December	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B (pp. 57 ff.) / CAROL SERVICE VIGIL OF CHRISTMAS	Live-Streamed Holy Mass Carol Service Live-Streamed Holy Mass	9.30 am 9.00 pm 9.30 pm
Monday 25 December	MASS OF CHRISTMAS DAY	Live-Streamed Holy Mass	9.30am

Third Sunday of Advent: One Who Is Coming

The mysterious figure of John the Baptist, introduced in last week's readings, comes into sharper focus today. Who he is, we see in today's Gospel, is best understood by who he isn't. He is not Elijah returned from the heavens (see 2 Kings 2:11), although like him he dresses in the prophet's attire (see Mark 1:6; 2 Kings 1:8) and preaches repentance and judgment (see 1 Kings 18:21; 2 Chronicles 21:12-15). Not Elijah in the flesh, John is nonetheless sent in the spirit and power of Elijah to fulfil his mission (see Luke 1:17; Malachi 3:23-24).

Neither is John the prophet Moses foretold, although he is a kinsman and speaks God's word (see Deuteronomy 18:15-19; John 6:14). Nor is John the Messiah, though he has been anointed by the Spirit since he was in the womb (see Luke 1:15, 44).

John prepares the way for the Lord (see Isaiah 40:3). The baptism he performs is symbolic, not sacramental. It is a sign given to stir our hearts to repentance. John shows us the One upon whom the Spirit remains (see John 1:32), the One who fulfils the promise we hear in today's First Reading (see Luke 4:16-21). Jesus' bath of rebirth and the Spirit opens a fountain that purifies Israel and gives to all a new heart and a new Spirit (see Zechariah 13:1-3; Ezekiel 36:24-27; Mark 1:8; Titus 3:5).

John comes to us in the Advent readings to show us the light, that we might believe in the One who comes at Christmas. As we sing in today's Responsorial, the Mighty One has come to lift each of us up, to fill our hunger with bread from heaven (see John 6:33, 49-51).

And as Paul exhorts in today's Epistle, we should rejoice, give thanks, and pray without ceasing that God will make us perfectly holy in spirit, soul, and body—that we may be blameless when our Lord comes. (Scott Hahn)

PARISH NEWS

Today's Liturgy: Third Sunday of Advent, Year B (pp. 53 ff.)

p. 521: Introductory Rites
p. 53: Readings & Proper Prayers
p. 540: The Creed

p. 550: Preface II of Advent
p. 603: Eucharistic Prayer II
p. 631: Communion Rite

Christmas Flowers – we are blessed with the generosity and talents of parishioners, who always provide us with such beautiful flowers for Christmas. Would you consider helping us with a donation, which will go towards making our church even more beautiful, and fitting for celebrating the birth of Our Saviour?

Today: *Bambinelli* Sunday! – Each year on *Gaudete* Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, children in Rome bring their Baby Jesus figures from the cribs in their homes to St. Peter's Square where the Pope blesses both them and the figurines during the Angelus. Fr Domenico will bless all 'Bambinelli' at the end of today's Mass.

Today: Children's Christingle Service, 4.00pm, at St. Mary's Nairn – All children are welcome to take part; simply speak to Fr. Domenico. All children meet in the St. Mary's church hall at 2.30pm this afternoon, to prepare before the Service.

Advent Reflections: each Wednesday evening during Advent, from 6.00pm-7.30pm – the last evening will take place here at St. Columba's. There will be Eucharistic Adoration, opportunities for Confession, Night Prayer, and Benediction: **Wednesday 20 December** – St. Columba's Culloden – Fr. Andrzej Niski

Thursday 21 December, 7.00pm-8.00pm: St. Columba's Christmas Carol Concert! – we will be hosting a service of your favourite Christmas carols, with community singing, together with seasonal Scripture readings, with festive food and drink provided (including non-alcoholic mulled wine, *panettone*, and mince pies). We will have the children of St. Joseph's RC School joining us. Donations at the door; suggested offerings are: £5 for adults; kids go free! Why not invite some friends and come along?!!

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Sunday 24 December 9.30am: Fourth Sunday of Advent; 9.00pm: Carols; 9.30pm: Christmas Vigil Mass

Monday 25 December 9.30am: Mass of Christmas Day.

*** NB. BOTH Sunday AND Monday are Holy Days of Obligation**

Mary's Meals: 'Double the Love' Appeal – from now until 22 January, any donations made to Mary's Meals will be doubled by a group of generous donors, up to £1 million. A donation of just £19.15 can feed a child every day for an entire school year. Since your gift will be matched by our benefactors, the same donation will feed a second child, too!

Christmas Hamper – buy a ticket (or two..!) and our lovely hamper could be yours! Tickets are on sale at the front door; only £1 a strip. Please include your name and contact details on the stub, so we can call you when you win (!)

90 Club: Next Draw on Sunday 31 December! The first draw of 2024 will take place on Sunday 28 January. There are a few numbers available, if anyone would like to try their luck: only £2 monthly. Speak to Don.

Prize Bingo will continue in 2024, on the last Friday of each month. Our box of prizes is almost empty; any donations will be gratefully received. We are looking for someone to take over the Bingo? Can you help us? If so, speak to Don, or to Fr. Domenico.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Sick: Anna Black, Angus Johnson, Laura Johnstone, Kathleen Macpherson, Marian Ellis, Chris Hamilton, Rina Herbison, David Munro, Ellen Williams, Rose Corbett, Winnie Ferrari, Eileen Anne Millar, Esther Smith, Linda Macdonald, Pat Peteranna, Lauren Marsh, Katie MacCormick, Brian Hamilton, Dorothy Macdonald, Cathy Grant, John MacPhee

Anniversaries: Anne Davidson, George Innes, Tommy Cameron, Garry Brown, Kerry Green