

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

14th December 2014

St. Mary's, Belford Road, Fort William PH33 6BT. Tel. (01397) 702174

A Parish of the R. C. Diocese of Argyll & the Isles Charitable Trust

Registered Scottish Charity No. SC002876

www.stmarysfortwilliam.org



Noticeboard

Sunday Masses: Vigil Mass, Saturday, 6 p.m.
Sunday Morning Mass, 10.30 a.m.

Weekday Masses: 10.15 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday: 9.45 to 10 a.m. 4 to 4.30 p.m. 5.30 to 5.50 p.m.
THIS MONDAY, 7 – 8 P.M. (Fr. James MacNeil)

There are no Feasts or Memorials this week.

This Sunday, six of our young people will receive the **Sacrament of Confirmation**. We commend Louie, Dennis, Natalia, Vanesa, Mateusz and Dominika to your heartfelt prayer. May they grow as their young Lord Jesus did:

“..The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom, and God’s favour was with him.” (Luke 2:40)
“And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and man.” (Luke 2:52)

We pray for our Faithful Departed, especially those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Jean Green, Ronald MacRae, Lachie Wynne, John MacDonell, Effie Gillies, Michael Nicholson, Cathie Boyd, Georgia Thomson, John MacDonald, Janet Jones, Christina Stage, Steven Haggerty, Patricia Argue, Alick MacLean, John MacDonald and Margaret Gallacher**. May they rest in eternal peace and joy. We remember also **Neil MacKinnon**, husband of the late Jessie Murphy, who was buried from St. John’s, Caol, on Wednesday. May Neil now rest in the peace of his beloved Saviour, and may the Lord bless those who loved him and cared for him.

The **Blessing of the Crib** will take place next Sunday after the 10.30 Mass. As in previous years, the children will be blessed with olive oil from Bethlehem.

It will be an extra special blessing this year, **for we have a new Crib!** Two donations made this possible: that of Martin and Christine MacKenna, and also the money put aside for the parish from the estate of the late Peter MacFarlane. We are most grateful for such generosity. The old Crib will find a home in St. Patrick’s Church in Mallaig,

Those who, in previous years, have been so helpful in **setting up the Crib** are asked to come to the church on Tuesday, at 7 p.m. This invitation is extended to everyone who would like to begin our preparation for Christmas. But we do keep in mind that it is still Advent, that precious time of spiritual preparation. For us, all that is at the heart of Christmas begins at the Mass of Christmas Night.

We thank those who donated so generously to the retiring collection at **Margaret MacLean’s Requiem Mass**. It raised £797.22, to be shared by our parish and by the Salesians of Don Bosco.

Sister Lorna, of the Good Shepherd Sisters, ‘phoned Fr. MacKinnon to ask after Margaret, only to be given the sad news of her death. Sister Lorna is now working in Edinburgh, and still retains the fondest memories of St. Mary’s in Fort William. You will always be in her thoughts and prayers.

Our thanks to **Deacon Thomas** for his pastoral care of the parish in Fr. MacKinnon’s absence.

PLEASE NOTE

Our visiting confessor this Advent will be Father James MacNeil, parish priest in Oban. He will be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation *this Monday*, from 7 to 8 p.m.

Isaiah has a special place in our lives, especially in Advent and Holy Week. Here are just a few representations of the prophet in Christian art. Which do you prefer?



Michelangelo



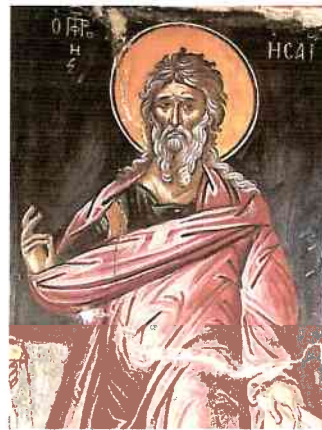
Raphael



James Tissot



Benjamin West



Orthodox Icon



This statue of Isaiah by Salvatore Revelli is part of the marble base of the Column of the Immaculate Conception in Rome. The column itself is 40 ft. high. The firemen of Rome helped erect it in 1857.



On the 8th December each year, a very special ceremony takes place at Rome's Column of the Immaculate Conception, near the famous Spanish Steps. One of the city's firemen places a wreath on the arm of Our Lady. Often, the reigning Pope is present, and this year Pope Francis made sure that he was there. In his prayer to Mary, the Pope said: *"In this time that leads up to the feast of Jesus' birth, teach us how to go against the current... Teach people how to be unencumbered...to give ourselves, to listen, to be silent, to not focus on ourselves, but to leave space for the beauty of God, the source of true joy."* We heed Francis's call to be free of the slavery of materialism and to concentrate on the spiritual and the poor. It's a proud day for the firemen of Rome. Perhaps we should remember our own firemen and all that they do for our community