

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

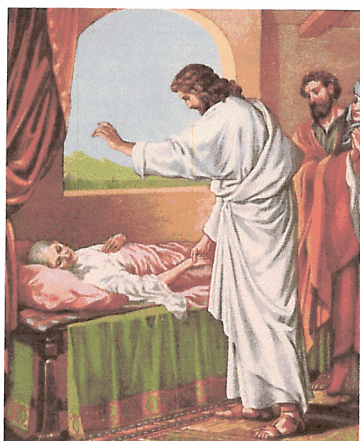
8th February 2015

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, 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 5.45 p.m.

Tuesday is the Memorial of St. Scholastica; Wednesday, the Optional Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes; Saturday, the Feast of St. Cyril and St. Methodius.

This is **Catholic Education Sunday**. We pray for our Catholic Schools throughout Scotland. With the changes that lie ahead in Lochaber, the future of the Catholic formation of our children must be at the heart of our prayer. We will have the usual special collection for the Scottish Catholic Education Services. With all the demands of winter, whatever you can give is deeply appreciated.

We pray for our Faithful Departed, especially those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Albert Timbrell, Dolly MacVarish, Elizabeth MacPherson, Bob Dryden, Ewen MacDonald, Willie Kennedy, Cyril Buchanan, Margaret Barr, Neil Campbell and Peggy Campbell**. May they rest in the peace and joy of their merciful Saviour.

As in previous years, we will have the **Sacrament of the Sick** this Sunday. The Gospel read at the Mass of the Fifth Sunday of the Year resonates with the healing love and power of Christ. He is at the heart of this simple and beautiful sacrament.

Barrhead Travel still has some available seats on its pilgrimages to Lourdes in May. If you are interested, please take one of the posters on the table at the back of the church. If May is not possible, you may ask for details of other pilgrimages in the near future. Barrhead Travel is a widely respected Scottish travel agency, and we can be sure that its staff will do their best for their pilgrims.

We look ahead. Ash Wednesday is a week this coming Wednesday, on the 18th February, to be exact. The Lenten SCIAF boxes will be available for collection next Sunday. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday on the 29th March. As regards the Easter Vigil, sunset in Fort William will be shortly after 8 p.m., so we can begin the Vigil at 8.30 p.m. (Last year it began at 9 p.m.) We will have the Way of the Cross throughout Lent, preceded by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for those who wish a period of silent adoration and prayer before the Stations begin.

In a church dedicated to the **Immaculate Conception** of our Lady, Wednesday's Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes must surely be more than optional!



"I went every day for a fortnight, and each day I asked her who she was—and this petition always made her smile. After the fortnight I asked her three times consecutively. She always smiled. At last I tried for the fourth time. She stopped smiling. With her arms down, she raised her eyes to heaven and then, folding her hands over her breast she said, 'I am the Immaculate Conception.' Then I went back to M. le Curé to tell him that she had said she was the Immaculate Conception, and he asked was I absolutely certain. I said yes, and so as not to forget the words, I had repeated them all the way home."

(St. Bernadette)

“Que soy era Immaculada Concepciou” – “I am the Immaculate Conception”

Standard French was not St. Bernadette’s native tongue. She spoke Gascon Occitan, the dialect or language of her region. It has some affinity with Catalan, for example. It was in this dialect that the “Lady” communicated with the young teenager. Here is the Lord’s Prayer as Bernadette would have said it at home:

Pay nouste, qui es en Cèu,
que toun Noum sie santifiat,
que toun Reg-né bengue,
qu’ere tue Boulentat sie heite sus ere terre
coum en Cèu.

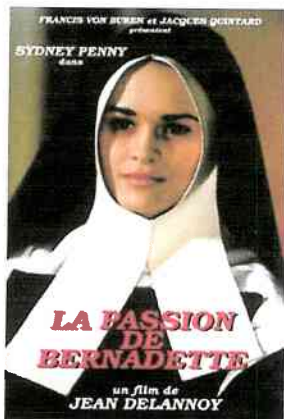
Balhe-nous ouey nouste pa(n) de cade die;
perdoune-nous ets noustes déutés
coume nous auti e perdounam aus noustes
débitous.
Hè que nou caygam ene tentaciou,
més delioure-nous d’et Mau.

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception had been proclaimed just a few years before the first apparition in Lourdes on the 11th February, 1858. It is obvious from Bernadette’s account that the girl had no idea what the title meant, but her parish priest certainly did.

The Statue

The statue of Our Lady in the Grotto was created by Joseph-Hugues Fabisch, a sculptor from Lyons, in 1864. Although it has become an iconographic symbol of Our Lady of Lourdes, it depicts a figure which is not only older and taller than Bernadette's description, but also more in keeping with the traditional images of Our Lady. On seeing the statue, Bernadette was deeply disappointed with this representation of her “Lady”. Could any artist successfully represent the beautiful gestures described by Bernadette on the day when the beautiful, smiling Lady at last revealed who she was? Perhaps it is better that no one has attempted it. The statue in the Grotto *is* Our Lady of Lourdes for tens of millions, and we should be content with that. Bernadette carried the reality of the apparitions in her heart. She now lies at peace in the convent of the Sisters of Charity in Nevers.

Cinema



The years in the convent are the theme of a film, “The Passion of Bernadette.” It is the second of two films about the saint directed by the Frenchman Jean Delannoy, a Protestant who greatly admired Bernadette. The actress Sydney Penny has the leading role. The “Passion” conveys the real sanctity of Bernadette, with her cheerful acceptance of suffering, her humility, her great charity, and her moments of spirited repartee! Bernadette may have been frail in body, but she was strong in spirit! The film is unlikely to be as famous as “The Song of Bernadette”, but its DVD seems worth acquiring. At the moment, unfortunately, it is very expensive.