

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

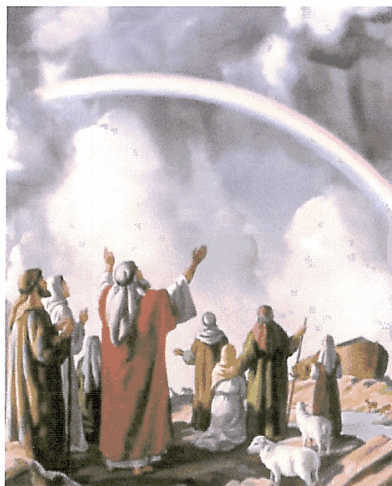
22<sup>nd</sup> February 2015

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](http://www.stmarysfortwilliam.org)



### Noticeboard

#### Sunday Masses

Saturday, 6 p.m.  
Sunday, 10.30 a.m.

#### Weekday Masses

10.15 a.m.

#### Way of the Cross

Wednesday, 7 p.m. (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 6.30 to 7 p.m.)

#### Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday, 9.30 to 9.50 a.m.  
4.30 to 5 p.m. 6.30 to 6.45 p.m.

*There are no Memorials of Feasts this week. The Masses are those of the First Week of Lent.*

It was very encouraging to see the numbers attending Mass on **Ash Wednesday**. And most of our SCIAF envelopes have been collected by parishioners. A good start to a season of many blessings!

**Holy Communion** will be taken to the housebound from Monday to Wednesday of this week, the last of the month.

We pray for our Faithful Departed. We remember especially **Muriel MacLellan**, buried from St. Mary's this Saturday. We give thanks for all that was service, quiet goodness and faithfulness in Muriel's life. May the Lord now take her to her heavenly home. We extend our sincere sympathy and prayer to Muriel's daughters, Catherine and Margaret and all the family, and also to those for whom she was such a good friend and neighbour. We pray also for the repose of the soul of **Mairi MacAulay**, sister of James MacDonald, who has died peacefully in Benbecula after a long illness endured with courage and faith. May the Lord comfort all her loved ones. We remember also those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Mary Wegner, Jessie MacDonald, Alexander MacDonald, Eugene Leddy, Alister MacDonald, Hugh McEleney, George MacPherson, Lewis Faryma, Jeanie Wright, Vera MacDonald, Kay MacDonald, Elizabeth Mulrooney and Anne MacKintosh**. May their souls and the souls of all the Faithful Departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Please note the first of our **Stations of the Cross** on Wednesday. There is Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for half an hour before. This can be a time for deep and prayerful peace, and we all need that! Whenever there is Exposition, please remember to be very quiet in the porch of the church. Sound certainly does carry in St. Mary's!

**Kevin Cameron** has been in touch to let us know that he will be with us from Holy Thursday night through to Easter Sunday morning. We are very grateful to Kevin for putting time aside to help make our Easter Triduum worthy of all that we celebrate.

This year's **Chrism Mass** will be celebrated on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> March, at 7 p.m. Bishop William Nolan, the new Bishop of Galloway, will preside at the Mass. There is a sheet at the back of the church for those who may want to go to Oban. If we have enough names, then we will do our best to book a minibus.

## THOUGHTS FOR LENT

Be earnest in righteous works, by which sins may be purged. Frequently apply yourself to almsgiving, by which souls are freed from death. *(St. Cyprian)*

The works of mercy are innumerable. Their very variety brings this advantage to those who are true Christians, that in the matter of almsgiving not only the rich and affluent but also those of average means and the poor are able to play their part. Those who are unequal in their capacity to give can be equal in the love within their hearts.

*(Pope St. Leo the Great)*

Come let us cleanse ourselves by almsgiving and acts of mercy to the poor, not sounding a trumpet or making a show of our charity.

Let not our left hand know what our right hand is doing;

let not vainglory scatter the fruit of our almsgiving;

but in secret let us call on Him that knows all secrets;

Father, forgive us our trespasses, for Thou lovest mankind.

*(Orthodox Lenten Prayer, sung at Matins)*

May God break my heart so completely that the whole world falls in. *(Mother Teresa)*

No one is a firmer believer in the power of prayer than the devil; not that he practices it, but he suffers from it.

*(Guy H. King)*

I used to think the Lord's Prayer was a short prayer; but as I live longer, and see more of life, I begin to believe there is no such thing as getting through it. If a man, in praying that prayer, were to be stopped by every word until he had thoroughly prayed it, it would take him a lifetime. *(Henry Ward Beecher)*

Prayer is exhaling the spirit of man and inhaling the spirit of God. *(Edwin Keith)*

There is both a physical and a spiritual fast. In the physical fast, the body abstains from food and drink. In the spiritual fast, the faster abstains from evil intentions, words and deeds. One who truly fasts abstains from anger, rage, malice, and vengeance. One who truly fasts abstains from idle and foul talk, empty rhetoric, slander, condemnation, flattery, lying and all manner of spiteful talk. *(St. Basil the Great)*

Prayer carries us half way to God, fasting brings us to the door of His palace, and alms-giving procures us admission.

*(The Koran)*

Fasting as a religious act increases our sensitivity to that mystery always and everywhere present to us. It is an invitation to awareness, a call to compassion for the needy, a cry of distress, and a song of joy. It is a discipline of self-restraint, a ritual of purification, and a sanctuary for offerings of atonement. It is a wellspring for the spiritually dry, a compass for the spiritually lost, and inner nourishment for the spiritually hungry. *(Fr. Thomas Ryan)*

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The BBC series “Wolf Hall” has woefully chosen not to communicate the famed humour and wit of Thomas More, present even on the day of his execution. At least Pope Francis has not forgotten. In his address to the Roman Curia on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2014, the Holy Father spoke these words: “So let us not lose that joyful, humorous and even self-deprecating spirit which makes people amiable even in difficult situations. How beneficial is a good dose of humour! We would do well to recite often the prayer of St. Thomas More. I say it every day, and it helps.”

Here is the prayer that helps Pope Francis:

“Grant me, O Lord, good digestion, and also something to digest. Grant me a healthy body, and the necessary good humour to maintain it. Grant me a simple soul that knows to treasure all that is good and that doesn’t frighten easily at the sight of evil, but rather finds the means to put things back in their place. Give me a soul that knows not boredom, grumbling, sighs and laments, nor excess of stress, because of that obstructing thing called ‘I’. Grant me, O Lord, a sense of good humour. Allow me the grace to be able to take a joke and to discover in life a bit of joy, and to be able to share it with others”.