

THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8th November 2015

(Remembrance Sunday)

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

First Mass of Sunday (Vigil Mass)
Sunday Morning Mass

Saturday, 6 pm,
10.30 a.m.

Weekday Masses

Monday, 5 p.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
Liturgy of the Word and Communion at 10.15 a.m.
Friday and Saturday, Mass at 10.15 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday
9.30 to 9.45 a.m.
4 to 4.30 p.m.
5.30 to 5.45 p.m.

Monday is the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica; Tuesday, the Memorial of St. Leo the Great; Wednesday, the Memorial of St. Martin of Tours; Thursday, the Memorial of St. Josephat.

On this **Remembrance Sunday**, we commend to the eternal love of God all who have died in combat, from the Great War to the conflicts of our own time; and we pray all the more for peace throughout the world. It is the only legacy worthy of those who have died.

Jubilee Years are rare in the life of the Church. Normally they occur every twenty-five years. Pope Francis has called upon us all to celebrate a special **Jubilee Year of Mercy**. It begins on the 8th December when the Holy Door in St. Peter's will once again be opened. This door is only opened in Years of Jubilee. Permission has been given for each Diocese to have a similar ceremony. Ours will take place in Oban on the 8th December at 7 p.m. On the following Sunday, there will be a solemn opening of the Jubilee Year in our Deanery, perhaps at St. Mary's. We will give you the details in the near future. There is a sheet at the back of the church for those who would like to attend the ceremony in Oban. Please fill it in as soon as possible, so that we know if hiring a minibus is viable.

We pray for our Faithful Departed, especially those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Mary Ellen Timbrell, Charlotte Turner, Una Brown, Mary Mulrooney, Jack Doyle, Esther Judge, Kathleen Mitchell, Edward Walsh, Murdo MacLeod, Johnnie Neil, Dick Cameron, Donald Macdonald, Jessie MacKinnon, Patricia O'Reilly, Hugh MacDonald, Kenny Jones and Dorothy MacDonald.** May their souls and the souls of all the Faithful Departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Our parish Confirmations will take place at the 10.30 Mass on Sunday 13th December.

Christmas Cards have been ordered from the Carmelite Sisters in Dysart and from CBC, the church suppliers. They should be with us soon.

The **Pastoral Fund** collection will take place next Sunday. This is the last special collection of the Diocese's financial year. Whatever you can give is really appreciated! We also have our parish to think about, and during the coming winter there should be collections for the cost of our church heating.

Father MacKinnon will be away from Tuesday until Thursday. Deacon Thomas will look after the parish and will lead parishioners in the Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion.

The weather forecast for Sunday is not good. It might be wise to postpone the rosary at **Glen Nevis cemetery**. We will try again later in the month.

The Working Party by Siegfried Sassoon

Three hours ago he blundered up the trench,
sliding and poising, groping with his boots;
sometimes he tripped and lurched against the walls
with hands that pawed the sodden bags of chalk.
He couldn't see the man who walked in front;
only he heard the drum and rattle of feet
stepping along barred trench boards, often splashing
wretchedly where the sludge was ankle-deep.

Voices would grunt 'Keep to your right -- make way!
when squeezing past some men from the front-line:
white faces peered, puffing a point of red;
candles and braziers glinted through the chinks
and curtain-flaps of dug-outs; then the gloom
swallowed his sense of sight; he stooped and swore
because a sagging wire had caught his neck.

A flare went up; the shining whiteness spread
and flickered upward, showing nimble rats
and mounds of glimmering sand-bags, bleached with rain;
then the slow silver moment died in dark.
The wind came posting by with chilly gusts
and buffeting at the corners, piping thin.
And dreary through the crannies; rifle-shots
would split and crack and sing along the night,
and shells came calmly through the drizzling air
to burst with hollow bang below the hill.

Three hours ago, he stumbled up the trench;
now he will never walk that road again:
he must be carried back, a jolting lump
beyond all needs of tenderness and care.

He was a young man with a meagre wife
and two small children in a Midland town.
He showed their photographs to all his mates,
and they considered him a decent chap
who did his work and hadn't much to say,
and always laughed at other people's jokes
because he hadn't any of his own.

That night when he was busy at his job
of piling bags along the parapet.
he thought how slow time went, stamping his feet
and blowing on his fingers, pinched with cold.
He thought of getting back by half-past twelve,
and tot of rum to send him warm to sleep
in draughty dug-out frowsty with the fumes
of coke, and full of snoring weary men.

He pushed another bag along the top,
craning his body outward; then a flare
gave one white glimpse of No Man's Land and wire;
and as he dropped his head the instant split
his startled life with lead, and all went out.



Siegfried Sassoon 1886-1967
The Poet of Compassion and Anger

Siegfried Sassoon was descended from the Sassoons of Baghdad, a Jewish merchant family of spectacular wealth. His father was disinherited for marrying outside the Jewish faith, his wife being a High Anglican Christian. The name "Siegfried" does not indicate German blood: his mother simply liked the operas of Wagner! Cricket and hunting were Siegfried's great passions in his youth. He also began to write poetry.

Patriotism had him enlist as war approached in 1914, but a hunting accident delayed his active service, which began in May 1915. He soon became horrified by the realities of the Western Front, and the tone of his poetry changed completely, conveying the ugly truth of the trenches. His men came to revere him. He was the most heroic of the WWI poets. Single-handed, he once captured a German trench, scattering 60 enemy soldiers with grenades. Nicknamed "Mad Jack", he seemed at times to be possessed of a manic courage. It earned him the Military Cross.

His disillusionment with the conduct of the war would lead him to throw that Cross into the River Mersey. At the same time, with great moral courage, he spoke publically against what the War had become and refused to return from leave. Rather than have him court-martialled, the authorities sent him to the psychiatric hospital at Craiglockhart in Edinburgh. There he befriended another great poet, Wilfred Owen. Siegfried would return to the Western Front in July 1918, only to be shot and wounded by a British soldier who mistook him for a German! He resigned his commission in 1919.

He then worked as a literary editor in a national newspaper and wrote several novels. Siegfried married in 1933. It did not last, but there was a son, George, whom Siegfried adored.

Siegfried has been described as a poet "haunted by Christ". Stark, often disturbing religious imagery is often found in his wartime poems. The titles alone tell us much: "Absolution," "Golgotha," "The Redeemer," and "Stand-to: Good Friday Morning". In the midst of the horrors of war there remained a mystical element in his soul. After the next great conflict, he would feel more and more drawn to the Catholic Faith. His close friendship with Monsignor Ronald Knox and Hilaire Belloc helped him make his decision. He was received into the Church in September, 1957.

Those who knew Siegfried well said the subsequent decade was the happiest of his life. He had found peace at last. His love of the rosary was a blessing in his final years. He died in 1967 and was buried near his friend Monsignor Knox. Siegfried's name is included among the War Poets commemorated in Westminster Abbey. On their stone can be seen the words composed by his long-dead friend, Wilfred Owen:

"My subject is War, and the pity of War. The Poetry is in the pity."

