

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

29th November 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 First Mass of Sunday (Vigil Mass) Saturday, 6 p.m.
Sunday Morning Mass 10.30 a.m.

Weekday Masses 10.15 a.m. except on Monday, when Mass will
be at 1 p.m. (*Funeral Mass of Betty Vance RIP*)

Sacrament of Reconciliation Saturday
- 9.45 to 10 a.m.
- 4 to 4.30 p.m.
- 5.30 to 5.45 p.m.

Monday is the Solemnity of St. Andrew; Thursday, the Memorial of St. Francis Xavier; Friday, the Optional Memorial of St. John of Damascus. (We will celebrate this Memorial, praying for the people of Syria)



We pray that this **holy season of Advent** be a time of special blessing for us all. We need that spiritual space in all the rush and the commercial onslaught of the coming weeks. We join our hearts and souls with Mary and Joseph as they journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. And we remember that Advent invites us to put our lives in perspective as we contemplate the Second Coming of Christ.

We pray for the Faithful Departed. We remember especially **Betty Vance** who died peacefully in the Belford Hospital, blessed by the sacrament and prayer of the Church and by the love of her family. We give thanks for all that was love and friendship in Betty's life, and we extend our prayer and sincere sympathy to her husband Willie, to their children and grandchildren, and to Betty's brother and sisters. May the Lord comfort them with his promise of eternal life. We pray also for the repose of the soul of **Marion McCarthy**, remembered by many of you as a good friend and a faithful parishioner of St. Mary's. Marion has died peacefully after a long illness, and her Funeral Mass will take place in St. Vincent de Paul Church, Thornliebank, on Thursday. We extend our sincere sympathy and prayer to her husband John, to their children Theresa, Marjory and Michael, and to the grandchildren Marion loved so dearly. We pray also for those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Marion Cumming, David Buchanan, Peter Ryan, Patrick Curran, John Brady, John Kerr, Monsignor Roderick MacDonald, Allan MacLean, Margaret Barron, Penny Kennedy, Thomas MacPherson, Alistair Semple and Angus MacDonald**. May their souls and the souls of all the Faithful Departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Our sincere thanks to the large number of parishioners who came for the cleaning of the church after Mass on Thursday. God bless you for that!

Because of the Funeral Mass on Monday, Holy Communion will be taken to **the housebound** from Tuesday to Thursday of this week.

The Rite of the opening of the **Holy Door of Mercy** will take place here at St. Mary's on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, 13th December 2015, at 4.00pm. Fr. Joseph Calleja, our Dean, will lead us in this ceremony. It is hoped that many local Catholics will be able to attend.

There is an ecumenical **Advent Service** at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church next Sunday, at 6.30 p.m. Please come along!

We will have the same Christmas schedule as last year: the **Mass of Christmas Night** at 10 p.m. and the **Christmas Morning Mass** at 10.30 a.m.

Keep **Pope Francis** in your prayers as he visits the Central African Republic. It is the most dangerous part of his five-day visit to Africa.

The Coming

And God held in his hand
a small globe." Look," he said.
The Son looked. Far off,
as through water, he saw
a scorched land of fierce
colour. The light burned
there; crusted buildings
cast their shadows; a bright
serpent, a river
uncoiled itself, radiant
with slime.

On a bare
hill a bare tree saddened
the sky. Many people
held out their thin arms
to it, as though waiting
for a vanished April
to return to its crossed
boughs. The Son watched
them. "Let me go there," he said.

(R.S. Thomas, Welsh poet and Anglican priest)

On the Mystery of the Incarnation

It's when we face for a moment
the worst our kind can do, and shudder to know
the taint in our own selves, that awe
cracks the mind's shell and enters the heart:
not to a flower, not to a dolphin,
to no innocent form
but to this creature vainly sure
it and no other is god-like, God
(out of compassion for our ugly
failure to evolve) entrusts,
as guest, as brother,
the Word.

(Denise Levertov, Catholic poet)

Every year we celebrate the holy season of Advent,
O God. Every year we pray those beautiful prayers of
longing and waiting, and sing those lovely songs of hope
and promise.

(Fr. Karl Rahner, Jesuit theologian)

Virgin

As if until that moment
nothing real
had happened since Creation
As if outside the world were empty
so that she and he were all
there was — he mover, she moved upon
As if her submission were the most
dynamic of all works: as if
no one had ever said Yes like that
As if one day the sun had no place
in all the universe to pour its gold
but her small room

(Luci Shaw, Christian poet)

Pope Francis: Advent Thoughts

Advent has a special charm, it makes us experience
deeply the meaning of history.

In Advent we rediscover the beauty of all being on a
journey ... across the paths of time.

The season of Advent restores ... a hope which does not
disappoint for it is founded on God's Word. A hope which
does not disappoint, simply because the Lord never
disappoints! ... Let us think about and feel this beauty.

Let us allow ourselves to be guided by Mary this Advent,
she who is mother, a mamma, and knows how to guide us.
Let us allow ourselves to be guided by her during this
season of active waiting and watchfulness.

Fire of Advent

Advent, like its cousin Lent, is a season for prayer and
reformation of our hearts. Since it comes at winter time,
fire is a fitting sign to help us celebrate Advent... If Christ
is to come more fully into our lives this Christmas, if God
is to become really incarnate for us, then fire will have to
be present in our prayer. Our worship and devotion will
have to stoke the kind of fire that can truly change our
hearts. Ours is a great responsibility not to waste this
Advent time.

(Fr. Edward M. Hays, spiritual writer)



R.S. Thomas



Denise Levertov



Karl Rahner



Luci Shaw



Edward M. Hays