

# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

13<sup>th</sup> December 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 First Mass of Sunday (Vigil Mass) Saturday, 6 p.m.  
Sunday Morning Mass 10.30 a.m.

Weekday Masses Monday, 5 p.m.  
Tuesday, 12 noon (Funeral Mass of Johnny MacKinnon)  
Other Weekdays, 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.

*Monday is the Memorial of St. John of the Cross, the Carmelite priest, poet and Doctor of the Church.*

This Sunday, children from various schools will receive the **Sacrament of Confirmation** in St. Mary's. Please welcome them with your love and your prayer.

This Sunday afternoon, at 4 p.m., the **Holy Door Rite** will take place in St. Mary's. This is an extension of the ceremony that took place in Rome and in Oban on the 8<sup>th</sup> December. It symbolises our entry into the Jubilee Year of Mercy, St. Mary's being set aside as a special place of reconciliation and peace. Please take part!

We pray for those who have died. We remember especially **Johnny MacKinnon** of Claggan. We give thanks for all that was love given and received in his life and for his unspoiled contentment with home and family: with the things that really matter. May he now rest in peace and may the Lord comfort his wife Cathy, as well as Julie, Gordie and Natasha, Jane and Stephen, the grandchildren who loved him dearly, his mother Dinah and all the family. We pray also for **Pauline MacKenzie**, sister of Margaret Meek, who has also died peacefully in Kent. May she rest in the peace of her Saviour and may God be with her loved ones. We remember those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Sandra Vial, Christina Quinn, Ronald MacRae, Lachie Wynne, John MacDonell, Effie Gillies, Robert Meek, Georgia Thomson, John MacDonald, Michael Nicholson, Cathie Boyd, Janet Jones, Effie McFall, Christina Stage, Patricia Argue, Steven Haggerty, Alick MacLean and John MacDonald.** May their souls and the souls of all the Faithful Departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

**The Blessing** of the Crib, the Christmas tree and the children will take place next Sunday after Mass. We are most grateful to the group of parishioners who, each year, set up the Crib and the tree!

The **WWI memorial bench** is now at the front of the church. Our sincere thanks to Tommy Laggan and Anthony MacMillan, without whom this would not have been possible.

Instead of a basket for donations to **the church heating**, we have a bottle designed to receive coins. It will be at the back of the church each Sunday during the winter. You can't exactly miss it. Your donations will be gratefully received. All we ask is that you do not put coppers in this bottle. Eventually, someone will have to count its contents!

You will have noticed that a lot of clearance has been done in the **Chapel House garden**.

*From the very beginning of his pontificate, Pope Francis has spoken of mercy. Here are some of his words:*



Jesus' attitude is striking: we do not hear the words of scorn, we do not hear words of condemnation, but only words of love, of mercy, which are an invitation to conversation. "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again." Ah! Brothers and Sisters, God's face is the face of a merciful Father who is always patient. Have you thought about God's patience, the patience He has with each one of us? That is His mercy. He always has patience, patience with us. He understands us. He waits for us. He does not tire of forgiving us if we are able to return to Him with a contrite heart. "Great is God's mercy," says the Psalm.

God's mercy can make even the driest land become a garden, can restore life to dry bones (cf. Ezekiel 37:1-14). Let us be renewed by God's mercy, let us be loved by Jesus, let us enable the power of his love to transform our lives too; and let us become agents of this mercy, channels through which God can water the earth, protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish.

Together let us pray to the Virgin Mary that she helps us ... to walk in faith and charity, ever trusting in the Lord's mercy; He always awaits us, loves us, has pardoned us with His Blood and pardons us every time we go to Him to ask His forgiveness. Let us trust in His mercy!

A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just.

Today I ask you in the name of Christ and the Church, never tire of being merciful.

What a beautiful truth of faith this is for our lives: the mercy of God! God's love for us is so great, so deep; it is an unending love, one which always takes us by the hand and supports us, lifts us up and leads us on.

Why the cross? Because Jesus takes upon himself the evil, the filth, the sin of the world, including the sin of all of us, and he cleanses it; he cleanses it with his blood, with the mercy and the love of God.

Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy.

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**The children of the parish who are at Lochside Catholic School joined us for Mass on our patronal Feast Day, that of the Immaculate Conception. We were all very pleased to see them among us again! They joined in the blessing of the bench that commemorates the men of the parish who died in the First World War. Here you see our youngsters with Mrs. Murphy, Miss MacLean and Fr. MacKinnon. The blessing included these words: "May their memory be honoured from generation to generation, and may we be the messengers of your peace in the darkness and conflict of the present age."**