

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

20th 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

Noticeboard



Monday	Mass at 5 p.m. Sacrament of Reconciliation from 7 to 8 p.m. <i>(Fr. Wood and Fr. Calleja)</i>
Tuesday	Mass at 10.15 a.m.
Wednesday	Mass at 10.15 a.m. Sacrament of Reconciliation from 7 to 8 p.m. <i>(Fr. MacKinnon)</i>
Thursday	Mass at 10.15 a.m. Mass of Christmas Night at 10 p.m. (Carol Service before, beginning at 9.45 p.m.)
Friday	Mass of Christmas Morning at 10.30 a.m.
Saturday	Mass at 10.15 a.m. Vigil Mass at 6 p.m.
Sunday	Mass at 10.30 a.m.

Saturday is the Feast of St. Stephen. Next Sunday is the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Our congratulations to the children who received the Sacrament of Confirmation last Sunday, and our sincere thanks to the parents, sponsors and teachers who prepared them for this very special milestone in their lives.

And our thanks, too, to all who came for the **Blessing of the Holy Door** on Sunday afternoon. It was a very prayerful entry into this Holy Year of Mercy.

After our Sunday Morning Mass we will have the **Blessing of the Crib and the Christmas tree**. The children will be blessed with oil from Bethlehem. We thank the parishioners who set up the tree and the Crib, beautifully decorated as always. The donkey and the lambs invite you to come in and spend a few moments in prayer. The image of the Child Jesus will be placed in the manger before the Mass of Christmas Night begins.

Our visiting confessors this Christmas will be Fr. Tony Wood and Fr. Joseph Calleja. They will be here on Monday from 7 to 8 p.m. Fr. Wood will be in the confessional and Fr. Calleja in the sacristy. We thank them both for putting time aside for us at a very busy time of the year.

We pray for our Faithful Departed, especially those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Alick MacLean, John MacDonald, Margaret Gallacher, Mary MacPherson, Angus MacDonald, Chrissie MacIntyre, Maureen Thompson, Nell Holness, Cathie MacDonald, Alex MacDonald, Jack Cronin, Mary MacDonald, Thomas MacLean, Neil MacKinnon, Hugh McNeil and Anthony Adams**. May they rest in the peace of their Saviour.

More calendars are available at the back of the church. They cost £2 each. Betty Vance's sister, Trisha, has donated some **lovely candles** that she has helped make and design. We are asking for the normal price, and that as a donation to the church heating. If you purchase one of these candles, please put the money in the Church Heating Bottle. We thank you for that support and Trisha for her kindness. It is hoped that in the coming year she will be able to take the left-over candles in the vestry and turn these into beautiful candles for our stall.

Mary's Meals is the charity that we will support through the special collection at our Christmas Masses. As always, the Crib Collection is in support of the Missions. We know that you will be as generous as ever.

Holy Communion will be taken to the housebound during the week after Christmas.

We can feel the rush of warmth and kindness, the sudden urgency of love that sent that girl hurrying over the hills. 'Those days' in which she rose on that impulse were the days in which Christ was being formed in her, the impulse was His impulse. (*Caryll Houselander*)

One of the most beautiful moments in history was that when pregnancy met pregnancy when child bearers became the first heralds of the King of Kings. (*Bishop Fulton Sheen*)

John was "filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb" by Christ himself, whom the Virgin Mary had just conceived by the Holy Spirit. Mary's visitation to Elizabeth thus became a visit from God to his people. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 717*)

Down through the centuries, the Church has carefully preserved, protected, and defended its Marian teachings, because to give them up would be to give up the gospel. (*Scott Hahn*)

Mary and Elizabeth are wonderful heroines in Luke's account. He loves the faith of these women. The thing that impresses him most, it appears, and the thing he wants to impress on Theophilus, his noble reader, is the lowliness and cheerful humility of Elizabeth and Mary. Elizabeth says (1:43): "And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord would come to me?" And Mary says (1:48): "The Lord has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden." The only people whose soul can truly magnify the Lord are people like Elizabeth and Mary—people who acknowledge their lowly estate and are overwhelmed by the condescension of the magnificent God. (*John Piper*)

Mary's greatness consists in the fact that she wants to magnify God, not herself (*Pope Benedict XVI*)



We await the Child