

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

21st February 2016

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: Vigil Mass, Saturday 6 p.m.
Sunday Morning Mass 10.30 a.m.

Weekday Masses: Monday, 5 p.m.
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.

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

Monday is the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter the Apostle.

Bishop McGee's episcopal ordination was a very moving event. Our sincere thanks to the parishioners who made the return journey to Oban, ensuring that St. Mary's was well represented. We wish our new Bishop joyful service in all the years ahead. We remember him in every Eucharistic Prayer. Let us also remember him in our personal prayers.

There are **cards commemorating the Bishop's ordination** at the back of the church. Please take one home with you.

We pray for our Faithful Departed, especially those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Mairi MacAulay, Muriel MacLellan, Donald Joseph Currie, Alister MacLean, Mary Delaney, Mary Wegner, Jessie MacDonald, Alexander MacDonald, Eugene Leddy, Hugh McEleney, Alister MacDonald, George MacPherson and Lewis Faryma.** May their souls and the souls of all the Faithful Departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. We remember also those who have recently died in the hills and mountains of Scotland. We remember their loved ones, and we are all the more aware of the courage and dedication of the Mountain Rescue services, especially our own in Lochaber.

It was very encouraging to see the number of parishioners who took part in our first **Way of the Cross** last Wednesday. This week, the Stations will again be on Wednesday at 7 p.m. But please note the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 6.30 to 7 p.m.

Holy Communion will be taken by Father MacKinnon to the housebound in the course of this week.

Mass on Monday will be at 5 p.m. Please read the weekly noticeboard carefully, just in case there are any changes to the normal Mass times.

Interior renovations are taking place in the Chapel House. These include new units in the kitchen, replacing those installed over forty years ago! Our sincere thanks to the parishioners who are helping!

As Easter is much earlier than usual, the **Easter Vigil** will start sooner than in recent years. The exact time will be decided during the week.



Pope Francis blesses the Mexican-US border. The Cross commemorates the Mexicans who have died trying to cross that border. The figures on the Cross powerfully evoke the Holy Family as they flee from danger. The message could not be clearer.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

These are edited extracts from a reflection by Romano Guardini:

What are they doing here, Moses and Elijah? One the lawgiver of the old Covenant, the other the prophet who, according to the first Book of Kings, did not die, but was spirited away in to heaven. Why Moses and not Abraham? Why Elijah and not Isaiah or one of the other prophets?

... Moses has well been called the most plagued of men. The story of the forty years' wandering through the desert is the story of a never-ending struggle, not only with the hardships of nature and the assaults of hostile tribes, but also with the apathy and stubbornness of those he was leading. At first the people are enthusiastic, but soon discouraged. They bind themselves with sacred vows, only to forget everything when it comes to the test.... Moses had to carry the entire nation on his shoulders. He was, necessarily, the most patient of men.

This then the man who appeared to Christ, to him who was to carry the cross of his people to the bitter end; Moses too they had failed to follow, in the flesh, into the new land of free divine dominion. Yet another leader had to die 'on the mountaintop' (this one for our sins, not his own) before the Promised Land could become reality.

And Elijah? It is not too much to call him the mightiest of the prophets... During Ahab's reign, darkness covered the land, the darkness of hell. It was against this dark that Elijah had been sent. He never was able to proclaim the tidings of the coming kingdom; he had to fight to the end against a wall of blackness, hardened disbelief; against the violence, blasphemy and bloodthirstiness that stalked through the land, Elijah's life is one titanic struggle against the powers of evil. The spirit of the Lord seethes in him, lifting him high above the human plane, spanning his strength far beyond the human breaking point.

Moses who had known the hopelessness of all efforts to rip his people out of the captivity of their own hearts; Elijah who with both sword and spirit had charged the satanic dark. It is as though the weight of one and a half millennia of sacred history had been bundled together and laid upon the shoulders of the Lord. All the enmity against God, heritage of a thousand years of intractability and blindness he must now bear to an end.

No wonder we are shocked when Peter, seeing the radiance, says to Christ: "*Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us set up three tents, one for you, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah ...*" (Luke 9:33).

The Evangelist does well to add, "*not knowing what he said.*" It is the comprehension of a child, who, witnessing something terrible and ignorant of what it is, thinks it beautiful because it shines.