

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

4th December 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 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 5 p.m.

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

Wednesday is the Memorial of St. Ambrose; Thursday, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Bishop Brian will be with us next weekend, celebrating both the Vigil Mass and the Sunday Morning Mass. We know that you will make him feel most welcome.

There is an **Advent Ecumenical Service** in St. John's, Caol this Sunday at 6.30 p.m. Please come along!

We pray for our Faithful Departed. We remember those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Danny Haggerty, Annie Tully, Bill Shearer, Monsignor Roderick MacDonald, Allan MacLean, Thomas MacPherson, Roderick Gemmel, Agnes Gemmel, Alister Semple, Angus MacDonald, Lachlan Wynne, Arthur McGinlay, Margaret MacDonald, Margaret B. MacDonald, Marion Wynne, Rose McTaggart, Mary MacKellaig, John MacDonald, John and Mary Alice Kelly, Margaret Culley and John Kearney**. We remember also **Clare Ryan**, for many years a member of this parish, who has died recently. May she now rest in peace. And we pray also for **Willine McAllister** who died earlier this week. Her husband Jim was laid to rest in Glen Nevis on the 11th November. May they now rest in peace together with their Saviour. As always, our thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved.

Our **Christmas Masses** as are last year: the Mass of Christmas Night at 10 p.m. and Christmas Morning Mass at 10.30 a.m. This year's Christmas special collection is for SCIAF's work in the Middle East.

The **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception** is celebrated on Thursday. It is the patronal feast of this parish. If you are free, do come and share in the Mass.

The **Church Heating Bottle** is once again at the back of the church. Please be as generous as you were last winter.

The **firewood** in the parish garden has now gone. May it bring warmth to many a home!

Thank you for your generous response to the last collection of the Diocese's financial year. £466.88 was raised for the Ecclesiastical Students' Fund and the Pastoral Fund.

The **Apostolate of the Sea** has written a most moving letter to thank you most sincerely for what you raised for Aurellian's family. This is a gift they had never expected and it comes, as always, from your thoughtful kindness.



The Immaculate Conception, by Velasquez

Many people think that the Immaculate Conception refers to the conception of Our Lord in the womb of Mary. It does not.

-0-0-0-

Is it too much to say that the celebration of the Immaculate Conception is Scotland's gift to the Universal Church? The theologian who laid the foundation of this dogma was the Scots-born John Duns Scotus, a Franciscan friar and one of the greatest thinkers of the medieval Church. Born in Duns in the Scottish Borders about 1265, he became a friar in Dumfries. He moved to Oxford, then to Paris. For some mysterious reason he had to leave that city in great haste and found refuge in Cologne, where he died 1308. We forget how open and robust debate in the medieval and even the post-medieval Church could be, and there were many who challenged John Duns Scotus' Mariology. In 1613, one unfortunate Dominican gave a sermon in Seville in Spain, casting doubt on the Immaculate Conception. Immediately the streets of the city were filled with tens of thousands, protesting against him. Eventually, in 1854, Pope Pius IX would confirm as dogma what Seville had so noisily proclaimed: that from her conception in her mother's womb, Mary was free of Original Sin. Could we not say that this is a Feast not imposed from above but rising from the people, a true example of the "consensus fidelium", that Spirit-driven instinct in the Christian people that recognises the embryonic truths of our faith?

-0-0-0-

"Que soy era Immaculada Concepciou."

Our Lady's words to Bernadette, speaking the dialect that was the girl's native tongue.

-0-0-0-

Some quotes from St. Ambrose of Milan (AD 340-397)

It is not enough just to wish well; we must also do well.

When I go to Rome, I fast on Saturday, but in Milan I do not. You, too, should follow the custom of whatever church you attend, if you do not want to give or receive scandal.

God, who preferred the correction rather than the death of a sinner, did not desire that a homicide be punished by the exaction of another act of homicide.

The emperor is in the Church, not above the Church.

.
A kindness received should be returned with a freer hand.
.