

TWENTIETH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

20th August 2017

St. Mary's, Belford Road, Fort William PH33 6BT. Tel. (01397) 702174

Charity No. SC002876

www.stmarysfortwilliam.org



Noticeboard

First Mass of Sunday (Vigil Mass)	Saturday, 6 p.m.
Sunday Morning Mass	10.30 a.m.
Weekday Masses	Monday, 5 p.m.
Tuesday to Saturday	10.15 a.m.
Sacrament of Reconciliation	Saturday, 9.45 to 10 a.m. 4 to 4.30 p.m. 6.30 to 6.45 p.m.

Monday is the Memorial of St. Pius X; Tuesday the Memorial of the Queenship of our Blessed Lady; Wednesday, the Optional Memorial of St. Rose of Lima; Thursday, the Feast of the Apostle St. Bartholomew

Father Donald MacKay's Funeral Mass in Daliburgh was a moving and fitting farewell to a dedicated and compassionate priest. He will be deeply missed by many of his fellow priests, including Fr. MacKinnon. All that Fr. Donald would want from us are not tributes, deserved as they are, but our heartfelt prayer for his eternal peace and joy with his beloved Lord. His loved ones, especially his brother Alistair, we take to our hearts in prayer.

We thank Deacon Thomas and Fr. Wynne for their care of the parish in Fr. MacKinnon's absence. We thank them especially for the Requiem Mass in St. Mary's on Thursday. There is a tradition that three Masses be offered for our priests when they die. Tuesday's morning Mass will be a Requiem Mass for Father Donald. We will have the third Mass in September.

We pray for our Faithful Departed. We remember those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Ann MacLeod, Darin Quail, Vera de Santis, Alister Gow, George Brown, Lily Quail, Betty Cooney, Donald Smith, Anne O'Donnell, James Fairbairn and Alister MacAlister.** We remember also **Elsie Shillinglaw**, the sister of Chrissie O'Neill, who has died in South Africa after a long and brave struggle with cancer. May their souls and the souls of all the Faithful Departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

There was an obituary of Fr. MacKay in the *Glasgow Herald* some days ago. It contained the following vignette. He was on holiday once and stayed overnight in a B&B. In the morning he was presented with the most meagre of breakfasts. Fr. Donald liked some honey with his breakfast and asked the landlady if he could have some. She returned with the tiniest of containers of honey known to mankind. Fr. Donald looked at it, then looked up at her and said: "I see you have a bee."

Fr. MacKinnon remembers well when four of the priests of the diocese arrived in the **Basilica in Fatima**, soaked to the skin by a sudden downpour. We heard the voice of Fr. Mackay: "I thought rain stopped at Glenceo!"

On which subject, we have had more than **our share of downpours recently.** It's a long time since we have had a leak into the sanctuary of the church, but we now have one. We hope to have this attended to us soon as possible.



Michelangelo's hidden self-portrait

The Gospel of this Feast tell us a little about Bartholomew, or Nathaniel. It's very human. Nathaniel is from Cana and his remark about Nazareth seems very typical of the small town rivalry you find in every culture. It's a bit like Kingussie versus Newtonmore, especially when it comes to shinty!

Christ sees in Nathaniel a man "without guile", and then there is his mysterious reference to something that took place "under the fig tree": something that Nathaniel thought was his own very personal secret. Nathaniel is overwhelmed, and makes one of the first great acts of faith in the entire Gospel: "Rabbi, you are Son of God, you are King of Israel." Henceforth, Nathaniel will follow Christ as his Master and Teacher. He will become one of the Twelve who are the foundation of the New Israel that is the Church.

Bartholomew's Feast was first celebrated in France on this day in the 8th Century and spread to the rest of the Church. There are differing traditions as to where Bartholomew preached the Gospel, Armenia being the most popular. He suffered a martyr's death, as did all the Apostles save John.

Tradition has it that he was flayed alive. He can be seen in Michelangelo's Last Judgment holding his skin – Don't worry! Heaven provided him with new skin! – But what's interesting about this unusual symbol of martyrdom is that Michelangelo's face is depicted on the skin that the Apostle holds. That is how the artist identifies the great Sistine Chapel paintings as his. The only work of art that he actually signed was the Pieta.

Bartholomew would be venerated as a patron of the sick, hence St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London, or 'St. Bart's' as it is commonly called. It's a beautiful way to be remembered.

It was founded by a man called Rahere. He had become very sick while on pilgrimage to Rome. He attributed his recovery to the Apostle, who appeared to him and told him to found a hospital. This he did in 1123. Perhaps the sick, at home and in hospital could have a special place in our prayers on this Feast.