

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

17th December 2017

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 Monday, 5 p.m.
Other Weekdays, 10.15 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation Wednesday, 7 to 8 p.m.
(Father Stanislaw)
Saturday, 11 a.m. to 12 noon
(Father MacKinnon)
4 to 5 p.m.
(Fr. MacKinnon)

There are no Feasts or Memorials this week.

Our sincere thanks to those who set up the parish Crib and Christmas Tree. There is a lot of work involved, and we are grateful for very moment of it. Over the coming weeks, try to spend time for personal contemplation in the Lady Chapel. The Crib brings home to us the wonder of God's gift of his beloved Son in a stable in Bethlehem. It is a place of quiet prayer for adults as well as children.

The Crib and the Tree will be blessed after this Sunday Morning Mass. The children will also be blessed with oil from the land of Jesus. This is an ancient sign of God's blessing.

Normally, we have a special collection at Christmas, and have supported different charities over the years. This year, **we will concentrate on the parish.** The collection will be for church fabric and heating. In the year ahead, we have ample opportunity to give in charity, and we know that you will be as generous as ever. This has not been an easy decision to make. Please see your special donation as your Christmas gift to your parish church!

We pray for our Faithful Departed, especially those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Michael Nicholson, Cathie Boyd, Christina Stage, Patricia Argue, Stephen Haggerty, Alick MacLean, John MacDonald, William Gillies, Margaret Gallacher, Mary MacPherson, Angus MacDonald Chrissie MacIntyre, Erin McQuade, Lorraine Sweeney, Jack Sweeney, Maureen Thompson, Margaret Pryce, Theresa Tumilty, Nell Holness, Jack Cronin, Mary MacDonald and Thomas MacLean.** May they all rest in the eternal peace of their Saviour.

Registration of Candidates for Confirmation is very important. Please collect the appropriate form at the front of the church and return it is soon as possible. We cannot leave things to the last moment. Our thanks to the families who are assuring that the church be a familiar place for the children.

Father Stanislaw is our visiting confessor this Advent. He will be in the church from 7 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday evening. He is there for *all our parishioners* and not just for the Polish speakers among the Faithful.

Fr. MacKinnon will hear confessions at the times indicated in this week's Noticeboard.

Father Wynne has now returned home after his time in hospital. It is good to have him among us once again, and we wish him all the best.

Christmas Masses will be as usual: 10 p.m. on Christmas Night, with a short Carol Service beginning at 9.45 p.m. Christmas Morning Mass will be at 10.30 a.m.

With Christmas Day on a Monday this year, it is not easy. Please try to get to the **4th Sunday of Advent** Masses and do not make the Christmas Masses a substitute for these.

Bishop Brian has appointed **Fr Francis Agaduaja** as Administrator of Our Lady of the Holy Angels, Mingarry from Saturday 16th December 2017. Fr Francis is a Missionary of St Paul. He has travelled far from his homeland of Nigeria to minister among us for six years. We welcome him and wish him every blessing.

I live my Advent in the womb of Mary
And on one night when a great star swings free
From its high mooring and walks down the sky
To be the dot above the Christus 'i',
I shall be born of her by blessed grace.
I wait in Mary-darkness, faith's walled place,
With hope's expectance of nativity.
I knew for long she carried me and fed me,
Guarded and loved me, though I could not see,
But only now, with inward jubilee,
I come upon earth's most amazing knowledge:
Someone is hidden in this dark with me.
(Jessica Powers)

Like foolish folk of old I would not be,
Who had no room that night for Him and thee.
See, Mother Mary, here within my heart
I've made a little shrine for Him apart;
Swept it of sin, and cleansed it with all care;
Warmed it with love and scented it with prayer.
So, Mother, when the Christmas anthems start,
Please let me hold your baby - in my heart.
(Sister Maryanna, O.P.)

An Advent Prayer

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility;
that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

