

THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

18th November 2012

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

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Noticeboard

<u>Sunday Masses:</u>	Vigil Mass, Saturday, 6 p.m. Sunday Morning Mass, 10.30 a.m.
<u>Weekday Masses:</u>	10.15 a.m.
<u>Sacrament of Reconciliation:</u>	Saturday: 9.45 to 10 a.m. 4 to 4.30 p.m. 5.30 to 5.50 p.m.

Wednesday is the Memorial of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Thursday, the Memorial of St. Cecilia; Saturday, the Memorial of St. Andrew Dũng-Lac and Companions, the Martyrs of Vietnam.

This Sunday we have the annual collection for the **Pastoral Fund** of the Diocese. Whatever you can give is appreciated.

As **Kate Mitchell** was laid to rest, the thoughts and heartfelt prayers of so many people in this town were with Stewart and all the family. Kate shared her happiness and contentment with everyone she knew. Her faith was in her loving Saviour. May she now receive the reward of her faithfulness and kindness and rest with the Lord in eternal peace. We pray also for the eternal peace of those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Frances Hayes, Monique Masclet, Jean MacDonald, Annie Tully, Danny Haggerty, Annie MacDonald, Annie Morrison, Mark Donoghue and Mary Flora MacKay**. May their souls and the souls of all the Faithful Departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

As violence and counter-violence flares up once again in **Israel and Gaza**, we renew our prayers for peace in the world. Without that prayer, offered by people of every faith, what hope remains for the human family?

A further supply of **Christmas candles** has been ordered from CBC. These can be used at Christmas but also for Candlemas, the Feast of the Presentation of the Child Jesus on the 2nd February. Fr. MacKinnon has often wondered why church suppliers do not produce special candles for what is a rather beautiful event in the Church's Calendar.

Cards on which is printed the **Apostles' Creed** are available at the back of the Church. It is for those who wish to commit themselves to a daily recitation of the Creed, perhaps in the morning. This would make the Year of Faith all the more a reality in our lives. If need be, we will order more cards. They have already been distributed in our Primary School, for use each school-day.

We remind you that this year's **Confirmations** are drawing near. The Sacrament will be celebrated on the 14th December. Please keep the young Confirmands in your prayers.

New offering envelopes have arrived, the first date on them being the 2nd December. They will be available next Sunday for those who have kindly opted for Gift Aid on behalf of the parish. We are most grateful for this support!

We are also grateful for those who continue to be in the 200 Club. Recent winners have been **Alistair MacLeod** and **Ena Morrison**. We congratulate them both.

Next Sunday is the **Solemnity of Christ the King**, the final Sunday of the Liturgical Year.

Women of the Bible Sarah

This week, we go back in time to the very beginning of Israel's journey of faith. We go to Sarah, the wife of Abraham. Her name means "Princess" and the tradition is that she was very beautiful, so beautiful in fact that the Pharaoh of Egypt made her live for a while in his palace, not realizing that she was Abraham's wife. The great scripture scholar Fr. John L. MacKenzie S.J. gives a succinct description of Sarah as depicted in the scriptures of her descendants. She has

"a vivacious and well defined character, proud, quick to anger, hardly the submissive and demure wife, a bustling and generous hostess and easily amused, ready for the give and take of conversation with her man and his guests."

This is the sort of wife that any nomadic or Bedouin chief would delight in. But for one thing: she could not give Abraham a child. This, of course, would change when God entered the life of Abraham.

Three angels visit their camp at Mamre. Sarah laughs in disbelief when she overhears them tell Abraham that she will have a child. When challenged she denies that she laughed. This is a warmly human scene: the eavesdropping, the bemused laugh, the lie told when cornered. But a darker side of Sarah's character is revealed in her treatment of the slave girl Hagar. Believing herself hopelessly infertile, Sarah arranges for Abraham to have a child with Hagar: something acceptable in her culture. Hagar conceives, but then makes the biggest mistake of her life: *"...Once she knew that she had conceived, her mistress counted for nothing in her eyes."* (Genesis 16:4) This one does not do with the fiery Sarah! She treats the slave-girl so badly that she flees the camp. In the wilderness, an angel appears and tells Hagar to back and submit to Sarah. Peace is temporarily restored, no doubt to the great relief of Abraham. One has the impression that he kept a very low profile in the face of Sarah's wrath! Hagar gives birth to Ishmael, traditionally seen as the father of many of the Arab peoples. Sarah would have her child, Isaac, but would then insist that Hagar be expelled once again, this time with her child, and that to the great distress of Abraham. God ensures that Hagar and her child survive in the wilderness. Ishmael would grow up to be a famous archer and hunter.

Sarah died at Hebron. Abraham was given permission by the local people to buy a site for her grave: it would be the only land that he would ever possess. Later, the Book of Isaiah would speak poetically to Israel about Abraham and Sarah: *"Consider the rock you were hewn from, the quarry from which you were cut. Consider Abraham your father and Sarah who gave you birth."* (Isaiah 51:1) As we reflect on the two half-brothers, Ishmael and Isaac, we could perhaps pray all the more for peace between Arab and Jew.



The Tombs of the Patriarchs at Hebron, in the West Bank, revered as the burial place of Sarah and Abraham, as well as of Isaac, Jacob and their wives. Muslims, Jews and Christians alike honour this shrine, first built by King Herod.

Potpourri

Faith isn't the ability to believe long and far into the misty future. It's simply taking God at His Word and taking the next step. (Joni Erickson Tada)

Tears are often the telescope by which men see far into heaven. (Henry Ward Beecher)

Life is eternal, and love is immortal, and death is only a horizon; and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight. (Rossiter Worthington Raymond)

For the Christian, heaven is where Jesus is. We do not need to speculate on what heaven will be like. It is enough to know that we will be for ever with Him. (William Barclay)

God is even kinder than you think. (St Theresa)

No matter how steep the mountain - the Lord is going to climb it with you. (Helen Steiner Rice)

Faith is daring the soul to go beyond what the eyes can see. (William Newton Clark)

There are only two ways to live . . . one is as though nothing is a miracle. . . the other is as if everything is. (Albert Einstein)

In the name of God, stop a moment, cease your work, look around you. (Leo Tolstoy)

One cannot get through life without pain... What we can do is choose how to use the pain life presents to us. (Bernie S. Siegel)

One of the advantages of being disorganized is that one is always having surprising discoveries. (A. A. Milne)

Even a minor event in the life of a child is an event of that child's world and thus a world event. (Gaston Bachelard)

What keeps me up at night is poverty and unemployment. (King Abdullah II of Jordan)

A man willing to work, and unable to find work, is perhaps the saddest sight that fortune's inequality exhibits under this sun. (Thomas Carlyle 1795-1881)

You can learn many things from children. How much patience you have, for instance. (Franklin P. Jones)

Make it a rule never to give a child a book you would not read yourself. (George Bernard Shaw)