

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

16th December 2012

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

www.stmarysfortwilliam.org



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>	Friday: 7 to 8 p.m. Saturday: 9.45 to 10 a.m. 4 to 5 p.m. 5.30 to 5.50 p.m.

There are no Feasts or Memorials this week.

We congratulate these young parishioners, confirmed by Bishop Toal in St. Mary's on Friday evening. May they continue to grow in the love and knowledge of Jesus, their Friend and Saviour. Our sincere thanks to the parents, grandparents, school teachers and assistants for being such an essential part of our children's formation in faith. God bless you all. And a big thank you to all who prepared and contributed to the lovely reception in the school afterwards.



Jac Currie	Sandra Gasperowicz	Alice Ann MacPherson	Ben Farr
Jamie Docherty	Marlena Lopatniuk	Leah MacLennan	Josh Farr
Ruairidh Timbrell	Nikola Dolowa	Emma Wallace	Dobrochna Czapla
Chloe Timbrell	Klaudia Solinska	Travis Steadwood	Olek Matuszczak
Gavin Goncalves	Julia Kaczor	Larisa Klava	
Oliwia Palicka	Aine O'Rua	Craig MacDonald	

This Sunday there are collection baskets at the back of the church for those who would like to support the **White Fathers** in their missionary work. Anything you can give is deeply appreciated.

We pray for our Faithful Departed. We pray especially for **Marion Wynne** who died very peacefully at home and was buried from St. Mary's on Thursday. Marion was a person of great faith who loved her Church and served it well. Many were blessed by her example, her friendship and her devoted love. May her beloved Saviour now welcome her home to eternal peace and joy. We extend our prayer and sympathy to all the family. We pray also for those whose anniversaries are about this time: **John MacDonald, Michael Nicholson, Cathie Boyd, Christina Stage, Patricia Argue, William Gillies, Stephen Haggerty, Alick MacLean, John MacDonald, Margaret Gallacher, Mary MacPherson, Angus MacDonald, Chrissie MacIntyre** and **Maureen Thompson**. May their souls and the souls of all the Faithful Departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Holy Communion will be taken to the housebound shortly after Christmas, on Thursday 27th December and Friday, 28th. Please note the departure from the usual days.

Many of you like to donate towards the **Christmas flowers**. Such thoughtfulness is always appreciated.

Please remember the **Blessing of the Crib and the Children** next Sunday, after the 10.30 Mass. As in previous years, the children will be blessed with olive oil from Bethlehem. And please help put up the Crib and Tree: this Monday, at 6 p.m.

Fr. Joseph Kasule will arrive on Thursday. We know that he will enjoy this holiday with us.

Christmas Confessions:	Friday	7 to 8 p.m. (Mgr. James MacNeil)
	Saturday	9.30 to 10 a.m. (Fr. MacKinnon)
		4 to 5 p.m. (Visiting Priest)

Women of the Bible Rachel

This week, we return to the matriarchs of the Jewish people: to Rachel, the wife of Jacob.

After Jacob fled the camp to save himself from Esau's fury, he journeyed to Haran, near the modern Turkish-Syrian border. His uncle Laban lived there. Jacob was immediately attracted to one of Laban's daughters, Rachel. He agreed to work for seven years in order to marry her. Come the wedding ceremony, Laban substituted his other daughter, Leah, for Rachel. Jacob the trickster had met his match in his uncle! He agreed to work for another seven years in order to have Rachel as his second wife. It was certainly a long courtship and Jacob was clearly in love with Rachel, although he would always treat Leah with respect. Please remember that polygamy was normal at the time.

Jacob decided to escape from his uncle and return to Canaan with his wives, his children and livestock. Unknown to him, Rachel had stolen the household gods of her father. Laban pursued them and searched everywhere in Jacob's camp for his idols. Rachel was sitting on them and so prevented her father finding them. Jacob lost his temper with his uncle, and all the resentment of the years came to the surface. Then he and Laban made a covenant and went their separate ways. (Cf. Genesis 31:22-54)

Rachel had already given birth to Joseph, he who would one day become Pharaoh's chief minister. Once settled in Canaan, she gave birth to Benjamin, the youngest of Jacob's sons, only to die immediately afterwards. (Cf. Genesis 35:16-20).

In the Book of Jeremiah, we find the following:

"A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamenting and weeping bitterly;
it is Rachel weeping for her children,
refusing to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more." (*Jeremiah 31:15*)

The same verse is found in Matthew 2:18, referring to the Massacre of the Innocents of Bethlehem. This Sunday it directs our minds and hearts to Connecticut.



The Meeting of Jacob and Rachel

Potpourri

You don't really understand human nature unless you know why a child on a merry-go-round will wave at his parents every time around - and why his parents will always wave back. (*William D. Tammeus*)

Before you were conceived I wanted you.
Before you were born I loved you.
Before you were here an hour I would die for you.
This is the miracle of life.
(*Maureen Hawkins*)

You will always be your child's favourite toy.
(*Vicki Lansky*)

Children make you want to start life over.
(*Muhammad Ali*)

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
(*Kahlil Gibran*)

It's the greatest poverty to decide that a child must die so that you may live as you wish.
(*Mother Teresa*)

God is in the slums, in the cardboard boxes where the poor play house. God is in the silence of a mother who has infected her child with a virus that will end both their lives. God is in the cries heard under the rubble of war. God is in the debris of wasted opportunity and lives, and God is with us if we are with them.
(*Bono*)

A person's a person, no matter how small.
(*Dr. Seuss*)

Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man.
(*Rabindranath Tagore*)

An aware parent loves all children he or she interacts with - for you are a caretaker for those moments in time.
(*Doc Childre*)

No one has yet fully realized the wealth of sympathy, kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure.
(*Emma Goldman*)