

SOLEMNITY OF THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

24th June 2012

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

Charity No. SC002876

www.stmarysfortwilliam.org



Noticeboard

Sunday Masses: Vigil Mass, Saturday: 6 p.m.
Sunday Morning Mass: 10.30 a.m.

Weekday Masses: 10.15 a.m.

FRIDAY IS THE SOLEMNITY OF STS. PETER AND PAUL, A HOLIDAY OF OBLIGATION. MASSES WILL BE AT 10.15 A.M. 1.15 P.M. AND 7 P.M.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday 9.45 to 10 a.m.
4 to 4.30 p.m.
5.30 to 5.50 p.m.

Thursday is the Memorial of St. Irenaeus.

Fr. Joseph Kasule arrives on Monday evening. Parishioners will be happy to have him with them once again, and we know that they will as supportive as always. He will take charge of the parish in Fr. MacKinnon's absence. We hope that he did well in his recent accountancy exams. Fr. MacKinnon will be absent for much of July, but may have to return from time to time to attend to various matters.

Holy Communion will be taken to the housebound from Monday to Wednesday of this week.

We pray for our Faithful Departed, especially those whose anniversaries are about this time: **Mary Fitzsimons, Donald MacDonald, Janie Wilson, Joan Morrison, Johnny MacBeth, Shirley MacLean, Mary MacDonald, Margaret MacKay, Alexander Rennie, Brigitta Paulus, John MacKay, Mary Ann MacDonald, Kenneth MacDonald, and Ellen Jane O'Hare.** May they rest in the peace of their Saviour.

The new **book-trolley** has arrived. It should help makes things much tidier at the back of the church. We sincerely thank the anonymous donor.

We hope that those who went on **the pilgrimage to Carfin** found it to an occasion of blessing and peace. There was some money left over and Fr. MacKinnon is grateful for this donation. It will be used to buy extra Mass books for the parish.

It is hoped that **major repairs** to the church will begin in July. This will involve scaffolding that permits slaters and stonemasons to attend to the exterior of the church, as well as the re-plastering and painting obviously required within the building itself. There should be no difficulty with the Diocesan Finance Committee. Just pray that the weather is favourable!

There was a very pleasant dinner and presentation in the Ben Nevis Hotel on Friday night. It was in honour of **Miss Sutherland** and **Miss Campbell**, as their retirement approaches. We cannot thank Anne and Moira enough for all that they did for our school over the years. They will be greatly missed, both as teachers and as two very likeable people. Time and time again, they were there when our children were confirmed or made their First Holy Communion. They would like to thank our parishioners for the warmth of their welcome and friendship over the years. It meant a lot to them. We wish Anne and Moira a very happy retirement. We know that there is still plenty of "joie de vivre" left in both of them!

Should you have noticed that **Zechariah** is writing in Spanish in the illustration above, it is because the clip-art comes from a Spanish website. The world of biblical scholarship can rest undisturbed!

Potpourri



This is the Year of Mark, or John Mark, to give him his full name. The Gospel readings for the Ordinary Sundays are from his Gospel. Perhaps we could reflect a little on him.

St. Mark is, of course, the patron saint of Venice. He has given his name to the city's basilica and its famous piazza. The image of the winged lion, the evangelist's symbol, is seen throughout the city. There is a charming custom attached to the Venetians' celebration of his feast day. Men give to the women they love a "boccolo", that is, a single budding rose. This expression of love is not just for girl friends and wives: it is also for mothers.

We should pay tribute to St. Mark's mother. Her name was Mary and she was from the very start a prominent member of the infant church. It was to her house that St. Peter went after his miraculous escape from prison. (Cf. Acts 12:1-19 - Incidentally, those who name is Rhoda will find the biblical source of their name in this passage!). The close bond with the family endured, as St. Peter's first letter testifies. Mark joined St. Peter in Rome, and his Gospel could be in fact largely based on the memories of St. Peter himself. Mark certainly does not idealise the Apostles, and this may itself reflect the humility of Peter. There is an interesting theory that the young man mentioned as fleeing naked from the Garden of Gethsemane might be John Mark himself. (Cf. Mark 14.52)

Relations with St. Paul were less warm. It would be years before St. Paul would forgive Mark for returning home from his first mission. It was to cause Paul's rift with St. Barnabas, Mark's cousin. In the end Paul and Mark were reconciled, and the evangelist gave Paul comfort in his final years.

Mark the failed missionary would become the first to write a Gospel, and that work has touched the lives of countless people. That would be his contribution to the great mission of the Church.

The lion of St. Mark in Venice holds a book on which can be seen these beautiful words: "Pax tibi, Marce, evangelista meus." - "Peace to you, Mark, my evangelist." Perhaps we could make this a prayer when his Feast comes round again. Eternal peace and joy to you Mark, along your mother, and with Peter, Paul and all the saints!

We wonder how our children will turn out. We have hopes for them – for friendship, love, a good life, prosperity, a goal in life and many more. We have fears and anxieties about how they will get on in life. The people said of John the Baptist, 'what will this child be?' While his parents, old as they were, knew there was something really special about him in God's plan, they also had the usual parental fears. They put their child into the protection and hands of God, as we do at each baptismal ceremony.

(Gardiner Street Church, Dublin)

All men's miseries derive from not being able to sit in a quiet room alone. *(Blaise Pascal)*

I often regret that I have spoken; never that I have been silent. *(Publilius Syrus)*

Sometimes, when one person is missing, the whole world seems depopulated. *(Lamartine)*

The most valuable thing the Psalms do for me is to express the same delight in God which made David dance. *(C. S. Lewis)*

When you say that a situation or a person is hopeless, you are slamming the door in the face of God.

(Charles L. Allen)

The first Rotarian was the first man to call John the Baptist, Jack. *(Henry Louis Mencken)*

There comes a point in your life when you realize who really matters, who never did, and who always will.

(Anon)

One's friends are that part of the human race with which one can be human *(George Santayana)*

We should take care not to make the intellect our god; it has, of course, powerful muscles, but no personality.

(Albert Einstein)

