



Fourth Sunday of Advent, 2024

22nd December, 2024

RC Diocese of Argyll and the Isles

Fr Roddy McAuley, Parish Priest

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Charity registration number - SC002876

Masses during the Week

Tuesday: 10am and Christmas Eve: Midnight Mass preceded by Carols at 11.30pm.

Wednesday: 10am Christmas Day

Thursday: No Mass

Friday: No Mass

Saturday: 6pm Vigil.

Sunday: 9am and 11am

Confessions: Saturday at 5.30pm

Eucharistic Adoration: Wednesday after morning Mass.

Rosary: After Mass on Thursday morning.

Scripture Readings:

Micah 5:1-4 The promise is given that Bethlehem will be the birthplace of the shepherd of Israel.

Hebrews 10:5-10 Instead of offering sacrifices, Jesus offers himself, dedicating himself to do God's will — a model for all believers.

Luke 1:39-44 Blessed is Mary among women, and blessed is the fruit of her womb – Jesus, whose birth we will shortly celebrate.

Jubilee Year: Pope Francis has given the 2025 Jubilee Year the theme of “Pilgrims of Hope”. Pope Francis has invited Catholics to renew our hope and discover a vision that can restore access to the fruits of the earth to everyone. We are also invited to rediscover a spirituality of God's creation in which we understand ourselves as pilgrims on the earth rather than masters of the world.

The Jubilee Year begins on Christmas Eve 2024 and concludes on 6th January, 2026. In the Catholic Church, a Jubilee or Holy year is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, in which people are invited to come back into right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation. A Jubilee Year is celebrated by the Church every twenty-five years. This has been the case since 1470, when Pope Paul II changed it from every fifty years. The word Jubilee comes from the Hebrew word “yobel”, which is a ram's horn. This wind instrument is blown to mark the start of a Jubilee Year in the Bible (Leviticus 25:9).

There will be a **Christmas church cleaning** at 7pm on Monday, 23rd December if anyone is free to help. This will be followed by a cup of tea/coffee and a mince pie in the parish house. Thank you to the volunteers who come along without ceremony to clean the church throughout the year.

As usual, there will be **Midnight Mass** in the parish preceded by Carols at 11.30pm and Mass on **Christmas Day** at 10 am. Looking ahead to New Year, there will be Mass on **New Year's Eve** at 10.00pm followed by a very informal gathering in the hall for those parishioners who want to come together to bring in the New Year. Bring along a wee plate of snacks if you wish to share with others and bring along a wee bottle to share too, if you wish. To have an idea of numbers, please sign your name on the sheet at the back of the church if you intend coming along. Mass will also be celebrated on **New Years Day** (Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God) at 12 noon.

There will be an **open parish meeting** in the church hall on Wednesday, 15th January at 7pm with Fr. Roddy, Brenda Reid (acting Head of St. Mun's Primary School) and Fr. Ronald Campbell (R.E. Advisor and Director of R.E.) who will each give a short presentation with a view to looking at what we can do for our young parishioners and how we can support parents in handing on the faith to their children. This is something that

should concern all parishioners. The youth are not only the future of the church but they are also the church now. All parishioners welcome.

Parishioners and visitors sometimes ask for the Bank details of the parish so that they can set up a Standing Order. Your generosity to our Parish and the charities which we support are much appreciated. Bank details of the parish. Account Name: RC Diocese of Argyll and the Isles – Dunoon Mission. Sort Code: 83-91-25
Account Number: 65627554.

Parish walking Group: Saturday morning at 11am, meeting in the church car-park. All welcome to come along and meet fellow parishioners and have tea/coffee/cake after the walk.

Teas/Coffees: Available in the Church Hall after 11am Mass on Sunday. All welcome.

Pause for Thought

It's assumed that Mary rode on a donkey, but the Bible doesn't say she did. []

It's assumed there was an innkeeper, but it doesn't mention one anywhere. []

It's assumed there were three Magi, but it doesn't give a number of those who showed up. [] []

It's assumed there was a star overhead when Jesus was born, but it doesn't say that either. [] []

It's assumed that Jesus was born in a stable, but all it says is that He was laid in a manger - and that could've been any number of places. [] []

Christmas comes with many assumptions—some helpful, some not so much. []

Spirituality also comes with many assumptions, and the ones that fail us are the ones we make about what it's supposed to look like, who is worthy for it to happen to, and what kind of outcome it's supposed to have for us.

Assumptions like . . . []

You should be more than you are now to be pleasing to God. [] []

Your weaknesses are in the way of God's plan for your life. []

Your lack of religious excitement disqualifies you from divine participation. []

You're probably not doing it right. [] []

Other spiritual people have something you don't have. [] []

Our assumptions hinder our spiritual journey in all kinds of ways, and the antidote to assumption is surprise.

The surprise of Christ's incarnation is that it happened in Mary's day as it is happening every day in your lack of resources, your overcrowded lodging, your unlit night sky, your humble surroundings. [] []

It's a surprise that life can come through barren places. [] []

It's a surprise that meek nobodies partake in divine plans. [] []

It's a surprise that messengers are sent all along the hidden journey of life to let you know you are not alone. []

It's a surprise that you will be given everything you need to accomplish what you've been asked to do. [] []

It's a surprise that nothing can separate you from the love of God. [] []

Nothing can separate you from love. Your assumptions believe there must be something that can . . . But surprise! []

Nothing can. []

May you thank God with joyful surprise at how much you have assumed incorrectly. []

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(Honest Advent).