

St. Stephen's RC Church Blairgowrie

St. Luan's R C Church Alyth & St. Mary's Coupar Angus

First Sunday of Advent Year C 8/12/24.

Parish website: <https://www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk/>

Parish Priest and Prison Chaplain: Father Gregory Umunna Ph.D. Phone: 01250872171

E-mail: ststephen@dunkelddiocese.org. Address: 8 Bank Street Blairgowrie, PH10 6DE.

Warm welcome to all our Parishioners and visitors. Whether you are visiting our parish or just moved into the area, please feel very welcome ... thanks.

[Parish diary for the rest of the Week beginning from 1/12/24.](#)

"The voice of one crying out in the desert: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..."

Saturday 7th December - 5.30pm: Vigil mass St Stephen's.

Sunday 8th December - 9.30 am: Holy mass at St. Luan's Alyth.

Sunday 8th December - 11.00am: Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

Monday 9th December: 10.30am/1.30pm Masses and Ministry of Care, all day in Glenochil Prison.

Tue 10th December. 10am mass at St. Stephen's.

Wed 11th Dec. 6.00pm: "*From the lips of Children and of babes,*" lets bring Jesus into Christmas with a Christmas Carol Service in St. Stephen's R C Church, led by Pupils of St. Stephen's Primary School Blairgowrie. Everyone is invited.

Thursday 12th December - 11.30am Funeral Service for Gary Dawson.

---2.00pm: Council of Priest's Meeting St. Mary's Forebank.

--- 7.00pm: An Advent Evening of Recollection and prayer.

Exposition/Adoration, Reconciliation and Holy Mass at St. Luan's

Friday 13th December - 10.00am Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

--- 6.00pm: FAMILY MUSICAL EVENING-WITH A DASH OF DIVERSITY. You are all invited - with ALL your family - children PARTICULARLY welcome - to an evening of music, song, dance and enjoyment. Please bring your own nibbles and drinks and prepare for a fabulously entertaining evening of music and songs. @ St. Stephen's Parish Hall.

Saturday 14th December -5.30pm: Vigil mass St Stephen's.

Sunday 15th December - 9.30 am: Holy mass at St. Luan's Alyth.

Sunday 15th December -11.00am: Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

This Sunday's message, ..., Even though poor old Advent seems to get stampeded and overrun by the frenzy of buying and selling of this time, Advent drags us back to basics. The very essence of humanity means patience. Waiting for day to come. Waiting for buses. Waiting for the end of winter. Waiting for the sun to shine. Waiting to get well. Waiting for pain to go. Waiting to grow up. Waiting for visitors. Waiting for an appointment in a hospital... Waiting for a child to be born! But above all, it is learning not to live just in the present moment. John the Baptist is thus the focus of the liturgy: his challenge to us to '*prepare a way for the Lord*' is at the heart of the Advent message. We worship the one who will surely come to us.

Opening Prayer: God of our salvation, you straighten the winding ways of our hearts and smooth the paths made rough by sin. Make our conduct blameless, keep our hearts watchful in holiness, and bring to perfection the good you have begun in us. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near: your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Introduction to the Scripture Readings *Baruch 5:1-9* Baruch looks to the day when God will guide all people, bringing them joy. *Philippians 1:3-6, 8-11* Paul encourages the people of Philippi, and tells them to prepare inwardly for the 'Day of Christ Jesus'. *Luke 3:1-6* John the Baptist's words and actions remind the people of Isaiah's call to repentance.

In your prayers, kindly remember those on our prayer list: Michael Rolls, Neil Mcdowall. Pam McKenna, Val Naughton, Dr. Paul Kinneary, Mary and George Flockhart. Snooky Marshall, Maud McGinn, Alex Forrester, Cipriano and Carmelita, Tom O'Malley,

Diana Richardson, Giles Umunna and Tony Donnan, Lisa Robertson.

You are never alone: Reach out! join any of the church groups e.g. readers, flowers ladies, Divine Mercy, adoration group etc. For a shared a prayer, or just have someone listen to you, a candle lit for you or yours, have a mass offered for your intention or that of a loved one living or dead, please speak to the priest. Thanks.

Pope: 'War does not solve problems': Pope Francis renews his appeal for peace in the world, at the first General Audience of the 2024 Advent season.

At his first General Audience of the 2024 Advent season, Pope Francis again stressed the need to pray for peace.

"War is a human defeat," he reiterated. "War does not solve problems." Amid ongoing conflicts around the world, the Pope specifically prayed for "martyred Ukraine," Palestine, Israel, and Myanmar. He lamented how in each of these countries, there are "many children dead, many innocent people dead." "War is evil; war destroys," warned Pope Francis. He renewed his call for peace, encouraging everyone to pray always. "Let us pray," the Pope said, "so that the Lord may bring us to peace."

A forgotten conflict: Three years after a coup overthrew the elected government, Myanmar was thrown into conflict, which continues to rage. The

UN Human Rights Council has called for a "course correction" from the international community as the civilian death toll rises.

"There are now 6,000 reminders that the international community is failing the people of Myanmar," according to experts appointed by the Council.

The Human Rights Council experts stressed the importance of the impact of the international community. "We know that international action makes a difference," they said. "We have documented that it has reduced the junta's access to weapons that it uses to attack civilians."

Advent calls us to Make his Paths Straight: The imagery of filling in the valleys and levelling hills is a call to care about justice for all God's people. Baptist called for a level playing field for all, so that everybody has fair access to the amenities of this world. He was against hoarding, dominance and aggression. I am to turn from my sins, and to prepare the way for him. I am to help ensure fair play and justice for others.

Filling valleys, levelling mountains, straightening the crooked road, preparing a pathway for the Lord. God is always calling for a response. Responding to him is to become responsible.

In the season of peaceful good-will, we need to restate our good-will, and act on it. We try to do our part in making his paths straight!

Tea/Coffee, Everyone is welcome to tea and coffee served in the Lower Hall after 11.00am mass in St. Stephens every Sunday morning after 11.00am mass. Thanks.



Parish Repository is packed with lovely items for your Christmas celebrations at very subsidized prices: Candles, cards, prayer books, bibles, pictures, statues and various gift items that you would love.

-Finale 170th and 125th Joint Anniversary of St Stephen's Blairgowrie (1856 – 2026) and St. Luan's Alyth (1900 – 2025).

-New to the Parish? Please pick a form at the entrance of the church, complete and hand in the form. Thanks. New members are always welcome to come along and attend or visit the following parish groups: SVDP, Wednesdays 7.30pm; Divine Mercy, Tuesdays 10.30am; Adoration, Wed. 6.00pm.

-FAMILY MUSICAL EVENING-WITH A DASH OF DIVERSITY - FRIDAY 13th DECEMBER 2024, 6.00pm. You are invited - with ALL your family - children PARTICULARLY welcome - to an evening of music, song, dance and enjoyment on Friday 13th of December 2024 in the Hall at St Stephen's, Blairgowrie. Please bring your own nibbles and drinks and prepare for a fabulously entertaining

evening of music and song. If you would like to put on a display of song, dance or even a culture-specific "party piece", please let Fr. Gregory know so that it can be included in the Programme. Please come along and be part of this December show and make it even more enjoyable!

-Today and Up Coming Events:. -8th Dec. Poor Mission Fund. - 29th Dec. Building maintenance Fund collection.-12th January. Justice and Peace. -26th January Building maintenance Fund collection. -9th February: The Ecclesiastical Students Fund, -23rd: February: Building maintenance Fund; 16th March. The Ecclesiastical Students Fund -30th March: Papal and Episcopal Charities (SCIAF).

Confirmation and pastoral Visit by the Bishop: Sunday the 1st of June 2025, 11am mass. First holy communion will be on Sunday the 15th of June 2025, 2pm. Reconciliation would be on Wednesday the 26th of February 6.00pm.

Catechism Classes for First Holy Communion and Confirmation: Are you an adult and not yet confirmed? Do you want to know more about the faith and get deeper into sacraments? Then do not hesitate to join us every Monday at 5:30pm from 14th October. We will have a great time together. Please, send a confirmation email to giovanigiovani2024@gmail.com with your full name, dates and places of your received sacraments.

-Parish Finances: All of us hope to leave the world a better place than when we came into it. When making your will please consider leaving something to St. Stephen's RC Church so that you will continue to assist our parish to flourish and leave behind a legacy of Faith. If you feel able to support the parish in whatever way you could via Standing Order, occasional or one-off payment, it would be very much appreciated. By signing the Gift Aid form, your offertory collection can earn the parish a bit more.

-Details of Parish account: Royal Bank of Scotland, 14 Allan Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6AD. Sort code:- 83-16-33; Account No:- 00240708. Account name:- Trustees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dunkeld No3 Char TST St Stephens RC Church. Many thanks.*Last Sunday's offertory coll. £655.64; BMF: 210.78. Many thanks for your support to the parish. *Figures exclude takings from Standing orders, bank transfers and direct debits. Comprehensive Parish Financial Audits and Accounts are published on the Notice Board. Thanks.

Reflection: Pilgrims of Hope. The Holy Year, offers an opportunity to rediscover the face of Christ, saying theologians need to place their head "close to the heart of Jesus," as did the Apostle John at the Last Supper. "By remaining close to the heart of the Lord, your theology will draw from the source and bear fruit in the Church and in the world," he said. "In Jesus," he said, "we come to know the face of God and, at the same time, the face of humanity, and thus realize that we are sons and daughters in the Son and brothers and sisters of one another."

Pope Francis - *Wishing you a lovely Sunday, Fr. Greg.*

