

St. Stephen's RC Church Blairgowrie

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

Third Sunday of Advent Year C 15/12/24.

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

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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.

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."

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.

Monday 16th December: 10.30am/1.30pm Masses and Ministry of Care, all day in Glenochil Prison.

Tue 17th December. Funeral Mass for **Bill Waldron** @ 11am mass at St. Stephen's;

Funeral Service for **Geo McGoldrick** at Perth Crematorium 4pm.

Wed 18th Dec. Adoration, parish community Rosary @ 6.00pm; Mass @ 7.00pm at St. Stephen's.

Thursday 19th December— 10 am. Holy mass at St. Luan's Alyth.

Friday 20th December - 10.00am Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

Saturday 21st December -5.30pm: Vigil mass St Stephen's.

Sunday 22nd December - 9.30 am: Holy mass at St. Luan's Alyth.

Sunday 22nd December -11.00am: Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

This Sunday's message, ..., The third Sunday of Advent is also called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is a Latin word that means "rejoice." This name is taken from the entrance antiphon for Sunday's Mass, which is also echoed in today's second reading from the Paul's letter to the Philippians. Some people mark this Sunday by lighting a pink candle instead of a purple one on their Advent wreath. It is a reminder that the Advent season is a season of joy because our salvation is already at hand.

The dominant question in the worship of this weekend is "What must we do?" (to be saved or to get Advent preparations right) they asked him; and John spelled out his answer in no uncertain terms. While their request showed their willingness to change, it also showed that they were lacking in clear insight about what is right human behaviour. "Love and do what you will," was to be the motto of St Augustine, meaning that if people have total inner commitment to God, then they will be incapable of doing wrong, they will know instinctively what is right from the promptings of the Spirit within them.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God, you sent your Son into a world where the wheat must be winnowed from the chaff and evil clings even to what is good. Let the fire of your Spirit purge us of greed and deceit, so that, purified, we may find our peace in you and you may delight in us. Grant 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: *Zephaniah 3:14* Zephaniah appeals for joy. The Lord is in the midst of the people, so there is no need for fear. *Philippians 4:4-7* Be happy, says Paul, and be tolerant: the Lord is very near. *Luke 3:10-18* John the Baptist announces the Good News, and declares he is not the Messiah.

In your prayers, kindly remember those on our prayer list: Michael Rolls, Neil Mcdowall. Pam McKenna, Val Naughton, Dr. Paul Kinnear, 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.

Advent calls us to Make An Advent examen (from *The Pilgrim's Almanac*, by Edward Hays): "Advent is the perfect time to clear and prepare the way. Advent is a winter training camp for those who desire peace. By reflection and prayer, by reading and meditation, we can make our hearts a place where a blessing of peace would desire to abide and where the birth of the Prince of Peace might take place. Daily we can make an Advent examination. Are there any feelings of discrimination toward race, sex, or religion? Is there a lingering resentment, an unforgiven injury living in our hearts? Do we look down upon others of lesser social standing or educational achievement? Are we generous with the gifts that have been given to us, seeing ourselves as their stewards and not their owners? Are we reverent of others, their ideas and needs, and of creation? These and other questions become Advent lights by which we may search the deep, dark corners of our hearts."

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.



*He is the one foretold by all the prophets,
whom the Virgin Mother awaited with love beyond all
telling, the one whose coming John the Baptist heralded,
and whose presence he proclaimed. This same Lord invites us
to prepare with joy for the mystery of his birth,
so that when he comes he may find us watchful in prayer,
our hearts filled with wonder and praise.*

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.

-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 R C 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. £429.21; Poor Mission: £170.16. 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.

The Beauty and Challenges of Family Life "Throughout the life of a family, its members can embrace and be a living part of this community in different, meaningful ways.

The challenges that families face are myriad and range from the

daily friction between personalities and opinions to the more grave – divorce, substance abuse, the disruption of relocation, job loss, medical crises, financial setbacks, separation by incarceration or deployment, death of a family member, domestic violence, and challenges related to immigration status, to name a few. Caring for and serving one another within a family (the domestic church) in these situations is not easy. Let our love for one another be demonstrated through both tangible and intangible support.

Information on Annual Leave: Just to inform all our parishioners that I hope to be away from the parish for my annual leave from the 30th of December to the 5th of February 2022. During this period, I will be able to be with my family and manage some rest away from parish settings. Please give our usual warm welcome to the Superior of The Redemptorists, Fr. Elias (07378648040) (he may delegate another priest of the Redemptorists) in Kinnoull, Perth. He has gladly accepted to cover the Sunday masses which will be limited to 9.30am in St. Luan's Alyth and 11.00am in St. Stephen's Blairgowrie throughout the period of my absence. In the case of an emergency, he could be contacted on his number or the house line:01738624075.

As we successfully arrive to the end of 2024, I give thanks to the almighty God in "in whom we live and move and have our being" and offer my deepest appreciations to all our parishioners for all your unflinching support to the parish throughout 2024.

Because of your faith, your support and participation, our parish family is alive, stable and focused. Take time to notice the vibrant and enthusiastic young faces amongst the readers, at weekend masses, prayer of the faithful and offertory processions in both churches. Take time to notice the joy of meeting and sharing our ourselves, young, not so young and old at the tea and coffee after the 11.00am mass every Sunday. Take time to notice the now frequent musical evenings, concerts and other parish community events that are now celebrated in our parish. These qualities are rare to find in many parishes!

During this year 2024, we continued with parish masses, visits to families, homes, Care homes and school, bringing communion and anointing of the sick where necessary. There is an increase in number of children who were baptised, made their first holy communion and or confirmed. Two adults became Catholics and befitting funerals were giving to our parishioners who passed away. Towards the last quarter of the year, an additional responsibility of pastoral care to prisoners in Glenochil was assigned to me.

In the area of projects, besides the never ending regular maintenance of our 170 and 125 years old churches and over a 100 years old presbytery, through your support, 1. We completed the replacement of the rotten timber frame with 13 new PVG double glaze extra-large windows of the presbytery. 2. We completed the installation of new electrical wiring and 3. installation of new light and shade fittings as well as the 4. installation of new sets of heaters in St. Luan's church. 5. We also installed three new sets of stained glass windows depicting the images our lady and St. Luan on the sanctuary end and on the top end of the entrance to the church. The remaining six stained glass windows of the church to depict six Scottish saints: Columba, Andrew, John Ogilvie, Dun Scotus, Margaret of Scotland are ongoing at the moment. May 2025 usher in for us all, a blessed, healthier, happier and more prosperous individual and parish family lives.

I commend our whole parish and my journey to the powerful intercessions of the Blessed Virgin Mary the mediatrix of all graces and to your prayerful support.

With all my love, Fr. Gregory

-Wishing you a lovely Sunday, Fr. Greg.