

**Parishes of Our Lady of the Assumption & St
Maolrubha, Isle of Skye
& St Duthac's, Dornie
Parish Review
2024**



Welcome to our 2024 Parish Review. You will find in these pages a flavour of what has taken place in the parish over the last 12 months.

We also have contributions from parishioners, community and Diocesan figures, and I thank all for taking the time to write a piece for our review.

2025 is an extra-special year for the Catholic Church - a Jubilee Year with the theme of Hope. It is also extra special for both our Parishes with the Parish of Skye celebrating its 25th Anniversary and the Parish of Dornie celebrating its 165th Anniversary!

May 2025 be a year where we renew and perhaps rediscover our hope. I think when you read and see the many faith-filled lives in our community it will help you to do just that.

With my continued thanks and prayers. Fr. Ronald

What is a Jubilee Year?

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 25 years.

A Pope can also proclaim an Extraordinary Jubilee, like the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in 2015.

The theme of this Jubilee year is ***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 Year of Hope Logo

The official Jubilee logo shows 4 figures, representing all of humanity.

They embrace each other to indicate the solidarity and fraternity which should unite all peoples.

The figure at the front is holding onto the cross. It's not only the sign of faith which this lead figure embraces, but also of hope, which can never be abandoned, because we are always in need of hope, especially in our moments of greatest need.

There are the waves under the figures, symbolising the fact that life's pilgrimage is not always smooth and in calm waters. Often the circumstances of daily life and events in the wider world require a greater call to hope.

That's why we should pay special attention to the lower part of the cross which has been elongated and turned into the shape of an anchor, which is let down into the waves. The anchor is a well-known symbol of hope.

The anchor of hope refers to the reserve anchor used by vessels involved in emergency manoeuvres to stabilise ships during storms.

The image illustrates that the pilgrim's journey is not an individual undertaking, but rather as something communal, marked by an increasing dynamism leading the pilgrim ever closer to the cross.

The cross in the logo is by no means static, but it is also dynamic. It bends down towards humanity, not leaving human beings alone, but stretching out to them to offer the certainty of its presence and the security of hope.



Our year in pictures



Màili & Paddy's 1st
Holy Communion

A winter wedding in St
Duthac's –
congratulations Jenna &
Ryan



Confirmations



Congratulations Maura, John, Ian, Dasha and Paula

Lily's
Baptism





Lenten Retreat at
Flodigarry Hostel





2024 – A challenging year for the
Parish walking group!!!



Refurbishment of the Sacristy
in Portree. Angus Neil 'drilling
his way to heaven!'



Well represented at the
Chrism Mass in Oban

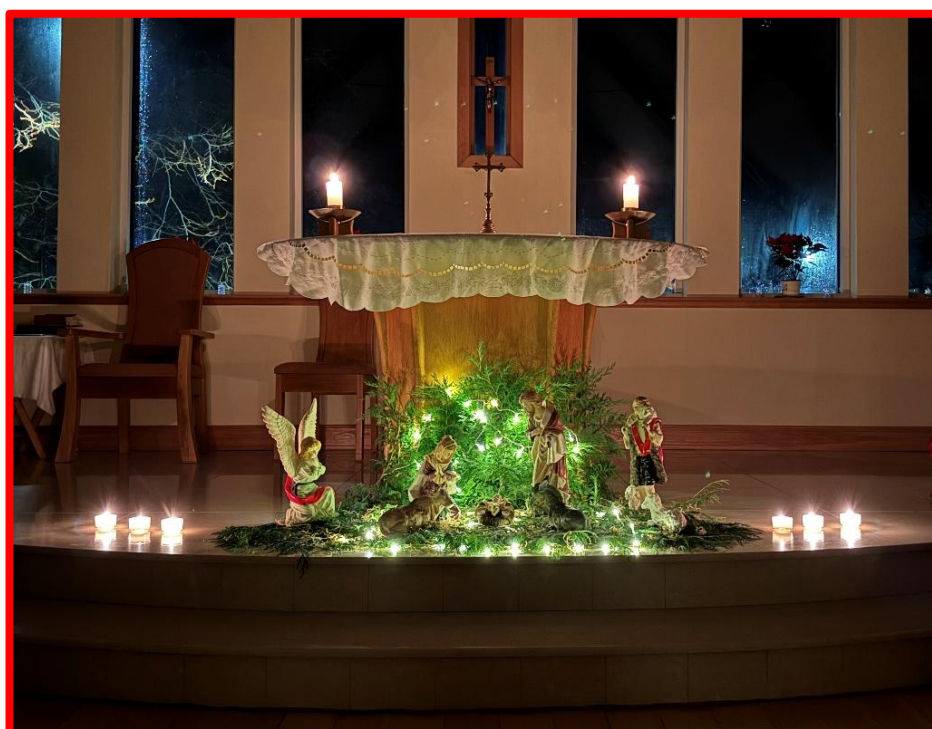
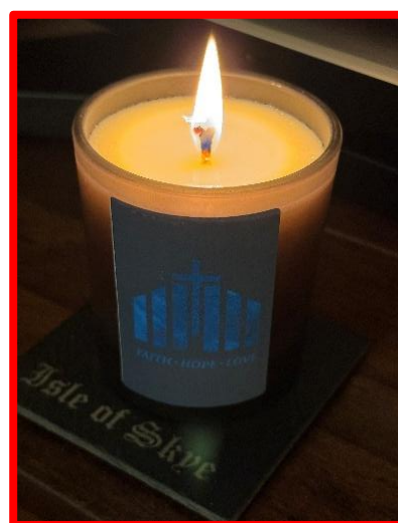


Candlemas



The
Travelling
Crib

Candlelit Mass & Christmas



Since the inception of the Parish in Skye twenty-five years ago, music has played a very important part in the liturgy.

The distribution of the legendary 'Green' and 'Pink' Books (*In the Name of God, A Core Liturgy for Parishes*), combined with a healthy attendance at diocesan music weekends meant that, at the outset, many parts of the Mass were sung rather than spoken: The Kyrie, Gloria, Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Doxology (Amen) and Lamb of God.

Various settings were gradually introduced; Dunkeld, MacMillan, Glendalough and Schutte among others and, although the names might not be familiar to the congregation, the melodies certainly are.

In the last few years, there has been a movement towards using certain settings at different times in the church year. In the same way that hymns are chosen for Advent, Lent or months devoted to Our Lady, a rhythm to the year is also shown in the Mass settings.

A good example of this is the use of the Latin Chants sung unaccompanied during Advent and Lent. This creates an atmosphere of paired-back, reflective tones as we prepare for the outburst of musical joy at the birth of Jesus at Christmas and His resurrection at Easter.

The change and the alternation of settings, also keeps the liturgical music fresh, interesting and on our toes!

From the early days of the Parish, psalms were also sung rather than spoken - led by cantors with congregational responses.

The Church Music Group also try to choose hymns which match the message of the readings and the theme of the Mass. We have a wide choice from the existing hymn book but also try to introduce new hymns, music from other countries and cultures as well as some 'Golden Oldies'. When doing so, we are always guided by the response from the congregation as to whether we adopt them or not into our repertoire.

The Group is also seeking to expand our range of repetitive chants such as *Ubi Caritas* as these appear to have an important place in supporting more contemplative prayer. And this year we hope to produce a supplementary parish hymnbook.

However, probably our most exciting development in recent years is the involvement of our young people in the music ministry. Caterina, Somhairle, Marsali and Maeve have embraced their roles with enthusiasm, learning Mass settings, hymns and instrumental pieces.

As we approach our Silver Jubilee as a Parish, this injection of youth participation makes us confident that the music ministry of St Mary's parish is in good hands for the next generation.

Compiled by Maureen Osborne

Pilgrimage to
Benbecula & South
Uist



A wee walk to say Thank you to St Duthac...



Driving over the causeway into Inverinate, the ruined church - the original parish church for Kintail - is always an impressive sight to behold.

It is reputed to have been damaged by Hanoverian soldiers following the battle of Glenshiel¹. It has been a place of worship since about 1050 and is thought to have been dedicated to St Duthac, (Gaelic: *Naomh Dubhthach*) who is reputed to have been the missionary Bishop of Ross².

Despite the damage, worship continued in the church until around the 1850's when the new parish church about one mile away opened on the shore of Loch Duich in 1856.

St Duthac's name was also given to Loch Duich and Clachan Duich - the graveyard beside the church where burials still take place; and it remains the burial ground for the MacRae chiefs. The Roman Catholic church in Dornie is also dedicated to St Duthac.

St Duthac is particularly associated with Tain, (or Tain is particularly associated with St Duthac) as its Gaelic name is *Baile Dhubhthaich*, 'the town of Duthac'³. It is reputed he was



born there, educated in Ireland and returned as clergy and died there. While bishop he was known for two things in particular - introducing sanctuary within the area, and walking!



¹ <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/church/st-dulthac-kintail>

² <https://canmore.org.uk/site/275649/kintail-st-dubhthacs-church-clachan-duich-burial-ground>

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tain>

Church of Scotland ministers are allowed a week each year to go on retreat/ pilgrimage. When thinking about how to use this time, I did some online research using the amazing ScotWays website, and in particular, the Heritage Paths section. I was looking for old pilgrim paths across Scotland, and was amazed to find there was a St Duthac's Way⁴ - about twenty five miles from Morvich, along the road from St Duthac's through the hills to Tomich. How could I say No? Actually, since I was going to walk the pilgrim path to Tomich why didn't I just keep walking to Tain to say Thank You, to St Duthac at his burial place there? Why not indeed, so I did... kind of...!

We live by Loch Duich, so on Saturday 2nd September 2023, I packed my bag with tent, sleeping bag and other stuff and began the walk through the hills to Tain to say Thank You to St Duthac.

On the way, I had a bit of conversation with him, as you do! Well, I say conversation, but the truth is that I asked questions and like every good pastor, he listened, didn't interrupt and left me to figure it out for myself.

For the opportunity and the experience; thanks be to God!

For all the saints who from their labours rest; thanks be to God!

For St Duthac, who from his labours and walks does rest; thanks be to God!

Fred Vincent
6th December 2024



Rev. Fred Vincent is Minister for South-West Ross Church of Scotland (*Glenelg, Kintail, Lochalsh, Lochcarron, Applecross, Shieldaig, Torridon*)

⁴ <https://scotways.com/heritage-path/#zoom=12&lat=57.2536&lon=-5.3588>

The Secular Franciscans *by Pola Livesey*

What is the Secular Franciscan order?

It was formally known as The Third Order of St. Francis and is in its 8th century of existence. We follow the spiritual inspiration and guidance from Francis Bernardone who was the son of a wealthy cloth merchant in Assisi in Umbria. Francis lived for only 44 years from 1182 to 1226. It is indeed awesome to reflect that the Secular Franciscans are now numbered in the millions.

Francis of Assisi is distinguished from other reformers by his total loyalty to the institutional church. We try to follow the Franciscan way of life: From the Gospel to Life and from life to the Gospel. We are on a daily pilgrimage, trying to live a life of love. We acknowledge our weaknesses and that we are sinners, so we try daily to re-commit to following Francis's example of Love for Christ...and we fail...so we try again.

In October our little Fraternity of Secular Franciscans undertook our annual pilgrimage (this year as in the previous two years), to the Isle of Iona.

What a joyful place that is and what a joy filled band of pilgrims we were. Do not be misled that we are a sorrowful and pious group - indeed we were GLAD to be on Iona; to spend time together, sometimes in prayer, at times in silence, at other times we had presentations on different aspects of Faith. Spending time in and around the Abbey and joining their community for prayer services. We are fortunate that within our little group we have talented musicians so we hold our own little ceilidh. I should mention here that we stay at The Catholic House of Prayer on the Island. We are made so very welcome, as I am sure everyone would be.

During Advent, we prepare for Christmas in various ways... the Sacrament of Reconciliation... Candle Lit Services... the Advent Wreath... and The Crib. It may surprise you to learn that it was our dear St. Francis who instituted the very first crib over 800 years ago.

Inspired by visiting Bethlehem, St. Francis arranged for a manger scene in a cave in Greccio in December 1223, as part of the Christmas observances. Live barnyard animals and local villagers played the part of the biblical characters. St. Francis hoped the staged Nativity would help people recognise Christ's coming in poverty and humility.

"In a particular way, from the time of its Franciscan origins, the nativity scene has invited us to "feel" and "touch" the poverty that God's Son took upon himself in the Incarnation.... It asks us to meet him and serve him by showing mercy to those of our brothers and sisters in greatest need."

Admirabile Signum: Pope Francis





Soup and
Pudding
afternoon



Shona's
Special
birthday

We had lots of
volunteers for the
annual big church
clean!



And a fresh lick of
paint for St
Maolrubha's

The making of the Paschal Candle

The Paschal candle represents Jesus' resurrection and triumph over death and is a symbol of hope and new life. It is often decorated with a cross, symbol of the resurrection, and the Greek letters Alpha and Omega, the current year and other significant symbols. The candle is lit from a new fire during the Easter Vigil, representing the light of Christ overcoming the darkness of the tomb. It is lit during baptisms and funerals to symbolise new life in Christ and eternal life.

With that in mind I had a profound feeling of respect and blessing to be allowed to decorate this important symbol in our church. This was the first time for me to do so.

I kept the design quite simple and drew ideas down at first.

Once the right design emerged, I would print it onto the blank candle as a guide. Beeswax plates in red and gold were used to decorate the candle. I needed to be precise and steady handed to cut the wax plates into their shapes and then apply it to the right space onto the candle. It is quite a nerve-wracking process as I was aware of the spiritual importance that the Paschal candle holds.

Hopefully I will be able to create another Paschal candle for next year. It was an amazing honour to do this, and probably very brave of Father Ronald to let me loose on it!

Vanessa Gauld



LOUDfence in Oban

by Liz Chaplin, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor

The purpose of LOUDfence is to give a voice to survivors of abuse and to show support for them. The idea is that bright colourful ribbons and messages of support are hung on a fence by people to express solidarity with survivors.

The initiative was started by Antonia Sobocki (LOUDfence.com) and is gradually spreading throughout the world. Antonia is a survivor of abuse who found healing in the church. Pope Francis told her that the initiative was “A symbol of hope for the whole church”.

In our diocese we decided to hold LOUDfence (the first in Scotland) on the grass just outside Oban Cathedral on Sunday 30th June and Monday 1st July from 9am – 9pm each day. We had a Scottish theme with tartan and tweed ribbons. Vanessa Gauld, from Portree, designed a beautiful Celtic Cross as the Diocesan Symbol for the event.

On the 30th June the Bishop launched LOUDfence at 10.30 Mass in the Cathedral. We had a table at the back of the church for folk to write messages and take ribbons to hang outside – I was surprised by the number of people who queued to do this. It was the beginning of a very intensive two days. We had a team of volunteers, one of whom was Helen Gilpin, to greet people and to listen to them. We also got advice from a survivor the Diocese is supporting – on the importance of a warm welcome, some comfort and knowing who people are – we all had badges and sweets were available for everyone.

Antonia brought messages from survivors from all over the world – many of them heartbreaking. She also put a very moving display at the foot of the altar – shoes from children, religious sisters and seminarians who had been abused.

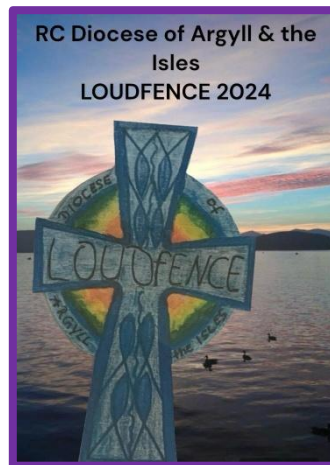
The weather was bitterly cold, but we had a constant stream of people crossing the Esplanade to see what it was about and often to start talking about abuse. Our general message was that we are showing solidarity with everyone who has been abused – in churches, in schools, in families and in sports settings - anywhere. That it is wrong everywhere. Many people spoke about the shock and hurt they had experienced when they had read about abuse in the Church. What stood out for me was the number of people who said things like “thank you for doing this – it is so important that abuse is called out”.

Something that came from our LOUDfence was that Peter Rose and Anne Conlon wrote a beautiful hymn called ‘Ribbons of Hope’. Antonia told us that the hymn had generated a powerful response from around the UK and that it is being recognized as Scotland’s contribution to the LOUDfence movement – all from our Diocesan event!

I think LOUDfence gave people a voice and permission to speak about abuse; it showed that the Church has compassion and solidarity with people who have been abused – anywhere; it said that abuse should never happen and it showed people that the Church will listen to them – all powerful messages.

We were being open about abuse and this was appreciated. There were many messages which were difficult to read and many other which were prayerful and supportive of victims/survivors. The Bishop commented that “LOUDfence was a powerful testimony which will hopefully bear much fruit”. We thought it was a good start and hopefully we helped some people – also, we are chuffed that Argyll and the Isles LOUDfence is still the only one in Scotland!

My role as Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor is to work closely with the Bishop and everyone in the Diocese to manage all aspects of Safeguarding. We want our Diocese to be a place of welcome and safety for everyone and, in particular, our children, young people and vulnerable adults. Two important aspects of Safeguarding are to promote a genuine culture of care for survivors and to raise the profile of Safeguarding throughout the Diocese - the LOUDfence did both of these.





In Memoriam

Our Parishioners who died this year

Mary MacRae

Billy Spence

Robert MacRae

**Eternal Rest Grant unto them, O Lord and
let perpetual light shine upon them, may
they Rest In Peace. Amen.**

**May their souls and the souls of all the
faithful departed, through the mercy of
God, Rest In Peace. Amen.**



2025 – Dates for your diary

8th - 15th May: Parish Pilgrimage to Lourdes

Tuesday, 26th August – Silver Jubilee Mass at St Maolrubha's, Broadford followed by social at Breakish Hall

Wednesday, 27th August – Silver Jubilee Mass at St Mary's, Portree followed by celebration ceilidh at Skye Gathering Hall

Sunday, 31st August – Skye whole Parish Mass & Social

Saturday, 8th November: Soup & Pudding Afternoon at Dornie Hall

More events announced throughout the year!

Holydays of Obligation 2025

Thursday, 29th May – Ascension of The Lord

Sunday, 29th June – St Peter and St Paul

Friday, 15th August – The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Sunday, 2nd November – All Saints Day

Thursday, 25th December – Christmas Day

Contact Us

Parish Priest: Fr. Ronald Campbell

Permanent Deacon: Rev. Anthony Livesey

St Mary's Chapel House

Viewfield Square

Portree

Isle of Skye

IV51 9HB

Email: portree@rcdai.org.uk

Tel: 01478 613 227

Website: www.rcskye.org



Donate to our Parishes

Skye Parish Bank Account details:

Account name: RC Diocese of Argyll and the Isles – Skye

Account number: 65626953

Sort Code: 83-91-25

Scan the Skye Parish QR Code for a single, weekly or monthly donation:



Our Lady of the Assumption RC

Dornie Parish Bank Account Details:

Account Name: RCD Dornie St Duthac

Account Number: 00879175

Sort Code: 80-08-71

Thank you for your support!