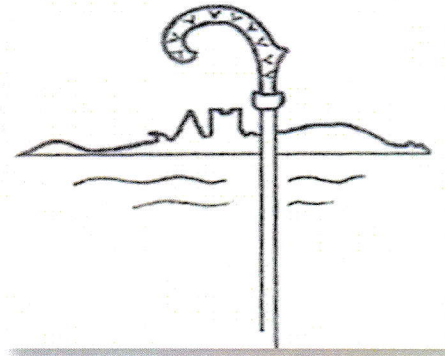


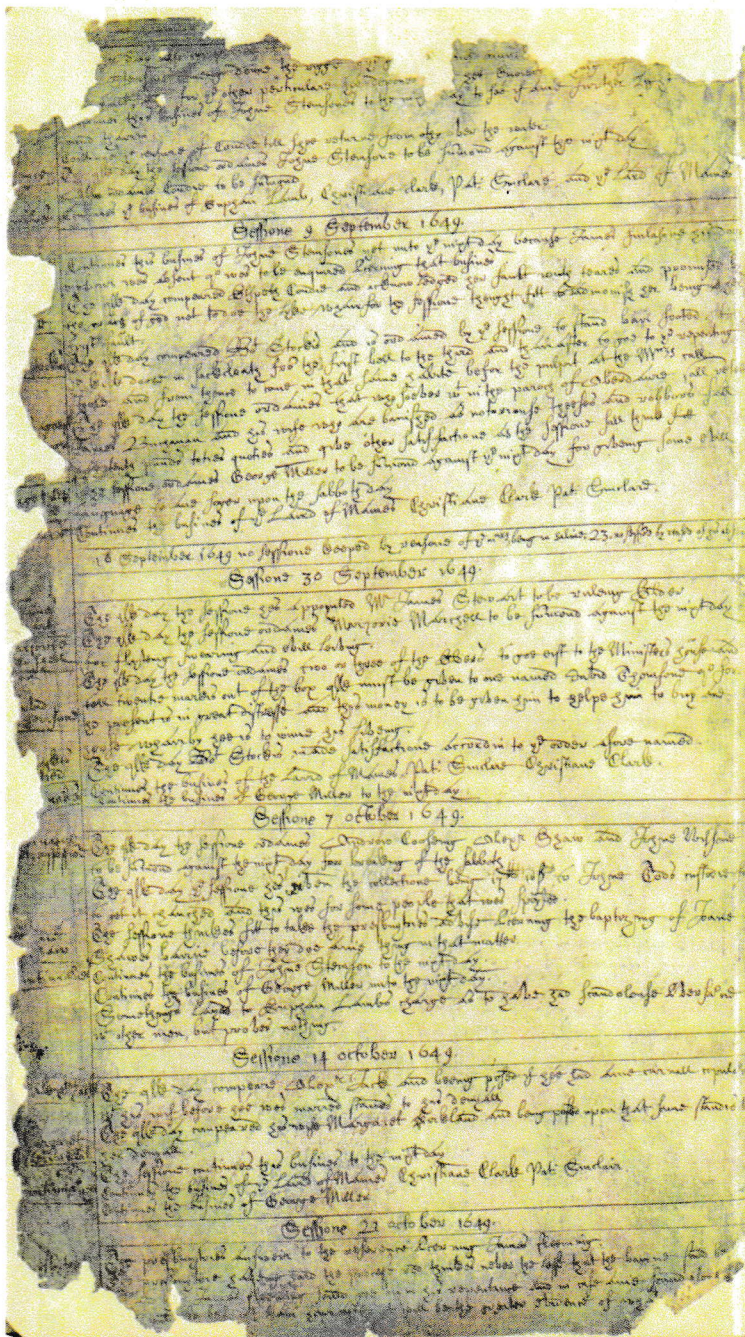
ST FILLAN'S CROSIER



These are the earliest known recorded Kirk Session minutes for St Fillan's dated September 1649! When it seems session meetings were held every week.

Inside:-

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- PAGE 6: Parish Register.
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- PAGE 4 & 5: Restoration of St Fillan's W Cochrane



Through St. Fillan's and St. Columba's working together, plus a little help from our friends, July saw yet another successful **Family Fun Week** when, through crafts, video, songs, games, stories and snacks, the children (acting as spies) solved the clues to find out more about the story of Moses. It was great to see some of the teenagers who had previously attended the Fun Weeks as youngsters come along to help and also to have 'their own space' and recreation time. Plans are now well under way for our next big event detailed here.

C E Duncan.

CHRISTMAS CRACKER

(Free Fun Morning)

Only one month to the big day!

Sat 25th November 2017

From 9:30am until 12:00 For Boys and Girls Primary 1 to 7

Prompt registration is recommended on the day for a 9:30 start

Crafts, Stories, Games, Snacks and

Christmas Chocolates

Church Hall Aberdour

ST fillan's & St Columba's working together.

Ethiopia Appeal

Sunday, 27th August saw the handing over of a cheque for £6741 by St. Fillan's Church to Christian Aid for their partnership project to promote women's sexual health in Ethiopia

Lesley Gordon, the Christian Aid Organiser of St Fillan's Church, presented Mary Mulligan from the Edinburgh Office of Christian Aid with the cheque on behalf of the congregation. This marked the end of a very successful fundraising effort.

The Service that day had an African flavour to it. African music, singing, costumes, drinks and snacks added colour to the very informative addresses and prayers fronted by the Ethiopia fundraising co-ordinating committee. The fundraising group would like to thank the very many people who supported our fund raising efforts. We were amazed that we exceeded our target of £5,000.

For every pound raised for this project, the EU has pledged to match it by adding £5. This means the £5,000 our Church pledged turns into an amazing amount of £30,000



By 2020 the project hopes to:

- * Double contraception usage in young women in the targeted communities to 59%
- * Educate young women and halve the rate of teenage pregnancy to 5%
- * Increase access to maternal health services, including antenatal and post-natal care, and to ensure births are attended by health workers
- * Improve the provision of healthcare at community and national level
- * Increase the proportion of babies being delivered by skilled midwives from 18.4% to 60%.

Giving women support to receive an education, such as learning basic maths and literacy skills, means women are more employable, can manage their finances and can have a voice in their community. The project will work in close collaboration with the public sector, helping to ensure that local authorities deliver a high quality, accessible service to communities.

Creating change in Ethiopia will not happen overnight but efforts such as this one should help. Thank you for supporting St Fillan's Church efforts to attempt to build a better future for young women in Ethiopia.

Letter from the Manse

This summer & autumn life has been quite varied. As Interim Moderator at Rosyth Parish Church, I am involved in the life & work of the Congregation, and in their sometimes difficult and demanding process of seeking a new Minister. A hard-working Kirk Session and Deacon are getting used to change following the retirement of their much-loved Minister, the Reverend Violet McKay.

But it has not been all work & no play. A couple of visits to my very frail Parents, a week with the wonderful Benedictine Sisters in Lancashire, where I met up with a treasured friend who made a special journey to do so; and wonderful walks along the Coastal Path in sunshine & rain. And elsewhere, I was part of the wedding celebrations of two good friends, a very happy & emotional occasion, in which you could almost touch the love present in the room.

-o0o-

The title of the ground-breaking book *In Memory of Her*, by the feminist theologian Elizabeth Schlüssler Fiorenza, is based on St Mark's story of the anointing of Jesus by an unknown woman. She breaks open a jar of spikenard, worth a year's wages to a Roman soldier, to do so. The Disciples grumble, and say the money could have been spent on helping the poor. But Jesus says: "*Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you will, you can do good to them; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burying. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.*"

Our Lord's statement: "*The poor will always be with you*" is quoted from time to time, to mean that, as we can't do anything about the poor

anyway, there's no need to get stressed about them. It's always dangerous to take Our Lord's words out of context, or to quote them only in part.

The suggestion to be generous to the poor is a vital part of Christianity, as well as of other Faiths. Our response to poverty, at home or abroad, may be seen as a living out of our Faith in a practical way.

This year many people in Fife will be faced with unexpected drops in income, as the new benefit system, '*Universal Credit*' will be rolled out, *three weeks before Christmas*. Whether one approves of the new system or not, implementing it locally during Advent can only be described as unhelpful, to put it mildly. Like wages, benefits are paid in arrear, and so many people may well have no income in the period leading up to Christmas. Local Food Banks always ask for food, but maybe this Advent we might collect other necessities as well, toiletries & related products, and selection boxes of sweets, so that those faced with impossible situations at the time when millions spend millions in the Christmas frenzy, may have a tiny amount of festive food.

The concepts of 'food' and 'Messiah' are connected closely. We speak of the Baby of Bethlehem, and in Hebrew Beth-lehem is two words and means "house" (*Beth* as in *Beth-el*, "house of God") and "bread" (*lehem*). And the Baby grew up, and spoke of Himself as '*the Bread of Life*', and, just before the Crucifixion, in establishing the Sacrament of the Eucharist, Jesus said: "*This bread is my Body, broken for you*". As we prepare in our hearts through prayer, to celebrate Christmas again, let us prepare for the Nativity through our actions, and ensure the most vulnerable have enough, to help them through this period of change.

Peter Gerbrandy-Baird
Parish Minister, October 2017

The Restoration Of St Fillan's Church

“for the purposes of outlining the scheme for the restoration of the Norman Church at Aberdour, and also with a view to securing an expression of public opinion with regard to the proposal the Revd.

Robert Johnstone, the minister of the parish, addressed a meeting of the parishioners in Aberdour Institute on Wednesday evening”.

So ran the report in the Dunfermline Press of the 22nd August 1925 that heralded the restoration of St Fillan's Church in 1926. At that meeting Mr Johnstone had first come to *“that beautiful and peaceful spot round the old church when he had come to take the funeral service at the grave of his predecessor Mr Gray. Soon after that he was privileged to come to Aberdour as parish minister”* (in 1914).

The fact that the church had lain unused and uncared for over a period of 135 years since 1790 had been, at least partially, due to Katherine the Dowager Countess of Morton who did not care for worshippers coming so near to the castle.

(Katherine, the Countess, was the fourth daughter of the Hon. John Hamilton, second son of the sixth earl of Haddington, had married Sholto Charles the 16th Earl of Morton in 1758 and had two sons, George, the seventeenth earl, and the Hon. Hamilton Douglas. Her husband died in Sicily in 1774)

This woman had the support of Revd Robert Liston who seemed to favour a new church (perhaps the kirk was in poor repair then?) and it was around this time that the building of a parish Church in the High Street took place. (which we now know as the Church Hall)

Mr Johnstone told his audience at the Institute, that immediately following the First World War, he had started to investigate the whole idea of restoration and about the various difficulties that had to be overcome, not least the financing of this project. It had been following a lecture that he had given at the Ecclesiological Society in Edinburgh, where he had spoken on the subject, that he had been approached by a kind donor who offered the money for the restoration. Thereafter an estimated was obtained, presented to the donor who offered to finance the complete restoration. He (Mr. Johnstone) was unwilling to reveal who this generous person was, but informed the meeting that the donor was *“No stranger to Aberdour and was deeply interested in our village, like themselves”*. He detailed the work required:

- Restoration of the windows to their original 12th century form.
- Careful removal of the plaster from the walls to avoid damage to the mason's marks within the church.
- An old vault, which had been originally part of the church, was to be put in proper condition and it was proposed to make part of it a small vestry and the front of it an organ chamber.
- An open timbered roof covered with the old stone slates some of which still lay about but others that could be obtained from Caithness. (in 2006 the roof was renewed with slate from Hexham, in Northumberland, as suitable stones could not be obtained in Scotland)
- The Church would be lit with electric light.
- After excavation, the floor would be laid with stone flags from Cullulo quarry.
- The entrance originally from Easter Aberdour would be best made from the other side.

Mr Johnstone also added that the church would not be complete without *“a beautiful little pipe organ”*, and if his audience would give him their assurance of hearty goodwill that night he would be able to find a donor who would give them an organ before the church was opened.

Over the previous couple of years the Minister had successfully obtained consent from the Earl of Morton, the Presbytery, and the Church trustees, and the path towards the entrance had been carefully planned so as not to interfere with any graves in the churchyard. Only eight of the many parishiners who attended this meeting had any objections and the proposal to restore the Norman Church received overwhelming support.

Previously (to the public meeting), the minister had intimated to the session, on 27th July 1925, "*that plans had been drawn out by Mr Williamson FRIB (A)*" which the session had inspected and unanimously approved. Lord Morton had also "*given right of access for worship in the restored church by the road leading down to the old castle and around the castle by the terrace walk.*"

In the session meeting dated the 26th March 1926, the minister announced the successful restoration of the Norman Church. He then continued to give details of the arrangements for its Re-Dedication and official opening. This momentous occasion would take place on Wednesday 7th July 1926 at 2:30p.m.

The officiating clergy would be:

- The right Rev J. McCallum, Moderator of the General Assembly.
- The Rev. W. Andrew Hutchinson, Moderator of the Dunfermline Presbytery.
- The Rev. J. Rennie, Aberdour United Free Church.
- The Rev. R. Johnstone, Minister of the Parish.
- Lt.-Colonel W Glen Liston, Great Grandson of Rev. R. Liston, Minister of the Parish in 1795. (it is of interest that Rev. R Liston was the son of Rev. John Liston who was favoured as Minister by Earl of Morton against the wishes of the vast majority of parishioners in 1725)

It was intimated that a gift of an alter dish and collecting bags had been received and it was decided that this system of taking collections be adopted in the church.

On the 25th June the session agreed "*to postpone having communion this summer*", and the **re-dedication and re-opening of St Fillan's Aberdour took place at @.30 pm on Wednesday 7th July 1926.**

In the session meeting of 26th September: "*it was unanimously agreed to ask Presbytery to grant their consent to make the restored church of St Fillan's Aberdour Fife the parish church as the kirk session feel this is the desire of the congregation who has given their offerings generously for equipping the church for worship*". (Details of the costs accrued by the restorations, and donations received were given in the session on 15th November 1926 and noted below).

The session minute continued "*it was (also) agreed that the chairs in church should be let to members and adherents and that the uniform charge of one shilling a year be made for each 'sitting' and that a number of free seats should be left (for visitors?). after some discussion about the erection of a stone vestry the matter should be left over. With regards to the entrance to the church from the Wester village through Aberdour House grounds it was left to the Moderator to see Capt Suttie and ascertain if the entrance through the gardens could be given for the summer months*".

The minute of 15th November recorded that "*the presbytery had given their cordial approval to the request of the session to transport the Parish Church to St Fillan's Church*".

The moderator laid before the session the total cost of the restoration:-

Total cost of Church including Architects fee	£2301. 11. 5d
Extras including vestry	£ 244.. 6. 8d
Chairs	£ 156.
Doors	£ 103. 12. 6d
Additional extras	£ 64. 8. 3d
Total	£2869. 18. 10d
The money received and promised	£2585. 13. 0d
Outstanding amount (subject to agreed overdraft with bank)	£ 284. 5. 10d

Special Note: The name of the donors has been revealed as the Misses Laurie of Starleyhall who were gifted "*two Sittings (in the church) as a compliment from the kirk session.*"

Bill Cochran

Parish and Congregational register

Bereavements

2017 Mrs. Mitzie McAndie; Mr. Charlie Clyde; Mrs. Phyllis Lochtie; Mr. Roderick McKinnon; Mrs. Joan Raffan, Mrs Evelyn Birnie

Things beyond our seeing, things beyond our hearing, things beyond our imagining have all been prepared by God for those who love Him
Corinthians 2: 9

Marriages

2017 Kevin Low & and Claire McCool; Ronald Haldane & Elizabeth Tinker

Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder

Baptisms

2017 Sophia Rose Brown; Christian Henry Schoeman; Elsie Rose Fieldsend, Arabesque Iris Sweeney

Jesus said "Let the children come to me"

(NOTE: Please advise editor of any omissions from above – these will be included next time)

OPEN DOOR 2017/18

Open Door is a community intervention held in Aberdour Church Hall, which informs & entertains and has aided numerous charities over the years. Invited speakers give a talk on a subject of interest on the second Thursday of every month from October to March at 10:30 am

Entry is £2, which includes tea/coffee and home baking. All welcome.

Upcoming speakers:

9th November.

Chris Short, a former nurse/midwife who lives in Aberdour. Her talk "**Go Home and Sit Still**" discusses the extraordinary work of Dr Elsie Inglis and Scottish Womens Hospitals in World War One. This talk commemorates the 100th anniversary of the death of Elsie Inglis in November 1917, and appropriately will be given close to Remembrance Day.

14th December.

Fiona Robertson, lives in Dunfermline and following her recent retirement as a Physiotherapist with NHS Fife, she spent five weeks working as a volunteer in a school for disadvantaged children in Southern India. Her illustrated talk "**An Indian Experience**" will focus on this joyous work with The King World Trust for Children. Fiona is Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Fife.

11th January

Ken Reid. Ken is blind and in 2016 he rode a tandem round the British Isles to raise funds for RNIB Talking books. "**Around Britain on a Tandem**" is the story of his courageous adventure, cycle 750, and the message it delivered. Open Door will make a donation to RNIB Talking Books at the end of the financial year to support this vital work.

8th February

Angus Maciver, a retired prison officer who long had a passion for ornithology, in particular Bean Geese. It all began in 1992/93 when he decided to study this specie, which over wintered on the Slamannan Plateau. His entertaining talk "The Bean Goose Story" will be informed by his current position as the Bean Goose Monitoring Officer in Central Scotland.

8th March

Speaker to be announced. The talk title, "**Making a Difference**" will be given by Shared Lives Fife, a Council service, which has 30 years experience matching adults, who require support, with carers throughout Fife. It is a highly flexible form of support to enable adults, aged 18 to 100+, to lead a full and inclusive life in their local community.

World Mission Stamp Appeal.

In 2016 the Church of Scotland's World Mission Council's Stamp Appeal raised £4,334 for the Othara Eco-spirituality Centre run by The Church of South India, Partner of the Church of Scotland.

This year's appeal, started in March 2017, is raising funds for the Giffen Institute of Theology in South Sudan. This Institute was established in 1974 and is run by the Church of Scotland's partners, The Presbyterian Church of South Sudan. 75% of this Church's ministers are trained at the Institute. It plays a vital role in educating and equipping students for ministry. It has suffered as a result of the violence that has erupted in South Sudan over the past few years. The Institute has been twice relocated in order to ensure the safety of its students and staff. It is now in Kakuma, a refugee camp in Kenya. The Institute's resources have been lost and its library has been burnt to the ground. The money raised from this financial year's Stamp Appeal will provide The Giffen Institute of Theology with much needed resources, including books for its library.

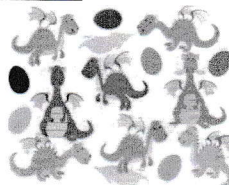
Stamps can be left

*with me, Susan Morton, 4 Manse Street, Aberdour

*or in the basket to the right of the door as you enter St. Fillan's

*or in the wooden box on the first windowsill as you enter into the Church Hall .

St. Fillan's Lunches



The continuing Team (already amicably nicknamed 'The Soup Dragons') very much look forward to welcoming YOU as usual to

The Church Hall - First Thursday of each month - 12 noon - 1.30p.m.

ALL are Welcome

to come along and choose from a selection of Home-made soups, freshly filled rolls, tea/coffee or Juice and biscuits and some great fellowship all for £3 (Children £1.50).

It is hard to believe so many Lunch Days (including the busy Festival Lunch and 'A Place at the Table' event) have already taken place since we expressed our Thanks and Appreciation to Sandra and Ewart McSkimming as they retired after Fourteen years of organising the event and The 'Soup Dragons' Team took over.

We hope to continue serving our diners into the future and are always very happy to welcome any volunteers who would like to join us on The Team. It is an ideal way for any newcomers to the Village to meet people and get to know folk. Normally you may be asked to be 'on duty' two or three times a year and aprons are provided!

Please feel free to come along any Lunch day to see what takes place and if you would like to join the Roster please contact Liz Walker < pececky@gmail.com > or Janette Smith < janettecsmith46@gmail.com >.

Sleep in the Park, December 2017.

Most of us have heard of Social Bite because of their café in Edinburgh that George Clooney once visited. There are 5 shops in Scotland now based in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. After all costs of the shops and staff are covered all profits are spent on tackling social problems here and abroad. You may have heard too of the Social Bite Village in Edinburgh where 11 purposes built houses for the homeless are being built. These should be opened in December.

Social Bite are organising the world's largest sleep-out, in which thousands of people are invited to sleep rough in Princes Street Gardens, to raise money to end homelessness in Scotland within the next five years. The Church of Scotland has asked that members take part in this venture. My sister, Janet, a member of St. Andrew's Church in Newcastle and myself, Susan, a member of St Fillan's here in Aberdour, have signed up to take part in this. We have promised to raise £500 between us to be able to sleep rough for one night. We are hoping that our Congregations to support us in this. I shall have a collection box at the December Church Lunch for any donations you care to give. Our sponsorship page is to be found on Virgin Money Giving under my name, Susan Morton, Sleep in the Park.

Sleep in the Park will take place in West Princes Street Gardens on Sat 9 December and hopes to raise £4m for the charity, as well as 1000 employment offers and 1000 'spare room' pledges.

Social Bite has developed a very comprehensive 5 year plan to tackle homelessness in Scotland. They are working with the Scottish Government, Herriot Watt University and many charities. Social Bite has commissioned a study into homelessness from Heriot Watt University, released in September of this year, entitled "Eradicating Homelessness in Scotland." It is worth looking at their website to find out more. – www.sleepinthepark.co.uk.

St Fillan's 900th Anniversary

During 2023 we will be celebrating our 900th anniversary (its only 6 years away!) A special "900 Fund" has been running for some eighteen months to build up reserves to help fund initiatives and events to mark this truly special anniversary, but as yet we have no specific plans on which to start any planning. We are asking our parishioners to submit ideas and suggestions on how we should mark this notable anniversary: perhaps a series of special events, or some special development for (or in) the Church itself, a piece of artwork or a new stained glass window? The field is open to your good ideas, so that a list of potential objectives can be considered and prioritized by our Kirk Session. At this stage we want to develop a range of ideas irrespective of costs. Thereafter, we will develop a set of agreed targets for everyone to get involved in and to work towards and we will be able to assess the scale of further fundraising needed. If you have any ideas as to how we could mark this occasion please forward them to the Crosier Editor Shiona Doig at allan@hame.org.uk

Letters of Thanks

I was married to an Anglican minister. Sadly he died in October 2016. His ministry was in an urban parish, then as Padre in the Royal Air Force and finally as a Chaplain in a Theological College. What I learned from his work was that a minister touches peoples lives when they are at their most vulnerable. It is a privilege to get to know the person or family in its joy or grief. The qualities of patience, calmness, a sense of humour and empathy with the person is necessary. Thank you to the congregation of St Fillan's who have been so friendly and kind to me and my family. Those who have supported me when I have wept in Church. But above all to Peter, without whom I may have been tempted to give up completely, he has made me laugh and let me cry and turned up miraculously when I have been so down. If I stay in Scotland or go south I know that what I had here was something very precious. The Lord certainly dwells in this congregation.

Elizabeth Payne

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed so generously to the roof repair fund. The final sum raised was £27,470.74. The final cost was £74,947.80 and the repair was completed early in the summer in time for the Family Fun Week and Aberdour Festival.

The contract was longer than anticipated due to the poor condition of the south elevation of the roof where 70% of the slates had to be replaced with traditional Scotch slates. It was difficult to source slates of a similar colour and texture to the existing ones but the roofing contractor, Greyfriars, did a good job in sourcing enough to complete the work.

The Church hall was built in 1790 and I am sure the village will benefit from the hall for the next two hundred years.

Thanks must go to all the fund raisers who organised so many events and gave their time and energy to raise such a magnificent sum. We are a small village with a big heart.

Willie Crowe
Property Convener

APPROPRIATE HYMNS FOR CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS

Card users	"A charge to keep I have"
Investors	"And can it be that I should gain"
Prisoners	"Yield not to temptation" or "Fling wide the gates"
Politicians	"Standing on the promises"
Courting couples	"Sometimes a light surprises"
Chain smokers	"I need thee every hour"
Lawyers	"Come my soul thy suit prepare"
Launderers	"O for a faith that will not shrink"
Corsetiers	"All is safely gathered in"
Dog lovers	"O master let me walk with thee"
Cyclists	"Ride on, ride on"
Fishermen	"Shall we gather at the river"
Farmer	"We plough the fields and scatter"
Estate Agent	"How lovely is thy dwelling place"

It's church Jim, but not as we know it.

Little girls are dressed as fairy princesses and wee boys look like miniature talent show hosts with shiny suits and bow ties. Teenagers swagger in distressed denim and sparkly trainers. Twenty- thirty somethings are dressed for a night club with, glitter bags, teeter high heels, and on their arms are men looking like croupiers, chewing gum and wearing shades. The more mature look as if they are going to a royal garden party. The elderly are in navy blue! Who else? – Oh yes, the nine babies. They are here somewhere, but hidden amid the excitement of the general melee.

I'm at a Sacrament of Baptism in Citta St Angelo and the genial local priest Don Camillo has appeared to commence the Sunday Mass. Recitations, responses, readings, responses, Gloria Alleluia, Ave Maria – I can't join in, but recognise a few incantations. Then the sermon, – or what seems like a eulogy in praise of the community. At this point a few children are running about, a feeble attempt at restraint is largely ignored. Some people start to wheel a push chair around and a new cohort of friends, relatives and towns folk, sweep into the church, hoping to have arrived just in time for the sprinkling of water, - they are early, and start chatting - there is a constant trickle of new arrivals.

I say church, but you must envisage an interior such as St Pauls rather than St Fillans. Don Camillo seems unperturbed by what I would call 'restless' behaviour. His voice is magnified not just with the ubiquitous electronic device but by the astounding natural acoustics of an interior constructed of solid marble. No commotion from the congregation can be heard above his resounding tones.

Do I hear a bell being rung? – Something indicates that the service is moving on to its final phase. Suddenly a surge from behind pushes forward - there is a crush! The aisles are full of people with phones/cameras/Ipads. People stand on the pews to get a better view or hand their device to a taller person, who willingly videos the proceedings! I have to stand but can barely see Don Camillo, who is now speaking from the floor of the church, - his place, on the steps of the chancel, is taken by 'the paperatse'. Flash, flash, flash..... and on it goes.

Julia, yes! I hear her name, – that's who I am here for, - she is last. Tiny Julia in white satin, the 'bella figura', must make a good impression before God and the guests. Don Camillo hands the mother a tall candle and says 'Luce di Christo' (The light of Christ). There are now nine candles flickering in the transept.

On turning to go, I follow a small group of young people with trendy asymmetrical hairstyles, and tattoos as they wend their way down the nave. One young man breaks away briefly from the group to go towards the crucifix. He gazes up and raises his hand to touch the feet of Christ, then kisses it and crosses himself, before re-joining his friends and heading out into the sunshine.

K Wheaton

St Fillans Annual Sale of Work on Saturday 18th November

Doors open 2pm; £2 entry to the sale includes tea/coffee, with homemade scone, pancake and fancy cake.

The stalls include; cakes and tablet, plants and home produce, new and nearly new gifts and jewellery, a Christmas table, white elephant and bric a brac, toys, music and DVDs. There is also a bottle stall to try your luck, and a superb Christmas Hamper and delicious home-made Christmas cake with a bottle of Champaign, to be won in the raffle.

Do please join us to take advantage of the splendid fare and unrivalled bargains.

**I am not a badge of
honour,**

**I am not a racist smear,
I am not a fashion**

**statement to be worn but
once a year,
I am not glorification of**

**conflict or of war.
I am not a paper**

**ornament or a token,
I am more.**

I am a loving memory of

**a father or son,
A mother, a sister or**

daughter each and every one.

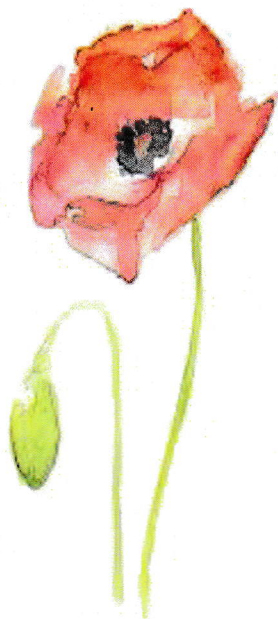
**I am paper or enamel,
I am old or shining new,**

I am a way of saying thank you,

To every one of you.

I am a single poppy, a reminder to you all,

**That courage, faith and honour will stand
where heroes fall.**



Omega

I came to lay a wreath upon the hillside,
Say goodbye to a time, a place, a loss.
Events evolve, remembrance comes and
goes,
Year after year names disappear
In the undergrowth of passing time.
Love, fear, absolution, all lie here.

In scattered groups we wander back
Searching for things no longer here.
We read memorials, honours bestowed
Like dressings for wounded consciences.
For families who lost all, a wounded
silence
When collecting the meager crumbs the
nation owed:
All are separated from their previous
existence.

When a voice rang out "Halt, who goes
there?"
I said "I have no name but War, old
man,
And you've made the same mistake as I.
Go home, and never be tempted back.
Never come back.

After Arras 08:04:1917

The 1 Corinthians 13 of Christmas

According to Sharon Jaynes

If I decorate my house perfectly with beautiful bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny baubles, but do not show love to my family,
I am just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of mince pies, roasting a perfect turkey and lay a magnificent table, but do not show love for my guests,
I am just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not have compassion in my heart for those in need, I am just another social service: it profits me nothing.

If I decorate the tree with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes and attend a myriad of holiday parties but do not focus on Christ,
I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child.

Love sets aside the decorating to help ones wife with boring housework.

Love puts the Christmas presents shopping on hold in order to run the elderly neighbor to the doctor.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another's home that has more expensive presents,

Or even coordinating Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way,

But it is thankful they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who cant.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Video games will break, cashmere jumpers will wear out and golf clubs will get lost.

But the gift of love endures forever.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Advent & Christmas

<u>3 December</u>	10.30	Advent Service	St Fillan's
	3pm	Give thanks for the Year	Dalgety Parish Church
	6.30pm	Advent Evening Service	St Fillan's
<u>10 December</u>	10.30	Family Advent Service	Church Hall
	3pm	Presbytery Advent Songs of Praise	Beath & Cowdenbeath North Church
<u>17 December</u>	10.30	Festival of Lessons & Carols	St Fillan's
	6.30pm	Meditative Advent Evening Service	St Fillan's
	7pm	Advent Concert	Dalgety Parish Church
<u>Christmas Eve</u>	10.30am	Brief Advent Service***	St Fillan's
	3pm	Crib Service	St Columba's
	6.30pm	Children's Service	St Fillan's
	11.30pm	Watchnight Service	St Fillan's
<u>Christmas Day</u>	10.30am	Christmas Family Service	St Fillan's
	10.00am	Communion & family Carol Service	St Columbus

