

# Weekly Bulletin

St. Margaret's, St. Joseph's & St. Finnan's

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Weekly Bulletin Online: [www.gaeldom.com/bulletin/](http://www.gaeldom.com/bulletin/)

Sunday August 5<sup>th</sup>. 2007



Blessed Mary MacKillop's Shrine, St. Margaret's, Roy Bridge

## Progress of Blessed Mary's canonisation

An Australian Josephite Sister has asked Pope Benedict XVI to reconsider his previous calls for the abolition of a Vatican rule delaying Blessed Mary MacKillop's canonisation.

In Adelaide, the *Southern Cross* reports that Sr Maria Casey wrote to Pope Benedict recently recalling his demand to overturn the "second miracle" clause for candidates for sainthood made before his elevation to the papacy. "I reminded him of the beatification of Mary MacKillop and that Australia needs a saint," said Sr Maria, postulator for the canonisation of Blessed Mary MacKillop. "I also reminded him that he could revisit the issue of waiving the requirement of a second miracle now that he is Pope," she told the paper.

In December, three years ago, Pope Benedict, then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, made a formal petition to the late Pope John Paul II to investigate waiving the centuries-old miracle clause. At present, candidates must be shown

to have performed at least two miracles after death by curing the terminally ill in response to prayers of intercession.

A woman cured of leukaemia is the first miracle attributed to Blessed Mary MacKillop. This resulted in Blessed Mary MacKillop being beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1995. Now she is one miracle away from sainthood!

"We're optimistic," said Sr Maria. "I think her sainthood is a step closer given that Cardinal Ratzinger proposed these changes and now he is the Pope."

Hopes of Blessed Mary MacKillop's history-making canonisation – she would be the first Australian saint – have been renewed in Penola following the election of Pope Benedict. The town is preparing for the 100th.. anniversary of Blessed Mary's death which will be in two years time, August 8, 2009

An extensive list of thousands of favours involving the intercession of Mary MacKillop is kept at Mary MacKillop Place in Sydney. Ultimately, however, all claims of miraculous cures are examined by five medical experts at the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints. A miracle is declared once the expert panel concludes a cure was "sudden, complete and permanent" and had no scientific explanation.

The previous procurator for the cause of Blessed Mary MacKillop - Australia's first saint - has criticised the attitude of doctors who deny the possibility of a miracle because they fear professional embarrassment.

Adelaide Jesuit Fr Paul Gardiner, S.J. (who has visited Roy Bridge twice), told ABC Radio's *Religion Report* that a scientist whose mind is closed to the possibility that nature may surprise us is behaving in an "unscientific" manner.

He said: "A lot of people seem to have presumed that because nature is regular, therefore it is always that way. But that it not always the case."

The cause for canonisation of Blessed Mary MacKillop has reportedly run into difficulties, as Australian doctors have proved reluctant to attest to "miraculous" recoveries from illness. >>>>>>

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Blessed Mary's courage and dedication in facing the challenge of building an education system in the harsh conditions of the Australian colonies, were recognised when she was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1995.

Some time ago, Sydney's *Catholic Weekly* reported that a young boy with an untreatable brain tumour had recovered after the family offered prayers to Mary MacKillop, but Fr Gardiner was unable to find a doctor who would admit that he could not explain the cure in scientific medical terms. It is often referred to as a simply a "remission". Another reason may be that, living an age of litigation, where so many sue medical professionals for a wrong diagnosis, consultants are afraid of declaring someone to be cured with no medical explanation.

"I can see their point of view, for they are scientific and professional people," Fr Gardiner told the *Religion Report*. "but there is also, on the part of some, an understandable reluctance of being ridiculed by colleagues for being associated with miracles, as this would be a source of embarrassment. The recent canonisation of the Maltese saint, Fr George Preca, made such rapid progress because of the evidence given by a Moslem London consultant who stated that the cure of a child dying of a terminal liver failure was instant, and beyond scientific explanation. He gave his personal testimony to the Vatican consultants, and was present at the canonisation in Rome.



Fr Tom and Fr. Paul Gardiner S.J. at the ruins of the house of Mór Liath, the holy woman of Insh,



Sister Katrina Brill, head of the Sisters of St. Joseph, at Cille Choirill, visiting the graves of Blessed Mary's relatives. She is anxious to see Blessed Mary, the foundress of the order, canonised in the near future



Fr Paul Gardiner, S.J, inside Cille Choirill church at the corner where Mór Liath is buried

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## Blessed Mary's feast day, August 8th

**St. John's, Caol:** Tuesday evening - Holy Hour Vigil arranged by the Sisters of St. Joseph 7 –8 pm. to prepare for Blessed Mary's feast day. All are welcome.

**St. Margaret's, Roy Bridge:** Wednesday morning mass at 10 a.m. in honour of Blessed Mary.

We hope as many as possible will come to mass on Wednesday morning to pray for Blessed Mary's canonisation, and also to present their needs for her intercession

### *Blairs to become a luxury hotel*

It is with great nostalgia and sadness that I read the report in the *Glasgow Herald* about the future of Blairs College. It is to become a £115m. development, which will include the transformation of the college into a luxury hotel, conference and leisure centre.

Paul Lawrie, former Open winner, has been asked to design a championship golf course to attract top golfers from all over the world.

John Muir, chairman of *The Muir Group*, says it will create 1000 jobs, and make it one of the world's important golf destinations.

The Blairs Museum will be retained, which houses a collection of paintings, vestments, silver plate and Jacobite memorabilia belonging to the Catholic Church. And of course, the beautiful gothic style church with its marble interior, will continue to be used as the parish church for the area.

There is over a 1000 acres of land, and as well as the golf course, 280 new houses will be built. and no doubt golf villas for clients and extra houses for the large staff that will be required.

John Muir said: "*I believe the Muir Group's enabling development represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to save Blairs College and ensure future generations are able to enjoy the full benefits that Blairs has to offer.*"

St. Mary's College, Blairs was founded in 1829 when the local landowner John Menzies of Pitfodells gifted his mansion house and his 1000 acre estate to the Catholic Church for the training of young boys for the priesthood. Over the years, the present magnificent college was built with the finest of Aberdeen silver granite, and also included a magnificent chapel where the students would find an atmosphere to encourage their progress in prayer and meditation.



The change of use is surely a sign of the secular age in which we are now living: churches, monasteries, convents, seminaries, catholic colleges of education, have closed over the past few years, and certainly more will follow. The faith of people has been contaminated by a material world that is becoming evermore Godless, and fewer people are interested in going to mass and the sacraments,. The lack of numbers also means that there is no longer the financial support to keep churches, religious houses, seminaries and colleges open.

Blairs was closed in 1989 because of the drop in vocations, and although ideas were explored to try to maintain the college as a anchor of religious studies, they were unsuccessful. The Scottish bishops retained the college as long as they could, but the cold winters in the Deeside valley took their toll on the fabric which began to deteriorate very quickly because of lack of heating.

Although the college and the grounds will be developed and given new life, the lives and spirit of those who spent their teenage years preparing themselves spiritually for the priesthood, the many masses offered in the church, the youthful excited cries that echoed from the football pitches and sports grounds, will all have left an indefinable atmosphere that will always permeate the grounds that were hallowed by prayers and sacrifices over several generations.

*May the spirit of Blairs rest in peace*

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## ***Cille Choirill Mass next Sunday, August 12th at 3 p.m.***

There will be mass at Cille Choirill in a week's time, and I would be grateful if our parishioners would let their relations and friends know who live at a distance. The following Wednesday, August 15th, is the feast of the Assumption of our Blessed Lady into heaven, and so our mass will be a reminder to us that our loved ones, who lie at peace in Cille Choirill, will one day be raised by the power of God to join their souls in heaven. In the meantime, we pray that they are now enjoying the fruits of their faith and labours on this earth by possessing the presence of God in heaven for all eternity.

### ***Anniversary***

We remember in our prayers this weekend the anniversary of Joanne MacDonald, mother of Margaret Muncie, for whom mass was said on Thursday.  
*May her good soul rest in peace.*

### ***Scottish Catholic Observer***

There were so few Observers sold that I have cancelled the order. I know that quite a number of our parishioners order their copies through their local newsagent.

### ***Lourdes October 2007, Australia July 2008***

If anyone has late thoughts of joining the diocesan pilgrimage going to Lourdes in October, there may still be time to book a place.

The priest-in-charge for arranging the youths from our diocese hoping to go to Australia next July to welcome Pope Benedict to Sydney, has asked them to inform their parish priest as soon as possible so that their booking may be made secure. The cost is quite prohibitive at £800, but

there is a whole year to save for the trip of a lifetime, and the diocese will try to help a little with the fare. The age group is from 18 –30 years

### ***School holidays--final fortnight***

The holidays have gone racing by so quickly, and already adverts for back-to-school clothes are appearing in the papers and TV.

The weather has been mixed throughout July, but at least we were spared the horrendous flood that people in parts of England had to suffer. We are fortunate that we only have the rain and the midges to contend with, and neither were at their worst so far. this summer.

It is interesting to read about the approach our local councillors are going to make to the education committee early in September on behalf of the newly formed parents' committee regarding retaining Roy Bridge school, and proposing its replacement with modern portacabins. One wishes them every success in their endeavour to try to keep primary education on Roy Bridge.

### ***Cille Choirill***

We hope to have the damaged window at Cille Choirill repaired this week. The new glass has taken some considerable time coming from the manufacturers.

The grass has been cut in the cemetery, and the area is looking very neat and tidy.

### ***Have you bought your horse yet ?***

David MacFarlane and Frank MacKenzie have the horses all ready groomed in the stables waiting for your purchase! A bargain at £5 each!



### ***Race-Nite - Spean Bridge Hall, September 1st.***

### ***Continental Market comes to town!***

If you have not been to the continent on holiday this year, the continent comes to you this week at the Parade, High Street, Fort William from Tuesday 7th—Saturday 11th.

There are stalls with goods fresh from France, Holland, Spain, Italy, Sweden and Poland, and you can buy everything in sterling. No euros required!

