



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 234436



Fr. Pat (pfcp44@yahoo.com) Fr. Tiernan (tiernanpc@gmail.com)

Masses: Sunday: (7pm Saturday) 8am, 10am, 12noon, 1.30 (Polish), 7pm.

Holydays: 6.30pm vigil, 9.30am, 11am, 6.30pm

Weekdays: 9.30am, 6.30pm. **Saturday:** 9.30am, 7pm. **Bank Holiday:** 9.30am

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 10-10.30am, 6.30 -6.45pm

Weekdays: immediately after Mass (on request)

24th January 2016 – 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Listening to Jesus

I think most of us will acknowledge that as human beings we tend to be creatures of habit. Maybe as children we have been told that this or that is the correct way to do things, or later in life we just get into the habit of doing things in a certain way, but whatever the origin we tend to take the line that 'the way we've always done it' is probably the best way of continuing to do it. And we rarely question these habits. Sometimes people don't fully appreciate that the Vatican Council, for instance, was for many priests a far great upset of their routines than it was for the laity. Suddenly the habitual ways of doing things were being questioned. For instance, from being the sole celebrants at mass – which the laity "went to", as the phrase was – priests now found that they were sharing the sanctuary with readers and Eucharistic ministers, and even female servers!

But once it became clear that the often 'experimental' changes were going to last, and we were never going back to the old ways of doing things, most people, clergy and lay, adapted to the new ways. And, as human nature has it, these now became our new habits. And we might ask the same questions – for instance, how much of what we do in relation to our participation at mass do we do simply out of habit. I say this because as I was reading the gospel for this Sunday I was distracted by the thought – what if we introduced the practice of Jesus' time into our Sunday liturgy? Our gospel reading this Sunday is about the occasion at the start of His ministry when Jesus attends the synagogue in Nazareth for the Sabbath service. We're told He stood up when it came to the time of the reading, which was clearly a recognised signal that He was volunteering to do the reading. So they handed Him the scroll, and He read the passage from Isaiah describing the effect the expected Messiah would have on the world when He arrived. And then He shared His thoughts on the reading.

Can you imagine what might happen on a Sunday if we introduced that practice? I mean, at gospel time for someone to just stand up in the middle of the church and volunteer to read it, and then to stay on and share their thoughts on the passage? I appreciate there have probably been times when you've thought to yourself 'that mightn't be the worst thing in the world – we're sick and tired of listening to the same few guys every Sunday' – and I can't say I blame you! But can you imagine the results? To be honest, I'd rather not imagine them! But it does raise the question of what our expectations are when we come to celebrate on a Sunday. Can we see ourselves in that synagogue with Jesus? Can we see ourselves as the poor who are being offered the Good News? Can we see ourselves as the captives of our habits who are being offered liberty? Can we see ourselves as the blind who need to have a new sight of the world around us? Can we see ourselves as the easily led who need to feel free to tread new paths? Do we realise we are specially favoured by the Lord?

That's what Jesus offered the people of His time – a total new outlook on life - and that's what He's offering us. He's drawing to our attention that He provides the answers to all our deepest questions – that He's not simply an 'optional extra'. Wouldn't it be a pity if we got distracted by who's doing the reading, and missed the point that ultimately it is truly God's Word that we're listening to, and need to listen to?

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We pray for the sick and housebound of our Parish - John & Nancy Lennon, Diana Ageba, Bridget Mc Donnell; we remember those who have died recently – Sr. Helen McChesney (died Sunday afternoon, 24th January), George Earley, Michael Rock, Emmanuel (Leli) Xuereb; and we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time – Clare Fruin, Patricia O'Keefe, Dudley Fox, Dr Kali Collie, Paddy Healy, Sarah Pender, Noreen Feehily.

Update on Roof Repairs, Internal Works:

We are coming to the end of the first phase of our church repair and restoration work. All the roof repair works have been completed with the exception of one persistent leak which remains in the area of the old pulpit – top right side of church. Getting at, and finding, where the water is penetrating from the outside, is the difficulty, but we hope for success in the near future. In the meantime preparatory work is underway in relation to the internal works we hope to undertake. Broadly they can be listed under four headings – painting of the main body of the church; getting a new lighting system; cleaning the magnificent art-work on the ceiling; and making the porch more welcoming and presentable. The latter three jobs, because of our status as a listed building, would most likely qualify for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund – but the downside of that is that getting grants is a slow process – a year to eighteen months being regarded as a reasonable estimate. Some preliminary reports have already been commissioned and obtained, and we're proceeding as quickly as we can. The painting of the main body of the church is unlikely to qualify for much, if any, grant aid, so we are progressing with that as quickly as possible. We would hope to have it out to tender within the next month or two, with work starting as soon as possible after that – I'll be very disappointed if it's not completed by the end of summer. (The above is very summarised – feel free to ask for further detail.)

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,494. In addition we also receive over £1900 in standing orders each month. We really do appreciate your continuing generosity.

Pre Marriage Course:

Our next Marriage preparation course will be taking place on Saturday, 6th February. Those who wish to participate should contact Fr. Pat, at pfc44@yahoo.com. For those wishing to get married in the Catholic Church nowadays it is a requirement that they do a pre-marriage course – though not necessarily in their own parish. Calling it “a requirement” – can make it sound like a burden, but it genuinely isn't so. It is focussed on thinking past the wedding day and its preparations, and helping couples to appreciate that they still have a lot to learn, about themselves as well as their partners. Our course here is conducted by a counsellor, a married couple and a priest – so many different perspectives on married life are presented.

100 Club:

The January draw for the 100 Club will take place during the week. Would any members and agents who have not yet handed in their subscriptions please do so as soon as possible. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way.

Cardinal's Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony Saturday 14th May 2016 at 3pm.

This annual event will be taking place in Westminster Cathedral, on Saturday 14th May 2016 at 3pm. For the past few years members of our Parish have attended this very meaningful celebration. The Archbishop will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2015. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give Fr. Pat (email or letter) the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email). Fr. Pat will forward any details received to the Diocese, who will eventually issue the invitations directly to the couples involved.

“Vinnie Packs”:

The SVP are distributing 12,000 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. They would be very grateful if you could sponsor packs at a suggested donation of £3.25 per pack. Donations can be sent to **Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ** with cheques made out to SVP or go to virginmoneygiving.com and type "SVP" into the charity section. Vinnie Packs is in the **Campaign** drop down box. Thank you so much for your support.

World Youth Day – Krakow 2016:

Westminster Youth Ministry are leading a pilgrimage for youth 16 years and over to World Youth Day in 2016, visiting both Lodz for Days in the Diocese and Krakow for World Youth Day. The pilgrimage runs from 18th July until 31st July and is priced at £750 - inclusive of all accommodation, travel, WYD fees and food. There is an option for those over 18 to join the pilgrimage for the WYD week only. For more information youth@rcdow.org.uk, <http://dowym.c4om/events/wyd/> or 0207-387-1971.

St. Dominic Barberi?:-

The Archbishop of Birmingham, Bernard Longley, (previously Auxiliary Bishop in Westminster and frequent visitor to St. Joseph's) has organised a Novena (26 February to 5 March 2016) for a miracle for the Canonisation of Blessed Dominic Barberi C.P. who received John Henry Newman into the Church in 1845. As a Passionist Parish, I suggest this is something we could support with our prayers.