



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)

4th February 2018 – 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

IN WITH THE OLD; IN WITH THE NEW?

Twice in our gospel this week-end there is reference to Christ being in synagogues. It might sound a little strange to our ears, because ultimately we associate Christianity with leaving the synagogue and setting up their own churches. But of course Jesus was raised a Jew, and the gospels emphasise that in raising him his parents did all that was required by the laws of the Jewish faith. The important thing, however, was that Jesus was not strait-jacketed, as it were, by his youthful formation. He was well able to see that not just his religious up-bringing, but that of the people in general – including the priestly leaders – needed to grow and develop to a much more 'Christian' way.

It wasn't just our gospel this Sunday that caused me to reflect along these lines, but I was also struck by two different churches in this diocese that I have happened to be in recently. One represented what I might term old-style worship – with lots of ornate decoration, and many of the people a long way from the altar. The other was more 'modern', very plain in terms of decoration, but because of its shape nobody was very far from the sanctuary area. In both churches mass is said validly every Sunday, and I'm sure there are many people who much prefer the one rather than the other, and many people who prefer the other rather than the one. Clearly our approach to building new churches in recent times is very much different to what it was 100 years ago, never mind 500 or 1000 years ago. But it's fair to ask the same questions as Jesus raised about the religion of his time – are we just changing, or are we growing in our appreciation and celebration of our faith? Put simply, are we growing in love – of God and of one another?

That's the question that also struck me this Saturday afternoon, as I spent time with a group of young people who were preparing for marriage. It's always uplifting to be with people who are in that wonderful joyous stage of life where everything is being focussed around their commitment to one another in the sacrament of matrimony – even if a lot of the time it's about such mundane matters as "the venue", or the invitations – "it's OK having aunty X, but do we have to invite her children, whom we've hardly ever met? And if we invite them, we have also to invite" If for no other reason than that it's good for them to get a break from all that, having a pre-marriage course can be a very positive experience and opportunity for a while to focus on the important reality that there is life beyond the wedding day.

And marriage can be a bit like church buildings! There are some and they would want to model their marriage on the way their parents and grand-parents lived theirs, but there are a lot more who see it in an entirely different light, with a much greater focus on 'sharing' rather than 'this is your responsibility, and this is mine'. I don't think Christ has any problems with these various approaches to living out our lives – married or otherwise – as long as the core values and realities are being looked after. That, in other words, we are all living in a truly loving way.

Nor, I suspect, does he have any great problems with our preferences with regard to church buildings, again as long as they are truly centres of celebration of the life and love that he has won for us through his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

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We pray for the sick and housebound of our Parish – Elizabeth Rodgers, Chan Piu Wah, Pollyanna Mak;
we pray for those who have died recently - Eileen Hughes (funeral 10.30am Friday 9th February), Robert Robson, Anthony Mayers, Gerry Walker; **and we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Rose & Mary Gardiner, Raymond Hogan, Rosaleen Fox, Brendan Plunkett.

Eileen Hughes, R.I.P.

Eileen's funeral will be taking place this coming Friday, 9th February, at 10.30 am, with burial taking place immediately afterwards in Islington Cemetery, East Finchley.

Mass in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes:

The annual Mass in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes will take place in the Cathedral this coming **Saturday 10th February 2018 at 2.00 pm**. The Sacrament of the Sick will be administered during the Mass by the bishops and priests. This mass is open to all, with a particular encouragement to those suffering from any sickness or infirmity to attend.

If there are any parishioners who will be attending in a wheelchair, please let Rebecca Goode know as soon as possible by email to rebeccagoode@rcdow.org.uk, - this is to ensure that the appropriate space is reserved in the Cathedral.

Cardinal's Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony:

This annual event will be taking place this year in Westminster Cathedral, on Saturday 19th May 2018 at 3pm. The Cardinal will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2018. If you are celebrating one of those anniversaries, please give to Fr. Pat the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,479. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. We very much appreciate that you have very many other calls on your finances, so we are very grateful for your outstanding generosity in supporting your parish.

Lent Groups:

Details of the ecumenical Lent Groups meetings this year are available in the porch. There is a range of courses with daytime or evening meetings to choose from. Courses begin in the week of 18th February so please pick up a leaflet and sign up on the list in the porch as soon as possible. St. Joseph's Group will be studying this year's York Course ***On The Third Day: The Resurrection then and now***, and will be meeting in the Red Room, 10.45am–12 noon on Tuesdays beginning February 20th.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes – helpers needed:

If you are over 18, your help would be very much appreciated as a St Frai Helper. Some of our sick pilgrims in most need of support and medical care stay in a hospital-like building called the Accueil St Frai in the centre of Lourdes. It is well-equipped for their care and they are looked after by a team of doctors, nurses and volunteer St Frai Helpers.

The role of a St Frai helper is to support the nurses and provide the sort of care for which you don't need a medical qualification. This includes helping the pilgrims get up and ready in the morning; making large amounts of tea; taking the pilgrims to various pilgrimage events; shopping and socialising with them and other helpers; and putting them to bed at night. The timetable is shared across two shifts so there is enough time to rest, make your own pilgrimage, spend time with your groups and make new friends.

Helping in the St Frai is an extremely moving and rewarding experience. Working in the St Frai is an opportunity to give our care and company to our pilgrims and make a huge difference in their lives.

If you're interested in helping in the St Frai in Lourdes, please email chief helper Nick Leonard and team at westminsterstfrai@gmail.com

New Playgroup in Parish Centre:

The Bright Stars Stay and Play for 0-5 year olds meet every Friday during term time from 9.30 - 11am in the parish centre. Lots of interactive toys, a home corner, arts and crafts and ride on toys. Tea and coffee for parents and carers. At the end of each session there will be a rhyme time. It's £2 per child.

In case you are admitted to hospital.....

(We feel we need to repeat this notice every so often.) The Hospital Chaplaincy department in the Diocese, ask us to bring to your attention the difficulties that sometimes people have in making contact with the chaplains in the various hospitals. Data protection regulations mean that your details will not be passed on to the Catholic chaplain, **unless you specifically ask the staff to do so**. Also you are advised to state that you would like the Catholic chaplain to visit you. Many of the hospitals – the Whittington being one of them - have dedicated chaplains, whose special ministry is being there for the patients when they need them. However, should you have difficulty contacting the chaplain, then please do not hesitate to call upon myself or another of the priests here.