



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)

5th February 2017 – 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Is Silence Really Golden?

When I was growing up it seemed that the old folk – the over-30's – had a saying for every occasion. The likes of “waste not, want not” was always likely to be called on when you didn't want to finish your meal – because to a child there were always more exciting things to be doing. And of course you were likely to be full of worms if you were an early bird, or something like that! And even though I may be making a little fun of those sayings, they always contained a seed of wisdom that was worth pondering. “Look before you leap” was always a wise piece of advice when one was maybe in too much of a hurry to make an important decision, especially as it was better to be safe than sorry!

But the value of these sayings was often undermined by the fact that frequently they were in apparent contradiction with one another – which to a child gave the impression ‘I can't win either way’. When you didn't want to be involved in something that others wanted you to help with, you were told, by way of encouragement, that ‘many hands make light work’. But if you **did** want to be involved and your presence was not appreciated you were told ‘too many cooks spoil the broth’. And if you were discouraged in some project that appeared to be getting nowhere and wanted to give up, you were advised ‘if at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again’. On the other hand, if you were really determined that you were going to succeed, no matter what, and refused to give up, you were told ‘no point in beating your head off a stone wall’! Did absence make the heart grow fonder, or was it out of sight, out of mind? And of course if your parents quoted one of these sayings to you, you certainly had to be borderline suicidal to quote the opposite one back!

These sort of thoughts came into my mind this week on reading our Gospel for this Sunday. It contains one of those sayings, this time from Jesus. “No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub”, He tells us, “they put it on the lampstand where it shines for everyone in the house”. And this saying is to remind us that we should let people see our good works so that they will be impressed, “and give the praise to your Father in heaven”. I'm not suggesting that there's anywhere in the bible that suggests you should be placing lights under tubs, but we are told that when we are giving alms – surely a good work – our right hand shouldn't know what the left is doing – God, who sees what is done in secret, will give us our reward. And somehow it is this idea that often seems to have won the day. We become afraid of ‘blowing our own trumpet’, realising that ‘self-praise is no praise’.

But with all these sayings context is important. We are not simply individuals – we are individuals who make up a special community – a community of believers in the message of Jesus; a message that reminds us that the greatest value is true love. And we live in a world that certainly needs to see far more true love in action. Many might question whether we're experiencing some new Dark Age at present – ‘dark’ and ‘secrecy’ often go together. Certainly many of us would believe that we could do with a lot more genuine openness from those in positions of power. But we don't need light to see what kind of a mess the world is in, but rather to let people see that there are wonderful opportunities to overcome the darkness. And that demands of each of us to share the light of Christ, and as a community to bring a warm glow to our world. We're never too old to learn, unless we're dogs who can't learn new tricks!

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We pray for those who have died recently – Denis McGarry (funeral 11.00am Thursday 16th February, Reception 5.30pm Wednesday), Richard Hill (funeral 10.30am Friday 17th February, Reception 5.30pm Thursday), Patrick Mulkerrins; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Mary & Rose Gardiner, Noreen Feehily, Raymond Hogan, Helena Meade.

Coffee Morning Today:

There will be a Parish Coffee Morning this Sunday, 5th February, in the Red Room, immediately after the 10.00 am. Mass. We encourage you to take this opportunity, especially if you are new to the area, to meet fellow members of your Parish.

Pre Marriage Course:

Our next Marriage preparation course will be taking place on Saturday, 11th 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. We appreciate that expressing it this way – “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.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week’s collection amounted to £1,531. In addition we also receive approximately £1,800 in standing orders each month. We thank you for your continuing generosity.

Confirmation Program:

Reminder: There is a short meeting for Parents and carers of this year's Confirmation Candidates at 5 pm in the Lady Chapel on Sunday 5th February. This is to discuss how the programme is going, the forthcoming Coffee morning/Cake sale and a chance to ask any questions.

Cardinal’s Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony Saturday 3rd June 2017 at 3pm.

This annual event will be taking place in Westminster Cathedral, on Saturday 3rd June, 2017 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 2017. If you are celebrating any of the above anniversaries this year, 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.

Churches Together Highgate Service:

There will be a Churches Together Highgate Service on Sunday 12th February, 6pm, at All Saints Highgate. The theme is Christian Unity and the preacher is Mark Davies from Highgate International Church. There will be light refreshments and time for fellowship after the service.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Fatima:

Since the good old days of Frank Hughes of happy memory, there have been no pilgrimages run specifically from St. Joseph’s Parish (hint, hint – if there’s anybody out there willing to take on his mantle!), but there are of course many Pilgrimages run on a Diocesan-wide basis, which members of the Parish are welcome, indeed encouraged, to join. In a few months time there will be the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Fatima, from 24th to 27th April 2017. This is the Centenary Year of the Apparitions in Fatima, so it will be a particularly significant pilgrimage. Places are still available to book. If you are interested you should contact Gill of Tangney Tours directly on 01732 88 6666 for further information. The Pilgrimage will be led by HE Cardinal Vincent Nichols and the Pilgrimage Director is Fr Chris Vipers.

Celebration in Westminster Cathedral:

It never rains but it pours! On Saturday 18th February, beginning at 1.45pm, the Cathedral will be visited by the National Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima along with the relics of Blessed Jacinta and Francisco for the Fatima centenary. Cardinal Nichols will be receiving and crowning the statue and celebrating mass for the occasion. Big crowds are expected, so if you wish to attend be sure to be there in good time.

Will there ever be another Fr. Pat?

The answer, of course, is ‘yes’ – and you don’t have to wait too long for him – in fact he is already here! You may be aware that Fr. Tiernan has not been enjoying the best of health for some time now and has been directed by higher authority to take a break. We wish him a speedy recovery as he steps down from working in the parish for a few weeks. We have been blessed that Fr. Pat Rogers has made himself available for the next three weeks. This does of course cause a slight problem, in that there could be confusion when referring to ‘Fr. Pat’, so it seems to me that the best way to deal with it is to refer to Fr. Pat Rogers as ‘Fr. Pat the Elder’, and me as ‘Fr. Pat the Younger’! (Come on – I haven’t had any form of the word ‘young’ referring to me for so long!) Among his many talents Fr. Pat is a well-known scripture scholar and lecturer, and a gifted linguist. I have known him for 60 years – we were at school together – and I’m really grateful that he has agreed to be with us for the next few weeks. I’m sure you will all make him feel very welcome.