



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 234436



Fr. Pat (pfc44@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)

21st January 2018 – 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Way I Figure It

Thursday this week is the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. It's an extraordinary story. Paul was hell-bent on destroying the Church, until his "Road to Damascus" experience. What really struck me in reading the account was the person that God used to interact with Paul at this time. He is not widely known; because like many of us he kept in the background. But God used him and turned him into a Miracle!

Ananias was a follower of Jesus whom God used to restore Paul's sight (Acts 9:15) What is amazing about him is that he chose to get involved in Paul's story, which meant that Paul was able to find his place and make a significant contribution to the church and our Scriptures as we read it today. His conversion was nothing short of Miraculous, with this two 'Miracle Man' intervening and carrying him along!

One of the reasons I find Ananias particularly interesting is that he reminds me of me! He is one of those people who steps out of the wings onto the stage of the Scriptures and then just as quickly they appear. Ananias is one of those unsung heroes of faith. Not widely known, but greatly used by the Lord. As I consider his experiences, I am confronted with a man who can teach me much about myself and my service to God and His people. I will call him Ananias, the Reluctant man because that is just what he was. He was a servant of the Lord, but he was reluctant to all the Lord wanted from Him. In that, he has much to teach me!

I have always loved Ananias' response. Somehow, he forgets his place and attempts to give God a bit of newsflash. Ananias showed weakness here. He did not have unwavering trust in God. I have been there: many a time! God's commands do not always make sense, but they are always right. We should, therefore, resolve that regardless of whether we understand or not, we will just do what He says. Ananias teaches us the kind of reaction we need to have to the inspirations of God in our lives. Ananias could have been bitter. He could have refused to go. Or, if he did go, he could have gone grudgingly, and half-heartedly. But he didn't! He went in the spirit of God and changed the life of Saul. And that is what being a disciple of Jesus is all about. It is about Him using us to make a difference in the lives of those around us.

At this point Ananias fades from the story and we hear of him no more. His role in the drama of Acts is small, yet significant. We see a man who wavered when he heard God's voice, yet despite his initial hesitation he was faithful, obedient, and submissive. Ananias' small act of obedience furthered God's purposes in launching the career of the most influential of the Apostles and thereby changing the very trajectory of the Church itself. He was indeed a reluctant Miracle!

As I think about my own life's journey, I am reminded of the 'Miracle men and women' whom God used to stand by me when I was "blind" and to introduce me to people who would go on to shape who I am today. Who knows where I would be if those men and women had decided to take the day off! What about you? Take a moment and think about the awesome men and women in your life who have intentionally spoken life into your situation over the years. People who have rallied to your side, made you feel welcome and walked with you for a while. We not only needed them, but their words and actions also spurred us to enter into a deeper relationship with Christ.

There are many people out there groping in the dark. They need 'Ananias' to step out. They need 'Miracle men and women' to encourage them and walk by their side into new life.

Fr. George

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We pray for the sick and housebound of our Parish – Leo O'Flaherty, Eileen Riley; **we pray for those who have died recently** - Eileen Hughes, Sr. Adriana van den Berg, Doria Griffith, Kellie Dunne, Ian Madden, Noel Tuohy, Michael Lydon, Joyce David; **and we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Sr. Siobhan Shelley CP, Sr. Helen McChesney OSA, Kathleen O'Sullivan, Patricia O'Keefe, Dudley Fox, Matty Ryan.

Eileen Hughes, R.I.P.

It is with great regret that we have to tell you of the sad news of the sudden death of Eileen Hughes last Wednesday. Eileen, and her late husband Frank, has had a lengthy and extensive involvement with St. Joseph's parish. In recent years she has been living with her nephew James in Chertsey, and our thoughts at this time are with James and his family who have been so caring of Eileen. Eileen's funeral will be taking place from here. As yet we have no date, but it's likely to be early in the week beginning 5th February.

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 new St. Joseph's Parish Bright Stars Stay and Play for 0-5 year olds is up and running. The group will run every Friday during term time from 9.30 - 11am in the parish centre. We have lots of interactive toys, a home corner, arts and crafts and ride on toys. We'll serve tea and coffee for parents and carers. At the end of each session there will be a rhyme time. It's £2 per child.

Pre Marriage Course:

Our next Marriage preparation course will be taking place on Saturday, 3rd February. Those who wish to participate should contact Fr. Pat, at pfcp44@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. The course is focussed on thinking past the wedding day and its preparations, and helping couples to appreciate that there is much 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.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,445. 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.

100 Club:

The January draw for the 100 Club will take place during the week. Would any members who have not yet handed in their subscriptions please do so as soon as possible. We particularly remind those who pay annually or 6-monthly that it is the start of a new year. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way.

Do you want to become a teacher?

The Cardinal Vaughan School on behalf of the RBTSA alliance will be holding an Initial Teacher Training Recruitment Fair on 1st March 2018 from 5pm to 8pm. This will be an opportunity to meet with a number of schools and Alliances across London, offering a variety of School Direct teacher training and recruitment opportunities. There will be experts on hand to speak to you regarding suitability and the possibility of financial incentives and bursaries. The fair will be held at The Cardinal Vaughan School, 89 Addison Road, W14 8BZ. If you are interested in attending this event, please email brooksh@cvms.co.uk or register at https://rbtsa_tickets.eventbrite.co.uk

SVP Vinnie Packs:

The SVP are distributing 12,000 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £3.50 per pack. Donations can be sent to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ with cheques made out to SVP. Thank you so much for your support.