



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)

11th December 2016 – Third Sunday of Advent Some Touching Up!



Well, we've got there at last! What a day it has been. The workmen were here at 7.00am to remove the last sections of the scaffolding, and apart from morning prayer and mass they worked through until after 1.00pm. All were of one mind – everything was going to be ready for the week-end. (Almost everything, that is – there are still a few lower level jobs to be completed in the next couple of days.) And the attention to detail! If a guy removing a pole happened to touch the new paint, there was another guy with a roller immediately behind him repairing the damage! Come to think of it – wouldn't it be great if life was always like that – anytime we made a mistake there would be somebody at hand to put things right straight away. Now, why does that ring a bell?

Let me see – maybe it's got something to do with the time of the year – Advent, leading into Christmas. In a sense one might describe Jesus's mission as something along those lines – coming into our world so that when we make a mess of things, which we frequently do, He is right behind us ready to clean up the mess. One of the ways in which He offers to do so is through the sacrament of reconciliation – confession to us older folk. Which is why, even still, for many people receiving the sacrament of reconciliation is very much part of the preparation for the festivities.

Our gospel reading this week-end draws our attention to John the Baptist and his role of preparing the way for the coming of the Lord, a way which he said calls on us to repent – to think again about the way we go about our lives, and if there are parts that maybe are not as beautiful as they should be, then let the Lord touch us, and lift us up again.

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We pray for those who have died recently – Kathy O'Brien (funeral 11.30am Tuesday 20th December); **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Joan Fox, George Barulis, Frank Quinn, John D'Arcy, Andrew Toomey, Patrick Donohue, Margaret McGrath, Pat & Kate Loftus, Tom McManamon, Raymond Hogan.

The Great St Joseph's Clean-UP!

The painting has now been almost totally completed and the scaffolding is away, revealing an incredible change to the appearance of our beautiful church. Which is all very well and fine as long as you keep looking upward! But as the saying goes – you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs – so inevitably the quick removal of the scaffolding meant no time was available before the week-end to give a thorough cleaning to the church. Special thanks are due to those who kept themselves on stand-by on Saturday to do a very essential removal of the heavier dirt and to leave the seating usable for the Sunday services, but we are very much in need of a more thorough clean-up after the week-end is over. So we are pleading with as many as can possibly fit it into their busy schedule to join us this Monday morning to do a thorough cleaning to bring us back to a condition fitting for our Advent and Christmas celebrations. The ideal time to arrive is at 10 o'clock, and the more who turn up the quicker the job will be completed. To assist with the organising of the morning – and especially the provision of refreshments! – it would be helpful (but not essential) if you could please email or telephone Roxane (020 7263 6831 roxane.stirling@btopenworld.com).

Giving Tree:

Our Giving Tree is once again evoking a wonderful response from so many people. You may be misled by the fact that so many tags still seem to remain – but be assured that the reason for this is that they have been replaced with more tags so that we won't have people being disappointed as has happened in previous years when all the tags have gone. For those of you who may be new to the parish, or haven't come across this exercise before, the idea is very simple, and very much in the proper spirit of Christmas. Instead of the usual decorations our trees are bedecked with lots of tags, on each of which has been written a suggestion for a Christmas gift to be given to the poor of our city – in particular the many poor families that our local branch of St. Vincent de Paul assist, and also for the Cardinal Hume Centre, which does outstanding work with families in distress and with the homeless. We invite you to take a tag from the tree, and then during the following week to purchase the item suggested (please ensure food items are in date!). Items – which should be gift-wrapped – should then be brought to the church the following Sunday, with the tags stating what gift is in each parcel attached to them. (Don't worry, the tags will be removed before being given to any individual.) We promise you that all items will be distributed before Christmas.

Many of the items on the tags are of a practical nature, like warm socks, gloves and so on, but there are also suggestions for small non-essentials, like biscuits, toys, books, games, etc – items which for us we're inclined to take for granted, but for others are a luxury that they could never afford to buy for themselves. We particularly invite you to encourage your children to become involved in this project, which is a very practical way to help them appreciate how lucky they are, and maybe spend a little of their own pocket money on getting a present for a child of their own age who is much less well-off.

Living Crib:

This year's Living Crib procession is today, Sunday, 11th December, beginning at 3.00 pm in Pond Square. This Highgate tradition is a lovely way of preparing for Christmas. We have children taking the roles of Mary and Joseph, but having nobody to play the role of the donkey, we have a real live one instead! We particularly welcome any local (real?) angels, shepherds and wise men –and wise women won't be turned away! All are invited to simply turn up appropriately dressed – no need to enrol beforehand. The procession ends here at St. Joseph's with a brief candle-lit Carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

A Highgate Christmas: an Advent Evening of Readings and Carols:

Join us this Thursday 15th December at 7.30pm for a flavour of Christmas given by extracts and poems from some of the great writers associated with Highgate, as well as readings from Holy Scripture and beautiful music from our own choir, and our organist Alberto Brigandi. And the whole service will be rounded off with even more mulled wine and mince pies!

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,651. In addition we also receive approximately £1,900 in standing orders each month. Thanks again for your continuing generosity.

Christmas at the Repository:

Christmas Cards, Advent Calendars, and 2017 Calendars and St. Joseph's Parish Diaries are all now available at the Repository shop at the back of church, as well as the usual range of cards, books and devotional items, and the weekly Catholic papers.

100 Club:

The December 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. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way.