



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)

30th October 2016 – 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Seeing Differently

Our gospel this week-end is one of those that I find most intriguing. It is a very different kind of encounter than others recorded in the Gospels - there are quite a number of unusual elements to it. Firstly, it again involves a tax collector – remember we had one of those last week whose prayer from the back of the church, but from the bottom of his heart, was more acceptable to God than that of the rather smug Pharisee. And this week again the tax collector is being presented in a rather positive light, despite the fact that it is brought to our attention that he is a wealthy man – which usually meant that he was probably extorting excessive taxes from people. Another unusual feature of the story is the picture of a grown man, of small stature in terms of feet and inches, but of considerable stature in the community, climbing a tree to get a view of Jesus as He was passing along the way. We are told he was anxious to see what kind of man he was.

We're generally inclined to see this story as one of conversion – that the tax collector was so impressed with Jesus, particularly that He was willing to visit and eat with him, that he resolved from there on out to reform his ways. But some scholars – you know, those who devote their lives, in many cases, to studying the Bible in its original languages so that hopefully we can get closer and closer to understanding the original words and intent of Jesus – some scholars, as I say, believe that the words of the tax collector were spoken in the present tense. In that case he would be describing how he actually behaved, rather than expressing his intentions for the future. So Zacchaeus would be saying, for instance “Half of my possessions I give to the poor; and if I find I have taken more than I should, I pay back fourfold.”

In other words, although he is a tax collector and apparently rich, he is, in fact, a very good man. Jesus recognised that when he invited himself into Zacchaeus's house. The crowd, however, judged Zacchaeus simply by his profession. He is a tax collector, *therefore* he is an evil and corrupt man. And he was treated as an outcast not to be approached by any decent person. A perfect example of stereotyping and of judging people's 'holiness' by their external observance of religious ritual.

But Jesus always sees beyond the external to the potential inside. He praised the repentant tax collector in last week's Gospel as against the proud and arrogant Pharisee. Today he praises a tax collector whom he knows to be a good and generous person. He sees a unique individual and not just a stereotype.

How often are we blinded by the stereotype of a person's profession, or race, or religion and fail to see the unique individual inside? A policeman, a truck driver, a single mother, a recovering alcoholic, a priest...? “For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost” — the lost include those regarded as sinners and those who are marginalised by so-called respectable society. They are the people to whom we Christians, as disciples of Jesus, are also expected to pay special attention. We need to be particularly careful about pre-judging people, about slotting them into stereotyped compartments...

Stereotypes do not really exist. Only unique individuals with unique needs exist. Jesus saw, not a tax collector, but the unique person, Zacchaeus. And, fortunately, that's how he looks on each one of us, and invites us to look on one another. Every person has the right to be treated with respect and dignity, no matter who they are or what they are like.

(Help of “LivingSpace” acknowledged.)

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We pray for the sick and housebound of our parish – Frank Domantay; and we pray for those who have died recently – Agnes Murphy, Anthony Ferns, Rosealba Delmaestro; we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time – Patrick Condon, Mary O'Shea, Mary & Martin Joyce, Mick Faherty, James Joseph Waldron.

Feast of All Saints:

Tuesday this week is the Feast of All Saints, and a Holyday of Obligation. Masses will be at 6.30pm Vigil on Monday, and 9.30am, 11.00am and 6.30pm on Tuesday.

Coffee Morning Next Sunday:

Our next Coffee Morning will be next Sunday, 6th November, in the Red Room, immediately after the 10.00 am. Mass. A good opportunity, especially for new Parishioners, to meet fellow members of our Parish.

November Dead List:

The usual envelopes and sheets for the November altar list of the dead are still available in the porch. Mass will be said each day in November for all whose names are submitted for the list.

Christmas Bazaar - Saturday 19th November:

Our Bazaar this year is on Saturday 19th of November, only **three** weeks away. As always we are relying on your generous donations of all the usual goods for the stalls: books, cakes, toys, toiletries, homeware, etc. (but do please remember that health and safety regulations nowadays forbid us to sell second-hand electrical goods, used soft toys or clothing that we cannot guarantee have been disinfected) and of course lots of bottles for the Tombola stall – thank you to the many of you who have contributed already, especially the generous donation of £100 towards expenses received during the week. Please start bringing in goods for stalls AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so that we can start sorting. But also we need volunteers to make it all happen, so if you would like to help in any way, either with the preparatory organisation or on the day itself, please contact Cheryl on felicitymaynard@hotmail.com. And finally, we hope you will be able to come on the day and help make this year's Bazaar the successful social event it always is.

Dates for your Diary:

Other Christmas dates for your diaries: the **Living Crib** will be on Sunday 11th December at 3.00pm, and our evening of **Christmas Readings and Carols** will be on Thursday 15th December at 7.30pm.

Mealtime Supervisor /Premises Assistant:

St Joseph's Primary School is looking for a Mealtime Supervisor (hours 11:45-1:15) and also a Premises Assistant (7:30-3:30 or 10-6pm – Exact hours to be agreed). For more information and an application form for either post please email office@st-josephs.islington.sch.uk or visit the school office after 31st October.

Welcome Back:

We extend a welcome back to Fr. Frank Trias who arrived on Wednesday to help out until the return of Fr. Tiernan on November 7th. I am really grateful to Fr. Frank for making himself available in our time of need.

Church Cleaning:

A sincere thank you to all those helping with the cleaning of the Church in readiness for the week-end masses. It appears that Saturday mornings at 11.00am is best for most people. So if you've been meaning to come, but maybe forgot it on the day, please feel free to come any Saturday to give a helping hand.

Pre-Marriage Course:

Our next pre-marriage course will be on Saturday, November 26th. This course is open to all those planning on getting married during 2017 – they need not be members of the parish, or be planning on getting married here. Application forms and further details of the course can be obtained by emailing pfc44@yahoo.com

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,532. In addition we also receive approximately £1,900 in standing orders each month. Thanks again for your continuing generosity.

St. Joseph's Primary School:

If you weren't able to make it to St Joseph's Primary school's open morning in October, fear not – you have another opportunity on **Tuesday 22nd November**. Registration and refreshments from 9:15am. All forms and the Admissions Policy which sets out the criteria for offering places at the school, are available from the school office or to download from the website. <http://www.st-josephs.islington.sch.uk/>

100 Club Results:

The October Draw for the 100 Club was held in the Monastery during the week. The number of entries was 115 and the winners were: £400 Caitriona Kelly (131), £100 Anne Marie Duffy (165), £50 Karen McCormack (74). A copy of the results may be obtained from the Parish office on request. The July draw will be held as usual in the last week of the month, and monthly subscriptions should be paid by Sunday 20th November. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way.

Confirmation:

The second session of this year's Confirmation programme will be at 5.00pm this Sunday evening, entrance via the Monastery (street door). We emphasise the need for the highest standards of behaviour during classes. Mass attendance forms should be folded and put into the collection bags during Mass.