



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)

29th January 2017 – 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time Steps To Heaven!

Just before Christmas I was attending a function, and one of the other people present told me about an app (see, I'm learning the lingo!) he had on his phone. I have to admit I'm not big into apps – most of the ones I see on people's phones on the Tube, for instance, seem to be games that there's not the remotest chance I would be able to master – especially when they demand quickness of response. But there are a few I do use – like being able to access my emails when I'm not at my computer, or having a copy of my diary on my phone. Otherwise my life might be even more chaotic than it often is!

This particular app he was showing me had to do with health – keeping track of how much exercise he was getting each day, how many calories he was burning, what his heartbeat was like, and all kinds of other things. Becoming a little intrigued I questioned whether he needed to have one of those bands around his wrist, or keep his phone in his shirt pocket – near his heart – or what. No, all that was required was to have the phone in his trouser pocket. Thank God I have never been obsessed with my health – probably because I've generally enjoyed good health. But I am aware that I'm not as young and fit as I once used to be, and that I should be getting more exercise, and eating less junk food, and drinking more water, etc. etc. – you know, all the advice that those who are looking much more out of condition than you give you! So I was tempted, and as the man once said – “the only thing I can't resist is temptation” – and down-loaded the app, which was free, to my phone.

I'm one of those who, when I get a new app, will spend as little time as possible setting it up – so I've never got around to feeding in all the information required to check my calories or pulse and whatever. But it 'defaulted' (more of the lingo!) to expecting me to take 6,000 steps each day. At first I wondered whether I should increase the number – 6,000 didn't sound a lot. Wisely, I left it alone. No problem when I play a round of golf – somewhere around 12,000 steps! But other days I rarely made it – despite the size of the monastery and all the walking I do around it, upstairs and downstairs; and up and down to the school, and maybe to visit the hospital or someone sick at home. And I actually surprised myself by deliberately going out to the park sometimes to clock up another couple of thousand steps! It has actually influenced my lifestyle. I almost feel like a child who has been naughty if when going to bed I check it and I haven't reached my quota. (And sleep-walking doesn't count!) To my surprise, as a result of having this app on my phone I have actually changed my attitude to getting sufficient exercise every day.

And today's Gospel is all about changing attitudes - but much more important attitudes – it's about the be-attitudes – our attitudes to how we live and be. I know, it's a fairly poor pun, but nevertheless, I think it brings the sayings of Jesus out of the realm of pious aspirations to affecting our real lives. If only we could take note of the word that is constantly repeated through the reading – ‘happy’ – and realise that what Jesus is putting before us is an application/program that if we allow it to guide our lives, will bring us much happiness. Being poor and gentle, and thirsting always for what is right; being pure of heart, merciful, peacemakers who are not afraid to stand up for what is right, even should it mean hardship and opposition – these are the important steps we should be taking to achieve the ‘default’ goal – a loving, caring world, where all are appreciated and valued.

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We pray for those who have died recently – Richard Hill, Elizabeth Cooney, Robert Taylor, Patrick Dunne; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Edmund Kolibabka (Dr Kali Collie), Pat McKendry, Sarah Pender, Paddy Healy, Joseph MacDonogh, deceased members of the McGarry family.

Coffee Morning Next Sunday:

Our next Parish Coffee Morning will be next Sunday, 5th February, 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.

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 pat@stjosephshighgate.org.uk. 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. Our course here is conducted by a counsellor, a married couple and a priest – so many different perspectives on married life are presented.

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.

100 Club Results:

The January Draw for the 100 Club was held in the Monastery during the week. The number of entries was 110 and the winners were: £400 Anne Marie Duffy (165), £100 Gillian Kaul (137), £50 Sue Prudo (123). A copy of the results may be obtained from the Parish office on request. The February draw will be held as usual in the last week of the month, and monthly subscriptions should be paid by Sunday 19th February. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,273. In addition we also receive approximately £1,800 in standing orders each month. We thank you for your continuing generosity.

Financial Matters:

I couldn't immediately think of any other heading, but don't worry, this is not going to be principally about trying to get more money out of you – although, let's be honest, in some cases that might be justified! “What does he mean by that?” I can hear you ask. Well, the figures speak for themselves. The average weekly collection is somewhere in the region of £1,700 – some weeks much lower than that, as you can see above. The average weekly donations from standing orders is about £420. The average adult attendance at Sunday masses is at about 700. So the average donation per adult is about £3. Of themselves those figures mean very little. Everybody is aware that our parish is made up of a wide range of people, living in all sorts of differing financial realities. And we all know that appearances can be misleading, so it would be very unwise – and unchristian – to attempt any kind of judgement. That has to be left to yourself.

It should also be noted, of course, that on average over the past two years you have also contributed about £800 per week to Growing in Faith. And on top of that quite a few people have donated substantial one-off amounts, and the Parish has also been bequeathed some sizeable sums. And we've done our best in relation to the costs of the works done to date – which came to approximately half a million pounds altogether – to get any grants that have been available. So, where are we? Thanks to your generosity we have not had to be continuously harassing you for money, which I can assure you is as much a relief to me as it is to you! But you can see yourselves that there is still a lot of work that needs to be done in our beautiful church – and it would be my hope that this will get done in manageable steps over the coming years. So we can't be complacent with regard to funding. One simple, painless way you can help is Gift Aid. Many people are already doing this, which means their contributions are increased by a quarter – so if they give £4, it becomes £5 in value to the parish. But in order to do that with weekly contributions you need to make use of the planned giving envelopes, and also complete a Gift Aid form. (You must also be a tax-payer, of course.) A new financial year will be starting in April, and so we will be giving out new boxes of envelopes. We are asking you, if you are not already doing so, to consider gift aiding your donations. I assure you doing so will not give anybody here access to your financial details, but it will make a helpful addition to our funds.