



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

St Joseph's Church, Highgate Hill, London N19 5NE
Tel. 020 7272 2320

e-mail: joseph.highgate@gmail.com website: www.stjosephshighgate.org.uk

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)

8th January 2017 – Feast of the Epiphany The Chain of Love

I came across the following story – slightly modified - lately, and thought it might be suitable for today's Feast.

One evening a man, driving along in his old battered car, saw an old lady stranded on the side of the road, but even in the dim light he could see she needed help. So he pulled up in front of her car and got out. Even with the smile on his face, he could see that she was worried. No one had stopped to help for the last hour or so. She wondered was he going to help or hurt her? He didn't look safe. To be honest, he looked pretty poor and hungry.

He could see that she was frightened, standing out there in the cold. He knew how she felt. It was that chill which only fear can put in you. He said, "I'm here to help you, ma'am. Why don't you wait in the car where it's warm? By the way, my name is Paddy Joe." Paddy crawled under the car looking for a place to put the jack, skinning his knuckles a time or two. Soon he was able to change the tyre. But he had to get dirty and his hands hurt. As he was finishing she rolled down the window and began to talk to him. She told him that she was only just passing through. She couldn't thank him enough for coming to her aid. Paddy just smiled as he closed her boot. The lady asked how much she owed him. Well, all she had was a flat tire, but for an old lady, that was bad enough. She already imagined all the awful things that could have happened had he not stopped. Paddy never thought about being paid: This was not a job to him. This was helping someone in need, and God knows there were plenty who had given him a hand in the past. He had lived his whole life that way, and it never occurred to him to act any other way.

He told her that if she really wanted to pay him back, the next time she saw someone who needed help; she could give that person the assistance they needed, and Paddy added, "And think of me."

A few miles down the road the lady saw a small cafe. She went in to grab a bite to eat, and take the chill off before she made the last leg of her trip home. The waitress came over and brought a clean towel for the lady to wipe her wet hair. She had a sweet smile, one that even being on her feet for the whole day couldn't erase. The lady noticed the waitress was very far advanced in her pregnancy, but she never let the strain and aches change her attitude. The old lady wondered how someone who apparently had so little could be so giving to a stranger. Then she remembered Paddy.

After the lady finished her meal, she paid with a fifty pound note. The waitress quickly went to get her change, but the old lady had slipped quietly and quickly out the door. She was gone by the time the waitress came back. The waitress wondered where the lady could be. Then she noticed something written on the napkin. There were tears in her eyes when she read what the lady wrote: "You don't owe me anything. I have been there too. Somebody once helped me out, the way I'm helping you." Under the napkin were four more fifty-pound notes.

That night when she got home from work and climbed into bed, she was thinking about the money and what the lady had written. How could the lady have known how much she and her husband needed it? With the baby due next month, it was going to be hard.... She knew how worried her husband was, and as he lay sleeping next to her, she gave him a soft kiss and whispered soft and low, "Everything's going to be all right. I love you, Paddy Joe."

Our gift to the Lord may not be gold, frankincense or myrrh, but what help we give to others, is also our gift to God.

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We pray for those who have died recently – Maria Cecilia Persaed (funeral 10.30am Monday 9th January), Margaret Dunne, Therese MacGowan; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Elizabeth (Liz) Williams, Tom Hurndall, Frans & Miep Van den Berg, Hugh D'Arcy, Robert Ryan, Michael Flynn, David Jones.

Thank You:

We hope you all, whether you managed to get away or not, had a most enjoyable celebration of Christmas and the New Year. I take this opportunity on behalf of all the community here in St. Joseph's to express our very genuine and heartfelt appreciation of the many expressions of good-will received, and for the many thoughtful and generous gifts left in for us prior to and during the Christmas season. We also thank and congratulate you on the magnificent turn-out at the various Christmas celebrations, particularly at the two Christmas Eve celebrations. It is so heartening to see so many people taking the time and making the effort to focus on the deeper meaning of the festive season as well as enjoying the more material side of the festivities. A special thanks to all who put in so much work towards making Christmas in St. Joseph's so special - we think particularly of those responsible for cleaning and decorating the Church; for those who erected and decorated the Cribs and Christmas Tree; those responsible for the Music ministry, readers, Eucharistic Ministers, servers, collectors, counters, receptionists –not forgetting the other ministry groups and individuals who as usual were generous in giving of their time and talents. The list could go on and on, but let's just draw the line there and say to you all that your wonderful support is very much appreciated.

And while on the subject of thanks – we want to mention your magnificent response to the Giving Tree campaign; nobody's keeping a count, but the amount of gifts donated seemed more than ever. Those arriving by the Sunday before Christmas were duly delivered in good time and much appreciated by the Cardinal Hume Centre and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. It makes one so proud of St. Joseph's!

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.

Christian Stewardship:

The collections over the Christmas period amounted to respectively – Christmas Eve and Day: £4528: New Year's Day: £1251. We thank you for your continuing generosity.

Confirmation Programme:

Confirmation classes will resume this Sunday evening at 5.00pm. Candidates are reminded that regular attendance at Sunday Mass is a mandatory element of the programme.

Prayer Groups:

The Charismatic Prayer Group will resume meetings at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10th January. The Christian Meditation Group will resume on Friday 13th January.

St.Gabriel's Cold Weather Shelter:

St.Gabriel's in Holloway Road is looking for volunteers to help with the provision of services and friendship to the homeless for whom we shall be providing shelter, dinner and breakfast every Tuesday of this winter beginning the 3rd of January. Potential volunteers should please contact KC on 07973 416603. Thanks and God bless.

Are you ready to Volunteer and make a difference in Lourdes?

Every year, the Diocese of Westminster takes a pilgrimage to Lourdes in the French Pyrenees. They bring a large number of sick pilgrims to Lourdes and rely on the help of people like you to care for them. If you are **between 16 and 18**, you can serve as a 'Red Cap', helping people in wheelchairs and taking part in the processions and many other tasks. Please contact Katrina Lavery at katrina.lavery@clovershipping.com if you would like to learn more.

If you are **over 18**, your help would be very much appreciated as a St Frai Helper. Some of the sick pilgrims in most need of support and medical care stay in the Accueil St Frai. It is well-equipped for their care and they are looked after by a team of doctors, nurses and volunteers. 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. If you're interested in helping please email Nick Leonard and team at westminsterstfrai@gmail.com

Kathy O'Brien, R.I.P:

The family of the late Kathy O'Brien have asked us on their behalf to thank everyone for their mass cards, prayers and support following the death of their aunt. Mass will be offered for your intentions.