



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)

14th January 2018 – 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Christ Online?

During the week I was assisting a member of the community to apply for a renewal of his UK passport online – which for me was a very educational experience. My first reaction was ‘this is going to be very complicated – be sure to read all the instructions carefully’. I was rather surprised when the whole thing – including taking his photo – took about half an hour, and probably would have taken half the time if I’d had a little more experience at it, and wasn’t double-checking everything. I was even more surprised when his new passport arrived in the post 3 or 4 days later. When I think of the amount of time I spent chasing around Paris the last time I renewed my Irish passport almost ten years ago, I had to acknowledge that the internet definitely can simplify some things for us. (Yes, I spotted it too – I’m going to have to renew my own passport shortly! Let’s hope it’s as easy.)

That won’t come as much of a revelation to our younger generations, who are practically growing up online, but I’m one who is happy to embrace the online world – but cautiously. Buying items online can save much time and trouble in finding the item you want to buy. Making travel arrangements on line is practically the only way to do it nowadays. Even banking online is now reasonably safe. Yes, there is always that background danger of hackers, but on the other hand I could be run over by a bus while going to the shops!

And nowadays there are even a lot of very good religious sites (and a plethora of horrific ones!) where one can go and pray, or learn more about one’s faith. There are sites where those who cannot leave their homes, say for health reasons, can attend a live mass from a church not too far away – surely a huge boon to those who are sick or housebound. And so some might ask, if the housebound can do it, why not the rest of us? It would surely save a lot of time and trouble if we could attend mass right in our own sitting rooms – and we could have a choice of sermons from the different sites! And no collection!

Obviously a very bad idea! And not just because of missed collections. Our gospel today gives us a few good hints as to why. It’s the account from John’s Gospel of the very beginning of Jesus’s ministry. When two of John’s disciples, who now decide to follow Jesus, ask him where he lives – he doesn’t give them his address (email or otherwise), but invites them to ‘come and see’. And when subsequently Andrew, who was one of the two, wants to tell his brother Simon about Jesus, it isn’t enough to describe him and his teaching. No, he drags him off to meet him.

Our gospel, in other words is reminding us of a very important aspect of our relationship with Jesus – it’s not just knowing about him, it’s also, and maybe more importantly, about seeing him and meeting him. And of course he has repeatedly told us how that relates to our present world – we see him and meet him in one another, and especially in those who are the weakest and poorest in our world. Even with online shopping we can only go so far. Someone needs to open the door and meet the person making the delivery. Someone needs to put the food away until it is needed, etc. It’s true, a digital clock has no hands, but a digital age Christian has to be very much ‘hands on’. Shutting ourselves away entirely from Christian contact, from seeing and meeting Christ in others it doesn’t bear thinking about – it’s not an option.

It’s got to be worth enduring the sermon, and even the collection!

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We pray for the sick and housebound of our Parish – Leo O’Flaherty; we pray for those who have died recently - Kellie Dunne (funeral 12.00 noon Friday 19th January), Ian Madden (funeral 2.00pm Friday 19th January, reception 7.30pm Thursday), Sr. Adriana van den Berg, Doria Griffith, Kathleen Scanlon, Seamus Clancy; and we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time – Bro. Matthew Grace CP, Anne Cross, Tom Hurndall, John Collins, Jessica Jacob, Hannah Kyne, Linda Warden, David Jones.

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 £1,414. 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.

Nursery & Reception in St. Joseph's School:

We are rightly very proud of our Parish School, which is both Ofsted & Diocese rated 'outstanding'. Its ethos is based on Faith, Community and partnership between school, church and family. It is totally committed to the development of each child, offering the very best start to their formal education and support to their faith. The school offers full time nursery places 8:40-3:15. Children born between 1st September 2014 and 31st August 2015 can start nursery in September 2018. Applications must be returned before the deadline.

If your child was born between 1st September 2013 and 31st August 2014 they are due to start reception class in September 2018. A school application and a borough ON-LINE e-application must BOTH be completed before the deadline. **You must apply for a nursery or reception place before the closing date of 15th January, 2018.** All forms and the Admissions Policy which sets out the criteria for offering places at the school, are available to download on the website. <http://www.st-josephs.islington.sch.uk>

Prayer Groups:

The Charismatic Prayer Group will resume on Tuesday 16th January at 7.30pm.

Church Improvements Update:

You could be forgiven for thinking that the works on improving the church building have been abandoned. Let me assure you that such is not the case. Since last September we have been working hard to get permission for the next phase, which broadly covers cleaning up the entrance area, some minor amounts of painting to the side chapels, and refurbishing and fixing in place the seating. I am personally shocked by the amount of unreasonable and obstructive behaviour we have been confronted with in the name of the Historic Churches Committee, but we are persisting and at this stage are hopeful of being able to put the work out to tender some time in February.

In the meantime the fund-raising through Growing in Faith is now entering its 4th and penultimate year. The initial target was £200,000 including Gift Aid. To date we have received just under £130,000 in donations, with a little over £13,000 in Gift aid (with some more in the pipeline), so we are very much on target, thanks to your consistent generosity.