



# ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 234436



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**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)

## 25th February 2018 – 2nd Sunday of Lent DEAD, OR ALIVE?

*A much abbreviated version of a letter from Fr. Rick, after he heard rumours that he had been killed in Haiti.*

If I am alive, am I fully alive? Last week, as I worked with the Sisters of Mother Theresa, a 17 year old boy, Sanon, was brought to me in a wheelchair. Sanon is making his own way through high school, and had just raised enough money, through small jobs, to pay this semester's tuition. As he approached the school to pay his tuition, he was attacked by bandits. They beat him, stole the school money, and for good measure, they stabbed him literally in the back. Now he is paralyzed from the waist down. If I were to allow myself to become dulled, and deadened, to so many such tragedies in the human family, I would not see "Sanon" before me, but just another victim of crime. I would just see "the 5th victim of bandits so far this month."

A deadened me would start thinking, "Maybe there is more to the story. Maybe he is also in a gang." I might start asking, "How am I supposed to pay for his care? How can I manage to get the wheelchairs, therapy etc?" This is the approach whereby the healthy one becomes the hero of the story, complaining "How am I supposed to manage this burden?" Seeing rightly, instead of wrongly, one would better ask "How is Sanon supposed to manage this tragic and emotional shock, and the rest of his life?"

Am I fully alive? How do I know? For a Christian, when our reflexes and instincts mirror those of Jesus, that's how we know we are fully alive. Jesus would not look at Sanon, counting all the while how many such cases he has seen this month. Jesus would look into Sanon's eyes, and into his heart. He would see a teenager whose dreams were severed, literally cut short, by a knife in the hands of thieves. Jesus would see how sad and confused he is, and his hopelessness about any future. We need the heart as Jesus. But even if we do happen to do pretty well at imitating His heart, Jesus still has the advantage.

Jesus can say "Sanon, be healed." We have to say, "Sanon, take these steroids and anti-inflammatory medicines, and we hope and pray you have some feeling and movement restored." Jesus can say, "Sanon, stand up and walk." That doesn't work for us. We know how fast Sanon will have atrophy of his upper body, how soon he'll develop severe ulcers on his buttocks, heels, and legs if we don't get him to move soon. Sanon needs physical therapy, and yet we have no imaging means (MRI) to define the extent of the injury, and so to know if we will harm him more by moving him.

As we begin Lent, our heads dusted with ash as we "Remember you were dust and you shall to dust return," we can be glad this is just symbolic. Ashes are a ritual to make our mortality real to us, for the sole purpose (and soul purpose) of asking ourselves how alive we are. Jesus' formula is simple: I become more alive when I help you become more alive. For Sanon, His Lent started with a knife. His ashes are, for now, his dreams. We are giving him therapy and attention. We've paid a weight trainer for his upper body, and classes in how to use a laptop. We will rent a small house for him very near the school, with no stairs or steps. We will repay his tuition. He will restart his life, continue to come for therapy, and mother nature (with some help from medicine) will reduce inflammation and heal some damage. And we'll hope and pray for the best.

Our calling is to rise again from ashes. As we begin the Holy Season of Lent, let's commit ourselves even more profoundly to helping anyone we know whose lives are suddenly ash. Thank you for your ongoing support, which keeps us ongoing in our mission. God's blessing for you and your families during the 40 days of the Holy Season of Lent!

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**We pray for those who have died recently** - Patrick Timoney, (funeral 12.00 noon Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March), Francis Gerard (Gerry) Burke (funeral 10.45am Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March), Amata Hedge, John Shiels, Robert Robson; **and we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Herbert Trent, Vera Hodgkins, Pauline Fields, Pieter Tuitel, Margaret Murphy, Desmond Cardiff.

### **Lenten Project:**

During previous Lents you have been very generous in your support of the wonderful work being done by Fr. Rick in Haiti. Huge progress has been made, but unfortunately many people, and children in particular, are still living in sub-human conditions. For the Sundays of Lent there will be an exit collection after all Masses in support of this truly Christian work. I know you will be as generous as usual in your support.

### **Stations of the Cross:**

During the season of Lent there will be Stations of the Cross immediately after the 6.30 pm. Mass each Friday.

### **A Call to Young Adults - Your Bishops Want to Hear From You.**

Cardinal Vincent and the auxiliary bishops of the diocese are inviting Catholic young adults, aged 18 to 30, to meet with them to discuss the theme of the next Synod of Bishops - 'Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment'. Please do consider making your voice heard and playing your part in the shaping the Church's approach to young people in the future. If you would like to attend, please register at <http://dowym.com/events/> where you can find details of all events.

### **Novena for the Canonisation of Blessed Dominic:**

Starting 1st. March, there will be a novena for the canonisation of Blessed Dominic Barberi, Passionist. It will consist of saying the prayer on the cards – available free in the porch – after each Mass until 9th. If you wish to know more about Blessed Dominic there is a short account of his life on sale in the CTS book rack.

### **Christian Stewardship:**

Last week's collection amounted to £1,448. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. We very much appreciate your outstanding generosity in supporting your parish.

### **Personnel Changes:**

Fr. George has now officially been appointed as assistant priest on the Parish – taking over from Fr. Tiernan, who will now be involved in other areas of Passionist ministry, along with Fr. Tomy. It's not really a good-bye to Fr. Tiernan, as he will still be here and involved, albeit in a lesser way, in our ministry in St. Joseph's.

### **Scaffolding Again!:**

Those of you who look hopefully to the heavens will have had your view interrupted by new scaffolding that is still in the process of being erected in the dome area of the church. Unfortunately, we have had some storm damage to the copper roof, and, as usual in this kind of situation, when they got a closer look it was seen that the damage was more extensive than originally realised. We don't as yet know the full extent of the work that will be required, but now that the scaffolding is there it only makes sense to ensure that all problems in that area are dealt with. But relax – as I don't anticipate having to launch an emergency appeal for more funds, since your continuing generosity to Growing in Faith should cover the costs. On the other hand..... !

### **Proposed Parish Pilgrimage to St. Gabriel's Shrine, Assisi etc:**

This pilgrimage – which is being organised by St. Gabriel's Parish – is proposed for Friday 25<sup>th</sup> to Monday 28<sup>th</sup> of May. The pilgrimage would include; Guided visit to San Gabriele Shrine, Guided visit to Santa Rita da Cascia, Guided visit to Assisi, Guided visit to Loreto and visit to Moravalle. Cost is 700 euros (approx. £620) per pilgrim (excluding flight). Proposed Flight is from Stansted to Rome Ciampino - departure 13.25 hrs Fri 25<sup>th</sup> and return from Ciampino 17.25 hrs Monday 28<sup>th</sup>. Flight is approximately £250 at the moment and individuals would have to book their own flights (assistance will be provided if needed). **However, we need to be sure that a good number (say about 15) is willing to go before we can confirm the pilgrimage.** Those interested should contact St. Gabriel's Parish Office before the end of March.

### **100 Club:**

The February 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. We particularly remind those who pay annually or 6-monthly that it is the start of a new year. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way.

### **Women's World Day of Prayer:**

The Women's World Day of Prayer service will be held on Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2.00 pm at St. Michael's church, Highgate village. This year the service has been prepared by the women of Surinam.

### **Organ Recital:**

On Thursday this week, 1<sup>st</sup> March at 7.30pm, organist Mark James will perform the first of a monthly series of Organ Recitals on our renowned William Hill organ. Admission is free, donations towards restoration work to the organ will be welcome. Details of future performances are in the church porch.

### **Ceilidh for Cancer Care:**

Fundraiser in St. Joseph's Parish Centre for local cancer sufferer Linda Allinson, for treatment not available on the NHS (see *Ham & High* Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>). Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March 7:30 until 11:00pm tickets £20 including supper, live band. Contact Cheryl at [felicitymaynard@hotmail.com](mailto:felicitymaynard@hotmail.com) for tickets or information, or visit [support4linda.co.uk](http://support4linda.co.uk)