



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)

16th July 2017 – 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Little Things in Life

I've had occasion in the past to refer to my complete lack of skill with regard to dealing with plants, flowers – in fact, any kind of gardening. I have some very good friends from childhood who once thought that they could help. They reckoned my problems had to do with complexity – too many different kinds of plants and flowers out there – and scale – I needed to start small. So they hit on the idea, without consulting with me first, of buying me a bonsai tree. As they saw it, this would assist me on both counts – there was only one plant, and it was small! What, they reasoned, could possibly go wrong? Realising that this had probably cost them a considerable amount of money, and not really wanting to appear as a total failure, I entered into the spirit of the thing, and determined that I would give it my best shot. After all, it did come with a book of instructions!

After about a week I was wishing they had given me a child instead – at least from personal experience I had a good idea of the do's and don'ts of looking after one of them. But with this bonsai it was "how much is the right amount of watering – too little it will die, too much it will rot". Should I put it on the windowsill or not – too little light..... too much light.... However, I persisted, and after a few months of sleepless nights – ok, I exaggerate a little bit – I even saw some new buds appearing, and shortly after, some leaves. Had I cracked horticulture at last? And of course I was giving my friends constant report-backs on the health of the said bonsai.

Then disaster! I was asked to give a school retreat somewhere down the country, and forgot to make arrangements for the care of the bonsai. It was almost like having a pet – which fortunately it wasn't – because by the time I got back a couple of weeks later, there was a very unhealthy-looking bonsai in my room. Normally I mightn't have been too concerned – after all plants die all the time – but I couldn't face the thought of having to tell my friends that their best efforts at reforming me had been in vain. And I knew I couldn't do the old "left minding the rabbit which died" trick, and buy a new one, because I couldn't look them in the eye and tell them such a massive porky.

And this is where it gets a little bizarre. I did the next best thing. In the belief that it might not be totally dead, and could be resuscitated, as it were, I brought it to a bonsai hospital! (I know – I didn't believe it either!) And they agreed to admit it for a week and see what they could do. A week later and the sad news was that it had truly passed away, and it was time to get the bonsai undertaker. (Sorry, this time I am joking!)

All this came into my mind as I was reading our gospel passage for this Sunday, where Jesus is talking about the seed that is sown on various different kinds of ground. And He's reminding us that the seed – which in this case is the Word of God – is not necessarily going to flourish on its own. It all depends on the kind of ground – which in this case is us – in which it is planted. It is in a sense a kind of wake-up call to all of us, challenging us as to how well we accept that word in our lives, and how carefully we nourish that life of Christ which it offers us. While Jesus understands all the difficulties, all the temptations and counter-attractions out there, He still asks that we realise that it is through His Word that we find true happiness and fulfilment

I'm happy to say we're still good friends, but I never mention bonsai's in their presence!

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We pray for those who have died recently - James Spillane (funeral 12 noon Tuesday 18th July, reception into church 4.45pm Monday), Rosina (Rose) Morgan (funeral 12 noon Wednesday 26th July), Anne O'Donnell; **and we remember those whose anniversaries occur** – Fr. Conleth O'Hara CP, Fr. Theodore Davey CP, Patrick & Liam Delaney, Jane McNally, Ann Flaherty, Sean McCann.

Church Cleaning Fest:

A very sincere thank you to all who turned up for the recent cleaning of the church. As usual the event was meticulously organised by Roxane, even to the point of providing a beautiful day so that no speck of dust had any shadow to hide in, and who made sure there was an abundant supply not only of cleaning equipment, but even more importantly, deserved and much appreciated refreshments!

NURSERY SPACES – St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School & Nursery:

We still have spaces within our nursery to start in September 2017. The school currently offers full time nursery places 8:40-3:15 and applications are welcome if your child was born between 1st September 2013 and 31st December 2014 (3 before 31st December 2017). 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/admissions-2017-2018/> or come to the school Office.

Back to School/Back to Work Sharing Lunch:

After the magnificent response to the International Lunch we had recently, by popular demand we will be having a similar event to mark returning to work/school after the Summer holidays. It will take place after the 12 Mass on 10th September. More details will follow in September.

First Communion Photographs:

The official photographs are now available to order online – a lovely reminder of a very special event. Parents should have received details of how to access and order them but if you need more information email either the photographer martinblack@me.com or communion.joseph@gmail.com stating which week your child made their First Communion. If you have ordered photographs you can collect them from the Sacristy after any of our masses, Sunday or week-day, up **until 30th July**. After that you will need to contact the Office to arrange collection.

Updates:

Apologies – it’s been some considerable time now since I’ve given an update on the works in the Church and the Growing in Faith Fund. After completion of the roof repairs and the painting of most of the main body of the church, the next hope is to refurbish and make more welcoming the porch area of the church. Also there are some areas of the main body of the church which still need to be painted – fortunately all at a low level, so no scaffolding should be required. In addition we need to do something with the seating – some have been damaged over the years, and none of them could be described as ‘fixtures’! Two elements of good news in relation to the above. Firstly, we have been given verbally permission to go ahead with the work; and secondly, because of your generosity in the past, we will **not** be needing to have another fund-raising campaign in the near future. Referring to your generosity, and in particular the Growing in Faith campaign, you will remember that it was a five-year campaign. We are now approximately half way through the five years, and to date over £113,000 has been donated, as well as over £13,000 being claimed back in Gift Aid. So once again a very sincere thank you to all who pledged their support and have honoured those pledges so faithfully.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week’s collection amounted to £1,466. In addition we receive an average of over £800 per week in standing orders. See also the notice with regard to the Mary’s Meals collection. Thanks once again for your continuing generosity.

Children’s Summer Camps:

Bookings are being taken for the SVP John Bosco camps for boys (ages 8-13, weeks beginning 22nd & 29th July) and girls (ages 9-12, week beginning 5th August), near Colchester. Run with a Catholic ethos, these sports and activity based camps are especially for children who may not have any other holiday this year. See porch noticeboard or visit www.svpboscocamp.org.uk for details. Phone Eileen 020 7272 1263 if interested.

The Passage Garden Party:

There will be a Garden Party in aid of The Passage (homeless day centre) in the historic College Garden, Westminster Abbey this coming Friday, 21st July, from 6.00 p.m. Visit the oldest cultivated garden in England with a back drop of the Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. Tickets £40 from The Passage, St Vincent’s Centre, Carlisle Place, London SW1P 1NL tel. 020 7592 1856 email tickets@passage.org.uk which includes buffet supper, wine, soft drinks, live music and a prize raffle. Tickets are also available through passage-garden-party.eventbrite.co.uk

Christmas Bazaar:

I know – hard to be thinking of Christmas in the midst of this beautiful weather, but we appreciate how full your diary can get, so we’re giving you plenty of notice to get **Saturday 25th November** in there as the date for our Christmas Bazaar – so no excuses!