



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 234436



Fr. Pat (pfc44@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)

7th January 2018 – Epiphany of the Lord Best Laid Plans

This is by no means a complaint – but I'm afraid my break after Christmas wasn't the most relaxing one I've ever had. Of course I was very glad to get away and have the opportunity to meet, however briefly, with family and friends. But I spent far too much time on planes and trains and buses, when I should simply have been on beds, dining chairs and recliners! And it was largely my own fault. Let me try to explain.

I knew before going away that I had a fairly tight schedule. In addition to having some time with my sister, who lives in Galway, I had already agreed to celebrate a wedding for the daughter of friends of mine, whom I had married forty years ago – her parents, I mean. Apart from the fact that it was highlighting for me that I was now well and truly into the antique category of humanity, it was something I was very happy to do, as she was always someone I've had a special grá for (Irish word, no real translation – somewhere around 'love, regard, soft-spot, etc.') as I've watched her growing up over the years. But it did mean that having travelled from London to Dublin to Galway on Boxing Day, I would now have to travel up to Dublin for the wedding and back to Galway to spend the New Year with my sister.

I can hear you, very reasonably, saying – why didn't you just stay in Dublin for the wedding, and then go to Galway? Fair point, but one of the other tasks I had to achieve while over in Ireland was the renewal of my driving licence – another reminder of my antique status! Because once one passes 70 one's licence has to be renewed every three years, which means having a medical cert issued by an Irish registered doctor (even if you are living abroad!). So I needed to be Galway first to see the doctor, and in Dublin later, to apply in person for the licence – they now take one's photo on the spot!

All that I knew before going over to Ireland, so I was more or less ready for it. But then my nephew drops a hand-grenade into my plans – "I presume you'll be here for mum's birthday?" Now, I was aware of my sister's birthday – she's had it on the same date for years – and, like my own, we don't generally make a very big deal of it. "Sorry, I have my appointment in Dublin that day for renewing my driving licence. I'll give her my card before I leave." "She'll be very disappointed if you're not here." "I can't imagine why – it's not that important." "You've forgotten it's her 80th – haven't you?" I won't tell you what I said, but I knew I couldn't miss that! To cut a long story short, it meant rather than leaving Galway at a leisurely hour the evening before my appointment in Dublin, I was up at the crack of dawn on the day of the appointment in order to travel across the country in time. And then back to London the next day!

I tell you this, not to seek sympathy, but to say that I have a certain degree of sympathy myself with the wise men from the east and their travelling predicaments. Losing sight of the star was not in their plans, and left them at a loss for a while, before their journey got back on track, as it were. As we set out to journey through a New Year, it is a good time to ask ourselves where it is we hope to get to this year. That's really the point of New Year resolutions – setting ourselves goals, targets for the year ahead. We're not likely to achieve them all, but the challenge is whether we will make a few diversions here and there, or get totally side-tracked; whether we can deal positively with set-backs, or allow them to knock us off course entirely.

My prayer is that we can all travel with Christ as our Guide – He'll keep us on the right road.

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We pray for those who have died recently - Philomena (Phylis) Shiels (funeral 11.00am Wednesday 10th January), Kathleen Scanlon (funeral Mass 7.30pm Wednesday 10th January), Kellie Dunne (funeral 12.00 noon Friday 19th January), Ian Madden (funeral 2.00pm Friday 19th January, reception 7.30pm Thursday), Bridie Thompson, Michael Muldowney, Margaret Glennon; **and we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Elizabeth (Liz) Williams, Tom Hurndall, J.P. Gavaghan, Frans & Miep Van den Berg, Donal O'Donohue, Tim O'Shea.

Thank You:

I find myself each year faced with the same pleasant task of expressing on behalf of the Passionist community here in St. Joseph's our sincere gratitude for your wonderful support and generosity to us. While the task is pleasant, I know also that it is always in danger of appearing to be one of those things you have to do after Christmas, and hence can come across as some kind of formal annual ritual, rather than really coming from the heart. So let me assure you that this is no formality, but is really trying to convey our humble recognition of the great honour you do us through such support not just at Christmas, but throughout the year. Such has been your generosity with community and individual gifts that it would be nigh on impossible to individually acknowledge them all, so please accept this little notice as an effort 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. I do hope you all had a most enjoyable celebration of Christmas and the New Year.

I also want to 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; those who erected and decorated the Cribs and Trees; 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 Tuesday before Christmas were duly delivered in good time and much appreciated by the Cardinal Hume Centre and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. And all late deliveries will be distributed as soon as possible. It makes one so proud of St. Joseph's!

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 pfc44@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 £1,386. The Christmas collection for the support of the Passionist community here in Highgate amounted to £5,421. In addition to the above 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>

Confirmation Programme:

Confirmation classes resume this Sunday evening at 5.00pm.

Prayer Groups:

The Christian Meditation group will resume on Friday 12th January, at 7.00pm.

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