



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)

15th January 2017 – 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Seek and You Shall Find?

Having the celebration of the Epiphany last Sunday caused a fair degree of confusion, since it was being celebrated on the 8th of January, rather than on the 6th. For many people one of the traditions of the 6th – the twelfth day of Christmas, as the song puts it – it that this is the day on which the wise men – or were they kings? – arrive. So, this year should we have put them into the crib on the 6th, in accordance with that tradition, or should we have left it until the 8th, which was the day we were celebrating the Epiphany? And if we were to leave it until the 8th, where are they going to stay in the meantime, since we know there was no accommodation in Bethlehem at that time!

That was complicated enough, but if you were at the masses I celebrated last Sunday you will have learnt that we had a far more immediate problem – do you still put the Magi into the crib, even if Jesus is no longer there? Unfortunately that was the case – our “baby Jesus” was kidnapped from the crib! We don’t know exactly when it happened – most likely on the 6th – but at time of writing he is still missing. When I was mentioning this to a number of different people last week they shared with me the story of something similar happening some time ago in Dublin – in the Pro-Cathedral, no less. On Christmas morning, of all days, the figure of the baby Jesus was removed from the crib – to the horror of all. The likes had never been heard of before! There were lots of “what’s the world coming to” and “can you really believe someone would do something like that” being expressed. But before a posse could be rounded up, a little later in the morning a small girl was seen pushing her obviously new doll buggy down the street – but rather than having a doll the buggy contained the missing figure from the crib. There was much tut-tutting, and “How could you do such a thing?” going on, but if they thought they were going to impinge on the happiness of the child, they were much mistaken. With the sweetest, most disarming smile in the world she proudly explained herself. It was quite simple, really. “I promised Jesus that if I got a new buggy for Christmas, I would give Him the first ride in it!”

As I’m sure you can well imagine, we’ve had lots of reaction to our missing statue. It’s even got coverage on Thursday’s Ham and High, complete with before and after photos! I’ve also been told that the event has been publicised through twitter and blogs. There’s reason to believe, in the internet sense of the word of course, that Jesus has more ‘followers’ than ever before! So if you happen to see our statue anywhere please let us know, as we are concerned that his swaddling clothes aren’t really meant for this kind of weather, and we don’t want him getting a chill!

It’s nice to think that there are so many people out there looking for Jesus, but it would be so much more meaningful if they were all looking for the real Person, rather than a plaster depiction of Him as a child. Our Gospel today tells us of one such person, who was really looking forward to finding the real Jesus – John the Baptist. Not only was he preparing the way for the coming of Jesus – which the season of Advent reminded us of – but now he is the one to introduce Jesus to the people, as the Lamb of God, over whose head he has seen the Spirit descending like a dove. Those two images – the lamb and the dove – help us to be aware of the gentleness of Jesus. That gentleness can be ours if we truly allow Jesus to find us!

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We pray for those who have died recently – Elizabeth Cooney (funeral 10.30am Tuesday 24th January), John Gallagher, Maria Cecilia Persaed, Peggy Liddiard, Theresa Murphy; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Br. Matthew Grace CP, Sr. Siobhan Shelley CP, Anne Cross, John Collins, Jessica Jacob, Hannah Kyne, Mary McCrohan, George O’Shea.

Cardinal's Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony Saturday 3rd June 2017 at 3pm.

This annual event will be taking place in Westminster Cathedral, on Saturday 3rd June, 2017 at 3pm. For the past few years members of our Parish have attended this very meaningful celebration. The Archbishop will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2017. If you are celebrating any of the above anniversaries this year, please give Fr. Pat (email or letter) the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email). Fr. Pat will forward any details received to the Diocese, who will eventually issue the invitations directly to the couples involved.

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:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,727. In addition we also receive approximately £1,900 in standing orders each month. We thank you for your continuing generosity.

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.

Beginning Experience:

There is a healing weekend for men and women who find themselves single again following divorce, separation or the death of a partner from 17th to 19th March 2017 at the Emmaus Centre, West Wickham, Kent. For details please contact Freda 01322-838415 Sandra 01293-783965 or John 01992-642443 email johnabrotherton@hotmail.co.uk

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 please email Nick Leonard and team at westminsterstfrai@gmail.com

SVP Shop Volunteers:

Volunteers are needed for the SVP charity shop at 484 Kingsland Road, Dalston, Hackney. Work will include sorting donations, pricing, steaming, operating the till and customer service. Full training will be given.

You will be part of a happy, friendly team doing very rewarding community work. Please pop in for a chat or call Louise on 020 7249 3511.

In case you are admitted to hospital.....

(We feel we need to repeat this notice every so often.) The Hospital Chaplaincy department in the Diocese, ask us to bring to your attention the difficulties that sometimes people have in making contact with the chaplains in the various hospitals. Data protection regulations mean that your details will not be passed on to the Catholic chaplain, **unless you specifically ask the staff to do so**. Also you are advised to state that you would like the Catholic chaplain to visit you. Many of the hospitals – the Whittington being one of them - have dedicated chaplains, whose special ministry is being there for the patients when they need them. However, should you have difficulty contacting the chaplain, then please do not hesitate to call upon myself or another of the priests here.