



# ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 234436



Fr. Pat ([pfcp44@yahoo.com](mailto:pfcp44@yahoo.com)) Fr. Tiernan ([tiernanpc@gmail.com](mailto: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)

## 18th February 2018 – 1st Sunday of Lent

### TUMBLERS FOR GOD

I love somersaulting! As a child, I remember it was a sport of the less privileged in my corner of the world; because no expense was involved. But later, I discovered how holistic it was for both soul and body!!

St. Francis of Assisi was very good at somersaulting. He was a 'tumbler for God'. He used to stand on his head. And on his return to his feet he jumped up and down praising God with loud applause. The reason for his rejoicing was really solid. Standing on his head he saw the world upside down, with all trees, towns, castles and churches hanging head downwards. Francis discovered its dependent nature. The word 'dependence' simply means 'hanging'. When he had that enlightenment, he could not but burst into praise.

Seeing his world; city, castles, and churches upside down made a huge difference in the life of Francis. When he was thus enlightened it was no longer pride that overwhelmed him, but gratitude. He felt thankful to God Almighty for holding everything in suspension without dropping it!

And it is this turn-around that made the enlightenment possible. The enlightenment about a God who is at work in the world, made Francis magnify Him with praise and thanksgiving. And this is where we find the union of asceticism and joy in Francis. He was the most joyful of all the saints. His cheerfulness about all that is created was born out of his full realisation of its dependent nature on God. The enlightenment he had by standing upside down on his head, reminded himself and others of God's Lordship. And the exultant praise that followed revealed the beauty of all that is obedient to its Creator.

Lent, again! Heard the clarion call? "Repent and believe in the good news." Don't get panicky! For me Lent is as simple as that! It is an invitation to stand on one's head like Francis did and see everything hanging head downward. And at the discovery of that dependent nature one is enlightened and praises God for His abundant mercy. And the means for this enlightenment are age-old: prayer, penance and almsgiving. And the sole aim of these means is that we be enlightened with regard to the nature of God's Lordship, as one who creates, sustains, and renews.

On Ash Wednesday, I joined a family to bury the ashes of a deceased member of theirs at the cemetery in Finchley. After burying the urn with ashes, one of the staff of the cemetery covered it with some clay. It was a powerful symbol! Ashes and clay. Ashes on our foreheads mark the beginning of Lent. Lent is the time of tasting the dust of our human weakness and the ashes of our broken dreams. Lent shows us what God can do with our dust and ashes. They can become the clay from which he is able to fashion beauties beyond our imaginings. He only asks that we yield our dust and ashes to His creative power. Somehow, our Lord sees in this dust and in these ashes a potential which is beyond our vision. Had we been observers at the Creation, would we have recognized the possibilities of the primeval clay? Towards the end of the season of Lent He would show us the quiet potential in dust and ashes, a potential which prohibits us from labelling them as useless. Yes, that is what Lent is all about! To stand on our heads, discover and celebrate His Lordship!

Fr. George C.P.

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**We pray for those who have died recently** - John Shiels (funeral 1.30pm Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February), Robert Robson (funeral 11.30pm Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February), Patrick Timoney, Francis Gerard (Gerry) Burke, Estrella Murray, Leo Anthony Baker, Teresa O'Donnell; **and we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Bro Bernard Conolly CP, Linda Warden, Mr & Mrs Danny Benstock, Sarah Pender, Tom & Kathleen Carroll, Jeremiah & Catherine Harrington.

### **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. Of course, if the set time is not suitable for you, you can also do this particular form of prayer at any time on your own or with some friends.

### **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'. In particular, they would like to hear about how you see your place in the world, how faith impacts your life and how the Church can best accompany you as you work out God's plan for your life. The Cardinal is hosting two meetings at Archbishop's House in Victoria and the auxiliary bishops are hosting meetings across the diocese. You are invited to attend one of these meetings. They will involve discussion of the synod theme, an opportunity to question your bishops, and light refreshments. 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.

### **Cardinal's Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony:**

This annual event will be taking place this year in Westminster Cathedral, on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 3pm. The Cardinal will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2018. If you are celebrating one of those anniversaries, please give to Fr. Pat the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).

### **Christian Stewardship:**

Last week's collection amounted to £1,274. 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.

### **Lent Groups:**

Details of the ecumenical Lent Groups meetings this year are available in the porch. Courses begin in the week of 18<sup>th</sup> February so please pick up a leaflet and sign up on the list in the porch as soon as possible. St. Joseph's Group will be studying this year's York Course ***On The Third Day: The Resurrection then and now***, and will be meeting in the Red Room, 10.45am–12 noon on Tuesdays beginning February 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **Lenten Project:**

Once again Haiti has been in the news for the wrong reasons! But we mention it here for hopefully the right reason. 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 almost sub-human conditions. For the six Sundays of Lent we will be having an exit collection after all Masses in support of the work of this wonderful Passionist priest. I know you will be as generous as usual in your support.

Our Confirmation Group thanks everybody who supported last weekend's cake sale, which raised £318 to be divided between Haiti and the Cardinal Hume Centre.

### **Update on Fr. Chris:**

I often get questions about how Fr. Chris is getting on – is he still alive, what age is he now, does he ever get down here, etc. etc. I'm told a picture is worth a thousand words, and as we don't have room for a thousand words on a page of the bulletin, I thought it best to let you see the picture for yourselves. Now, I know the lady on the right side of the picture is Joan, so I'm not sure what that makes the fellow on the left! Suffice it to say that he doesn't look like he's suffering much hardship. Seriously, though, Fr. Chris still regularly visits the Centre on a Saturday evening, and frequently joins the community for Mass and lunch on Sundays. He may not be as nimble on his feet as he once was, but still regards himself as a Spurs supporter – I'm afraid there are no tablets to take for that!

