



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 1173084



Fr. George (gaskoloth@hotmail.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)

8th December 2019 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

A Season of Uncategorized Life

Good, ol', John the Baptist! Oh, I love how every Advent, as we are all enjoying the holiday spirit, going to Christmas parties, drinking mulled wine, giving gifts, and then John the Baptist comes out of nowhere and challenges us to rethink how we are doing EVERYTHING. Every year, he just keeps showing up, eating his locusts and honey making everyone uncomfortable and leaving us trying to figure out how it is we are supposed to prepare for this coming Kingdom of God. John is in the wilderness baptizing people. And on this particular day, some of the religious leaders come out, we are told, to be baptized. Now, some scholars have suggested that their reasons for coming out may not have been so pure. It is possible that John's way of offering baptism may have been seen as a reason to not have to go to the temple to be cleansed. This would have certainly made the religious leaders upset and it is possible they were coming out to see what was going on and perhaps even try to stop it. Whatever their reason for coming out to the wilderness, John challenged them with strong words. The scene he creates with his words is dramatic and even a little scary. John is channelling the tradition of the prophets who often created dramatic scenes with their words to get people to act. John wants these religious leaders, and he wanted all of the people there to repent and to bear good fruit. What he means by repentance is that he wants the people to live their lives in accordance with God's hope and purpose for this world. He wants them to stop living in ways contrary to God and begin living in ways that are with God. If we choose to do that, we will inevitably bear good fruit.

When we read today's passage, I think it is very easy for us to move quickly to the idea that Jesus is coming with his winnowing fork to punish us. But, scholar and professor, Alyce M. McKenzie says, "Judgment is not the same as punishment. The peaceful Kingdom of God described in this week's Old Testament lectionary text, is a kingdom of righteous judgment in which the wicked face the consequences of their actions, but in which the ultimate goal is peace and justice in the land. The way to prepare for punishment is to flinch. The way to prepare for judgment is to repent." Jesus is not coming to punish, rather he is coming to sweep away the things that are not of the kingdom of God. This is why we are called to live our lives prepared. Judgement is not punishment... it is looking to see if good fruit has been born in a life. And so, this week in Advent, we continue this work of preparing for Christ's return because it pushes us closer to the peaceable kingdom that Jesus shows us through his life and the fruit he bore.

- How would you feel if someone who looked basically homeless and unclean called you to repent in preparation for a new thing?
- Why was it important that people confess their sins?
- In what ways does that prepare one for peace?

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING AND JESSE TREE LITURGY

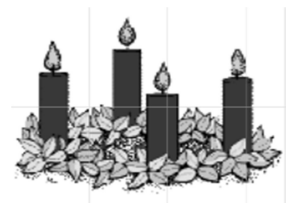
Today is the Second Sunday of Advent - the Sunday of Peace.

We light this candle today to remind us that Christ is the Prince of Peace.

Let us pray:

O God of Peace, Emmanuel, send your light into our hearts at this time. Help us to be ready for the day and the hour of your coming. Work in our hearts at this time and help us prepare ourselves for the peace that he brings – the inner peace that tells us that we are united with you and the outer peace which will come at your return. Bless our worship that it may be pleasing unto you, and bless us that we may prove to be your faithful children.

Amen.



We pray for the sick and housebound of our parish, we pray for those who have died recently – Christopher Michael Mackey (funeral 11.30am Tuesday 17th December), John Connor (funeral 1.00pm Thursday 19th December); **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Joan Fox, Florence Cass, George Barulis, Ida Webster, Patrick Groarke, Frank Quinn;

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,311. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Thanks for your continuing generosity in support of your Parish.

'Thank You' from Fr. Pat:

Fr. Pat has asked that we include a notice on his behalf to thank all the people who were so kind in their expressions of appreciation of his ministry in Highgate. A particular 'thank you' to those who organised, contributed to, and attended the meal on the Sunday, and to the many who were so exceedingly generous in their gifts. Be assured to a constant and fond remembrance in his Masses and prayers.

Mass of Induction:

The 6.30pm Mass on Friday this week, 13th December, will be a special occasion when Bishop Nicholas Hudson will formally induct Fr. George as our new Parish Priest. Everyone is welcome to attend this Mass and offer him your prayers and support.

Reconciliation:

In preparation for Christmas the 6.30pm evening Mass on Monday 16th December will incorporate a Service of Reconciliation, with opportunity for individual confession.

Giving Tree:

Once again we have our Advent Giving Trees in the porch. For those of you who haven't come across this exercise before, the idea is simple, and very much in the proper spirit of Christmas. Our trees are decorated with lots of tags, on each of which is written a suggestion for a Christmas gift to be given to the poor or disadvantaged of our city. We invite you to take a tag from the tree, and then during the week to purchase the item suggested. Items should be gift-wrapped (except food items) and brought back to church with the tags attached stating what is in each parcel (the tags will be removed before being given to people.) We particularly invite you to encourage your children to become involved. It's a very practical way to help them appreciate how lucky they are, and maybe spend a little of their own pocket money on a present for a child who is much less well-off.

Living Crib:

This year's Living Crib procession will take place this Sunday afternoon, beginning at 3.00pm in Pond Square. This Highgate tradition is a lovely way of preparing for Christmas. We have children taking the roles of Mary and Joseph, and we have a real live donkey! We particularly welcome any local angels, shepherds and wise men –and wise women! All are invited to simply turn up on the day appropriately dressed. The procession ends here at St. Joseph's with a brief candle-lit Carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

International Christmas Concert:

On Saturday 14th December 2019, at 8.30pm, we will have an International Christmas Carols concert, with songs from all over the world, including Navidad Nuestra, written by the Argentinian composer Ariel Ramirez, a suite of dances and songs typical of the Argentinian culture, about Nativity. The concert will be played by "St Joseph's Christmas Singers" and accompanied by "St Joseph's Players", including our cantor Marianne and our organist Alberto. Tickets will be available on pre-sale for £8, and on the door for £10, or online at: <http://navidadnuestrahighgate.eventbrite.com>. For information, please contact Marianne or Alberto.

A Highgate Christmas: an Advent Evening of Readings and Carols:

Join us on Thursday 19th December at 7.30pm for a flavour of Christmas given by extracts and poems from some of the great writers associated with Highgate, as well as readings from Holy Scripture and beautiful music from our own choir, and our organist Alberto Brigandi. Mulled wine and mince pies to follow.

Church Cleaning Day:

A big thank you to all the lovely people who turned out for our church cleaning session during the week, getting the church looking its best for the Christmas celebrations. And a special word of thanks to Roxane for co-ordinating everything - and for the cake!

Christmas at the Repository:

Christmas Cards, Advent Calendars, and 2020 Calendars are all available at the Repository shop at the back of church, as well as the usual range of cards, books and devotional items, and the weekly Catholic papers.