



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 234436



Fr. Pat (pfcp44@yahoo.com) 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)

6th May 2018 – 6th Sunday of Easter “WHAT FRIGHTENS YOU?”

In the darkness of the night Clavius finds the risen Jesus sitting all by himself at a distance. All Jesus's disciples are around him, sleeping on the same mountaintop. He gets up slowly and walks up to Jesus and sits down next to him. He whispers to Jesus in the stillness of the night: “I don't even know what to ask.” Jesus encourages him softly: “Speak your heart.”

Clavius took up courage and said “I cannot reconcile all this...with the world I know.” With a smile Jesus replies “With your own eyes you have seen, yet still you doubt. Imagine the doubt of those who have never seen...that's what they face.” Jesus looks into the eyes of Clavius and asks: “What frightens you?” Turning away from the look of Jesus Clavius replies: ‘Being wrong! Wagering eternity on it.’ Jesus intently looks at him: “Well then, know Him.” Clavius: “When you died, I was present... I helped.” “I know” placing the palm of his hand on the shoulder of Clavius; Jesus asks: “What is it you seek Clavius?...Certainty?... Peace?... A day without death?” A smile breaks across his face as he nods his head with welled up eyes.

This scene is from the well acclaimed movie ‘Risen’(2016). It takes place on the eve of the ascension. The movie retells the story of Jesus' resurrection and ascension through the fictional Roman tribune Clavius; who supervises both Jesus' crucifixion and the investigation into what happened to his missing body. Clavius' interviews with enthusiastic disciples and his encounters with the risen Jesus lead him to embrace faith. I love the movie for its linear mode of theologizing the events of Resurrection and Ascension. Clavius' first encounter with the risen Jesus is remarkable. When he finds the risen Jesus in flesh in the upper room he slides down the wall in a mixture of amazement and confusion.

The stories of ‘Jesus sightings’ tell us it was an embodied event; it had something to do with flesh. That is why I truly believe no religion takes body as seriously as Christian religion. Body is not seen as a prison or an enemy of spirit. Through Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension the human body has become part of the life of God. And my body is a home where God wants to manifest the fullness of the divine glory.

The next morning the disciples woke up and started calling for Jesus. They and Clavius finally saw him off in the distance walking toward the sun. He turned around while walking backwards uttering the words of ‘Great Commissioning.’ Then he explodes (in silence) and dissolves into the atmosphere. I love the cinematic language of this scene. It is not a vertical locomotion toward heavens. It is both presence and absence. We experience divine intimacy not only by Christ's coming but also by his leaving. That is why Bonhoeffer said: “The God who is with us is the God who forsakes us... Before God and with God we live without God.”

There is a great emphasis on underlining one's presence in our society and culture. Presence is what matters. Absence is killing. But ascension invites us to convert the pain of his absence into a deeper understanding of his presence. Ascension calls for this new mode of ministry of absence. On my communion rounds to the house bound and inmates in the nursing homes I am very conscious of this mode of ministry. My visits are essential and beneficial for them just as my leaving. Because when I leave them it creates a space where God's spirit can occupy and by my absence he can be present in a new way. In this way memory of the visit becomes more important than the visit itself. And there is no absence without the preceding presence; it is emptiness. “It is for your good I leave.” We have to learn to leave so that the spirit can come. Hence, believe me ascension is a paradigm of life.

“What is it you seek, Clavius?... Certainty?... Peace?... A day without death?”

Fr. George.

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We pray for those who have died recently – Neil McDonald, Anthony Miles, Jean Willis; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Frank Hughes, Dennis Hartung, Florence Tharby, Billy Ryan, Mary Hynes, Thomas Ryan, Emma Fiona May, Billy Nolan, Ted Duane, George O'Shea.

Bank Holiday:

Monday this week is a bank holiday so there will only be one Mass, at 9.30am.

Ascension Day:

Following a ruling by the Bishops of England & Wales, the feast of the Ascension has been returned to its traditional date (40 days after Easter) which falls on Thursday this week. Thursday is therefore once again a Holy Day of Obligation, and Masses here will be at: 6.30pm Vigil on Wednesday, and 9.30am, 11.00am and 6.30pm on Thursday.

Coffee Morning This Sunday:

Our next Parish Coffee Morning will be this Sunday, in the Red Room, immediately after the 10.00 am. Mass. Why not avail of this good opportunity, especially for new Parishioners, to meet fellow members of our Parish? All are welcome to relax for a while and enjoy a cuppa and a chat.

Fr. Christopher:

Just to keep you up-to-date with his present condition - Fr. Christopher has been discharged from the Whittington hospital and has transferred to the Marie Curie Hospice in Hampstead. He continues to make good progress, and is in good spirits but is still rather weak and is having significant difficulties in eating. The hope is that with the high level of care which the hospice can provide he will improve in strength and be able to return to Nazareth House. Please keep him in your prayers. Thank you.

Shared International Lunch:

To celebrate Pentecost, the Catholic Church's birthday, our Parish is organising a Shared International Lunch on Sunday 20th May, at 1pm in the Red Room – and, hopefully, (summer will be here by then!) spilling out to the lawn at the back of the monastery. This is our second year to celebrate Pentecost in this way. Our celebration is designed to encourage people to get to know, and mix with, particularly the many new people who are constantly joining our parish. If you were one of the lucky ones who managed to be here for the celebration last year you will remember what a wonderful success it was. All parishioners, longstanding or newly arrived, young or old, are invited to come along and, if possible, contribute a traditional dish from your country and/or some drinks (but not in large quantities). Please note that, on the day, you will only be able to warm up, not cook the food.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,230. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Last week's appeal on behalf of the Missionary Sisters raised £1056. We very much appreciate your outstanding generosity.

Eucharistic Congress:

The bishops of England and Wales are holding a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress in Liverpool in 7-9 September 2018. The Echo Arena in Liverpool will be the home to a six-hour stage programme on the 8th September including a Congress Mass, speakers Bishop Robert Barron and Cardinal Vincent Nichols, and a drama highlighting the beauty of reverence and devotion. The day will conclude with Adoration. For more information and to enquire about tickets, please contact adoremus@rcdow.org.uk or call 07738183829.

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

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

Bright Stars Stay and Play:

The St Joseph's Parish Bright Stars Stay and Play for 0-5 year olds is now back during the school term. It will run on Tuesday mornings from 9:00-11:00am in the parish centre. Lots of fun activities for 0-5 year olds. If you would like more information then please contact: stjosephsbrightstars@gmail.com

Various Updates:

The work on the dome of the church is coming to an end – hopefully will be finished this week. Much of the expense will be covered by insurance, so there won't be too great a hole in the parish finances. In the meantime the work on replacing the closers on the inner doors in the porch is almost completed – just another day's work to be done. And finally, you may have noticed that we have a totally new sound system installed. There are one or two little glitches to be sorted, but they should be dealt with quickly. Now for the painting of the porch, sorting the seating, cleaning the ceiling, restoring the sanctuary – never a dull moment!