



THE FEAST OF
**CORPUS
CHRISTI**

ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE

2020 June 14

What do I feel and think about when I see those words? Do I think What? Another Feast? We've just had Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday and here's something else the Church wants us to think about? It might be tempting to feel a trifle irritated.... But No, wait a minute, we're talking about the Eucharist, Holy Communion, that point in the Mass when the whole congregation gets up and moves towards the altar to receive Christ.

What does it mean, receiving Christ in this way? For me, it's a moment of focus in the middle of what is happening in my life, of what is pre-occupying me, what is distracting me... Faced with the Host, I stop, I focus, Christ is physically here and He is about to become part of me. He will become part of my sorrow, my worry, my immediate life, maybe thanks to this transforming moment, my problems will resolve themselves? He will become part of my joy and laughter too.

My sadness is that currently, I don't have that boosting moment, that weekly jolt into other ways of looking at my problems. I miss Holy Communion.

But I have a particular sadness: thanks to the Virus, all those young children, who we have watched over the months since September, getting closer and closer to their big moment and who would even now be making their First Holy Communion, are being deprived of the special joy and excitement of their first physical encounter with Christ.

-Elizabeth Millar



The long awaited Reopening....

May God be Praised!!!

Dear Parishioners of St Joseph's,

We are pleased to inform you that government guidance will permit places of worship to re-open for individual prayer from next week. **Accordingly, from Wednesday, June 18th, St Joseph's will be open for private prayer from 10am to 12noon on each Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday.**

There will be exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for individual worship. We are sure that you will welcome the opportunity to once again have access to St Joseph's to reflect and pray and to get connected with our faith.

As we welcome the faithful, it is still vitally important that we take seriously the risks involved and make all the necessary preparations to help us to open safely and without detriment to public health. So, there will be several measures in place to ensure that we fully comply with government guidance. These will include cleaning and hygiene, safe distancing, church capacity and entry and exit into the church. Volunteer stewards will be on hand to assist and ensure that the guidance is being followed.

This first step will enable us to learn and prepare for the further steps that will take us to a fuller use of our church, for the celebration of Mass and other sacraments, as the restrictions of lockdown are lifted.

We look forward, with great pleasure, to welcoming you again to St Joseph's.

-Betty Pires and Roni Collins



Volunteers Please

At last, after so long with the church doors shut and locked, the reopening is in sight. We will be able to meet again in our place of worship but things will be different for the foreseeable future. It will be necessary to observe strict guidelines for prevention of any resurgence of the coronavirus and to do this, volunteers are needed to assist in various cleaning and sanitising tasks and to help provide people in the congregation directions and guidelines regarding social distancing. Please get in touch if you are willing to help when the time comes at:

bettypiress1503@gmail.com /
07785925780



**Thanks a Million to our
Task-force for Parish Reopening.**

I do appreciate Serghel, Wezenet, Roxane, Betty, Roni and Fessehaye for cleaning, sanitizing, and getting the church ready for reopening.

A Big Thank You in advance to all the wonderful volunteers who are stepping in.

Caring presence of
**Jesus in the
Eucharist**



Today we celebrate the Feast of the Corpus Christi—which literally means the "body of Christ." This feast is about the presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, the very gift of Jesus' real presence with us — protecting us, nourishing our spirits, pledging us unending love and dignity as sons and daughters of God.

On the eve of his death, Jesus wanted to assure his disciples that they would not be alone, so he established the sacrament of the Eucharist. Today one of the things we are invited to do is to appreciate the Lord's continuing presence among us. As Jesus shares his presence with us in the Eucharist, the feast is also reminding us of the value of being present more fully and deeply to one another and to care for the whole creation.

The COVID-19- pandemic has affected our lives so much today. We struggle with bereavement, the fear of dying, loss of daily freedom, loneliness, the relational challenges of sharing the small spaces, anxiety about future, making us feel uneasy sense of doom all the more.

It is here that our scripture helps us to realise the caring presence of the Lord in the Eucharist. Reflecting on the feast, Scripture Scholar Fr. Donald Senior CP writes; "The first reading today from Deuteronomy recalls the story of the manna, which is the miraculous food God provides for the Israelites during

their desert journey from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land. The Lord, the biblical author notes, brought forth water from the rock and fed the people with manna so they would not starve in the desert". "Do not forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery: who guided you through this vast and dreadful wilderness, a land of fiery serpents, scorpions, thirst; who in this waterless place brought you water from the hardest rock; who in this wilderness fed you with manna that your fathers had not known.'

The same is true of the different Gospels stories. Jesus feeds great crowds with bread and fish. When his disciples want to send the crowds to search out food on their own, Jesus tells them, "You feed them!" There are touching moments too. When Jesus raises the little daughter of Jairus from her death, he tells the stunned parents to give her something to eat.

This is what we celebrate at Corpus Christi. It is a thanksgiving for the gift of nourishment at all levels. For all of us, it is a thanksgiving for the blessing of the sustenance that comes to us in the Eucharist — the very gift of Jesus' real presence with us.

-Fr. Thomas K R



From the Rector's Desk

The Passionist community's home (monastery) at Highgate is located attached to the church and over looks the monastery gardens. At the end of the gardens is the parish community centre used by the Irish Club. The entrance to the club is via the path way near the entrance to the Catholic school next door and also via the car park on the other side near the road- Dartmouth Park. The car park extends up the drive to a space adjacent to the monastery walls. All the present community's bed rooms, our private chapel, kitchen, dining room and recreation room and some parish meeting rooms look out directly to the garden.

Until a year ago we often had homeless people staying on our property, that were not in anyway, a serious problem but over the last year and a half we have had the presence of drug dealers and users coming all hours at night and daytime into our gardens selling drugs and camping in our gardens and behind bushes to smoke, inject or ingest. When the car park boom-gate is open for our own purposes this drug elements arrive, parking in their cars sometimes near the club and even up next to the monastery walls.

About a year ago, the rector, our religious superior saw from our chapel window a man attacking vegetables growing in a

patch in our gardens with what looked like a knife. When he approached the man to stop attacking our garden the response was an assault upon the priest's head and neck. Two witnessing the event saw he had a knife in the other hand. The priest kept his calm and managed by conversation to stop the man damaging the garden, but he still refused to leave the property. The police were then called and he was asked to leave. Charges could have been laid for assault but the priest did not want him to be charged. It was around this time that considering also the presence of drug dealers and two situations of people putting up tents and to stay in our gardens that the police suggested we protect ourselves and property by locking the gate near the primary school. The police promised to do a regular surveillance and to put signs up to that effect. We still resisted the idea, then of locking the gates.

When one or two of us are forced to confront people on our own land and private property about anti-social behaviour, the experience can be very intimidating and scary for us. With the tent dwellers mentioned already we had a person staying for nearly a week before leaving. Another couple came and placed a large tent up close to the monastery. When we requested they leave they

instead spent the rest of the day drinking and sun baking in the nude in the garden. The next day I asked the police to come and they asked them to remove the tent to depart. They left but left the tent and all the rubbish behind.

In the recent months we had left the barrier up at the request of the Whittington Hospital for extra staff, both doctors and nurses to park in our car park. We were very happy to assist. However, the downside meant more drug dealing and being woken up at night as groups came in cars to park under our windows to use drugs, listen to music play their videos and dump a lot of rubbish on our property. The rector went out three times on different nights between the hours of 1am - 4 am to ask in a quiet way for them to leave as we can't sleep.

In just recent weeks when the weather was quite warm, we found our gardens invaded by groups to picnic and play games. While this might seem an innocent act, in reality becomes a nightmare for our community. Rubbish is left behind, people end up publicly urinating because there are no toilets. On three occasions we have had to inform women sun-baking in bikinis and men in only shorts that they are acting in an inappropriate way, dressing down in our monastery garden

which we view as a sacred space with religious statues around the place.

Last Sunday evening, we saw from our window, two men breaking into our garden work shed. One priest attempted to approach them, but they escaped via the gateway that is now locked. The police were informed. They recommended we take stronger measures to secure our property by getting more cameras and locking the gates. During last week the rector and Parish Priest walked down to investigate around the community centre. People have been dumping their rubbish there and recently a wardrobe was dumped right next to the community centre near the pathway. To make things worse, two drug dealers happened to be standing around on the pathway at that time and spoke aggressively at us thinking we had come to meet them. They were asked to leave our property. They refused and moved away nearer to the gate entrance. When the priests walked then to view the condition of the gates and review our security situation they were again confronted by these dealers who threatened them. Not only have members of our community felt threatened at times when entering and leaving our premises but also visiting Passionist priests from overseas have also been intimidated daytime and night. In this last week we

have had to pay a locksmith to come for repairs. We have also had professionals come to repair the boom-gate which had been damaged and vandalized. The latest act of aggression was to cut the wires on our intercom that stops cars\trucks that come to visit us or do deliveries to request the opening of the barrier.

As you expect to live in peace and quiet in your own premises so do we. While the entrances to our gardens are now closed on the Highgate Hillside road they remain open on the Dartmouth Park side. You are welcome still to cross into the public gardens via the entrance in front of our church. Parishioners and people may also visit our gardens for private reflection and meditation by entering side passage near the church entrance doors or via the boom-gate entrance at the car park. We would like to thank you for appreciating the difficult challenges we face at this time.

Soon the church will be open again for personal prayer for a number of hours on set days.

The Passionist Community at St Joseph's Retreat, Highgate

The Eucharistic Colloquy



"Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you. All you who hunger and thirst for fulfillment, for holiness, come and have your fill of my life as you eat my Body and drink my Blood.

"Do you fear that I will not be enough? Do you have doubts that I will understand the depth of your hunger? Do you fret that I will feed only others and overlook you whom I love the most in your littleness and need?

"Come by yourselves to an out-of-the-way place and rest a little. Come into my heart that longs to fill you with my rest, my peace, my love."

Come to me from that deserted place in your soul. "Come, though you think that there is not enough to give even a morsel to the vast crowds. Bring me only what you have: your five barley loaves, your two fish. Bring me your nothingness, your emptiness, your powerlessness. Bring me only that and nothing more. For you have nothing more to offer. And watch me lift your nothingness in blessing. Watch me multiply your offering so that it overflows with my saving presence.

Remember and pray

+ Eleanor Frost

+ Dallas Maria Weir



REMEMBER HOLY JOES

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the forms you need and make your
offerings.

www.stjosephshighgate.org.uk



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