



# ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 234436



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**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)

## 10th January 2016 – The Baptism of the Lord Stopping and Starting

I don't tend to travel in the tube an awful lot, largely because I don't go into central London very much. In regard to being on the tube I'm a bit like the story of waiting for busses – none for a long time, and then three or four together. My tube journeys are a bit like that – not on one for a couple of months, and then three or four times in the one week. This week I needed to go to Camden Town. I don't know how you spend your time on these journeys – many people seem to occupy themselves with their mobiles, either playing games or catching up on their texts and emails; others have their Kindles or equivalent, even some books being read, or make-up being applied – as I saw the other morning. None of these ways of occupying oneself really attract me – I tend to simply read the ads, or observe what others are doing – without staring, of course! And, of course, I listen to the announcements. If you've been on the Northern Line over the last few months you will be aware that Tuffnell Park station has been closed. So, as you're heading into the city and are approaching Tuffnell Park, you hear the announcement "This train will not be stopping at the next station" – and sure enough, it slows down and then speeds up again. But it's on the way back that tickles me. Coming from the city, as it approaches the station the same announcement is made – "This train will not be stopping at the next station", and then it stops! Granted, the doors are not opened – people can't get on or off. But why say it's not going to stop, if what they really mean is "you can't get off here"?

You might say I have little to occupy me if all I have to worry about are tube announcements, but it got me to thinking about how often we say things nowadays that don't necessarily quite mean what they appear to say. Today's feast reminded me of one of those words – Baptism! Once upon a time when a person approached their parish and asked to have their child baptised, they meant that they wanted their child to become a Christian, and they intended for their child to enjoy all the privileges and take on all the obligations that being a Christian entailed. And it is still true today that the majority of people who bring their children to be baptised have that same intention. But I would have to be very naïve not to realise that some folk simply mean – will you pour water on my child's head and give me a certificate to say he/she's baptised; I'll see you again if I have another child, or when I want to get this child into a Catholic school.

Today's feast is inviting us to look at how we think of Baptism – not particularly in relation to children, but in relation to how we live our lives. John the Baptist describes it in today's gospel as being baptised "with the Holy Spirit and with fire". Do we truly live with that Spirit in us; do we really have that fire of enthusiasm in how we live out our faith? Do we really believe that voice from heaven – "you are my son/daughter, the beloved, my favour rests on you"?

This is traditionally the time of the year for making New Year resolutions. They're gone a bit out of fashion nowadays – largely, I suspect, because they didn't tend to last for too long; but largely also, I believe, because they tended to be too ambitious and generalised. As we start out this New Year perhaps it would be a good idea to take something manageable – like giving an hour a week, or even a month, to some worthwhile project you know about – there are even a few suggestions in our notices this week. Our gospel mentions today about Jesus take a little time to Himself to pray – perhaps there's some special moment in the day – at mealtime, for instance – when we could say a little prayer together as a family. The possibilities are endless, but the Spirit and the Fire need to be there. Then there will truly be 'no stopping' you.

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**We pray for those who have died recently** – James Flanagan (funeral 11.00am Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January), Emanuel Xuareb (funeral 12.00 noon Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January); Joan Fox (funeral 1.30pm Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> January), Nora O'Loughlin (née Gallagher), Eva Slavik; **and we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Anne Cross, Elizabeth Cross, Frans & Mieke van den Berg, Tom Hurndall, Maria Bezerra, James "JP" Gavaghan, Olive Hogan, Robert Ryan, Siobhan Bailey.

### **Thank You:**

We hope you all, whether you managed to get away or not, had a most enjoyable celebration of Christmas and the New Year. I take this opportunity on behalf of all the community here in St. Joseph's to express our very genuine and heartfelt appreciation of the many expressions of good-will received, and for the many thoughtful and generous gifts left in for us prior to and during the Christmas season. (You have to take responsibility if you think some of us are looking a little plump and rosy-cheeked – over-indulgence in chocolates and wine will do that!) We also thank and congratulate you on the magnificent turn-out at the various Christmas celebrations, particularly at the two Christmas Eve celebrations. It is so heartening to see so many people taking the time and making the effort to focus on the deeper meaning of the festive season as well as enjoying the more material side of the festivities. A special thanks to all who put in so much work towards making Christmas in St. Joseph's so special - we think particularly of those responsible for cleaning and decorating the Church; for those who erected and decorated the Cribs and Christmas Tree; those responsible for the Music ministry; but not forgetting the other ministry groups and individuals who as usual were generous in giving of their time and talents. The list could go on and on, but let's just draw the line there and say to you all that your wonderful support is very much appreciated.

### **Pre Marriage Course:**

Our next Marriage preparation course will be taking place on Saturday, 6th February. Those who wish to participate should contact Fr. Pat, at [pfcp44@yahoo.com](mailto:pfcp44@yahoo.com). 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. Calling it “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.

### **Applications for Admission to St. Joseph's Primary School:**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an Ofsted rated 'outstanding' school, with an ethos based on Faith, Community and a true partnership between school, church and the families. If you would like your child to attend St Joseph's Nursery or Reception in September 2016 please apply before the closing date of 15th January 2016). We offer free full time nursery places 8:40-3:15. For all children we also have the option (subject to availability) of additional breakfast club (£3) from 8am and after school care (£8) until 6pm. Forms and other details on our website - <http://www.st-josephs.islington.sch.uk/201617-admissions/> Or call the school on 0207 272 1270 or email [office@st-josephs.islington.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-josephs.islington.sch.uk)

### **Prayer Groups:**

The Charismatic Prayer group will resume meeting at 7.30pm Tuesday, 12th January. Everyone welcome. The Christian Meditation group will resume meeting on Wednesday, 13th January, at 8.00pm in the Monastery.

### **New Year's Resolution - Volunteer for CAFOD:**

Do you have good public speaking skills and want to help tackle poverty and injustice? CAFOD needs volunteers to speak in parishes and/or schools about its work in the developing world. To find out more and book a place on our next "Understanding CAFOD" training day on Saturday, 23rd January 2016 call CAFOD on 0208 449 6970 or email [westminster@cafod.org.uk](mailto:westminster@cafod.org.uk).

### **“Vinnie Packs”:**

The SVP are distributing 12,000 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. They would be very grateful if you could sponsor packs at a suggested donation of £3.25 per pack. Donations can be sent to **Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ** with cheques made out to SVP or go to [virginmoneygiving.com](http://virginmoneygiving.com) and type "SVP" into the charity section. Vinnie Packs is in the **Campaign** drop down box. Thank you so much for your support.

### **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.

### **World Youth Day – Krakow 2016:**

Westminster Youth Ministry are leading a pilgrimage for youth 16 years and over to World Youth Day in 2016, visiting both Lodz for Days in the Diocese and Krakow for World Youth Day. The pilgrimage runs from 18th July until 31st July and is priced at £750 - inclusive of all accommodation, travel, WYD fees and food. There is an option for those over 18 to join the pilgrimage for the WYD week only. For more information [youth@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:youth@rcdow.org.uk), <http://dowym.c4om/events/wyd/> or 0207-387-1971.