



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 234436



Fr. Pat (pfc44@yahoo.com) Fr. Tiernan (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)

10th September 2017 – 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

“My Summer Holidays”

When I was young school was never really a very big issue for me. I didn't hate it, nor did I particularly love it – it was just one of those things that made up part of life as a youngster. I was always happy to get holidays – particularly in the summer, because they were especially long – 2 months in primary school and three months in secondary. (Some people don't believe me when I tell them that – they think I'm exaggerating or it's another manifestation of my faulty memory! – but I assure you it's true.) The only explanation for it that I can think of is that we must be quicker learners in Ireland! And for the long summer holidays I was always sent with my younger brother down to Kerry to my granny's house – where school was quickly forgotten, and having day-long fun with my cousins was the name of the game. Eventually going back to school was part of the annual cycle, which one duly accepted. But there was one part of it that I have to say I always dreaded. I knew that within the first couple of weeks the teacher was going to demand a homework essay – one year in Irish and the next in English – on “My Summer Holidays”. I hated essays, and I was no good at them. Once I got past “*I had a great time. I swam and played football with my cousins*” I was stuck!

Why all that? Because I had a certain feeling of Deja-vu as I sat down to write the article for the bulletin this week. Should it be headed “My Summer Holidays”? Well, I neither swam nor played football! But I did do something that I had always hoped I would get around to. My niece asked me one of the days if I would come with her to the Skelligs the following day. That will probably mean nothing to most of you, though some may have seen it in the final scene of last year's Star Wars movie. They are two small islands – rocks really – that are about seven miles from the mainland, most noted because of the monastic settlement on the larger one. It consists of some beehive cells and a chapel and a few other small buildings perched on the very top of a precarious slope. We booked to go out on what was a small fishing boat, capable of holding no more than twelve people. Apart from the two of us, the rest were Americans and Germans.

Naturally the question came up – why would they have a monastery in such an inaccessible place – our boatman told us that when it was founded in the 7th or maybe 9th century, people still believed the world was flat, and that this was the most westerly point, not only of Ireland, or of Europe, but of the world! They believed that the world should be surrounded by a blanket of prayer, as it were, and they were covering the western flank.

It was a nice story, and went down well with the tourists – my niece and I weren't tourists, of course – and bobbing about in a small boat on ten-foot high waves, nobody was going to argue with the boatman. In fact most of them were arguing with their breakfasts, obviously not being used to Atlantic waves on a windy day! I think if they had heard the promise of Our Lord in today's gospel, they would have got together to pray for a calm sea. He's promised us that if even two of us got our act together and really trusted in the Lord, that our prayers would be answered. I hope that's the kind of spirit we all will have as we begin a new year – getting together as a community, and praying and working together with the Lord to make this a better world, and St. Joseph's an even better parish. Welcome back!

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We pray for the sick and housebound of our parish - Neil McDonald, Robbie McDonald, Dorothy Handerek; **we pray for those who have died recently** - Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Barbara Cronin, Nancy Rooney; **and we remember those whose anniversaries occur** – Jim Matthews, Martin Morrissey, Arthur Anderson, Tom Webster Jr., Eileen Dineen, Una Phelan.

Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor RIP:

The Cardinal's body will be received into Westminster Cathedral with a short service at 10am On Tuesday, 12th September. The Cardinal's body will lie in the cathedral throughout the day and all are welcome to visit to pay their respects, pray and sign the book of condolence. The regular Masses will be celebrated at 12.30 and 1.05pm.

At 5pm on Tuesday, Cardinal Vincent will preside at the Solemn Vespers of the Dead, then the cathedral will remain open until 8pm for visitors to pay their respects. All are welcome to the services on Tuesday.

The Requiem Mass and burial of Cardinal Cormac will take place at 12 noon on Wednesday, 13th September. Cardinal Vincent will preside and Archbishop George Stack will preach the homily. In order to allow as many parishes and schools of the diocese to be represented, **admission to the cathedral for the Requiem Mass will be by ticket only**. The Cardinal's body will be laid to rest in the Cathedral in front of 10th Station of the Cross.

On Wednesday, 4th October, a Memorial Mass for Cardinal Cormac will be celebrated at the cathedral at 5.30pm. All are welcome to attend on this occasion.

Welcome Back: *(Repeated for the benefit of those who hadn't returned last week!)*

It seems only the other day that we were looking forward to the holidays, and here we are having almost already forgotten how we spent them! Anyway, let me take this opportunity on behalf of all the community here to welcome you back, and also to extend a very warm welcome to the many new people who have come to our parish over the past few months. Whether you stayed at home, or travelled, I do hope you had a relaxing and enjoyable time and have your batteries re-charged as we face into a new school year.

I'm particularly happy to welcome among us Fr. Ralph Egan, a Passionist from our Irish/Scottish Province. He has very kindly agreed to help out in the parish during the absence of Fr. Tiernan in Australia. Fr. Ralph (by the way, pronounced Rahlf – not Raif!) tells me that his visit brings back many happy memories of his two year residence here away back in the 1960's – when he was studying in London. I trust that his stay here will help to build a new collection of happy memories. On your, and my own, behalf I want to thank him for his generosity in helping out over the next few weeks.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation:

While detailed dates for the actual beginning of the programs have not been finalised as yet, application Forms for our First Holy Communion and Confirmation programs will be available in the porch of the church from next Sunday. We remind you once again that these programs are solely for children either living in the Parish, regularly attending mass in the parish, or attending school in the parish. We also remind all parents concerned, that children will not be accepted on either program unless the application form is accompanied by a **baptism certificate** – so if you don't have one to hand, then we advise you to immediately set about getting one! For children baptised here in St. Joseph's the date of baptism is sufficient. Preparation for the sacraments is a joint project between the parish and the homes of the students, and hence involves quite a degree of commitment by families as well as our catechists, who voluntarily give of their time and talents. Naturally the children are required to attend mass each Sunday, and we of course expect their families to support them by good example.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,494. In addition we receive an average of over £800 per week in standing orders. Thanks once again for your continuing generosity.

Back to School/Back to Work Sharing Lunch:

After the magnificent response to the International Lunch we had earlier this year, by popular demand we are having a similar event to mark returning to work/school after the Summer holidays. It will take place after the 12 Mass **this** Sunday, 10th September. 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 you will only be able to warm up, not cook the food.

Prayer Groups:

The Charismatic Prayer Group resumes meetings in the Monastery at 7.30pm this Tuesday 12th September. The Christian Meditation group has resumed and meets at 8.00pm on Friday evenings. Everyone welcome.

100 Club Results:

The August Draw for the 100 Club was held in the Monastery last week. The number of entries was 109 and the winners were: £400 Neil Golding (31), £100 Anne Miles (91), £50 Sue Prudo (123). A copy of the results may be obtained from the Parish office on request. The June draw will be held as usual in the last week of the month, and monthly subscriptions should be paid by Sunday 24th September. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way.