



# ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

St Joseph's Church, Highgate Hill, London N19 5NE  
Tel. 020 7272 2320 Fax. 020 7281 9433

e-mail: [joseph.highgate@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.highgate@gmail.com) : website: [www.stjosephshighgate.org.uk](http://www.stjosephshighgate.org.uk)

Registered Charity 1173084



Fr. Pat ([pfcp44@yahoo.com](mailto:pfcp44@yahoo.com)) Fr. George ([gaskoloth@hotmail.com](mailto: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)

## 2nd December 2018 – First Sunday of Advent

### Finding Our Way

Once December starts there is no getting away from it – Christmas is just around the corner. Even if the calendar weren't reminding us, then the weather should. No snow, admittedly, but personally I'm not a great fan of those long winter evenings, dark around four, struggling to keep the umbrella from turning inside out, while at the same time trying not to step on the lethal wet leaves that are all over the footpath. I don't want to give the impression that the approach of Christmas is all about doom and gloom – shopping, Christmas cards, etc – because that is certainly not the way I see it. It is actually a wonderful time of excitement and expectation – and nowhere, probably, do we experience this more than when there are children around.

But it was never part of the Christian faith that Christmas is just for children, and that adults get their joy from seeing the children having such an exciting time. That would be very sad – it's like a sort of Christmas 'once-removed'. It is important for all of us, as we begin this season of Advent, to avail of the opportunity to renew our appreciation of the wonderful mystery of the Incarnation – of Christ leaving the, as it were, comfort of heaven, and coming down to enrich our understanding of what it is to be a person committed to loving and caring for one another.

We're invited to see Advent as a journeying towards Christmas, as Mary and Joseph journeyed to Bethlehem two thousand years ago. Which reminds me – next Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> December, we will be having our own very realistic presentation of that same journey, as our Living Crib event begins up in Pond Square and makes it way down the hill – complete with donkey – and finishes with our tableau in the church representing the nativity scene – less the donkey! If at all possible, do make the effort to be there, and join in the singing of Christmas carols on the way. (And for those who can be thus bribed – there will be mulled wine and mince pies in the Lady chapel – with suitable refreshments for the younger generation.)

Where was I? Oh yes – Advent as a journey – coming ever closer not just to Christmas, but to Christ himself. Nowadays it's commonplace if setting out on a journey – especially if we're not sure of the way – that we avail of Sat-Navs. And if you want to, you can say that the Bible and the traditions of our faith are our sat-navs through the journey of life. But there is another way of looking at it. What if we saw ourselves as the sat-navs – that being a sat-nav for those journeying through life and need of guidance is an essential part of our mission as Christians. And it's even more clearly the case for parents in relation to the children. (A good sat-nav indicates the best route to take, it doesn't force one to take it.)

As we approach Christmas, as we hopefully grow closer to Christ, I suggest there is no more practical way of showing that we have really heard that message of Christ – “in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me” – than by participating in our Giving Tree project – see the notices page for more details. But whatever way we prepare for Christmas let it show our deep desire to grow ever closer to Christ. Let it be an Advent-ure. Let it be fun.

-----00000OOO00000-----

**We pray for the sick and housebound of our parish, particularly –** Monica Vandenberg; **we remember those who have died recently –** John Fitzgerald (funeral 10.30am Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December); **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time –** Anthony & Joe McNulty, Daniel Lucitt, Caren Chow, Kathline McMahon, Frank Quinn.

### **Giving Tree:**

As you entered the church this morning hopefully you noticed our two trees in the porch. For those of you who may be new to the parish, or haven't come across this exercise before, the idea is very simple, and very much in the proper spirit of Christmas. Instead of the usual decorations our trees are bedecked with lots of tags, on each of which has been written a suggestion for a Christmas gift to be given to the poor of our city – local families that our local branch of St. Vincent de Paul are in touch with, and also for the Cardinal Hume Centre, which does outstanding work with families in distress and with the homeless. We invite you to take a tag from the tree, and then during the following week to purchase the item suggested. Items, which should be gift-wrapped should then be brought to the church the following Sunday, with the tags stating what gift is in each parcel attached to them. (Don't worry, the tags will be removed before being given to any individual.) We promise you that all items will be distributed before Christmas. Gifts received by Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December will be in time for the Cardinal Hume Centre's Christmas Party on the Saturday (but later donations will still be welcome). Many of the items on the tags are of a practical nature, like warm socks, gloves and so on, but there are also suggestions for small non-essentials, like biscuits, toys, books, games, etc – items which for us we're inclined to take for granted, but for others are a luxury that they could never afford to buy for themselves. 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 of their own age who is much less well-off.

### **Coffee Morning:**

You're invited to our Coffee Morning in the Red Room immediately after 10.00am Mass this Sunday. Why not take a little time to meet and greet your fellow parishioners. All welcome, young and old.

### **Living Crib:**

This year's Living Crib procession will be **next** Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> December, beginning at 3.00 pm in Pond Square. This Highgate tradition is a lovely way of preparing for Christmas. We have children taking the roles of Mary and Joseph, but having nobody to play the role of the donkey, we have a real live one instead! We particularly welcome any local (real) angels, shepherds and wise men –and wise women won't be turned away! All are invited to simply turn up on the day appropriately dressed –no need to enrol beforehand. The procession ends here at St. Joseph's with a brief candle-lit Carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

### **100 Club:**

The November Draw for the 100 Club was held in the Monastery during the week. The winners were: £400 Pat Kennedy (44), £100 Mrs P. Kelly (121), £50 Karl Mayer-Rieckh (143). A copy of the results may be obtained from the Parish office on request. The December draw will be held early so monthly subscriptions should be paid by Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way. We publish the names of winners each month, however if any member would prefer 'no publicity' please e-mail Ed at joseph.highgate@gmail.com and we will annotate our membership register accordingly.

### **Diocesan Youth Mass:**

On Saturday 8th December (starting at 3pm) at St. Dominic's Priory (Southampton Rd, Belsize Park, London NW5 4LB), Westminster Youth Ministry will be celebrating its annual diocesan Youth Mass. The principle celebrant will be Bishop John Wilson. Young people from all parishes are welcome to this special celebration. The music for the Mass will be provided by Catholic artist Edwin Fawcett and the young Music Ministry scholars who spent a year preparing for this day. If you are a young Catholic who is interesting in being more involved in your faith, this is a good opportunity to meet informally with other young people in the same situation. For more information about the Youth Mass, as well as to apply for next year's free music scholarship, visit [dowym.com](http://dowym.com)

### **Christian Stewardship:**

Last week's collection amounted to £1,528. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Thank you for your continuing generosity.

### **Christmas at the Repository:**

Christmas Cards, Advent Calendars, and 2019 Calendars and St. Joseph's Parish Diaries are all now 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.

### **Diary Updates - Christmas Events:**

Our evening of **Christmas Readings and Carols** will be on Thursday 20th December at 7.30pm. As an extra treat this year we are hosting a Christmas recital by the well-known local-ish choir, **Voxcetera** on Friday 7th December. (This is an admission by ticket event – please see the flyers in the porch.)