



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 1173084

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)

9th September 2018 – 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

TAKING OUR MEDICINE

There was a well-known and successful international snooker player, at his peak in the 70's and 80's, who, because he suffered from a particular disorder of his nervous system, reputedly had lager prescribed for him by his doctor. I don't know whether he went to the pub or to the chemist to have his prescription fulfilled, but I know he was the envy of all the drinking people with whom I was acquainted. How they wished they could reply to all the suggestions that "you really need to cut down on your drinking" with "I really would love to, but I can't – my doctor has prescribed it for me!" Before you rush off to check on whether you would qualify for such a prescription, the rather sad end to the story is that the player concerned has since died at a relatively young age – which, from where I stand, is before he was 60.

The reason why the above came into my mind this week, was a little bit of ingenuity that I remember a parishioner once shared with me. Like many of our parishioners, his job entailed a certain amount of travelling, and, like for the rest of us, the tightening up in airline security had been a bit of a pain in the neck. While we might appreciate that such measures are actually necessary, we don't particularly have to like them, especially when we know we're no threat to anybody.

Anyway, before embarking on this particular journey, which involved a number of connecting flights, he went to his doctor and had him issue him with a prescription for his toiletries. I doubt that any doctor would do it nowadays, but he did, possibly as much out of curiosity as anything else. Would it work? Not surprisingly, when he got as far as the security check he was told "You can't take toothpaste on board, sir!" "But here's the prescription! The rules state that if it's prescribed, I can take it on board!" I'm sure the loophole has been plugged by now, so don't bother trying it – but my friend managed to get it on board a couple of flights before eventually having to hand it over.

Our gospel today has Jesus doing quite a bit of travelling – admittedly not by plane – right through the Decapolis region around the sea of Galilee. Travelling was much simpler then, and security generally entailed making sure you travelled in groups whenever possible, and sticking to the highways. And, of course, since he was travelling by road Jesus was likely to meet all kinds of people. In today's passage, we have him meeting up with a deaf man, who also suffered from a speech impediment. He was a man who obviously had good friends, who indicated to him that the prescription for having his deafness and speech difficulties cured was to allow Jesus to lay His hand on him. And Jesus filled the prescription in a most unusual way – fingers in his ears, spittle on his tongue, a sigh towards the heavens, and the simple command – "Ephphata" – the Aramaic word for "be opened".

We might be tempted to say – "if only we had such simple remedies for the illnesses of the world nowadays". The reality is that we do – especially for the ones that really cause the most suffering. Like our deafness so often to the word of the Lord, asking us to hear the cry of the poor. Like our slowness to speak out against the injustices in our world. If we would only allow Jesus to lay His hand on us, to open our ears – and our hearts - to His word, how much more secure our world would be!

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We remember those who have died recently – Frances Mary Daly (funeral 11.00am Thursday 13th September), Thomas Finnegan (funeral 10.15am Friday 14th September, reception 7.00pm Thursday), Kathleen Crowe (funeral arrangements later), Rev. Robert Willoughby, Michael McManamon; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Alice McGartland, Jim Matthews, Martin Morrissey, John & Mary Nolan, Barbara Brown, Una Phelan.

Welcome Back: (*Repeated for the benefit of those not 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 year.

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 are available in the porch of the church. 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. Late applications cannot be accepted, so please make sure you return completed forms in good time.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,314. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Thanks again for your generous support of our parish.

Afternoon Tea Social, Wednesday, 20th September:

The next of our regular afternoon tea socials will be taking place on Wednesday September 20th.

Parish Youth Group:

The Youth Group for ages 13-17 years old will reconvene this coming Friday, 14th September. If you are interested in being part of this group it's very important to try and attend this session, where, among other things, we will be trying to plan out a program of meetings and activities for the coming year. Some refreshments will also be available to help the social and planning activities. It would be great to see some new faces so please do join us if you have not been involved before and help shape the way forward! We very specially welcome those who have been involved in the Confirmation program in the past few years. The gathering will run 7pm 'til 9pm and we ask you to use the entrance on Highgate Hill (just down from the traffic lights) when you arrive. Please contact Mirek on mirek17@hotmail.com for further details.

Adoremus National Eucharistic Congress: 7-9 September:

We remember very specially in our prayers this week-end the *Adoremus* Eucharistic Congress taking place in Liverpool. We pray that it will be a time of renewal for all – not just for those present at the Congress – in refreshing our appreciation of the wonderful gift that is the Eucharist.

Adult Religious Education, and RCIA:

The RCIA course – which is principally intended – but not exclusively – for those who are interested in becoming members of the Catholic community, – will be starting shortly. The course is free, and takes place on Wednesday evenings at 7.00 pm. Anybody interested in taking part should contact Fr. Pat immediately at pfc44@yahoo.com Any members of the Parish who would like to take part and use the opportunity to refresh their knowledge of the faith, as well as sharing their experience of faith with others, are also very welcome. Each session is a complete unit, so you don't have to commit to the whole program. Please let Fr. Pat know if you are interested.

Parish Bazaar – November 24th:

We don't seem to be properly back into a new year as yet, and already we are beginning the countdown to our Christmas Bazaar – it's only 11 weeks away! It might appear strange to be announcing it this early, but as this is the only regular fund-raising event we have each year, and also one of our principle social events, it is important that people support it as best they can. You will readily appreciate how disheartening it can be for the volunteers who give so generously of their time if on the actual day there is a disappointing attendance. Thank God that hasn't been the case in recent years. Attendance has been increasing year on year, and feedback has been very positive. But we still have people expressing disappointment that they didn't get to attend because they had already arranged something else for that day. So **please put the date in your diary**, and if you are able to help out on the actual day, or in the preparations, please contact Cheryl as soon as possible, at felicitymaynard@hotmail.com