



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 : website: www.stjosephshighgate.org.uk

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 December 2018 – Second Sunday of Advent

Listening Gives Birth

In our faith, listening is everything. Because it is a story of the Word; the Word of God. A story that would tell us how everything evolved through the Word and how the same Word in the fullness of time became flesh. In that sense Advent is a special time for listening; listening to the Word. Listening is not a skill. It is a door to open our relationship with God and with others. As St. Paul said: "We have faith because of listening." I wonder how does God listen to us and dialogue with us? Listening is not hearing; it is paying attention, being present even if you are staying quiet. "The biggest communication problem is we do not listen to understand, we listen to reply!"

Advent tells us that God is humble enough to become human in Jesus, to be equal with me so that god can listen to me. Jesus is the best listener for me. He listens to the desires, hopes, and fears in people's hearts with his love and mercy. And only in our deepest hearts can we truly dialogue with him. How do I listen to Jesus in others? The answer is to bend down or to be humble. Freeing myself from everything that stops me to listen to the whole person who is in the conversation. Whenever there is love or a truth, a fire of faith is born in the conversation. Then I can recognise a new part of that person. It is like a new person has been born in my heart as Jesus Christ was born for new life. Just as Jesus wants to be born anew this advent.

Benson's Instructions on Meditation have been a great source of help in my Life of Listening; and it fills my heart with the nectar of compassion.

1. Pick a focus word, short phrase, or prayer that is firmly rooted in your belief system. (Maranatha - Come, Lord Jesus!)
2. Sit quietly in a comfortable position.
3. Close your eyes.
4. Relax your muscles, progressing from your feet to your calves, thighs, abdomen, shoulders, head and neck.
5. Breathe slowly and naturally, and as you do so, say your focus word, sound, phrase, or prayer silently to yourself as you exhale.
6. Assume a passive attitude. Don't worry about how well you are doing. When other thoughts come to your mind, simply say to yourself, 'Oh well', and gently return to your repetition.
7. Continue for ten or twenty minutes.
8. Do not stand immediately. Continue sitting quietly for a minute or so, allowing other thoughts to return. Then open your eyes and sit for another minute before rising.
9. Practise the technique once or twice daily. Good times to do so are before breakfast and before dinner.

The seeds of the Word are sown all around us. Our individual consciousness reflects the collective consciousness. Each of us can practice listening deeply with compassion in order to hear and understand what we have not yet heard and understood. When we have listened and looked deeply, 'Nativity' takes place! New persons are born! There by we begin to develop the energy of brotherhood and sisterhood between all nations, which is the deepest spiritual heritage of all religious and cultural traditions. In this way, peace and understanding within the whole world is increased day by day. Developing the nectar of compassion in our own heart is the only effective spiritual response to hatred and violence.

Fr. George C.P.

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

We pray for the sick and housebound of our parish, particularly – Monica Vandenberg, Mike Walsh; **we remember those who have died recently** – John Fitzgerald (funeral 10.30am Monday 10th December), Mary Dolores Cooke (funeral 10.30am Wednesday 19th December), Sonny Iwedike Odogwu; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Joan Fox, George Barulis, Ida Webster, Bridie Thompson, Michael Muldowney.

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 15th 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.

Living Crib:

This year's Living Crib procession will be **this** Sunday, 9th 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.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,470. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Thank you for your continuing generosity.

Diary Updates for Christmas:

We have our other usual Christmas events approaching very rapidly, so make sure you note them in your diary. Our evening of Christmas Readings and Carols will be on Thursday 20th December at 7.30pm, and St. Joseph's School will have their carol concert at 2.00pm on Wednesday 12th December. And if you're really into carols, then St. Aloysius will be having carols by candlelight at 4.30 on the 18th, and LSU will be having their carol concert on the following evening, the 19th. And of course we will have our usual singing of carols before the midnight mass on Christmas Eve, starting at 11.30pm.

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.

Job Vacancies in St. Aloysius College:

Once again St. Aloysius College is advertising a number of vacancies in various posts – teaching, mentoring and assistant Premises manager, etc. Please contact mcdonagh.d@sta.islington.sch.uk for more information and application forms.

In case you are admitted to hospital.....

(We feel we need to repeat this notice every so often.) We remind you of the difficulties that sometimes people have in contacting hospital chaplains. Data protection regulations mean that a patient's details will not be passed on to the Catholic chaplain, **unless they specifically ask the staff to do so.** You should also state that you would like the Catholic chaplain to visit you. Many hospitals – including the Whittington - have full-time chaplains, whose special ministry is being there for the patients as needed. Should you have difficulty contacting the chaplain, then please call upon myself or another of the priests here. All we ask is that, if possible, you let the patient concerned know that you've asked us to call. It can be a little frightening for some sick people, especially of the older generations, if suddenly and unexpectedly a priest turns up at their sick-bed!