



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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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)

10th March 2019 – 1st Sunday of Lent Start at the End!!

Would it be unfair to ask, even at this early stage, how the Lenten resolutions are going? Or would it be fair to ask if one even made a Lenten resolution? Let's be honest, for many people that kind of idea can be dismissed as being part of a different age – no longer relevant in our modern computerised world. And there's no denying that there is a certain truth in that – there are not too many areas of life where we are doing things the same way now as we were, say, fifty years ago. But for those who are well-grounded, they will recognise that while many of the externals have changed, the basic principles remain the same. We want our children to have a healthy diet, for instance, but it's not likely to be the same food as in our younger days. We want them to have the best education possible, but it's not going to be in a school like the ones we went to. And so on.

And the fact that you are coming to Church, and reading this, is probably an indication that you want them to live their lives by the best set of values, which we believe come from the teaching of Jesus. But how best to do that? I came across the following story during the week, which may highlight one aspect of the answer, and which is also relevant to our celebration of Lent -

One day a mother found a six pack of beer in her daughter's closet. When her daughter came home, she asked her daughter what is this? The daughter responded, "It looks like a six-pack of beer." The mother responded, "Don't get smart with me, young lady. You tell me about this." The daughter thought for a moment and then said that she was hiding it for a friend. The mother didn't believe her. The girl ran off to her bedroom and slammed the door.

The mother sought advice from a good friend. The friend said to her, "Why were you so concerned with finding the beer in her closet?" The mother replied, "Because I don't want her to get into trouble." The friend said "I understand that, but why is it you don't want her to get into trouble?" The mother responded, "Well, because I don't want her to ruin her life." Her friend said that she understood that, "but why don't you want her to ruin her life?" Finally the mother got the point and replied, "because I love her." The friend then said, "Do you think she got that message?" The mother thought for a moment and said, "Of course not."

Then the friend said to her, "what do you think would happen if you started with that message? If you had told her that you love her very much and were scared when you found the beer hidden in her room and could we talk about this? With this approach you begin by being vulnerable instead of conducting an inquisition that inevitably leads to denial. Starting from the position of love, which is your goal, provides the focus so that the child can then open up and work together with you on some kind of solution."

I suspect many of you will identify with elements of that story, but even for those of us who are not parents, and who find ourselves struggling to remain fresh in our commitment to our faith and what that faith asks of us, there is sound advice there. Keeping the intended goal in sight can be a very effective motivation – no less during Lent than any other time. It's not our Lenten resolutions that are important so much as what we are trying to achieve through them. If everything we do during Lent is with this end in mind, than we will all find the realisation of our Lenten goal when we come to celebrate with the Risen Christ at Easter.

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We pray for the sick and housebound of our Parish - Karen Hodges; **we remember those who have died recently** – James Galvin (funeral 10.15am Tuesday 19th March, Reception 7.00pm Monday), Nora Flanagan (funeral 10.15am Tuesday 26th March), Linus Esangbedo; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Elizabeth Rogers, Jack Grace.

Lenten Project:

Over the past couple of weeks I have been printing extracts from the reflections of Fr. Rick in Haiti. For those who may be relatively new to the Parish and who may not have heard of him, Fr. Rick is a Passionist priest who when he first went to work as a priest in Haiti realised that while there was great need for spiritual healing for many of the people there was an even greater need for basic physical healing. And so he went back to the States, where he came from, and got trained and qualified as a doctor and surgeon, and then returned to work at both levels, priest and doctor, amongst some of the poorest people in the world. Our Parish here in Highgate has been regularly supporting him through donations in the wall-boxes at the back of the church, but we've also been making extra special efforts during Lent. Again this Lent I invite you to consider supporting the critical work being done by Fr. Rick and Fr. Enzo, who has since joined him, and his magnificent staff who, as well as dealing with the immediate problems, are also working hard at training the local people in the skills necessary to tackle the problems besetting them through natural disasters and crime. Throughout Lent there will be an exit collection after all the week-end masses, and there are also wall-boxes available at the back of the church to make your donations. What better way to prepare to celebrate the Risen Life of Christ than by actually helping to save lives. "As long as you did it to one of these"

Children in Church:

From time to time I think it is appropriate to raise the subject of the presence of children in church – hopefully in a positive and helpful way. First of all let me emphasise that we are always happy for parents to bring their children to mass from as early an age as feasible. An important element of that is to help them become aware that this is a special part of their weekly routine. But we would also like them to remember it as a specially happy part of that routine. I wonder sometimes if people think how frustrating it must be for children to come to church and see nothing but the back of the people in front of them for an hour, because they are too far down the church; little wonder they get restless and unhappy. Many parents, understandably, bring books, colouring books, etc. for them, to entertain themselves if they start becoming too restless. While this is a good enough idea, it has been pointed out to me that it's also very often an opportunity missed. If they need a book, for instance, why not a children's Bible or prayer book; if they need to do something more active, like colouring, why not have one of the wide selection of suitable religion colouring books that are relatively easily obtained – I'm sure our own bookshop probably has some of them. This is not about trying to boost sales, but really trying to make mass a meaningful and positive experience even for the youngest. And if it is one of those days where, no matter what you do they're in an unhappy and crying mood, then the best place is the porch, where parents can still see and hear what's going on, and the children's cries are muted from everybody else. Even having to go in and out a few times is better than having them being miserable and unhappy.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,633. In addition we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. We are very grateful for your outstanding generosity in supporting your parish.

Stations of the Cross:

During the season of Lent there will be Stations of the Cross immediately after the 6.30 pm. Mass each Friday. This is a particularly appropriate form of prayer during Lent, especially in a Passionist church, as it encourages meditation on the profound mystery on the depth of the Lord's love for us as expressed in His passion, death and resurrection. Of course, if the set time is not suitable for you, you can also do this particular form of prayer at any time on your own or with some friends.

Lent Groups:

There is still time to sign up for this year's ecumenical Lent Groups. Details are in the porch for a range of courses with daytime or evening meetings to choose from. The courses begin in the week of 11th March so please pick up a leaflet and sign up on the list in the porch as soon as possible. St. Joseph's Group will be studying the new York Course *Daring to see God now*, meeting in the Red Room, 10.45 for 11.00am on Tuesdays, beginning March 12th.

Post-Synod Reflections for Young Adults:

The next meeting of young adults at Archbishop's House will take place on Tuesday 2nd April, 6.30pm. These meetings are an opportunity for young adults to come together following the Synod of Bishops meeting on youth last October, pray, have input from one of our diocesan bishops, reflect and discuss the place of faith in the life of young people. Bishop John Sherrington will be leading our reflections this time. All young adults are invited to attend. Please let us know by emailing youth@rcdow.org.uk. For more details, go to www.dowym.com/events