



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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Registered Charity 1173084



Fr. Pat (pfc44@yahoo.com) Fr. George (gaskoloth@hotmail.com)

Masses: Sunday: (7pm Saturday) 8am, 10am, 12noon, 1.30 (Polish), 7pm.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Holydays: 6.30pm vigil, 9.30am, 11am, 6.30pm

Saturday 10-10.30am, 6.30 -6.45pm

Weekdays: 9.30am, 6.30pm. **Saturday:** 9.30am, 7pm. **Bank Holiday:** 9.30am

Weekdays: immediately after Mass (on request)

17th March 2019 – 2nd Sunday of Lent

Expanding Horizons

Sometimes I think I can get caught up in what one might call ‘church-speak’ – using ordinary words but thinking of them in a ‘churchy’ way. I can almost hear you asking – ‘what’s he on about?’ Let me explain. Over the past couple of weeks reference has been made to the fact that St. Patrick’s Day this year falls on a Sunday – this Sunday, in fact. And I have felt it was my duty to keep people straight, and to remind them that because it was one of the Sundays of Lent, we would be celebrating the mass of the Second Sunday of Lent. In other words, we wouldn’t be celebrating St. Patrick Day this year. How daft could I be?? We might not be celebrating it liturgically, but we certainly will find other ways to celebrate! (Unfortunately the message didn’t seem to get through to the Welsh that they were meant to let the Irish celebrate this week-end!)

As this is St. Patrick’s week-end it would be improper not to have some story from Ireland. I know that many people have the belief that the Irish are a nation of people who would never let the truth get in the way of a good story, but I promise, this story is true, the whole truth, etc. A number of years ago I was most unusually listening to the main Irish radio station – RTÉ Radio. On the news bulletin it was reported that a man was sentenced to four years in jail for membership of an illegal organisation. The report then went on to say that in regard to another charge he was not convicted, but was very much suspected of being involved in a money-laundering racket. Why? Because, when arrested, he was found with €94,000 hidden in a Daz box. Honestly – it’s true! Who said the Irish have no sense of humour?

This week also we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph, on Tuesday. I wonder what he would have made of the work going on in the church at present? I don’t know if he ever made seats for the local synagogue, or had to repair them, but I hope he is smiling down on and blessing the present workers. Shortly now they should be fixing the seats and kneelers in place, and hopefully we will be back to at least near normality before Holy Week. While on the subject of works taking place, I got word during the week that the new figures for the Calvary in the forecourt are due for delivery in early April, so maybe we may have that also in order for Holy Week. Lots to look forward to on the horizon.

In our gospel today Jesus is taking his apostles up a hill to help them extend their horizons. Naturally they were being dazzled by all that was going on around them – the blind seeing, the lame walking, lepers being healed, even dead people being restored to life. And the inspiring words of Jesus were sounding so convincing and obvious – God’s work is going on all around them – the Kingdom is at hand. The danger was that each day was filled with so many wonders that they were beginning to lose sight of the bigger picture – that this was not the end, but the beginning of a whole new age of salvation.

They needed reminding that His earthly part in the mission wasn’t going to be all glory days, but was inevitably going to lead to suffering, even death. In bringing them up Thabor he was preparing them for going up another hill, where he wouldn’t be accompanied by Moses and Elijah, but by two thieves; where they wouldn’t hear the comforting voice of the Father, but the jeers of the crowd; where His clothes wouldn’t be dazzling white, but His body covered in red wounds. Their horizons, like ours, were going to contain ups and downs, but we are being challenged not to let those horizons limit our sight, but to put on Christ Jesus, and see with His eyes – eyes of love. And, yes, I still love the Welsh!

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We pray for the sick and housebound of our Parish - Neave McDermott; we remember those who have died recently – James Galvin (funeral 10.15am Tuesday 19th March, Reception 7.00pm Monday), Nora Flannagan (funeral 10.15am Tuesday 26th March), Martin Walsh; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Jack Grace, Ann May MacDonagh, Elizabeth Siemicka, Nora Marley, Fr. Declan O’Toole, James & Maureen Waldron.

Lenten Project:

Our Lenten Project got off to a great start last week-end – see details below. Just a reminder – we are seeking to support the work of Fr. Rick in Haiti, the sixth poorest country in the world, as a result of natural disasters and rampant serious crime. Your individual donation may appear to make little dent in the overall situation, but for the individual people that Fr. Rick and his colleagues serve, your donation could mean the difference between life and death. Please be generous, even sacrificial, in your giving. As well as the exit collection there are two boxes always available at the back of the church. Thanks.

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,332. In addition we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Thanks also for your magnificent response to the first week of our Lenten Project in aid of Fr. Rick's work in Haiti - **£1143** in total was donated last week. Think of the difference it would make to so many lives in Haiti if we were to achieve a similar sum for the six Sundays of Lent. We are very grateful for your outstanding generosity.

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.

Children in Church: (*Repeated for those who missed it last week!*)

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.

Lent Groups:

The Lent Group meeting here got off to a great start last Tuesday, with almost 20 people meeting in the Red Room. Even if you were unable to get to the first meeting, you are still welcome to attend the future meetings throughout Lent. Remember, they meet each Tuesday morning, at 10.45 for 11.00am. They are studying the new York Course "*Daring to see God now*".

Mothering Sunday:

Mothering Sunday is coming up the Sunday after next – on 31st March and once again we would like to celebrate it, as we did most successfully last year, as a Parish community. You will find in the porch an invitation to attend either of two sessions – after the 10, and after the 12 masses, in the Red Room, and, weather permitting, spilling out to the lawn. It is open to all – you don't have to be a mother yourself – if you ever had a mother you qualify!

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