



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.

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)

17th November 2019 – 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

'Think about these Things'

The Second Reading for today invites us all to think about what it means to live with hope that Christ will return. In the particular context of our focus passage today, there were some in the community of Thessalonica who, believing that Christ's return had already begun or was imminent, had ceased in doing work to support the community. It is not clear exactly why they had begun to live idly – it may have been because they devoted all of their time to preaching the gospel or it may have been that they did not want to face the persecution at a job outside the safety of the community or it may have been because they were simply waiting on Jesus to return and did not want to work while they waited.

Whatever the reason was for their idleness, Paul is writing to tell them that living in this way is disruptive to the community and they need to stop. He reminds them that when he was with them, he did not rely on them for his food. Paul is speaking to a community of people who share things in common, and he is telling them that everyone has to pull their own weight. Everyone has to do their part to support the community. When we understand this context, we can realize that while this passage is saying a lot of things, there are some things it is NOT saying.

It is not saying that there should be no system of social welfare in place to catch those in society who need it. The people Paul is writing about have the means to work and the opportunities, but they are choosing not to work and are instead, spending their energy working mischief and causing problems. They are working in direct opposition to the purposes of the community at large. We live in a time when people can work more than full time and still not earn a living wage. In this kind of climate, we must be careful how we wield passages like this to embarrass those who struggle to make ends meet and to make ourselves feel important because we are able to support ourselves.

What this passage is speaking about is people who spend their energies harming the community rather than uplifting it. I do think it is important for us to distinguish between what it means to be disruptive in a community for the sake of helping the community grow and what it means to meddle and degrade a community.

We live in a time in which church communities are being disrupted because of misconduct that comes to light and because of disagreements about who should be allowed in the church community and about who is worthy of the church's love and help. When churches shift to be more open and more loving and more helpful, disruption often occurs. There will always be people who do not like that. This is disruption that grows the church and deepens its faithfulness to the gospel.

Paul is writing about people who are creating problems for the church community in how they live together and what that means for their witness outside of their community. These are the kind of people who are more interested in complaining than helping. They are more interested in water cooler talk than edification or even correction. They are spreaders of gossip before they are builders of community.

As I was thinking about this passage, I kept coming back to Paul's words in Philippians 4:8, and I leave you with those words.

"Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

- How do we help our larger community develop a lifestyle that constantly looks to improve the world around us?
- How can we help each other understand that our full participation matters, and how might that help people who are uncomfortable being a part of the group?

We pray for the sick and housebound of our parish – Janet Groves, Jane Thomas; **we pray for those who have died recently** – Anne Cahill, Gwyn Williams, Albie Flannagan; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Martha Hayward, Mary McCrohan, Michael & Kathleen Boylan, John McDonnell;

Christian Stewardship:

Last week's collection amounted to £1,410. In addition to that we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. Thanks for your continuing generosity in support of your Parish.

Christmas Bazaar:

Well, that's that for another year! Hard to believe that the Christmas Bazaar has already come and gone! Many people took the opportunity to venture out and enjoy the company of other parishioners, have a bite to eat, hunt for some bargain buys, have a go at winning some bottles of central heating, enjoy the entertainment and all the while contributing to the funds of the Parish. It was wonderful to see so many people turn up, and while fundraising is an important part of the day, the social event is probably even more valuable. There was a wonderful atmosphere throughout, and people, of all ages, seemed to be enjoying themselves. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the people who put so much hard work into making it possible for the day to happen; the many who so generously gave of their time on the day itself to staff the various stalls; the many who stayed behind to make sure everything was tidied up and put away; the many who turned up on the day itself helping to create such a lively and happy atmosphere. Special thanks to Cheryl and Roxane who put so much work into organising the event.

A Day of Celebration:

We are organising a Day of Celebration next Sunday 24th November in honour of Fr. Pat to thank him for his long commitment to St. Joseph's. Please join us in expressing best wishes and prayers. There will be a concelebrated Mass at 12.00pm and a shared lunch afterwards in the Red Room and the Monastery dining room. It would be appreciated if you could bring a plate of food to contribute.

And there will be an Exit Collection after all Masses this weekend for a Farewell Gift. Your generosity is appreciated, as always.

Pre-Marriage Course:

Our next pre-marriage course will be taking place this Saturday, 23rd November. This course is open to all those planning on getting married during 2020 – they need not be members of the parish, or be planning on getting married here. Application forms can be obtained by emailing pfc44@yahoo.com

Christmas at the Repository:

Christmas Cards, Advent Calendars, and 2020 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.

November Dead List:

The usual envelopes and sheets for the November altar list of the dead are available in the porch. Mass will be said each day in November for all whose names are entered on the list.

St. Joseph's School – spaces for 3 year-olds:

We are very blessed as a Parish to have a truly wonderful Primary and Nursery School linked to our Parish. St Joseph's Catholic Primary School has an individual identity that combines traditional values with a modern vibrant vision. The school is an Ofsted and Diocesan rated 'Outstanding' school, with an ethos based on faith, community and a true partnership between home, school, and Parish. St Joseph's is totally committed to the development of each child, to offer them the very best start to their formal education and to support them in their faith development. We currently have spaces in our Little Gems Nursery Class for children who have just turned 3. If you are interested in your child joining our Little Gems Nursery Class now or later on this academic year please pick up an application form at the back of the church or from the school office: office@st-josephs.islington.sch.uk. You are also more than welcome to come along to our open day on Thursday 21st November at 9:15am, no need to book just come along.

Bulletin Arrangements:

The weekly Bulletin is now being produced on Friday. Any input will need to be received by the parish office (joseph.highgate@gmail.com) by Thursday evening please.