



# ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE PARISH BULLETIN

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**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)

## 24th February 2019 – 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

### Celebrating a Passionist Parish

If my paternal grandfather were still alive he would be one hundred and seventy five years old this year! Even I, who have written the above am having to question it. But it is in fact the case. I don't write it as a boast – my grandad was born before yours, or some such – but to give some sort of context to the significance of history. I could, for instance, have begun by writing that the Passionists first came to Highgate one hundred and sixty one years ago, and you might have thought who's interested in ancient history? But my grandfather was a fourteen year old gorsoon, tending the family cattle on a mountainside in West Kerry at that time. If he was living here instead of in Kerry he probably would have been at the opening mass in St. Joseph's. And that I would have been boasting about! (Gorsoon, by the way, is an Anglicisation of the Irish word 'garsún' which means 'young lad'.)

For Passionists throughout the world these coming years are very significant historically, as we are preparing for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of our Congregation, which we generally think of as occurring in November 1720 – when our founder, St. Paul of the Cross wore the Passionist habit for the first time. To mark the occasion a special icon has been commissioned – pictured to the right – and at present it is circulating throughout the Passionist world. We are expecting to have it here in St. Joseph's very shortly after Easter, i.e. at the end of April. Iconography is a very specialised form of religious art, and to be totally honest with you I know very little about it – but be sure I will be doing a bit of learning in the meantime.

The visit of the icon here is, in a very real sense, a once in a lifetime special opportunity to celebrate the gift that the Passionists have been to this area of London over the last century and a half. Even within the lifespan of our present congregation many of you will have lasting memories of priests and brothers who served here and did so much to build up the sense of community and joy that still pervades the life of our parish. I mention the visit now, as I am aware that many of you will be away for one reason or another in the period leading up to Easter, but I ask you to make a special effort to be here with us on the week-end of 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> April, into Monday 29<sup>th</sup>, during which we would like to make a special effort to celebrate our Passionist ethos.



In our gospel today Jesus is spelling out his concept of a new ethos in which he would want his followers to live. The passage – continuing for the beatitudes of last Sunday – is probably one of the most difficult passages for us to read. On the one hand it is very down to earth – it is as manifestly relevant today as it was in Jesus's time – and on the other it is extremely challenging. Being compassionate, not judging, not condemning, being giving people – these are not obviously the values that are most respected in our world nowadays, and yet they are the spelling out of the basic tenet – treat others as you would like them to treat you. If we could live up to that we could all be icons to a world that badly needs them.

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**We remember those who have died recently** – Clive Ellis (funeral 12.30pm Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February), Seamus Galvin, Monica Van den Berg, Robert Evans, William Patrick Mangan, John Mallon; **we remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time** – Margaret Murphy, Herbert Trent, Jim Lyons, Desmond Cardiff.

### **Lenten Project:**

I wonder if you recognise the following -

*We have about 14 schools in very poor areas totalling nearly 4000 children - it is about \$2500/month to run each school. \$50,000 would pay for 2 of our biggest schools for a whole year. We deliver water with two trucks to the poorest areas of the city. To deliver 20,000 gallons a day for 6 days a week is about \$2500/month also - \$50,000 would pay both trucks for nearly a year. (We deliver each day to very poor areas, some to hospitals and schools and some by bucket. People are so desperate for water it can cause fistfights at times. When we are meeting water needs usually women and children come to the truck with buckets. When water is scarce men come with the buckets ready to fight. So just by who is in line we can tell the water deficiency.) We bury destitute dead - about 100 a week. \$50,000 would help us wall in a donated plot of land so we can have a catholic cemetery undisturbed by voodoo practice. We have clinics in poor areas. We need about \$2000/month for medicines mostly for children, and another \$3,000 a month for emergency surgeries....*

I quoted the above in a bulletin in 2010, when as a parish we responded to the horrors of the earthquake in Haiti, where our Passionist priest and doctor, Fr. Rick, was working. That year you donated a total of over £31,000. Since then many have continued contributing through the boxes at the back of the Church. There can be a danger of thinking that once the reporters have gone away, so have the problems, but such is rarely the case, and certainly not in Haiti. The Parish Council have agreed that especially as we will be welcoming the Passionist Icon shortly after Lent is over, that once again having the work of Fr. Rick and Fr. Enzo in Haiti as our special Lenten Project, is a practical way of celebrating our Passionist solidarity. Details next week.

### **Flame Congress:**

Flame, the biggest **Catholic Youth** event in the UK, takes place on 2nd March 2019 at Wembley Arena. It is a great celebration of Catholic faith, in a vibrant atmosphere, full of joy, with content presented in a way which resonates for young people. The day will include video input from Jean Vanier, a reflection on the Synod on Young People from Archbishop Eamon Martin, speakers addressing the issue of mental health and wellbeing, and Adoration which will be introduced by Rise Theatre's drama 'Jesus is here' along with a homily by Cardinal Vincent. Tickets are available from Westminster Youth Ministry at the reduced price of £20, which includes a t-shirt. Please contact [dominiccunliffe@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:dominiccunliffe@rcdow.org.uk) for more information or to book tickets.

### **Christian Stewardship:**

Last week's collection amounted to £1,608. In addition we receive an average of over £900 per week in standing orders. We very much appreciate that you have very many other calls on your finances, so we are very grateful for your outstanding generosity in supporting your parish.

### **Feast of St. Gabriel:**

Next Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> February, is the Feast of St. Gabriel. He was born in Italy in 1838 and named Francis. Growing up he was a typical teenager – dancing, dating, etc. – but always seemed to be looking for some deeper meaning in his life. Eventually he decided to become a Passionist (good choice!) and took the name Gabriel. He was remarkable in two ways – his extraordinary devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows, and how quickly he moved from a very worldly life to the heights of sanctity. He died at the young age of 24, and was canonised in 1920. While he is little known in these islands – except in Archway, of course - there is great devotion to him in Italy, especially among the young.



### **Lent Groups:**

Details of the ecumenical Lent Groups meeting this year are available in the porch. There is a range of courses with daytime or evening meetings to choose from. Courses begin in the week of 11<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Women's World Day of Prayer**

This year's World Day of Prayer will be on Friday this week, March 1st and St. Joseph's will be hosting the local service prepared by the women of Slovenia. It will be held in the Red Room at 11.00am. All welcome.

### **100 Club:**

The February draw for the 100 Club will take place during the week. Would any members who have not yet handed in their subscriptions please do so as soon as possible. Thank you once again to all who support the parish in this way, and especially to everyone who has responded to our recent membership appeal.