

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception and St Joseph

The Fourth Sunday of Lent
14th March 2010



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When the prodigal son came home they held a party to celebrate the fact that he was part of the fold once more. But there was an empty seat at the party; the older brother refused to come and take part. The liturgy, and especially the Mass, is the continuation of that party and festivity. At the Eucharist we celebrate the fact that in Jesus Christ we have been redeemed and forgiven, that we are already experiencing a share in the eternal life that God has promised us and that one day we will enjoy seeing God face to face in the never-ending celebration of bliss and happiness in heaven. In the meantime we eat and drink the body and blood of Jesus Christ that was given up and shed for us so that sins may be forgiven.

As you sit in your pew in church, are there any empty seats? It would be surprising if there weren't! Most churches struggle to fill their seats except at the great feasts of the year. Who belongs in those seats? It's tempting to say that they are older brothers' seats, people who have had some sort of gripe with the church and have decided to give Sunday worship a wide berth. To an extent this is true. We are a fallible group of people and we're quite capable of failing each other at crucial times, and of even putting off people to the extent that they no longer darken our doors. What would happen if we reached out to family and neighbours, to friends who feel that the Church has failed them? Is it worth taking the risk of inviting them to the feast, or should we just write them off as a dead loss? Would it shock us if they said yes?

And what about the person who's sitting in your seat? Yes, you. Are you the life and soul of the party or are you something of a party-pooper? We never find out whether the father finally managed to get the older brother to enter into the spirit. He could have just gone and sat there with a long face. Just turning up isn't enough. Are you glad to be able to celebrate with your whole being, singing and praying, giving thanks for the forgiveness that God has lavished upon you through no merit of your own? Or should we put the fatted calf on the back burner?

LIVING AS ONE

Each week we recite the Creed adopted at the First Council of Nicaea (AD 325). The next three weeks of Living As One, our Lenten faith-sharing season, look closer at what the Creed says about the church that Christ left to continue his ministry and pass on his message. This week we explore the oneness and holiness of the Church, which stems not from the holiness of its people or our efforts for unity but from Christ himself. 'I am the vine,' said Jesus, 'you are the branches' (John 15:5). The living As One booklets are available at the church at £1 each. The five groups already established meet on:

Saturdays at 2.30pm at the Convent at 3 Longlands Close - 01992 621168

Mondays at 8pm at the Convent - 01992 621168

Thursdays at 2pm in the Presbytery - 01992 626772

Thursdays at 8pm at 31 Rotherfield Road, Enfield - 0208 292 8592

New and old members are most welcome.



100+ CLUB FEBRUARY WINNERS

You can still help us to reach 200 by joining for the rest of the year for just £10 per number. Please put your application in before the next draw on 28th March.

CLOTHING AND DOMESTIC TEXTILE COLLECTION

Please take a bag after Mass this weekend and return it to St Joseph's Hall next weekend. Any number of bags are acceptable if you have a lot of items to donate. If you are unable to bring your filled bag back next weekend, please let us know via the Parish office (01992 623 156 – 9am to 1pm weekdays) and we will arrange collection from your home during the coming week.

Fr. John will be back for Tuesday 16th March. Fr John Miller will be here as usual, Fr Jim Mallon will be helping him this Sunday.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad.

Glorify the Lord with me.
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus!
I will leave this place and go to my father and say:
'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.'
Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus!

TODAY'S READINGS: NEXT WEEKS' READINGS:

Joshua 5:9-12 Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 33:2-7 Psalm 125
2 Corinthians 5:17-21 Philippians 3:8-14
Luke 15:1-3.11-32 John 8:1-11

Mass Times

SUNDAY	FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT	8.30am 11.00am 12.30pm & 6.30pm
Monday		10.00am
Tuesday		10.00am
Wednesday	St Patrick	10.00am
Thursday		10.00am
Friday	St Joseph	10.00am
Saturday		6.30pm
SUNDAY	FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT	8.30am 11.00am 12.30pm & 6.30pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation –

Saturday 10.30 – 11.00am & 5.45 – 6.15pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

There is Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Church each Friday morning from 9.15 to 9.45.

Offertory Last Week: £1,614.23

plus the regular Standing Orders. Thank You!

SVP

The SVP Group meets on Monday evenings at 8.00pm in the Sacristy.

LEGION OF MARY

The Legion of Mary meets in the Sacristy at 10.45am on Tuesday mornings.

LINE DANCING

There is Line Dancing every Tuesday evening at 7.30pm in Eleanor Hall.

RCIA

The RCIA Group meets on Monday evenings at 8.00pm in the Presbytery.

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

Confirmation Preparation is at 8.00pm on Thursday evenings in the Church.

FUND RAISING EVENT FOR THE PASSAGE

Please support the work of The Passage does for homeless people in Central London, by attending 'party Like A Rock Star' at the Hard Rock Café, 150 Old Park Lane, London W1 on Thursday, 18th march, from 7pm to midnight. There will be live music from The Counterfeit Stones. Tickets are £60 each and include complimentary food and drink. Tickets are available from The Passage, St. Vincent's Centre, Carlisle Place. London SW1P 1NL. Tel: 020 7592 1856. Email: tickets@passage.org.uk. All proceeds in aid of The Passage.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

There will be Station of the Cross Each Friday during Lent after 10.00am Mass and 8.00pm.

WEDDINGS THIS WEEK

The wedding of Kyriacos Hajikpri & Sharon Healy will take place on Saturday 20th March at 3pm

FIRST COMMUNION

There will be a meeting for all First Communion Catechists on Tuesday evening at 8pm.

There will be a meeting for all First Communion Children on Saturday 20th March at 10am in Eleanor Hall.

FUNERAL MASS

The Funeral Mass for the Late Raphael McDonald will be held on Tuesday 16th March at 10am

APF

Thank you to the APF box holders in the parish for raising over £350 in the recent collection. The Association for the Propagation of the Faith (APF) assists every one of the Catholic Church's 1,062 mission dioceses and territories to provide pastoral care and preach the Gospel effectively. The APF works in England and Wales with the Mill Hill Missionary Society, the only major missionary society to have been formed in England. Mill Hill was one of the first societies to introduce lay missionaries, and its priests, lay brothers and associates work in 27 countries and every continent. In England and Wales funds for the Missions are collected through the famous red collection boxes. If you would like to assist the work of the APF, and would like a red collection box, please contact Terry O'Sullivan on 01992 444 642 or see Father John.

"OLD GIRLS" REUNION

Our Lady's Convent High School is holding a reunion on Sunday 9th May 2010 from 2-5pm at the school. This will be the last reunion in the old building as the new building works commence in September 2010. Conducted tours of the school are being held on Friday 7th May and Monday 10th May between 10am and 12.30pm **by appointment only**. Please telephone or email by Wednesday 5th May for an appointment on Tel No: 0208 800 2158 or email: officeadmin@ourladays.hackney.sch.uk