

Parishes of St John XXIII & St Joseph, Birtley



Incorporating: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington;
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penshaw; St Bede, Usworth;
St John Boste, Oxclose; St Joseph, Birtley



Fr. Martin Morris Parish Priest Tel: 01916498257

Administrator: Audrey Huntley 0191 4163583 sj23office01@gmail.com

In the Partnership of Benedict

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 23RD-24TH SEPTEMBER 2023, Year A

Saturday 23rd September	St Joseph	5pm	Minnie & Frank Knott
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 24th September	St John Boste	9.30am	People of the Parish
The 24th Sunday in Ordinary time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Greg Moorhouse
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Hodgson & O'Hara Families

"It's not fair..."

How many times, I wonder, have we been on a journey only to hear from the back of the car, "Are we there yet?". How many times, after making a decision do we then hear, "It's not fair!"? There are some things that can be easily explained, such as time (number of sleeps before....) and even distance (like travelling to Grandma's house etc) however sometimes it is more difficult to explain about fairness. We can't always get away with saying, "because I said so"! As you probably realise, I am talking about children here, but sometimes it is even more difficult for adults, and I'm including myself here as well, to understand!

We have all worked hard for a living and probably all, at some time, uttered "it's not fair", so today's Gospel could cause us all a lot of soul searching. We must keep reminding ourselves that God doesn't think and do in the same way as His children, us! But by trying to rid ourselves of the "entitlement" that we sometimes feel in this commercial world e.g., "I go to Church every Sunday therefore deserve more than him...." we start to realise and understand more about God's love for us. We must rid ourselves of envy and jealousy and see, as God sees, the worth of every single person. Not an easy task when we look back in our own lives and through history at individuals who have caused hurt and damage.

In our Gospel today, Jesus suggests God's love is like that of the Landowner. His vineyard, a new life. He offers all people on earth, the labourers, no matter what creed, colour, religion, good or bad, the same unconditional love. It doesn't matter how soon you allow God's love into your heart and labour to spread his love, whether it is the dawn of your life or the eleventh hour, His love is unconditional and equal for all.

It is appropriate that our Gospel today is the Parable of the Labourers bringing in the harvest as today, we offer special prayers in Thanksgiving for the Harvest and, during September and October, we celebrate The Season of Creation. God created a beautiful world. We can't as individuals do anything about natural disasters except offer prayers and financial aid to those affected, but we can all work to reduce our own adverse effects on this planet by the way we consume and waste goods and pollute the environment.

So, "are we there yet?" No, not yet but heading in the right direction. If you haven't yet watched the Pope's "The Letter", try to do so to give yourself a better understanding of our world and what is happening to it, its peoples and all creation with which we share it. Celebrate creation by planting flowers, fruits and vegetables or admiring them in other people's gardens. Pray in Thanksgiving for the food and beauty that the Earth provides. It may be the dawn of our realisation about caring for the environment, or it may be our eleventh hour. It doesn't matter. If we all do a little, we can achieve a lot.



"As I gaze at my garden and regard the varying colours the Creator has made for us, red, yellow, blue, white, pink, purple, etc..., I also think of the many colours the Creator has made of us, black, beige, brown, red, yellow and white -- and all of us are beautiful."

Maya Angelou

E. Everett

Fr Martin Morris	0191 649 8257	Deacon Tony Joy	0779 989 3419
Fr Martin Wheaton	0770 996 1040	Deacon Peter Lavery	0730 505 9297
Fr Luke Wilkinson	0191 649 8257	Deacon Frank O'Neill	0779 115 5845

Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 25th September 2023

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 25th September	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Geoff Storey
Tuesday 26th September Ss Cosmas & Damian	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Jim Irving
	St Joseph	7pm	Brenda Weir
Wednesday 27th September St Vincent De Paul	St Bede	10am	Billy Bowdon (deceased anniversary)
	St John Boste	7pm	Graham Atherton
Thursday 28st September Ss Wenceslaus & Lawrence Ruiz	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Edward Ashburner
	St Joseph	Noon	Martin Kelly
Friday 29th September Ss Michael, Gabriel & Raphael	St John Boste	10am	Tina & Ted Dickinson
	St Joseph	10am	Fr. Michael McKenna
Saturday 30th September St Jerome	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Brian & Marian Simpson
Vigil	St Joseph	5pm	Vi Summers
	St Bede	5pm	Margaret Walker (deceased)
Sunday 1st October The 26th Sunday in Ordinary time	St John Boste	9.30am	Living and deceased members of the Irwin family
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	40th wedding Anniversary Anthony & Kathryn McDevitte
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Theresa Madden

First Reading: Our God: Rich in Forgiving Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near. Let the wicked man abandon his way, the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him, to our God who is rich in forgiving; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways not your ways - it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.

Response to the Psalm: The Lord is close to all who call him.

Second Reading: Life to Me is Christ Philippians 1:20-24.27

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by my life or by my death. Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results - I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake. Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heavens. Alleluia

The Gospel: The Generosity of God

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of Heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing around, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us," they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. "The men who came last," they said, "have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.'

The Generosity of God

It is hard not to sympathize with the workers who have sweated it out right through the day in the hot sun. The idlers who have hardly got earth on their spades or grease on their hands get a great bonus and I get no bonus at all! Is this fair? No. God is not fair. You can't apply the concept of "fairness" to God at all. We can't enter into a reckoning with God. God does not calculate as we do. In the terms of this world, this is obvious enough. The wicked do prosper, while honesty and high moral standards, instead of being rewarded are often simply mocked. Can we go deeper and say that the reward is in heaven? This hardly fits with the way Jesus worked here on earth. He did not reward the virtuous. He said he was the doctor who had come to the sick. His favourites were the worst of society, tax-collectors and prostitutes, not even amiable rascals. Heaven was open to anyone who accepted him. It is no good looking for fairness in God, for this implies that we deserve something. We cannot claim to 'deserve' anything; we are simply called into a loving relationship and to put our trust in Jesus. What does this Sunday's Gospel say about the generosity of God? When have you experienced God's generosity, his kindness and forgiveness in your own life?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

© Copyright 2023 The Wednesday Word Trust

Masses are live-streamed daily at 10am everyday, except Monday when Mass is live-streamed at 7pm

Please click the link <https://www.churchservices.tv/penshaw> to view from one of our Churches.

In addition, we live-stream Mass from St Joseph's, Birtley on: Tuesday at 7pm; Thursday at 12 Noon; Saturday at 5pm.

To access live streaming from St Joseph's Birtley, please click the link <https://www.churchservices.tv/birtley>.

What's On in the Parish

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - Our Lady Queen of Peace Church will be open on Friday afternoons, 2 pm to 3 pm for quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. All are welcome

Sacrament of Reconciliation - The Sacrament of Reconciliation is now available in all of our Churches:

St Bede's - Saturday after Vigil mass

Our Lady Queen of Peace - Thursday morning, after Mass;

St John Boste - Friday morning, after Mass;

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Saturday morning, after Mass.

OLOF - The club is on a Tuesday at 1pm in the Emmaus Room, at Our Lady's in the Village. All most welcome!

Rosary and Soup - During the month of October we will pray the rosary and serve a simple meal every Wednesday commencing 4th October at 12 midday at Our Lady Queen of Peace. All are welcome.

Parish Pastoral Council

We welcome Fr Martin Morris and Fr Luke Wilkinson to our community and look forward to growing in faith together. Both are hugely appreciative of the generosity of all who are ministering in our parish. While he is familiarising himself with all aspects of St John XXIII Parish life, Fr Morris has asked that we pause further meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council until further notice.

St. Joseph's Nursery & Reception Open Evening - We warmly welcome visits from families to attend an open evening on Monday 25th September at 4:30 at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Washington, for prospective Nursery and Reception parents for January 2024 and September 2024. This will be a great opportunity to meet the Headteacher and EYFS team, tour our classrooms and garden as well as ask any questions you may have. Please let the school office know if you would like to attend (Tel. 0191 917 2484)

Reconciliation at St. Bede's: Reconciliation at St. Bede's on Wednesday evening will no longer be available and is replaced with 6pm after Saturday Vigil.

Plant and Seed Exchange

After our success in the spring we have decided to do an autumn exchange at each mass on 7th & 8th October. Donations of plants and seeds will be gratefully received. Contact Chris O'Neill on 07815162153 if you need items collected.

MiniVinies - The minivines newsletter is now available by [clicking on this link](#).

Other News

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and is a priority in every parish and diocesan organisation. The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is fully committed in the church and operates a zero-tolerance approach. The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is at the heart of the Church's mission. Our liaison with statutory and non-statutory agencies ensures that we promptly and properly respond to allegations of abuse, report to police; appropriately support any victims and hold perpetrators to account. We adopt and implement fully the policies and procedures of the Catholic Church of England and Wales, which is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church. To discuss any safeguarding concerns please contact a safeguarding officer in any of our churches - their details are on the noticeboard in the porch. Details of our Diocesan policy can be found by [clicking here](#).

A warm welcome to Fr Luke as he begins his time here in our parish. We wish him every blessing.

Rosary Rally. A Rosary procession will be held on Saturday 7 October 2023 from St Joseph's Church, Gateshead to Northumberland Street, Newcastle followed by public Rosary in Northumberland Street. The day will start with First Saturday Mass and devotions at 11am at St Joseph's, High West Street, Gateshead (near to Gateshead Metro Station), then the Marian procession will start with a statue of Our Lady from the church at 12.30pm, walking over the Tyne Bridge before assembling in Northumberland Street to pray the Rosary starting at 1.15pm. All are welcome and anyone can join at any stage of the event.

The Season of Creation: 1 September - 4 October 2023 - The Season of Creation is the annual Christian celebration to listen and respond together to the cry of Creation: the ecumenical family around the world unites to pray and protect our common home. The Season begins on 1 September, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends on 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations. Learn more from this video. Pope Francis' inspiring message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation can be viewed [here](#). You can find out more information, view and download various resource and see suggestions on how you can take part by clicking [here](#). Join the Diocesan Environmental Group on Saturday 30 September (10.00am - 12.00pm) to hear from guest speakers about the Season of Creation and updates from parishes and schools working towards the Live Simply Award in the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle. [Click here to read more.](#)

Are you ready to accept? We invite men aged 18+ who might be experiencing the call from God to discern priesthood to join the Vocations Team in finding out more. The next Discernment Evening will take place on **Tuesday 3rd October at** Cloister Café - St Mary's Cathedral Clayton Street West, **Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5HH 6.00pm - 8.00pm** There will be a time of Prayer, talk/discussion, followed by a meal together. If you would like to attend, or for more information, please contact the Vocations Promoter, Fr Shaun Purdy by [clicking here](#) or by phone: 01207299012 by 30th September 2023.

Quiet Day - Minsteracres Team - £30 - Tuesday 3rd October -10am-4pm. An opportunity to sit aside, listen to God in Scripture and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the countryside here at Minsteracres. Lunch and refreshments included. [Please click here for more information.](#)

Retreat Weekend for Individuals and Parishes - Minsteracres Team - £180 - Friday 6th - Sunday 8th October - 6.30pm-2pm. A warm welcome to individuals and parishes to join us here at Minsteracres for a reflective retreat which comprises talks, discussions, reflections and social time. [Please click here for more information.](#)

Our next RCIA/Journey in Faith programme begins on Wednesday 27th September 7pm at Our Lady Queen of Peace church Penshaw. If you know anyone who would like to join us and haven't registered their interest yet, please ask them to speak to Fr Martin or Fr Luke for further information.

Diocesan Courses:

Days of Reflection:

Liturgical Leaders of the Celebration of the Word and Holy Communion (Lay Leaders): Saturday 7 October 2023 (10.30am - 3.00pm), St Joseph's, Gateshead. [View here](#)

Courses:

New Readers of the Liturgy of the Word: Commencing Monday 9 October 2023 (2 sessions), St Aidan's, Benton. [View here](#)

Liturgical Leaders of the Celebration of the Word and Holy Communion (Lay Leaders): Commencing Thursday 26 October 2023 (6 sessions), St Hilda's Diocesan Resource Centre, Newcastle. [View here](#)
Further information and booking details are available on the [Liturgy and Prayer webpage](#).

A Resource for individuals and groups - As part of our aim to promote growth and knowledge of the Eucharist, the Association of the Eucharist offer [The Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured](#), which gives us words from Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis to guide time before the Blessed Sacrament. This resource can be used by both individuals and groups.

Miracles of the World Exhibition. The Association of the Eucharist will be hosting an exhibition about Blessed Carlo Acutis and his documentation of Eucharistic Miracles from around the world. The exhibition will be held at St Joseph's, Gateshead, NE8 1LX from Saturday 14 October to Saturday 28 October. On Saturday 14 October, Bishop Emeritus Séamus Cunningham will celebrate Mass to mark the opening of the exhibition; there will also be a guest speaker and a time of Adoration. For the remaining two weeks, the exhibition will be available to visit, for a period of time, on a daily basis. More details about the launch day and timings to follow. Parish groups are welcome to attend. Event details can be found at <https://bit.ly/DHNCarloAcutis>.

Tyne & Wear Citizens invite you to join them on a webinar titled, 'Discipleship, Politics and Anger: Catholic Social Teaching and Community Organising'. This webinar, on 27 September 2023, will explore the relationship of the values of Catholic Social Teaching with the methods of broad-based community organising. This webinar will highlight how members of the Diocese, through working with Tyne and Wear Citizens, have been successful with a number of campaigns that have improved mental health services, won cheaper and safer public transport, improved local parks, developed anti-racism, work in schools, sought migrant justice and significantly increased the number of accredited Living Wage employers in the region. We will also hear from Catholics from other parts of the country working with Caritas, the SVP and other parts of the community within and beyond the Church, who have integrated the values of our tradition with this method for grassroots change. This will include Sir John Battle, Chair of Leeds Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission and Leeds Citizens. [Read more and register here](#).

First Steps – Exploring the Catholic Faith online - Wednesday 11 October at 7 pm for 7 weeks - The Vicariate for Faith and Mission is pleased to be able to offer First Steps this Autumn. Are you wondering about your relationship with God and not sure where to start? First Steps is aimed at people who are thinking about their faith or their relationship with God. Perhaps you were baptised a Catholic, but didn't make First Communion, or receive Confirmation, or were baptised as a member of another Christian Church or have never been baptised at all. If you are currently wondering whether joining the Catholic Church is the next step for you this may be the way forward. For further information, or to register, please [click here](#).

Centre for Catholic Studies - The following are audio recordings from our podcasts and a link to a feature that appears in The Tablet: **CTRS Seminar: Chris Insole - Pantheism: A Word for the World** - In this CTRS seminar, Professor Chris Insole of the University of Durham, speaks about 'Pantheism: A Word for the World'. To listen please [click here](#). **CTRS Seminar: Greg Hillis: Opposing the "Heresy of Individualism"** - In this CTRS seminar, Professor Greg Hillis of Bellarmine University talks about 'Opposing the "Heresy of Individualism": Thomas Merton and Interreligious Dialogue'. To listen please [click here](#). **CTRS Seminar: Tia Noelle Pratt: Anti-racism and the Catholic Church** - In this online CTRS seminar, Tia Noelle Pratt, Assistance Vice-President for Mission Engagement and Strategic Engagements at Villanova University, gives a presentation on "Do the Work: Anti-racism and the Catholic Church". To [listen please click here](#).

Stoicism - The Discipline of Desire - Darren Harper - £220 - Friday 29th September - Sunday 1st October 6.30pm - 2pm. This retreat will increase our understanding of Stoicism as a guide to life by focusing on the Discipline of Desire. Using lectures, discussion and meditation, we will explore the Stoic framework of fate and free will, their attitude of joyful acceptance, and their approach to love and friendship, as well as their ideal of the Sage. [Please click here for more information](#).

Vacancies

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has the following job vacancies:

Dept. for Education

Senior Administrator – Full-time, permanent. Closing date: 2 October

Primary Adviser – RE and Catholic Ethos – Full time, term-time. Closing date: 5 October

Secondary Adviser – RE and Catholic Ethos – Part-time, term-time. Secondment may be considered. Closing date: 5 October

All roles based in the Diocesan Offices in Newcastle. Please visit www.diocesehn.org.uk for full details or contact us on 0191 243 3301.

Reflections

Diocesan Weekly reflections can be found by [clicking here](#).

Examen - Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go

[Saturday Examen](#) [25th Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Catholic Social Teaching

For the Newsletter, [click here](#).

Prayers - If you would like to request prayers from the parish community for someone who is sick, or recently deceased, please click on the links below and complete the necessary forms. This will enable their names to be included in private prayer and during various Masses. [For Prayers for the Sick](#)
[For Prayers for the Deceased](#)
or ring 0191 4163583

Finance - Standing Order forms and Gift Aid forms are available by clicking on the following links:

[For St John XXIII](#)

[For St Joseph's](#)

or ring 0191 4163583.

Sick and Recently Deceased - To view the sick and recently deceased list [please click here](#).

Parish Newsletter

If you have any comments you wish to make about the Parish Newsletter, [please click here](#).

For the latest information, please go to any of the following

Websites:

[Parish of St John XXIII](#)

[Parish of St Joseph's](#)

[Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle](#)

All the Links you will ever need!

Please [click here](#) or Scan the QR Code with your mobile phone to go to a site containing All the Links You'll Ever Need.



To post a notice on this Newsletter, please [click here](#)