

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

Birtley, Chester-le-Street, Penshaw, Sacriston, Washington

28TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 14TH–15TH OCTOBER 2023, Year A

Saturday	St Joseph	5pm	John Hogan
14th October	St Bede	5pm	Margaret Walker (Deceased)
Vigil			
Sunday	St John Boste	9.30am	Deceased Members of the Selfridge Family
15th October	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	In Thanksgiving for Daniel Bentham
28th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	James & Elizabeth Beadle & George & Theresa Dawson

Today's Gospel from Matthew is a tricky one. Who isn't alarmed at the swift and dire consequences for the inappropriately attired guest? Isn't this the stuff of nightmares? More urgently, this Gospel compels us to consider the contemporary audience of Matthew's account of this parable. Let's reflect on this first.

Matthew was writing primarily for Christian Jews in the decades after his experience of Christ's ministry. There was not an easy path; ostracized and separated from their Jewish families and communities but essentially Jewish in their mindset. With some bewilderment, they were asked to welcome into their new communities Christian Gentiles, whose lifestyles were so different to their own. Matthew's Gospel has some hard work to do.

In this parable, where the wedding feast symbolizes God's kingdom, they would instinctively recognize themselves as "first tier" guests but are reminded that their status as God's chosen people has not exactly led to an unambiguous response to the Messiah. The king has opened the invitation to his son's wedding to all. The message of the Messiah is for everybody: "to all who did accept him, he gave power to become children of God."

Status, wealth, citizen or slave mean nothing in comparison to an open heart to Jesus.

And now to that wedding guest...

The crowd listening to Jesus (and the first audience of Matthew's Gospel) would be well aware that in the Jewish wedding ritual of the time, the host (here the frustrated king) would have provided the guests with the appropriate wedding garment. This explains his astonishment when he notices the careless public slight of the guest. He doesn't even give an explanation. What Jesus is really talking about, of course, is not the outer garment but the man's neglect. He is being offered God's Kingdom, salvation, but it requires a commitment from him. Answering the invitation is *active*: it requires clothes of an entirely different order. It is the guest's half-heartedness which brings punishment.

Today's Gospel challenges us to be sincere in how we live out God's invitation to us and to be constantly aware that we share this message with all. There is no top tier.

Angela Nichols



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

Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 16th October 2023

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 16th October			
Ss Hedwig, Margaret Mary Alacoque & Richard Gwyn	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Phil & June Falloon
Tuesday 17th October			
St Ignatius of Antioch	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	John Callaghan
	St Joseph	7pm	Martin Bowles
Wednesday 18th October			
St Luke	St Bede	10am	Pat McAdams (80th Birthday)
	St John Boste	7pm	Repose of the Soul of Arthur Armstrong
Thursday 19th October			
Ss Paul of the Cross, John de Brebeuf & Isaac Jogues	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Our Schoolchildren and Staff
	St Joseph	12 noon	Angela Mary Gardiner
Friday 20th October			
	St John Boste	10am	Charlie & Peggy Purvis
	St Joseph	10am	Sr Maureen Quinn
Saturday 21st October			
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Clare, Tony & Deceased Madden Family
Vigil	St Joseph	5pm	Ursula Jobson
	St Bede	5pm	Clare & Stephen Bottoms (Deceased Anniversary)
Sunday 22nd October			
The 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	Louise Tobin Davies
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Dennis Wilson
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Theresa Madden

First Reading: The Lord's Banquet Isaiah 25:6-10

On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will prepare for all peoples a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines, of food rich and juicy, of fine strained wines. On this mountain he will remove the mourning veil covering all peoples, and the shroud enwrapping all nations; he will destroy Death for ever. The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek; he will take away his people's shame everywhere on earth, for the Lord has said so. That day, it will be said: 'See, this is our God in whom we hoped for salvation; the Lord is the one in whom we hoped. We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us; for the hand of the Lord rests on this mountain.'

The Response to the Psalm: In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

Second Reading: Ready for Anything – with the Help of God Philippians 4:12-14. 19-20

I know how to be poor and I know how to be rich too. I have been through my initiation and now I am ready for anything anywhere: full stomach or empty stomach, poverty or plenty. There is nothing I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength. All the same, it was good of you to share with me in my hardships. In return my God will fulfil all your needs, in Christ Jesus, as lavishly as only God can. Glory to God, our Father, forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! The Word was made flesh and lived among us: to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God. Alleluia!

The Gospel: An Invitation to the Wedding Feast Matthew 22:1-10

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people: 'The kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a king who gave a feast for his son's wedding. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited, but they would not come. Next he sent some more servants. "Tell those who have been invited," he said, "that I have my banquet all prepared, my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, everything is ready. Come to the wedding." But they were not interested: one went off to his farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his servants, maltreated them and killed them. The king was furious. He despatched his troops, destroyed those murderers and burnt their town. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready; but as those who were invited proved to be unworthy, go to the crossroads in the town and invite everyone you can find to the wedding." So these servants went out onto the roads and collected together everyone they could find, bad and good alike; and the wedding hall was filled with guests. When the king came in to look at the guests he noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding garment, and said to him, "How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment?" And the man was silent. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot and throw him into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth." For many are called but few are chosen.'

An Invitation to the Wedding Feast

A wedding is a time of joy and of completion after long preparation, a time of love and of complete satisfaction. In Judaism at the time of Jesus, the coming of the Messiah is often compared to the joy of a wedding-feast. The marriage-feast at Cana must have been some party! At Mary's request Jesus produced 900 litres of wine. The Letter to the Ephesians teaches that the love in a human wedding is only a foretaste of Christ's love for his bride, the Church. In the story of the royal wedding in this Sunday's Gospel, however, two things go drastically wrong. First, the original wedding guests refuse to come. Not only do they refuse, but they brutally maltreat the innocent messengers, and the king (who must represent God) ruthlessly burns down their city. Secondly, the man who has no wedding-garment is thrown out: a wedding-garment is a standard Jewish image for works of generosity expected of every faithful Jew. For us Christians too, the story constitutes a double warning. **Are we alert and listening for God's call? Do we rest secure in being called Christians and leave the challenging jobs to others?**

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

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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 available in all of our Churches as follows:

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

St John Boste - Friday morning, after Mass.

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Saturday morning, after Mass.

St Bede's - Saturday after Vigil Mass.

OLOF - The club is on a Tuesday at 1pm in the Emmaus Room, at Our Lady's in the Village! All Welcome. Please note there will be no OLOF this Tuesday, 17th October at OBLI.

Special Collection Next Week – World Mission Sunday: We live in a privileged part of the world. Throughout the year we are reminded that we are not meant to be a 'cosy' local Catholic Community but have to look to support our fellow Christians throughout the world who witness to their faith in very difficult circumstances. Some people reckon that 1 in 10 Christians are persecuted throughout the world. This Collection helps us to help others to continue witnessing to the Lord in very poor parts of the world.

Medjugorje Northeast Prayer Group - The group will hold its afternoons of prayer in Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Penshaw, second Sunday of each month, 4-5.30pm, beginning Sunday 12th November, followed by refreshments. All welcome.

Induction Mass of new Parish Priest - Fr Martin invites all parishioners to his Mass of Induction as our new Parish Priest on Monday 23rd October, 7pm at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate.

Fr Colm Hayden (Episcopal Vicar) will celebrate the Mass which will be followed by refreshments in the hall. All most welcome as we invoke God's blessing upon our Parish. This will replace the usual Monday evening Mass at Our Lady Queen of Peace for **this week only**.

Macmillan Cancer Support - A huge thank you to everyone who baked, bought, ate cake and donated to the Macmillan coffee morning at St John Boste church. You raised an amazing £305 for the charity.

Rosary & Soup - During October, every Wednesday at 12 noon and each Monday at 6.35pm at Our Lady Queen of Peace. All are welcome. This Sunday at 4pm, **Rosary for Peace and Benediction** at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. Please come along.

Sick/Housebound in the Parish - Fr. Martin and Fr. Luke are very happy to visit any sick/housebound parishioner with the Sacraments. The Sacrament of Holy anointing and Confession can be a great help in such circumstances. Please contact the Priest's if you know of anyone who would appreciate a visit. Clergy landline: 0191 6498257. Thankyou.

Reception of Holy Communion and Covid Infections - With the current rise in the number of Covid infections in society at the present time, and as we go towards the winter season, it may be worth considering some aspects of receiving Holy Communion during Mass. Reception from the chalice is up to each individual's personal choice. The full presence of Jesus Christ in the bread of Life is fully received in the Consecrated Host. (Body, Blood, Soul & Divinity.) If you do choose to receive from the Chalice please do not 'dip' the consecrated host into the chalice. (This practise called 'intinction' is no longer an option, at the request of the Bishop's.) If you think you may have a cold, infection, etc, or consider yourself 'vulnerable' then please receive only the Consecrated host.

The sign of Peace - If the Priest or Deacon invites the 'sign of Peace' please consider that not everyone may wish to 'shake hands.' A simple smile, or bow suffices. Thank you, Fr. Martin.

SVP 200 Club Draw - CORRECTION for September: 1st Prize £50 No. 93 2nd Prize £25 No 84. October: 1st Prize £50 No 177. 2nd Prize £25 No 55. Congratulations to Vera Duffy winning first prize.

Nicene Creed - Fr Martin would like us to pray the 'Profession of Faith' i.e. the creed each weekend at Mass. (The Apostles Creed – shorter form is only prayed during the Easter season.) Mass cards with the longer version of the Creed are available at the back of each Church for those who wish to use them. Thankyou.

St Bede Toddler Group - The toddler groups meet every Monday during term time from 9.30 until 11.00. We currently have spaces and would love to welcome new members from the community. Just come along on a Monday morning. For more information contact Joan Formosa on 07504579591

Other News

Thank you for your generous donations to CAFOD's Family Fast Day Appeal - Together we are supporting local experts like Dr Nasha in Pakistan to get help to families and communities when they need it most. It's not too late to give online [by clicking here](#).

Blessed Carlo Acutis Exhibition - St. Joseph's Gateshead. The exhibition remains open until 28th October, formally opened by emeritus Bishop Seamus Cunningham with 10am Mass, 14th October. The exhibition traces the short life of Blessed Carlo, and his message for our own times. Event details can be found [by clicking here](#).

Retreat Weekend for Individuals and Parishes - Minsteracres Team - £180 - Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th November - 6.30pm-2pm. A warm welcome to individuals and parishes to join us at Minsteracres for a reflective retreat which comprises talks, discussions, reflections and social time. [Please click here for more information.](#)

World Mission Sunday this year is on 22 October. On this day the whole Church unites together through prayer for its missionary activity, and by collecting funds to support Catholic communities across the world experiencing situations of poverty and turmoil. The theme chosen by the Holy Father is: *'Hearts on fire, feet on the move'* (based on Luke 24). In his message for World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis encourages us all to set hearts ablaze with God's love and compassion for *'everyone has the right to receive the Gospel and we as Christ's followers have the duty to proclaim it without excluding anyone.'* Donations and prayers on this day have a direct impact on Catholic communities overseas where the Church is too young, too small, or too poor to flourish without help from the rest of the Church. Our donations help build the Church, support vocations, and enable missionaries to carry out their mission in often dangerous and remote places. Thank you for your ongoing support of Missio through prayer and charity. Please encourage your parish to do all they can to celebrate this day in solidarity with the whole Church. For more information about World Mission Sunday, please [click here](#).

Diocesan Church Music Association - Calling all musicians and singers, save the date! On Sunday 12 November there will be a workshop with the renowned composer Will Todd to learn his new Mass setting, *Gaudete*. This Mass setting has been commissioned by the Bishop Chadwick Catholic Educational Trust and made available for all churches and schools in our Diocese. *Gaudete* is upbeat and accessible and has been written to work in all sorts of settings, including parishes with limited musical resources. Find out more about the composer by [clicking here](#). You may have already attended one of Will's very popular workshops and singing days, or community events such as 'The Great Northeast Passion' in South Shields. Either way this promises to be a fun and rewarding afternoon. Entry is free - with a retiring collection - but this event is likely to be popular and registration is vital. If you have any questions about the event please contact the Diocesan Church Music Association by [clicking here](#). Register your interest for this event by [clicking here](#).

Diocesan Courses - 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](#)

Children's Liturgy of the Word Autumn Programme: Commencing Monday 30 October 2023 (2 sessions), St Hilda's Diocesan Resource Centre. [View here](#).

New Eucharistic Ministers of Holy Communion: Commencing Tuesday 7 November 2023 (3 sessions), The sacred Heart and St Cuthbert, Amble. [View here](#).

Further information and booking details are available on the [Liturgy and Prayer webpage](#).

Centre for Catholic Studies - The following are audio recordings from our podcasts and a link to a feature that appears in The Tablet: **New Podcast episode: The Church's Radical Reform** - Season 2, Episode 6 - Synodal Review and Papal Leadership. The synod process in the Catholic Church is attracting interest from other Christian denominations, including from unexpected quarters. In this episode, Christopher Lamb interviews Neil Hudson, a Pentecostal pastor for 30 years. He is a senior leader at the Elim church in Salford, the northwest of England, and has worked at the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity. [Listen to it here.](#)

Justice & Peace Autumn Newsletter - The latest Justice & Peace newsletter has been published. The Justice and Peace Co-ordinating Council urges people, if they have not already done so, to send a letter to their MP urging them not to pull back on their green commitments. We have produced a template letter which can be found in the appendix to our newsletter. [Read more.](#)

Synod - Linking with the first session of the Synod on Synodality in Rome (October 2023), Clifton Diocese will be exploring the same themes through a series of webinars (7.30 - 9.00pm) through October. They include:

Canon Christopher Thomas: **24 October** (to be confirmed); *'Participation, governance and authority in a synodal Church'*. [Click here to register](#)

Marriage Preparation Days- 2023: Saturday 4 November: St Mary's, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ. Saturday 18 November: Sacred Heart, Gosforth NE3 5EB. Engaged couples can find more information [by clicking here](#). To book on a course, [please click here](#).

Reflections

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

Examen - Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go: [Saturday Examen 28th 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.



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