

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

30TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 28TH-29TH OCTOBER 2023, Year A

Saturday	St Joseph	5pm	Dennis Welsh
28th October			
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Mary Dragone (Deceased)
Sunday	St John Boste	9:30am	John & Joe Erskin
29th October	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Geoff Storey
30th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Joan Shaw

The Greatest Commandment

This week in our Gospel reading, we hear Jesus tell the Pharisees about the greatest commandment, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind, and to love your neighbour as yourself. Jesus reminds us here that these are commandments of love – they are not optional, but imperative for us as followers of Jesus.

In fact, these commandments can be viewed as a mantra for the Christian life. In the same way that we are called to love God, we are called to love each other as ourselves. We cannot do one without the other. As we recognise the inherent dignity of every human being, made in the image of God, it becomes clear that we are called to love them as Christ would.

This, however, can undoubtedly prove challenging. Yet, in this Scripture, we are reminded of the duty of care for all people, regardless of who they are, or indeed what they believe. Jesus constantly upholds this throughout the Gospels, often spending time with some of the most marginalized in society, making them feel welcomed and valued in his presence.

Who can you reach out to this week? Perhaps an old friend who you lost touch with, or a family member who perhaps you don't see as often as you'd like. Love in this sense is more than simply an emotion, but a call to action; a call to discipleship. St Theresa of Avila reminds us that 'Christ has no body now on earth but yours', and as such we are called to be Christ-like in our world, giving the same care to the marginalized as He did. How will you follow this this week?

Hannah Bartlett



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 30th October 2023

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 30th October	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Greg Moorhouse
Tuesday 31st October	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Paul Raymond Lyons & Deceased Family
	St Joseph	7pm	Nancy White
Wednesday 1st November All Saints	St Joseph	12 noon	People of the Parish
	St Bede	10am	Deceased Dragone, Gabriele and Olsen Families
	St John Boste	7pm	Gerard Dent
Thursday 2nd November All Souls	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Holy Souls
	St Joseph	12 noon	Deceased Members of the Parish
Friday 3rd November Ss Martin de Porres & Winefride	St John Boste	10am	Tony Donkin
	St Joseph	10am	Special Intention (JS)
Saturday 4th November St Charles Borromeo Vigil	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Elizabeth Dixon
	St Joseph	5pm	Nicky Barnfather
	St Bede	5pm	Connolly Family
Sunday 5th November The 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	Tony Donkin
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Linda Harrigan
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Hodgson & O'Hara Families

First Reading: Commandments about the Vulnerable and the Poor Exodus 22:20-26

The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the sons of Israel this, "You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare and I shall kill you with the sword; your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans. If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him. If you take another's cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me, I will listen, for I am full of pity."

The Response to the Psalm: I love you, Lord, my strength.

Second Reading: Servants of the Living God 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

You observed the sort of life we lived when we were with you, which was for your instruction, and you were led to become imitators of us, and of the Lord; and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great opposition all round you. This

has made you the great example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord started to spread – and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for the news of your faith in God has spread everywhere. We do not need to tell other people about it: other people tell us how we started the work among you, how you broke with idolatry when you were converted to God and became servants of the real, living God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, to come from heaven to save us from the retribution which is coming.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Open our heart, O Lord, to accept the words of your Son. Alleluia!

The Gospel: The Greatest Commandment

Matthew 22:34-40

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

The Greatest Commandment

Familiarity with Jesus' answer to the question about the greatest commandment blunts our awareness of its startling directness. Many answers could be given, perhaps singling out any one of the ten commandments as the greatest, the most important basis of society. A frequent answer to the question was and is the Golden Rule which exists in many cultures: 'Do not do to another what you would not have done to you'. This is basically a selfish answer, protecting one's own interests. By contrast, Jesus' answer hits home, turning us away from self to God. 'Love' (not 'obey' or 'adore' or 'fear' or 'reverence') is the command. Love is not simply the warmth of companionship or of sex, but is the willing generosity of mother to helpless young child or daughter to helpless old parent, of wife to alcoholic husband or husband to paralysed wife, seeking no reward but the happiness of the receiver. Paul gives a useful check-list about love in chapter 13 of his first letter to the Corinthians. John's first letter provides a useful summary: 'No one who fails to love the brother or sister whom he can see, can love God whom he has not seen'. **How do we put into practice this commandment to love? 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

Special Collection This Week – Clergy Training Fund: The annual collection is for the training of current and new candidates for the Priesthood and Diaconate. Thank you for your generosity.

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.

Sacrament of Confirmation. This Friday evening we welcome Bishop Stephen Wright to our Parish, for the celebration of Confirmation for our young people. St. Bede's 7pm. All welcome. Let us keep our young people in our prayers. Thankyou to those who have helped prepare the young people for this special occasion."

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

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.

Medjugorje Centre Northeast Pilgrimage – In conjunction with Northern Star Travel Ltd. (0161- 7732115) Flying from Newcastle – Dubrovnik, 2nd- 9th June. 2024. Led by Fr. Martin Morris. For booking and info: please contact: Adrian Duffy on the above number, or Kath Ash on 01670- 733358.

October Rosary & Benediction: To conclude the month's devotion, 'Rosary for Peace' at St. John Boste Sunday 29th Oct 4-

5pm. All welcome. Why not come along and spend some time with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist?

"Blessing of Graves.." Sunday 5th November 2023 at 4pm. An opportunity to gather in Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church and pray for all our Departed loved ones. At the end of the service we will process into the cemetery where the traditional blessing of graves will take place.

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.

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,

Tuesday Night Holy Rosary prayers for the people of the Holy Land. Please join us at 6.40pm on Tuesdays at St. Joseph's Birtley, to pray the great prayer of the rosary for all sides in the conflict in Palestine.

Other News

Parish Christmas outing to York. Saturday 18th November, 2023. "An opportunity to visit York City, for shopping, sight-seeing, & Visit York's Christmas market. We will also be celebrating Mass in the 16th Century Barr Convent Chapel, with refreshments afterwards, (offered by the Sisters.) Coach leaving Our Lady Queen of Peace, 8.30am, departing York at 5pm. Cost per head £ 17 Children £14 please sign list at back of Church if interested. Thanks Fr Martin

Walking Retreat - £15 - Saturday 18th November-10am-5pm. Walk through the beautiful countryside around Minsteracres for about seven to ten miles, making time for prayer and reflection, whilst absorbing the beautiful creation all around us. You will need suitable walking boots, warm, weatherproof clothing and a packed lunch. [Please click here for more information.](#)

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.](#)

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. More details to follow. Register your interest by [clicking here.](#)

Engaging the Disengaged: How to accompany 'Non-Religious' persons - The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, along with the Diocese of Portsmouth, will be hosting an **Online Seminar** featuring the eminent evangelist, speaker and author Sherry Weddell. This seminar will provide an opportunity for people who work within the fields of evangelisation to explore how Catholics can fulfil their mission to bring all to Christ.

The seminar will take place on Tuesday 21 November 2023 at 6.00pm. Tickets are priced at £10 (non-refundable). For further information and booking details for this event can be found by [clicking here.](#)

Marriage Preparation Days- 2023: Saturday 4 November: St Mary's, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ. Saturday 18 November: Sacred Heart, Gosforth NE3 5EB. **2024:** Saturday 9 March: St Joseph, Blaydon NE21 5AE. Saturday 16 March: St Mary's, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ. Saturday 13 April: St Hilda's, Sunderland SR5 2JD. Saturday 18 May: St Robert of Newminster, Morpeth NE61 1QF. Saturday 21 September: St Robert of Newminster, Morpeth NE61 1QF. Saturday 9 November: St Mary's, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ. Engaged couples can find more information [by clicking here](#). To book on a course, [please click here](#).

Message from Fr Martin: "Thankyou to everyone who helped make my induction Mass last Monday evening such a special occasion. Thankyou to those who prepared the Church, the music and the buffet in the hall afterwards, greatly appreciated. Fr. Martin

All Saints and All Souls: This coming week we celebrate two of the greatest feasts of the Church's year. The Solemnity of All Saints, a Holy Day of Obligation, and the Feast of All Souls. On All Saints we celebrate the great communion of Heaven, those saints who are known to us by name and those of untold number who we do not yet know. The next day, All Souls, is not a day of obligation but it is an opportunity for us to gather together in prayer for those who have gone before us, remembering all those who have died, the Holy Souls in purgatory. On these two days we experience profoundly the connection that binds the Church together, on earth, in purgatory and in heaven. please come along to mass to join us in prayer.

Vigil of All Saints - St Joseph's 7pm, 31st Oct

All Saints

OLQP, 10am, 1st Nov

OBLI, 10am, 1st Nov

St Joseph's, 12pm, 1st Nov

St John Boste, 7pm, 1 Nov

All Souls

OBLI, 10am, 2nd Nov

St John Boste, 10am, 2nd Nov

St Joseph's, 12pm, 2nd Nov

St Bede's, 7pm, 2nd Nov

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](#).

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. 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](#).

Minivinnies - Autumn Newsletter - The Autumn newsletter is available [by clicking here](#).

Interfaith Prayer Vigil- 5 November 2023 - A monthly prayer vigil has been held outside the barrier to the DIRC for the last year. The purpose is to pray for the women who are detained there, to stand in solidarity with them and to witness by our presence that their detention is inhumane, unjust and incompatible with our faith, which calls us to recognise the unique dignity of each person. All are welcome to come along to a short prayer service which incorporates a time of silence. The postcode for the Centre on Corbridge Road, Medomsley is DH8 6QY. If you are unable to join in person, please join in prayer from home at 3.00pm. For more information, email Liz Archibald: lizarchibald.justiceandpeace@gmail.com. [Click here](#) to download the Prayer Service. Watch the online prayer service [here](#).

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.

Diocesan Courses:

The Diocesan Liturgical Formation Team will be offering the following Days of Reflection and Courses this coming Autumn:

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](#).

Reflections

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

Examen - Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go: [Saturday Examen 30th 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](#)