

# 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](mailto:sj23office01@gmail.com)

**In the Partnership of Benedict**

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

## 31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 4TH-5TH NOVEMBER 2023, Year A

Saturday 4th November	St Joseph	5pm	<b>Nicky Barnfather</b>
<b>Vigil</b>	St Bede	5pm	<b>Connolly Family</b>
Sunday 5th November	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>Tony Donkin</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	<b>Linda Harrigan</b>
<b>The 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	<b>Hodgson &amp; O'Hara Families</b>

### November

I love to go walking, especially fell walking, in the Lake district. One of my favourite walks ( or Climb) is Great Gable , situated on the western side of the Lakes, it offers breathtaking views from the mountain top towards the Cumbrian coast of St. Bee's Head.. At the foot of the Gable is a very small Church called St. Olaf's, and in the Church grounds a cemetery, where several people who died attempting to Climb the Gable, are now buried. One gravestone always stands out for me. It has no name on it, no date; it simply reads, " In thanksgiving for Happy memories." Those few simple but profound words say so much, and always encourage me to an' attitude of gratitude' for all that has been and all that will be. ' November is the month of the Holy souls when we pray for our departed loved ones. The month of the *Holy Souls* is universally marked throughout world, visiting Graves is the norm at this time. In many countries the first Sunday in November is known as 'Cemetery Sunday' when parishioners gather together and pray for the faithful departed. Standing in the midst of the headstones memories come flooding back of blessed times shared together, there lying side by side , their work now done, we pray with and for them awaiting the great call to to Rise and join our Lord in the great triumph of his Resurrection. Lives well lived, treasured and not forgotten these *Holy Souls* spur us on too towards the fulness of life in God. The word ' Eucharist' comes from the Greek word ' Thanksgiving' , whilst we fondly remember blessing's of happy memories, our Faith teaches that every Holy Mass we share in, every Holy communion received with Faith is a pledge and promise of our future glory in Heaven. Death is not a terminus, but the great -turning point of life. At the moment of our death our life is changed not ended, and the lifetime we have experienced thus far is tiny compared with the eternal life that lies ahead. That's what we mean by the phrase ' *The Communion of Saints*'- the ability to share the vision of God himself, to be part of the love of all God's creation. Our Lord has promised us this and nothing less. Let us pray for an increase in Christian hope as we await the Blessed promise of the Resurrection. I love this prayer of St. John Henry Newman;

" May he support us all the day long, Until the shades lengthen and the evening comes, And the busy world is hushed, And the fever of life is over, And our work is done. Then in his mercy may he give us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last."

*Eternal rest grant unto them o Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them, and may they rise in glory. Amen!*

God Bless, Fr. Martin Morris

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 6th November 2023

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 6th November <b>St Illtud</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Lisa Taylor
Tuesday 7th November <b>St Willibrord</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Theresa Madden
	St Joseph	7pm	Bob Moat
Wednesday 8th November <b>All Saints of Wales</b>	St Bede	10am	Deceased Monaghan Family
	St John Boste	7pm	Tom & Jane Rutter & Family
Thursday 9th November <b>The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	John Prendergast 90th Birthday
	St Joseph	12 noon	Tommy Finnigan
Friday 10th November <b>St Leo the Great</b>	St John Boste	10am	For a Good Health Update
	St Joseph	10am	Special Intention (JS)
Saturday 11th November <b>Vigil</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	John Barker
	St Joseph	5pm	Thanksgiving to St Joseph (VD)
	St Bede	5pm	Barney & Connie Casey & Christopher Bartley (deceased)
Sunday 12th November <b>The 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time and Remembrance Sunday</b>	St John Boste	9:30am	Eleanor and Maldwyn Roberts
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Gerard McCabe & Deceased Relatives
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	(Private Intention) 90th Birthday Anniversary

### First Reading: A Corrupt Leadership.

**Malachi 1:14-2:2,8-10**

I am a great king, says the Lord of Hosts, and my name is feared throughout the nations. And now, priests, this warning is for you. If you do not listen, if you do not find it in your heart to glorify my name, says the Lord of Hosts, I will send the curse on you and curse your very blessing. But you, you have strayed from the way; you have caused many to stumble by your teaching. You have destroyed the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of Hosts. And so I in my turn have made you contemptible and vile in the eyes of the whole people in repayment for the way you have not kept to my paths but have shown partiality in your administration. Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why, then, do we break faith with one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors?

**The Response to the Psalm: Keep my soul in peace before you, O Lord.**

**Second reading: Paul's Care for his Converts**

**1 Thessalonians 2:7-9,13**

Like a mother feeding and looking after her own children, we felt so devoted and protective towards you, and had come to love you so much, that we were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but our whole lives as well. Let me remind you, brothers, how hard we used to work, slaving night and day so as not to be a burden on any one of you while we were proclaiming God's Good News to you. Another reason why we constantly thank God for you is that as soon

as you heard the message that we brought you as God's message, you accepted it for what it really is, God's message and not some human thinking; and it is still a living power among you who believe it.

**Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Speak, Lord, your servant is listening: you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!**

**The Gospel: The Scribes and Pharisees Denounced. Matthew 23:1-12**

Addressing the people and his disciples Jesus said, 'The scribes and the Pharisees occupy the chair of Moses. You must therefore do what they tell you and listen to what they say; but do not be guided by what they do: since they do not practise what they preach. They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but will they lift a finger to move them? Not they! Everything they do is done to attract attention, like wearing broader phylacteries and longer tassels, like wanting to take the place of honour at banquets and the front seats in the synagogues, being greeted obsequiously in the market squares and having people call them Rabbi. 'You, however, must not allow yourselves to be called Rabbi, since you have only one master, and you are all brothers. You must call no one on earth your father, since you have only one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor must you allow yourselves to be called teachers, for you have only one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you must be your servant. Anyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and anyone who humbles himself will be exalted.'

## The Scribes and Pharisees Denounced.

This is the fiercest of all the hard things which the gospel of Matthew has to say about the scribes and Pharisees. It introduces a sevenfold curse upon them. The Pharisees were the party of the Jews most concerned about the exact observance of the prescriptions of the Law of Moses. The 'scribes' were lawyers to whom they would turn in the case of a clash between two laws. Their attention to detail and their fussiness often made them lose sight of the real purpose of the Law. However, Jesus was prepared to meet them on the Pharisees' own ground and debate with them on their own terms. In the gospels, and especially in Matthew (written towards the end of the first century), the hostility of the early Christians to the Pharisees has obviously become fiercer, no doubt because of their persecution of the followers of Jesus. As Matthew warns, 'They will flog you in their synagogues.' One of their concerns was obviously the status of the religious leaders. It looks as though they were almost turning themselves into little gods. So here the gospel stresses, by contrast, that all the disciples of Jesus are equal: in Christianity there is only one Father, only one Teacher for all. **What are the charges here levelled against the Pharisees? What qualities earn Christian leaders the respect of 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

### URGENT INFORMATION

Please be aware that Fr Jim O'Keefe's email has been hacked and taken over by someone who is trying to SCAM people into buying a gift card for him.

Do not reply to any email from Fr Jim O'Keefe and delete them without opening them. Do not buy any gift cards, etc.

**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.

**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 12<sup>th</sup> November, followed by refreshments. All welcome.

**Medjugorje Centre Northeast Pilgrimage** - In conjunction with Northern Star Travel Ltd. (0161- 7732115) Flying from Newcastle - Dubrovnik, 2<sup>nd</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

**A Light in the Darkness:** a service for those who mourn the loss of a child Sunday 19 November, 2023 3:00pm St Joseph's, Gateshead.

**"Blessing of Graves.."** Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

**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

**Parish Christmas outing to York.** Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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.](#)

**Penshaw OLQP C.W.G** - Our annual collection of toys for the poor children in the area is on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December after 10am mass. Please label any gifts Boy/Girl with an age or Family. Gifts can be left in the Church porch—all donations very much appreciated.

**Claire Harris 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday** - Claire and her Dad would like to thanks the ladies of Our Lady Queen of Peace for the bouquet, gifts and cards for Claire's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

**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.](#)



**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

**Update from Justice & Peace Refugee Project** - The plight of refugees and asylum seekers across the world and in the UK is very often in the news. A new report from [Just Fair](#) in partnership with [Human Rights Watch](#), organisations which defend the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, has recently reported that children and families seeking asylum in the UK face dire living conditions in government-provided temporary housing and are often in 'temporary' housing for months or years at a time. Members of these organisations visited the Project and we were able to provide them with valuable information about the living conditions of our clients and their families. At the Refugee Project we welcome clients from a range of settings – some of our clients are housed in hotels, others in very basic accommodation and there are some who are destitute, with no financial support. Those who do receive support need food, clothes and toiletries to supplement their meagre allowance. The numbers of asylum seekers using our service is growing each month and so your generous donations of food, toiletries and finance are needed even more than ever. The full list of items required is available [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](#).

**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](#).

**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](#).

**Minivinnies – Autumn Newsletter** – The Autumn newsletter is available [by clicking 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](#).

#### **Donations for the SVP Charity Shop**

We are resuming donations of clothes, shoes, household items, toys, DVD's, CD's etc for the SVP shop in Wrekenton. Please leave in the porch of Our Lady's Church in the Village.

## **Reflections**

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

**Examen** - Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go: [Saturday Examen 31st 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](#)