

ST JOSEPH'S NEWS

Saturday 3rd December 2023

NB. Today is the First Sunday of the Season of Advent

The readings of the Mass are from **Cycle B**

PRAYERS OF THE MASS

You will find these prayers, especially the Nicene Creed, on pages 4-10 of our Hymn Books

Sunday morning Celebration in St Joseph's Birtley

Every Sunday, there will be a Service of The Word, Prayer and Music, including Children's Liturgy, at **10am in St Joseph's Church**. After the service the celebration will continue over tea and coffee in the Parish Centre.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE IN OUR PARISH WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED:

- Elaine Murphy – died on 17th Nov aged 77 years.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE IN OUR PARISH WHO ARE SICK:

- Maureen Joyce (nee Casey)
- Jean Greenwood
- Bob Fish

NB. Please let us know if anyone else wishes to ask for prayers from our parish community.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

ADVENT ALMS – this collection supports the work of St Cuthbert's Care and is open throughout the Season of Advent

MANY THANKS! - Our Coffee Morning on Sunday 26th November was a wonderful parish celebration and raised £1,000 for parish funds which will enable us to carry out some much-needed works.

HOSPITALITY

Our parish is blessed to have a group of volunteers who generously provide hospitality in the Parish Centre after Funeral Services and have also assisted in Partnership celebrations.

A special thank-you to Olga Towns who has recently retired after 20 years of service!

If anyone would like to join the group, please contact Deacon Peter (07305-059297)

OUTSIDE CRIB

Many thanks to a generous parishioner who has offered to repair/renew and decorate our crib in readiness for Christmas.

CHRISTMAS CARDS from St Benedict's Partnership.

These cards are available at the back of church. Please take copies for family, friends and neighbours who do not normally attend church.

CAFOD - World Gifts 2023-24 are an amazing way to make a difference!

You buy a virtual gift, get a gift card to pass on and your donation will then change someone else's life. Catalogues are available at the back of church.

PLEASE TURN OVER

CAFOD - Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/news/emergencies-news/israeli-palestinian-crisis-how-you-can-help to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers.

SEASON OF ADVENT

- **Cycle of readings** – Year B begins on the 1st Sunday of Advent
- **Jesse Tree** – decorated by our children at the Family Liturgy on **3rd December @ 10.00**
- **Holy Hour** - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction on **3rd December @ 3.00** followed by Afternoon Tea in the Lounge of the Parish Centre.
- **Carol Services:**
Thurs 14th December @ 7.00 in Our Lady Queen of Peace (Penshaw)
Wed 20th December @ 7.00 in St Joseph's (Birtley)
- **Reconciliation Services:**
Wed 13th December @ 7.00 in St Cuthbert's (Chester-le-Street)
Thurs 21st December @ 7.00 in St Bede's (Washington)
- **CAFOD's online Advent calendar** - This online calendar of daily prayer and reflection will offer an opportunity to pause, reflect, pray and take action as we prepare for Christmas: cafod.org.uk/pray/advent-calendar
- **REFLECTIONS** - The Diocesan Vicariate for Faith and Mission has now produced a booklet of Advent reflections: <https://bit.ly/DHNAdvent>. Last year's Advent booklet was very well received. As we prepare for Jesus' coming at Christmas, we hope that this year's edition will once again foster prayerful reflection on the Scriptures and a renewed sense of belonging amongst the people of the Diocese. The reflections have been written by a variety of people to express the richness of our diocesan community.

HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion will now be distributed to both aisles at the same time, starting with those in the front benches.

In addition, those who are taking Communion to the sick and housebound are asked to step up on the Sanctuary after receiving Communion, so that the priest can place the hosts into their pyx before giving a Blessing and sending them out on their visit.

2024 MISSIO (Red Box)

Calendars are available at the back of church.

CHRISTMAS SHOE-BOX APPEAL

Please remember your donations for the shoebox appeal and put in the box at the back of church by Sunday 3rd. You will find is a list of urgently needed items and a collection box for your donations. Please be as generous as possible.

DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER - The December is available now. You can access it via this link: diocesehn.org.uk/services/communications/catholic-publications/#newsletter.

NORTHERN CROSS – is now on sale at the back of church.