

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

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In the Partnership of Benedict

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 27TH - 28TH January 2024, Year B

Saturday	St Joseph	5pm	Dennis Welsh (Dec'd)
27th January	St Bede	5pm	Billy Bowden (Deceased Anniversary)
Vigil			
Sunday	St John Boste	9:30am	Thanksgiving for Health
28th January	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	The People of the Parish
4th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	People who don't have anyone to pray for them

St. Simeon

**'At Last all-powerful master, you give leave to your servant to go in peace, according to your promise.
For my eyes have seen your salvation which you prepared for all nations,
A light to enlighten the gentiles and give glory to Israel, your people'**

These words spoken by St. Simeon in the Gospel according to St. Luke during the Presentation of Jesus form the canticle of the Church's night prayer – Compline. Every night throughout the world they are prayed by thousands if not millions of people. This coming week we celebrate the Presentation of Jesus, it marks the fortieth day after Christmas (and the day upon which I begrudgingly acknowledge that it's time to take down my nativity scene).



St Simeon speaks these words at the presentation, the Church speaks them nightly, in their simplicity they give voice to the ardent desire of every Christian heart – the desire to see the Lord. They speak to the God's faithfulness, for St. Simeon had been told that he would not see death until he set his eyes upon the Christ-child. Many long years he waited, praying regularly in the temple for that day to come when he would see God's promise to him come to pass.

James Tissot, one of my favourite artists – a man who painted almost every scene from the life of Christ – depicts the aged saint pouring over a scroll of scripture. Simeon doesn't simply look out for the Christ-child in the temple, he searches for him in the scriptures. Why? Because Simeon knows that if he's to recognise Christ with the eyes in his head, he must first be accustomed to recognising him with the eyes of his heart. He must be well-practiced at looking for the Lord where is always to be found – in His word.

It's not just the New Testament that reveals Jesus to us, the whole of the Bible paints a picture of Him if we have the eyes to see. St. Augustine famously said that the New Testament was hidden in the Old and the Old Testament made clear in the New. When we read the Bible, both Old and New Testaments with eyes that desire to see the Lord we will not be disappointed. In the Old we will find signs and symbols that in the New Jesus will take up to explain who He is and what He's doing. In this Year of Prayer let us take St. Simeon as our guide in studying the sacred scriptures, our eyes ever in search of the Lord, so that we might say with him: 'At Last all-powerful master... for my eyes have seen your salvation.'

Fr Luke Wilkinson

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 29th January 2024

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 29th January	St Bede	10am	People of the Parish
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	John James & Marian Moffett
Tuesday 30th January	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Janet O'Neil (Anniversary)
	St Joseph	7pm	Josef & Rita Oberg (Dec'd)
Wednesday 31st January	St Bede	10am	Sick of the Parish
	St John Bosco	St John Boste	7pm Those who live on the margins of life
Thursday 1st February	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Cosgrove & Docherty Families RIP
	St Joseph	12 noon	Deceased members of the Men's Choir
Friday 2nd February	St John Boste	10am	Intentions of SG
	The Presentation of the Lord	St Joseph	10am Holy Souls
		Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm Marian & John Moffett. RIP.
Saturday 3rd February	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	John & Sylvia Barker R.I.P.
	Ss Blaise & Ansgar	St Joseph	5pm Deceased members of the Killen Family
	Vigil	St Bede	5pm Margaret Jones (Dec'd Anniversary)
Sunday 4th February	St John Boste	9:30am	Thanksgiving for Health
	5th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am People of the Parish
		Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am People who don't have anyone to pray for them

First Reading: The Second Moses

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Moses said to the people: "Your God will raise up for you a prophet like myself, from among yourselves, from your own brothers; to him you must listen. This is what you yourselves asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the Assembly. 'Do not let me hear again,' you said, 'the voice of the Lord my God, nor look any longer on this great fire, or I shall die'; and the Lord said to me, 'All they have spoken is well said. I will raise up a prophet like yourself for them from their own brothers; I will put my words into his mouth and he shall tell them all I command him. The man who does not listen to my words that he speaks in my name, shall be held answerable to me for it. But the prophet who presumes to say in my name a thing I have not commanded him to say, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'"

Response to the Psalm: O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'

Second reading: Marriage or Celibacy?

1 Corinthians 7:32-35

I would like to see you free from all worry. An unmarried man can devote himself to the Lord's affairs, all he need worry about is pleasing the Lord; but a married man has to bother about the world's affairs and devote himself to pleasing his wife: he is torn two ways. In the same way an unmarried woman, like a young girl, can devote

herself to the Lord's affairs; all she need worry about is being holy in body and spirit. The married woman, on the other hand, has to worry about the world's affairs and devote herself to pleasing her husband. I say this only to help you, not to put a halter round your necks, but simply to make sure that everything is as it should be, and that you give your undivided attention to the Lord

Gospel Acclamation: : Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children. Alleluia

The Gospel: (Mark 1:21-28): Jesus Teaches with Authority

Jesus and his followers went as far as Capernaum, and as soon as the sabbath came Jesus went to the synagogue and began to teach. And his teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority. In their synagogue just then there was a man possessed by an unclean spirit, and it shouted, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God." But Jesus said sharply, "Be quiet! Come out of him!" And the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud cry went out of him. The people were so astonished that they started asking each other what it all meant. "Here is a teaching that is new," they said, "and with authority behind it: he gives orders even to unclean spirits and they obey him." And his reputation rapidly spread everywhere, through all the surrounding Galilean countryside.

Jesus Teaches with Authority

The growing authority of Jesus is the theme of the early part of Mark's gospel and today's story is an excellent illustration of this. Jesus has already called the disciples. He calls and they simply follow: it seems that he is a total stranger to them, yet has such authority that they drop everything to follow him. Now in the synagogue he teaches on his own authority. He does not quote the interpretations of others, as rabbinic teachers did, saying, "Rabbi X says this," "Rabbi Y says that". No, Jesus teaches, "I say to you...". He seems to be master even of the Law. But it is God's Law. Only God has authority over it, so who does Jesus think he is? On one level he is a teacher to be compared with Moses, one who is to come into the world, the teacher prophesied in today's first reading. But he is more than this. To confirm the power of his teaching, he shows what authority he has by overcoming an unclean spirit, wringing from it the snivelling protest, "Have you come to destroy us?" and the acknowledgement that he has a special link with God. What are the qualities of a good teacher? How does Jesus, the good teacher, reveal his authority?

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 is open on Friday afternoons from 2pm - 3pm 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:

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

Special Collection This Week - Racial Justice: The simple fact is that we are all sisters and brothers - no matter what country we come from or what colour we are. Sadly, not everyone agrees with this, and it takes a great deal of education and formation for anyone of us to become less prejudiced against other people. This collection is used to develop resources to help us all become less prejudiced and ultimately, more respectful of people who are different from us. Racial prejudice is a scandal, and we must work together to deepen our appreciation of people from all countries and cultures.

"And his teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority." Is Jesus making a deep impression in your life? Might he be asking you to consider Priesthood?.

Come and See! 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 is on **Tuesday 6th February at St Joseph's Church, Thorneyholme Terrace, Stanley, DH9 0BL between 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, Speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#)

Sunday 11th February is World day of prayer for the sick. There will be special prayers for the sick and housebound that day at all Masses. There will also be silent Eucharistic adoration at **Our Lady Queen of Peace 4pm -5pm.** With Rosary and prayers for healing at 5pm. The Sacrament of the Sick will also be celebrated for those who would like to receive the holy anointing.

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

BIBLE and a BITE, beginning Wednesday **31st of January** at 12 noon, in the coffee room at **OLQP**, come and share a cuppa and a sandwich whilst listening to and reflecting on a bible passage.

We only have one question. "Ah! But what is God saying to me and my life?" Just turn up or any queries contact: **Chas Ferguson on 07836631963**

CAFOD Big Lent Walk - Walk 200km in 40 days to help fight global poverty - Challenge yourself and take on The Big Lent Walk! Walk when and where you choose over 40 days, alone or with friends. Raise money to help people as they overcome poverty. [Sign up today!](#) CAFOD and SCIAF are teaming up to bring the Big Lent Walk to Great Britain! Read more about us and our decision to join forces. Thousands of walkers from England, Wales, Scotland and beyond, will be tying up their purple laces and walking an incredible 200km this Lent to fight global poverty. So, sign up to do the Big Lent Walk yourself, or join in with your school or parish. Then put your best foot forward with the biggest group of Big Lent Walkers yet.

Year of Prayer 2024: In preparation for the great Jubilee year, 2025, Pope Francis has asked the Church to make 2024 a year of Prayer. Over the course of this year we'll be hosting a series of talks and events to help us all grow in our prayer life and to help us prepare well for the jubilee. Our programme will begin on the 4th February with a talk on Prayer and the Mass, more details below!

Praying at Mass: The Eucharistic Wisdom of Bruno Lanteri - How do we pray at Mass? What does it mean to fully, consciously and actively participate? On **Sunday 4th February, 4pm at St. John Boste**, Fr Luke will give a talk on a method of prayer suggested by Ven. Bruno Lanteri. Venerable Bruno was the founder of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary, while he was still a seminarian, he devised a simple method drawing on a collection of biblical characters to engage his heart and mind in prayer of the Mass. Come along and join us as Fr Luke leads us through Ven. Bruno's method supplemented by works of Catholic art to draw our hearts deeper into the mystery of Jesus Christ.

Holy Hour - The Association of the Eucharist will be holding their monthly Holy Hour on Sunday 4 February at St Andrew's, [9 Worswick Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6UW](#), from 2.30pm to 3.30pm followed by refreshments. Everyone welcome. No booking required.

The Trinity Conference 2024: Reawakening the Catholic Vision is taking place on Saturday 17 February 2024. The Keynote Speaker is Monsignor James Shea, President of the University of Mary (USA) and Co-author, 'From Christendom to Apostolic Mission'. He will be joined with talks by Archbishop Mark O'Toole, Dr Hannah Vaughan-Spruce ... and more! **What else can I expect from the conference?**

There will be opportunity to browse our 'mission marketplace' where you can look through stalls and speak to people involved in evangelisation initiatives from across the UK. All delegates will also receive a hard copy of the conference publication, featuring papers written on the theme by our conference speakers and others. The day will also include a time of Eucharistic Adoration, led by the Youth 2000 Mission team. To register please [click here](#).

May we thank all who have been able to support **St. Michael's (Mickey's Place)** Sulgrave, with winter coats and duvets. They are extremely grateful as this is a huge bonus to those with so little. **The SVP.**

Feast of Candlemass - Friday 2nd February. Friday coming is the feast of Candlemass, forty days after Christmas Day, when we celebrate the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the temple by his parents Our Lady and St. Joseph. As well as the two morning Masses that day, we will have an evening Mass at **Our Lady Queen of Peace at 7pm**, with The Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary prayed at 6.30pm. Candles will be Blessed at all masses that day with the Candlemass procession at the evening Mass.

First Reconciliation. The Children in year four in each of our schools are currently making their first Confessions. Let us keep them and their families in our prayers as they prepare for their first Sacraments..

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

Vacancies – Opportunities to work at the Emmaus Village - The Emmaus Village, home for the Youth Ministry Team, hosts all the residential retreats led by YMT for our Diocesan Primary and Secondary Schools. It also offers catering and hospitality to the biggest gathering of Catholic Schools, the YMT Summer Festivals, students named it “God Camp”. With this we are looking for an Assistant Catering Coordinator and Kitchen Technician, who will help our catering team deliver this valuable service to all the groups that come to the Emmaus Village. If you or someone you know, wants to be part of the YMT team, please contact admin@ymt.org or click the link www.ymt.org/vacancies for more information with regards to our vacancies.

The Catechism in a Year - Sign up for Ascension's [Catechism In A Year](#) podcast with Fr Mike Schmitz, and you can: Read the entire Catechism of the Catholic Church in 365 days; Understand the essentials of the Catholic Faith and why they matter; See how Church teaching is rooted in Sacred Scripture; Absorb over 2,000 years of Sacred Tradition; Encounter God's plan of sheer goodness; Transform their relationship with the Church that Christ founded.

Youth Ministry & Practical Theology Conference: Saturday 3 February, Cardinal Hume Catholic School, Old Durham Road, Gateshead NE9 6RZ. A day to reconnect and reignite as we “invest in the fearlessness of youth.” For more information and to book please [click here](#).

Booking is still open and you can either email nsalkeld@ymt.org or book online here: www.ticketsource.co.uk/youthministryteam. Online booking will apply booking fees

We are looking forward to welcoming keynote speaker, Reverend Professor David Wilkinson, Director of Equipping Christian Leadership in an Age of Science, an international project based at St John's College, Durham, who will explore how we can engage young people in the Gospel when we live in a world of science. We are also pleased to welcome back David Wells, international speaker, best-selling author and friend of YMT, to guide us to reflect on our theme.

For more information about the conference visit www.ymt.org/ymt-conference

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](#).

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Volunteers Wanted - The SVP are looking for volunteers willing to help children put their faith into action. Could this be you? The St Vincent de Paul Society have primary school groups called **Mini Vinnies** and volunteers would support teachers or youth leaders wishing to start a group in their school or parish. They will talk to children about how they can make a difference to those living in poverty and share resources to support the group. The role is flexible but does need people with some availability during school hours (at least 2 mornings or afternoons per month) who are willing to travel within the Diocese (all costs are covered). If you are passionate about helping children discover how they can make a difference in their communities, please [click here](#) for more information. You do not have to have previous experience of working with children as all training will be given. Our next initial training day is on **Tuesday 27 February 2024**.

SVP 200 Club January. First prize £50 No 124 congratulations to John Stewart
Second prize £25 no 5. Thank you for your support

Update from Justice and Peace Refugee Project - As we start 2024, it is a good time to reflect on the global situation in relation to asylum seekers and refugees. In the past decade, the global refugee crisis has almost doubled in scope. In mid-2023, the United Nations Refugee Agency reported that there were 110 million forcibly displaced people worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order. Of these, 62.5 million were internally displaced people and 36.4 million were refugees – an estimated 43.3 million (40 per cent) were children below 18 years of age, with 1.9 million children were born as refugees. The vast majority of the items and the financial support that we provide at the Refugee Project are donated by parishes, schools and individuals and without the support of donors, the project would not be possible. We thank you all most sincerely for your generous support. With new clients registering every week, in need of food to supplement their meagre allowance and with the rise in the cost of living, the cost of providing food bags and toiletry items to clients has more than doubled in the last 2 years and we are often in short supply. The project really does need your help. Financial donations are particularly welcome, as we need to purchase food and toiletries on a regular basis. We receive donations of food, clothing and footwear on Mondays between 10.30am and 1.30pm. The full list of items required can be [found 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 4th 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.