

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 tel: 0191 4163583
 (Tuesday & Wednesday 8am-1pm, Thursday 11am-4pm & Friday 12-5pm)
 Email: sj23office01@gmail.com



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

PALM (PASSION) SUNDAY, 23RD - 24TH MARCH 2024, Year B

Saturday 23rd March Vigil	St Joseph St Bede	5pm 5pm	Kathleen Burlinson RIP Fr Mark Whelehan (Minsteracres) RIP
Sunday 24th March Palm Sunday	St John Boste Our Lady Queen of Peace Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	9.30am 10am 11am	Kathleen Burlinson RIP People of the Parish Sick Person (AC)

First Reading: The Song of the Servant

Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle. The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.

Response to the Psalm: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Second Reading: Raised High through Suffering

Philippians 2:6-11

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names, so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel Acclamation: Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory! Christ was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised Him high and gave Him the name which is above all names. Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory!

The Gospel: (Mark 11:1-10): Jesus Enters Jerusalem

The Gospel for the Procession at the Beginning of Palm Sunday Mass

When they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, and said to them, 'Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat; untie it and bring it. If any one says to you, "Why are you doing this?" say, "The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door out in the open street; and they untied it. And those who stood there said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' And they told them what Jesus had said; and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and threw their garments on it; and he sat upon it. And many spread their garments on the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed cried out, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming! Hosanna in the highest!'

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Fr Martin Morris	0191 649 8257	Deacon Frank O'Neil	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 25th March 2024

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 25th March	St Bede	10am	Veronica Grainger RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	A Sick Person
Tuesday 26th March	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Jean Lytollis Recently Deceased
	St Bede	12.30am	Requiem Mass for Margaret Short
	St Joseph	7pm	Frederick Carter RIP
Wednesday 27th March	St Bede	10am	Laurence McAdam (deceased anniversary)
	St John Boste	7pm	Fr John McElhone RIP
Thursday 28th March Holy Thursday	St Joseph	7pm	Commemoration of the Last Supper followed by Watching at the Altar of Repose - Mass Intention James Lamb RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	7pm - Midnight	Commemoration of the Last Supper followed by Watching at the Altar of Repose until Midnight
Friday 29th March Good Friday	All Churches	3pm	Commemoration of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Saturday 30th March Holy Saturday Vigil	St Bede	7pm	Gerard Cushlow RIP
	St Joseph	7.30pm	Father Tony Duffy
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	8pm	David & Elizabeth McCourt & Deceased Family
Sunday 31st March Easter Sunday	St Bede	9am	People of the Parish
	St John Boste	9.30am	Linda Banks RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Greg Moorhouse RIP
	St Joseph	11am	People of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Nan, John & John Jr Sweeney and deceased Sweeney family

Reflection for Palm Sunday

There are a number of readings from the divine office throughout the year that always stick in my mind: the great sermon of Ronald Knox for St. Edward the Confessor, St Bernadine of Sienna's beautiful text on the solemnity of St. Joseph, the anonymous homily from the second century we read on Holy Saturday as we await the Resurrection. I'd like to share today one of those great sermons, taken from St. Andrew of Crete for Palm Sunday, the saint sets well the stage for our entry into Holy Week, let his words guide your prayer and set your hearts upon the events to unfold. – Fr Luke.

From the discourse "On the Palm Branches" by Saint Andrew of Crete 'Let us go together to meet Christ on the Mount of Olives. Today he returns from Bethany and proceeds of his own free will towards his holy and blessed passion, to consummate the mystery of our salvation. He who came down from heaven to raise us from the depths of sin, to raise us with himself, we are told in Scripture, *above every sovereignty, authority and power, and every other name that can be named, now comes of his own free will to make his journey to Jerusalem. He comes without pomp or ostentation. As the psalmist says: He will not dispute or raise his voice to make it heard in the streets. He will be meek and humble, and he will make his entry in simplicity.*

Let us run to accompany him as he hastens towards his passion, and imitate those who met him then, not by covering his path with garments,

olive branches or palms, but by doing all we can to prostrate ourselves before him by being humble and by trying to live as he would wish. Then we shall be able to receive the Word at his coming, and God, whom no limits can contain, will be within us.

In his humility Christ entered the dark regions of our fallen world and he is glad that he became so humble for our sake, glad that he came and lived among us and shared in our nature in order to raise us up again to himself. And even though we are told that he has now ascended above the highest heavens – the proof, surely, of his power and godhead – his love for man will never rest until he has raised our earthbound nature from glory to glory and made it one with his own in heaven.

So let us spread before his feet, not garments or soulless olive branches, which delight the eye for a few hours and then wither, but ourselves, clothed in his grace, or rather, clothed completely in him. We who have been baptised into Christ must ourselves be the garments that we spread before him. Now that the crimson stains of our sins have been washed away in the saving waters of baptism and we have become white as pure wool, let us present the conqueror of death, not with mere branches of palms but with the real rewards of his victory. Let our souls take the place of the welcoming branches as we join today in the children's holy song: *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the king of Israel.'*

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

Holy Week is a special opportunity to quench his love-thirsty heart with our loving attention to all that He experiences, suffers, and expects from us. It's a great opportunity to bring our intimacy with Him back to life! We cannot even imagine the graces He has in store for those who worship Him or who humbly strive to worship Him. I invite all Parishioners to a full part in the 'Great Three days of Jesus Passion- Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday.' Thankyou.

Special Collection This Week – Holy Places - Jesus' footsteps walked all over the land we now call Israel. From his birth in Bethlehem to his upbringing in Nazareth, his preaching all over Galilee and in Jerusalem. It is so important for us to make sure that Pilgrims from all over the world visit the places where Jesus walked, healed and preached. We have to support our Catholic sisters and brothers to make sure that they can maintain and visit the places Jesus was born and preached. What about a Partnership/Pilgrimage to the Holy Land – you might be amazed at what a difference it might make in your life. Please give what you can to help our Church protect the places where Jesus walked. This Collection is vital to help Pilgrims to visit the Holy Places.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - Our Lady Queen of Peace Church is open on Friday afternoons, **except Good Friday 29th March**, 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.

Penitential Service for Lent - Tuesday 26 March 7pm St. John Boste. An opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation in time for Easter. All welcome

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!

Stations of the Cross: Wednesday OLQP 12 Noon and **SJB** 6.30pm – Last service 27 March. Stations at OLQP will be followed by a simple lunch of soup and bread. Any funds raised will be divided equally between St Benedict's Hospice and Cancer Research at Sir Bobby Robson's Clinic.

Watching at the Altar of Repose - At Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church following the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday until Midnight. All Welcome.

Good Friday Act of Witness - The Cenotaph, Shiney Row, 11.30am. Join with Christians of all denominations in honouring the passion of Jesus.

Good Friday Stations of the Cross at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church from 7pm. All Welcome.

Easter Sunday Sunrise Service - Sight Limes Hill, Herrington Country Park at 6.30am followed by Hot Cross Buns and Coffee. All welcome

Announcing NEW SONG! 4pm TODAY at OBLI - "For I am about to do something new" (Isaiah 43:19). A new monthly prayer event aimed at providing a space for prayer, inspiration and connection. We would love to welcome you to join us as we explore how the virtues of faith, hope and love can help us to live life to the full!

Information on Lent - To help our candidates on the 23-24 RCIA Journey in Faith programme understand more about Lent, some videos have been produced for them and they are also available for parishioners on the Parish website [here](#). Fr Luke provides some very interesting responses to a range of questions posed to him about Lent. The videos have been added to our Facebook page [here](#). There is also some information on the **Why & How - Confession/Reconciliation**; [please click here](#) .

International Organ Day Saturday 20th April: Have you ever wondered what it would be like to play such a huge musical instrument?

To celebrate International Organ Day why not come along to one or both sessions and enjoy an introduction to two of our historic parish organs. It is an opportunity to learn the story of our own instruments, to discover how they work and a chance to sit at the keyboard and experience the King of Instruments. Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penshaw, at 10.00 a.m. Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington, 1.00 p.m.

Open to all ages, musicians and non-musicians. If you wish to attend, please contact Michael. Contact: Michael Leckenby, 07981396544, mvleckenby@yahoo.com

"Pope Francis has declared a Holy Year of Jubilee for 2025, when the **Holy door in Rome** will be opened. In preparation the Pope asks for 2024 to be a year of prayer . Please visit our Diocesan Year of Prayer [webpage](#) for more information and regular updates. **Each Wednesday** morning there will be silent Eucharistic Exposition at St. Bede's before Mass. From 9.15-9.50am. A time for quiet prayer with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist."

St Bede Toddler Group - The toddler group is now full so we have opened a waiting list. However we will have places from September as there are several children leaving to go to nursery. Please contact Joan Formosa on 07504 579591 if you wish to add a name to the waiting list. Joan will contact you when a place becomes available.

CAFOD Fundraiser Dinner - OBLI Parish Rooms, 25th April at 7pm. Hot & Cold Dinner & Entertainment with soft drinks. £10 per person. Tel 07703855747 to book. You may bring own Alcoholic beverages.

CAFOD fundraiser - support please. Do you have any unused gifts that we could use for Raffle Prizes. Please contact 07703855747 if you can help.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Newsletter is now available by [clicking here](#).

St Bede Flowers: We are currently asking for donations to buy flowers for St Bede's Church for Easter. If anyone wants to donate could you please put money in an envelope marked 'Flowers' and hand it in at St Bede's. Thank you for your kindness.

Other News

"The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech." A priest is there to offer consolation and support to those in times of need. Is God inviting you to discern a call to the Priesthood and to help those in need? Speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#)

St Bede's Catholic Primary School's Big Lent Walk has started and the children are busy completing their 200km for CAFOD. If you wish to donate the Just Giving page is [here](#).
If anyone has any second-hand religious DVD's to donate to a charitable cause, e.g., Lourdes, Fatima, Medjugorje, or lives of the saints etc. Please leave them for Fr Martin Wheaton at your local church.

This month the Youth Ministry Team provide an update on the 'Wait-A-Minute, it's LENT' reflections. YMT started a series of online reflections during the seasons of Advent and Lent. We are delighted to offer this resource to anyone who would like to use the reflections to pause and reflect a minute during the season of Advent and Lent. Please click on the [Wait a Minute Lent 2024 Playlist](#).

Diocesan Lenten Reflection Booklets - Last year's Lenten Reflection booklets were very well received. As we prepare to commemorate Jesus' salvific death and resurrection at Easter, we hope that this year's edition will once again foster prayerful reflection on the Scriptures and a renewed sense of purpose and hope amongst the people of the Diocese. The reflections have been produced by a great number of people to express the richness of our Diocesan community. The daily reflections will be available for viewing, downloading and printing from the Diocesan website by [clicking here](#).

The Justice and Peace Co-ordinating Council is organising a Gaza ceasefire pilgrimage: This is part of an international event consisting of walks organised in different places of the world to walk in solidarity with the Palestinians. We are organising the pilgrimage for **Holy Saturday 30 March 2024**. We hope to cover two of the Northern Saints Trails: 'The Way of Angels' and 'The Way of Light', which will give people the opportunity to start closer to home. The idea is that people can walk either the length of Gaza 26 miles or the width of Gaza 6 miles or indeed any distance they feel comfortable with. Both trails finish in Durham. We are looking for a place where the pilgrims can meet and have a closing liturgy. We are aiming for arrival at 4.00pm. Further information will follow. Please [click here](#) if you are interested in finding out more, taking part, or would like to help with organising.

Pray the Rosary with Bishop Barron - We are halfway through this holy Lenten season and we hope Word on Fire's content is helping you make this a fruitful journey. The three pillars of Lent are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Today, we invite you to [pray](#) the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary along with Bishop Barron. As important as the pillars of fasting and prayer are during Lent, so too is the third pillar of almsgiving. Our ministry is made possible through the generosity of our donors. Take this opportunity to make a [Lenten offering](#) that will support our evangelization efforts. Our videos, podcasts, homilies, and articles are all designed to help strengthen your faith and evangelize the culture. May this sacred season give us the grace to take up the crosses of our own lives with joy and unite our suffering with that of our Savior. We pray that with your [support](#), we will help bring many new souls to Christ at Easter. God bless you.

SVP Society Membership Support Officer (MSO) for the **Newcastle and Hexham** Diocese to support member recruitment and development, home-based role (22.5 hours per week – 3 days equivalent). It requires the ability to travel around the diocese, own transport is essential, expenses are paid. For further information and details how to apply contact Lance Philpott, Head of Membership by [clicking here](#). Closing date for applications is Sunday 7th April.

Walking Retreat - Led by the Minsteracres Team - £15 - Wednesday 3rd April from 10am to 5pm. Enjoy a walk of seven to ten miles through the beautiful countryside around Minsteracres, with time for prayer, reflection and sharing the beauty of creation. You will need suitable footwear, warm, weatherproof clothing and a packed lunch. Please [click here](#) for more information.

North East Catholic History Society - The North East Catholic History Society is 50 years old this year. It was founded to encourage and promote the very rich Catholic History of our region. They meet five times a year for lectures and have the excellent magazine "Northern Catholic History" published yearly. Excursions to places of interest are organised for members. The Society is looking to attract new members. Currently, they meet on Wednesday afternoons at Joseph's Centre, Gateshead, directly opposite the Metro and bus interchange. We welcome visitors too. After many years of excellent service, their Programme Secretary is retiring, and they are looking for a replacement to organise talks. In recent years, they have established great contact with Ushaw and their fine group of researchers. You can read about The Society on the diocesan website or contact Margaret Henderson [by clicking here](#).

Job Vacancy - The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has the following job vacancy: **HR Adviser**, Diocesan Offices, Newcastle – full-time. Closing date: 28 March. Please visit www.diocesehn.org.uk for full details or contact us on 0191 243 3301.

Charity Registration Number: 1143450

Reflections

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

Examen - Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go

[Saturday Examen](#) [Palm Sunday](#)

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](#). To amend the information on the list [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](#)