

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

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 3RD—4TH FEBRUARY 2024, Year B

Saturday 3rd February	St Joseph	5pm	Deceased members of the Killen Family
Ss Blaise & Ansgar	St Bede	5pm	Margaret Jones (Dec'd Anniversary)
Sunday 4th February	St John Boste	9:30am	Living and deceased members of the Dougherty family
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	The People of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	People who don't have anyone to pray for them

To be able to offer the Good News freely.

I imagine that, at times, we all share the despair from the prophet Job as he cries out *“Restlessly I fret until twilight falls”*—especially in these dark days of February and in the midst of the constant turmoil that seems to be surrounding us on all sides! The wars which are raging in so many parts of the world, the worrying political upheavals and the cost-of-living crisis can make us all feel down-hearted.

But listen to the words of the Apostle Paul in his 1st Letter to the Corinthians 9:16-19,22-23 *“I have a responsibility which has been put into my hands.... to be able to offer the Good News freely, and not insist on the rights which the gospel gives me.”* The conversion of St Paul, which we celebrated on 25th January, transformed him into a passionate disciple of the Risen Christ and called him to dedicate himself to a life of Christ-like love and service of others with no need for reward other than the life-giving joy of proclaiming the Good News to the whole world and to *“have share in its blessings.”* His love and service of others brought joy, meaning and purpose to his life.

In our Baptism each one of us is called, chosen and commissioned to share the Good News of the Risen Christ with our own families and with everyone that we encounter throughout our daily lives. God the Father lavishes all the gifts of the Holy Spirit upon us and anoints each one of us to be modern-day prophets and witnesses *“to the faith by what we say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Through our Baptism, we are adopted as beloved daughters or sons of God and *“a responsibility has been put into our hands”* to make our own unique contribution to the building up of God's Kingdom here in our own community – to give without counting the cost of our discipleship!

Deacon Peter

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 5th February 2024

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 5th February St Agatha	St Bede	10am	Hugh Lennon Tonner (well being)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Mary Rose Winship
Tuesday 6th February St Paul Miki	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Catherine Hardy
	St Joseph	7pm	Matteo Valente RIP
Wednesday 7th February	St Bede	10am	Gerard Fagan RIP
	St John Boste	7pm	Fr. John Gibbons R.I.P. (NBF)
Thursday 8th February Ss Jerome Emiliani & Josephine Bakhita	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Greg Moorhouse RIP 1st Anniversary
	St Joseph	12 noon	Tony Carey RIP
	St Bede	12.30pm	Paul Cockburn. R.I. P. Funeral Service
Friday 9th February St Teilo	St John Boste	10am	Louise Tobin Davies RIP
	St Joseph	10am	Special Intention (MT)
Saturday 10th February St Scholastica Vigil	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Hilary Cassidy RIP
	St Joseph	5pm	Billy Wilson RIP
	St Bede	5pm	Margaret Jones RIP
Sunday 11th February 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	Louise Tobin Davies RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Anne & John Cantwell RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Eileen Shannon RIP

First Reading: Job's Suffering
Job 7:1-4. 6-7

Job began to speak: Is not man's life on earth nothing more than pressed service, his time no better than hired drudgery? Like the slave, sighing for the shade, or the workman with no thought but his wages; months of delusion I have assigned to me, nothing for my own but nights of grief. Lying in bed I wonder, "When will it be day?" Risen I think, "How slowly evening comes!" Restlessly I fret till twilight falls. Swifter than a weaver's shuttle my days have passed, and vanished, leaving no hope behind. Remember that my life is but a breath, and that my eyes will never again see joy.

Response to the Psalm: Praise the Lord who heals the broken-hearted.

Second Reading: Paul, the Servant of All
1 Corinthians 9:16-19. 22-23

I do not boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty which has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it! If I had chosen this work myself, I might have been paid for it, but as I have not, it is a responsibility which has been put into my hands. Do you know what my reward is? It is this: in my preaching, to be able to offer the Good News free, and not insist on the rights which the gospel gives me. So though I am not a slave of any man I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could. For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all

men in order to save some at any cost; and I still do this, for the sake of the gospel, to have a share in its blessing.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; anyone who follows me will have the light of life. Alleluia!

The Gospel: (Mark 1:29-39): Jesus at Capernaum

On leaving the synagogue, Jesus went with James and John straight to the house of Simon and Andrew. Now Simon's mother-in-law had gone to bed with fever, and they told him about her straightaway. He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. And the fever left her and she began to wait on them. That evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and those who were possessed by devils. The whole town came crowding round the door, and he cured many who were suffering from diseases of one kind or another; he also cast out many devils, but he would not allow them to speak, because they knew who he was. In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there. Simon and his companions set out in search of him, and when they found him they said, "Everybody is looking for you." He answered, "Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can preach there too, because that is why I came." And he went all through Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out devils.

Jesus at Capernaum

The snippets gathered in the gospel reading give us a sample of Jesus' activity at Capernaum – healing and prayer. The first incident, the healing of the relative of his friend and follower Simon Peter, reminds us that Jesus does respond if we pray for the needs of our nearest and dearest. Then the summary of his evening activity shows his concern to bring healing and wholeness. Any Christian will desire to follow his example: we can harm or heal those around us in so many ways. It does not need to be a miracle! A greeting, a look, a smile, a touch can bring the peace of Christ to someone in desperate need of reassurance - and no less can these actions harm and wound. But the third little story, of Jesus going off to pray in the early morning, shows that the well-spring of all his activity was his union with God whom he called his Father. We cannot say what Jesus' prayer was, any more than I can say what your prayer is, but the confident communication between Father and Son must have been the source of his strength and compassion. What sort of things can you do to bring healing to others? Where do you find it easiest to pray?

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.

During Lent the Priests will be available after Mass for Reconciliation.

Stations of the Cross:

Wednesday from 21/2/2024 **OLQP** 12 Noon and SJB 18.30pm – Last service 27/03/2024

Thursday from 15/02/2024 **St Josephs** 11.30am – Last service 21/03/2024

Friday from 16/02/2024 **St Bede's** 18.00pm last service 22/03/2024

Sunday from 18/02/2024 **OBLI** 16.00pm last service 17/03/2024

We are pleased to announce the Stations of the Cross will be preformed every Wednesday during the Lenten period at **OLQOP** commencing on 21st of Feb 2024, at 12.00. This will be followed by a simple lunch of soup and bread.

All funds raised will be divided equally between, St Benedict's Hospice and Cancer Research at Sir Bobby Robson's Clinic. Everyone 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!

"That evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and those who were possessed by devils." A priest has the privilege to serve God in ministering to the sick. Might the Lord be calling you to discern the call to 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 **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.

Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible continues this week on Thursday at 7pm at **OLQP.**

Other News

A Year of Prayer - In preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year '*Pilgrims of Hope*', 2024 has been designated a Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. Please visit our Diocesan Year of Prayer [webpage](#) for more information and regular updates.

A talk for the year of prayer- Prayer and the Mass: The Eucharistic Wisdom of Ven. Bruno Lanteri, Sunday 4th February, 4pm at St John Boste

Diocesan Church Music Association - The DCMA have been asked to share information about an event titled '*Monastic Musical Hours*' which will take place at Minsteracres Retreat Centre, Friday 8 to Sunday 10 March 2024. Led by experienced musicians and liturgists, you will experience a weekend immersed in the beauty of the monastic office hours singing and learning about these musical traditions. [See here](#) for further information and booking details. Quick Links: [DCMA](#)

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](#).

Peru Mission Appeal Joe Plumb the projects coordinator is in the UK for a few weeks before returning to Peru. He will do a short talk about the work of the Peru Mission at the 5pm Mass at St Joseph's, Birtley and the 9.30 Mass at St John Boste on the weekend of 17th and 18th February.

"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 . Each Wednesday morning beginning Lent 14th February 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."

"Loudfence" 3rd March & 6th March, St. Mary's Cathedral Newcastle.

Bishop Stephen will be hosting a **LOUDfence** event at the Cathedral jointly with St. Nicholas Cathedral on the above dates. It will begin with 11.30am Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral on 3rd March and will end with a service St. Nicholas at 6pm on 6th March. All are welcome to the Mass and the final service. Both Cathedrals will be open for those days and people are welcome to come and pray or offer their thoughts for those who have suffered abuse in any way."

Please see: <http://survivorsservices.org/loudfence/>. For further details.

Our Partnership group of Parishes are looking at the possibility of a pilgrimage to **Rome sometime in 2025** to celebrate the Jubilee year. Watch this space for further details.

CAFOD family fast day this year will be on Friday 23rd February 2024. Envelopes will be available for those who would like to take part in this Lenten act of solidarity with the poor and hungry of the world.

Monastic Music Hours - Dominic McGonigal and Alison Hawes - £250 Friday 8th – Sunday 10th March 2024. A weekend immersed in the beauty and serenity of the music of the monastic office hours. Slip into the rhythm of monastic life and let the music give you time for reflection, meditation and prayer. Please [click here](#) for more Information.

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.

Lent Vigil for Climate Justice 14-23 February outside Parliament.

Cafod are one of a number of Christian organisations supporting the above vigil. Many of us won't be able to go but could support by setting aside 5 minutes each day of the vigil to say the Pope's Prayer for our Earth. Those able to join in can either look up the prayer on Cafod.org.uk by clicking on the magnifying glass and searching for "A prayer for our earth" or take a copy home with you from the back of church on **Feb 11th and 18th.**

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.

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.](#)

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.**

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.](#)

Life in the Spirit Seminars

As a team, we have been greatly encouraged by these particular words from Pope Francis, in his recent address on 4 November, about Life in the Spirit seminars:

"...today I would ask you: are the Life in the Spirit Seminars being offered in a variety of ecclesial contexts, in small and remote places and among the poor and on the peripheries? One obstacle to this might be the idea that these Seminars can only be held in large venues and with well-known leaders, whereas in reality even small parish groups and local leaders can organize them and present them to people in their area." Plans are now in place, drawing on local leaders, as Pope Francis has encouraged, to deliver Life in the Spirit Seminars from 21 February 2024, 7.00pm to 8.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Sunderland. The themes and speakers for the first sessions are as follows: 21 February: Andy Drozdziaik on the theme of God's love. 28 February: Amy Cameron on the theme of Salvation. Details of how to book can be [found here.](#)

Friends Retreat - Led by the team at Minsteracres - Friday 16th February from 6:30pm to Sunday 18th at 2pm. "The Saving and Transforming Power of the Cross." A retreat exploring Passionist spirituality. We will begin by 'Entering the desert' a gentle introduction to the weekend giving people time to find space and try to leave behind them their cares, worries and problems. This will be followed by sessions on Passionist Spirituality. Please [click here](#) for more Information.

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..

Reflections

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

Examen -Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go [Saturday Examen 5th 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](#)

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