

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 OF LENT, 16TH - 17TH MARCH 2024, Year B

Saturday 16th March Vigil	St Joseph St Bede	5pm 5pm	Tom Conway RIP Adam Reay RIP
Sunday 17th March 5th Sunday of Lent	St John Boste Our Lady Queen of Peace Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	9:30am 10am 11am	People of the Parish Mary Maw (recently deceased) Margaret Glesson

First Reading: The New Covenant: Jeremiah 31:31-34

See, the days are coming - it is the Lord who speaks - when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant of mine, so I had to show them who was master. It is the Lord who speaks. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive - it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, 'Learn to know the Lord!' No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest - it is the Lord who speaks - since I will forgive their iniquity and never call their sin to mind.

Response to the Psalm: A pure heart create for me, O God.

Second Reading: Jesus' Prayer: Hebrews 5:7-9

During his life on earth, Christ offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard. Although he was Son, he learnt to obey through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

Gospel Acclamation: Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God! Whoever serves me must follow me, says the Lord; and where I am, there also will my servant be. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!

The Gospel: (John 12:20-30): Exaltation through Suffering

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, 'Sir, we should like to see Jesus.' Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them: 'Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life. If a man serves me, he must follow me; wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him. Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name!' A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an angel speaking to him.' Jesus answered, 'It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours. Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be overthrown. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.' By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

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 18th March 2024

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 18th March St Cyril of Jerusalem	St Bede	10am	70th Birthday (M.O'B)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Margaret Patricia Kennedy RIP
Tuesday 19th March St Joseph	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Joan Leeder & John Styles
	St Bede	11am	Requiem Mass - Gerard Cushlow
	St Joseph	7pm	Christine Thompson RIP
Wednesday 20th March	St Bede	10am	Kitty Barnes RIP
	St John Boste	7pm	Fr John McElhone RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Lenten Penitential Service
Thursday 21st March	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Fr Mark Whelehan (Minsteracres) RIP
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Holy Souls
Friday 22nd March	St John Boste	10am	Fr Kevin Bolger RIP
	St Joseph	10am	Irene Hughes RIP
Saturday 23rd March St Turibius de Mogrovejo	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Nancy Forrester Recently Deceased
	St Joseph	5pm	Kathleen Burlinson RIP
	St Bede	5pm	Fr Mark Whelehan (Minsteracres) RIP
Sunday 24th March Palm (Passion) Sunday	St John Boste	9:30am	Kathleen Burlinson RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Sick Person (AC)
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	People of the Parish

Reflection - 5th Sunday of Lent

The remote town of Svalbard is about midway between the northern coast of Norway and the North Pole. Since 2008 it has been the home of the 'Svalbard Global Seed Vault' which acts as the ultimate insurance policy for the world's food supply, securing millions of seeds representing every important crop variety available in the world today and offering options for future generations to overcome the challenges of climate change and population growth. A temperature of -18°C is required for optimal storage of the seeds and in Svalbard, permafrost and thick rock ensure that the seed samples will remain frozen even without power.

Seeds are amazing! Although they look dry and dead on the outside, their true nature and potential is hidden beneath the surface. Inside they possess the kernel of new life, capable of producing a new plant from which other new seeds can eventually emerge. The National Trust recently reported that seeds from the felled Sycamore Gap tree have begun to produce green shoots - life is changed, not ended!

But in order for a seed to achieve its purpose, Jesus tells us it must fall on the ground and die ... only then can it yield a rich harvest.

Jesus compares us to the seeds. No matter how we might appear on the outside, our true nature and potential is within. God tells us through Jeremiah, *'Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they will be my people.'* If we could only see through the many distractions in our lives and find that kernel of new life, that touch of God's grace written on our hearts, our lives would be full and we would naturally produce a rich harvest in sharing God's love to others as well.

On our journey through Lent, may we re-discover our true identity as children of God. Through prayer, reflection and sharing in the sacraments, may we be reminded of God's love and Jesus' sacrifice that brings us freedom and redemption.

Frank O'Neill

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

Special Collection Next 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.

Easter Masses and Services

Holy Thursday

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - 7pm

St Joseph - 7pm

Good Friday

All Churches - 3pm

Easter Saturday

St Bede - 7pm

St Joseph - 7.30pm

Our Lady Queen of Peace - 8pm

Easter Sunday

St Bede - 9am

St John Boste - 9.30am

Our Lady Queen of Peace - 10am

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - 11am

St Joseph - 11am

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: Thursday St Josephs 11.30am – Last service 21 March; **Friday St Bede's** 6pm last service 22 March

Sunday OBLI 4pm last service TODAY; **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.

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!

Penitential services for Lent - Wednesday 20 March 7pm St. Joseph's Birtley. Tuesday 26 March 7pm St. John Boste.

An opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation in time for Easter. 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.

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 24 March 2024 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!

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](#).

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 are also being added to our Facebook page [here](#).

"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."

The family of the late Eileen Sproul would like to thank everyone for the mass intentions, cards of condolence and flowers received. A collection for the residence fund at the Marigold nursing home in Sunderland raised the sum of £350. Much appreciated.

St Bede Toddler Group - The toddler groups meet every Monday during term time from 9.30am until 11am. 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.

SVP 200 Club Draw for March: First Prize £50 No 136, Second Prize £25 145. Many thanks for your support.

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.

Other News

"If a man serves me, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too." Can you die to self in order to serve others? Is God calling you to be a priest? **Come and See!** The next Discernment Evening is on Tuesday 9 April at St Joseph's Church, Thorneyholme Terrace, Stanley, DH9 0BL between 6pm and 8pm 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](#).

This month the Youth Ministry Team provide an update on the 'Wait-A-Minute, it's LENT' reflections. The Source is back for 2024! Internship applications are still open to work at the Emmaus Village and it also tells us about self-catering stays at the youth village. **Online Reflections:** 'Wait-A-Minute, it's LENT' YMT started a series of online reflections during the seasons of Advent and Lent. These reflections are from different schools, parishioners, clergy, and other Church communities. Since then, many of our followers tune in to Wait a Minute as part of their reflection of the seasons. 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](#).

The Justice and Peace Co-ordinating Council is organizing a Gaza ceasefire pilgrimage: This is part of an international event consisting of walks organized in different places of the world to walk in solidarity with the Palestinians. We are organizing 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 4pm. Further information will follow. Please click [here](#) if you are interested in finding out more, taking part, or would like to help with organizing.

Lenten Day of Reflection - Led by Pat Kennedy OBJ - £30 - Thursday 21 March 2024 from 10am to 4pm. An opportunity to step aside, listen to God in Scripture and enjoy the peace and tranquility of the countryside. Please [click here](#) for more information.

Holy Week Retreat - Led by the Minsteracres Team - £240 - Thursday 28 March 2024 from 6:30pm to Sunday 31st at 2pm. Join the resident community on their journey towards Easter, with time for reflection and the opportunity to take part in the Easter Triduum. Please [click here](#) for more information.

Life in the Spirit Seminars. Pope Francis "...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?" Plans are now in place to deliver Life in the Spirit Seminars from 7pm to 8.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Sunderland. The theme and speaker for the last session on 20 March are; Fr Shaun O'Neill on the theme of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The remaining two seminars, on the themes of Growth and Transformation in Christ, will be held after Easter as preparation for Pentecost. Details of how to book can be found [here](#).

The Source: The YMT SOURCE is back again! It will be at St Mary's Cathedral from 7pm on Thursday 21 March 2024. The event will welcome Year 9+ students and staff from different secondary schools around the Diocese and young adults around universities such as Newcastle, Sunderland, and Durham, who will be encouraged to pray together through praise, worship, and adoration. Catechists can also bring their confirmation group to join the evening of praise and worship. Please click [here](#) if you are bringing a group to the event.

Rediscover Your Marriage – Retrouvaille offers you the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and a loving relationship in your marriage. 10s of 1000s headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending and using the tools provided. There is no group therapy or group work. The next programme commences with a weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024. Call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443, email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

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.

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.

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 of Lent 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](#)

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