

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: StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

THE TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 31ST AUGUST - 1ST SEPTEMBER 2024,

Year B

Saturday 31st August	St Joseph	5pm	Brian Lee & Isabella Brydon RIP
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Leo, Jenny and Paul Bottoms
Sunday 1st September	St John Boste	9:30am	Peter Dolan RIP
22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	In Loving memory of Jim & Hilda Hillam
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	People of the Parish

First Reading: The Gift of the Law

Deuteronomy 4:1-2. 6-8

Moses said to the people, "Now, Israel, take notice of the laws and customs that I teach you today, and observe them, that you may have life and may enter and take possession of the land that the Lord the God of your fathers is giving you. You must add nothing to what I command you, and take nothing from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God just as I lay them down for you. Keep them, observe them, and they will demonstrate to the peoples your wisdom and understanding. When they come to know of all these laws they will exclaim, 'No other people is as wise and prudent as this great nation.' And indeed, what great nation is there that has its gods so near as the Lord our God is to us whenever we call to him? And what great nation is there that has laws and customs to match this whole Law that I put before you today?"

Response to the Psalm: The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

Second Reading: Putting the Word into Action

James 1:17-18. 21-22. 27

It is all that is good, everything that is perfect, which is given us from above; it comes down from the Father of all light; with him there is no such thing as alteration, no shadow of a change. By his own choice he made us his children by the message of the truth so that we should be a sort of first-fruits of all that he had created. Accept and submit to the word which has been planted in you and can save your souls. But you must do what the word tells you, and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves. Pure unspoilt religion, in the eyes of God our Father is this: coming to the help of orphans and widows when they need it, and keeping oneself uncontaminated by the world.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life; you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!

The Gospel: Mark 7:1-8. 14-15. 21-23: The True Purpose of the Law

The Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered round Jesus, and they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with unclean hands, that is, without washing them. For the Pharisees, and the Jews in general, follow the tradition of the elders and never eat without washing their arms as far as the elbow; and on returning from the market place they never eat without first sprinkling themselves. There are also many other observances which have been handed down to them concerning the washing of cups and pots and bronze dishes. So these Pharisees and scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not respect the tradition of the elders but eat their food with unclean hands?" He answered, "It was of you hypocrites that Isaiah so rightly prophesied in this passage of scripture: 'This people honours me only with lip-service, while their hearts are far from me. The worship they offer me is worthless; the doctrines they teach are only human regulations'. You put aside the commandment of God to cling to human traditions." He called the people to him again and said, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that goes into a man from outside can make him unclean; it is the things that come out of a man that make him unclean. For it is from within, from men's hearts, that evil intentions emerge: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, malice, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within and make a man unclean."

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 2nd September 2024

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 2nd September	St Bede	10am	In thanksgiving to St Martin
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Raymond Lyons & Deceased Family
Tuesday 3rd September	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Margaret Scott
	St Gregory the Great St Joseph	7pm	Christine Thompson RIP
Wednesday 4th September	St Bede	10am	David Moore RIP
	St Cuthbert St John Boste	7pm	Debbie Hull nee O'Brien RIP
Thursday 5th September	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Anne & John Cantwell on what would have been Golden Wedding Anniversary
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Elaine Hannon RIP
Friday 6th September	St John Boste	10am	Priests Intention
	St Joseph	10am	Pat Lewis RIP
Saturday 7th September	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	George Fawcett
	Vigil St Joseph	5pm	Cath & Bob McLeman RIP
	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 8th September 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	David and Anne Crombie and son David RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Leslie Thompson RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Gerard McCabe RIP & Patricia Denton RIP

At first glance, today's readings seem to stress the importance of strict obedience to God's Law. Deuteronomy says, *'You must add nothing to what I command you and take nothing from it but keep the commandments of the Lord your God just as I lay them down for you.'*

The Pharisees and Scribes in the gospel took this very seriously and became experts in keeping God's Law down to the smallest detail – in fact, they added a huge number of other rules under the guise of protecting the Law. But Jesus calls them 'hypocrites'! They were so focused on the letter of the Law that they had neglected the purpose of the Law – to bring people closer to God. Jesus says, *'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.'* (Mark 2:27)

As we read the Letter of James today, we realise that we are being invited to reflect deeply on what is going on in our hearts and minds, rather than just focusing on keeping the rules. Authentic religion demands that we put God's word into practice, especially in relation to those who are most vulnerable.

In similar vein, Psalm 14 also gives us some sound principles for living - *'walk without fault ... act with justice ... speak the truth ... do not slander ... do no wrong to your brother ... cast no slur ... keep your pledge .. take no interest on a loan ... accept no bribes'*.

In the light of the recent riots in the UK and the divisive rhetoric of some politicians both here and elsewhere in the world, these readings seem particularly relevant. I'm pretty sure that 'hypocrites' would be the least of what Jesus would have to say about these situations! God's Law involves a transformation of the heart, purifying our intentions and guiding our actions – a consistency between what we profess and how we live. I think they call that *'integrity'*.

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 each Friday 2-3pm, **Not Friday 6th September;**

St Bede's each Wednesday 9.15am - 9.50am;

St. Joseph's (until November) each Thursday evening 6.30pm - 7.30pm. I do encourage as many of you as possible to spend some time in quiet prayer with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is now available in all of our Churches:

Our Lady Queen of Peace - Thursday morning, after Mass and Saturday morning from 10am-11am.

St Joseph -Thursday after noon Mass.

St John Boste - Friday morning, after Mass.

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Saturday morning, after Mass.

St Bede's - Saturday after Vigil Mass.

OLOF (Our Lady's Over 50's Club) -Tuesday at 1pm in the Emmaus Room, at Our Lady's in the Village! All most welcome!

Special Collection Next Week - Catholic Education: The Catholic Church was the first provider of schools and universities in England and Wales, thanks to religious orders - there was a school on Holy Island run by St Aidan in 640! There were secret schools in farms and hedgerows throughout the Reformation in the 16th/17th centuries. The Catholic Education Service offers legal and educational advice to the Church in England and Wales and helps the Church to negotiate its way through all political discussions regarding education in this country.

Car Parking at St John Boste Church - The car park at St John Boste is very small and has caused complaints in the past as it is difficult to find other places to park. The school car park is open on Sundays as additional parking and we will endeavour to advertise on the newsletter when the school car park will be open at other times, such as Holy Days of Obligation.

The family of Alan Callaghan wish to say thank you for the Masses, Cards, Flowers and the generous donation to Charity in Alans Memory. Thanks to Fr Martin Morris for a wonderful service.

St Bede's Church - If you know someone who can no longer get to Holy Mass because they are sick or housebound, and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please contact Marian Fletcher Tel: 01914174413. We also would like to encourage those from **all our churches** that are no longer able to attend mass to have a Special Minister call with Holy Communion, Please ask or get in touch with any of our Priests or Deacons.

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.

Eucharistic Congress Birmingham 14 September 2024.

The Bishops of England and Wales have called the Congress to help parishes reflect more deeply on the great gift of the Eucharist and how our Faith in this Sacrament can be strengthened and renewed. Representatives from each parish community will attend the event and share with us at a later date the ideas put forward at the Congress. I am very grateful to those who have offered to attend the event as reps. for our partnership of parishes.: Sophie Taylor, Andrew French, Dominique Lentchou, Tom Kelly, Darren Trotter, Paddy Denton, Stanley Duru and Chibuzo Kabul. Thank you, Fr Martin.

NEW SONG! We look forward to welcoming you at our monthly time of prayer and fellowship on Sunday 8 September at 4pm in the less formal surroundings of OBLI Parish Room, St Joseph's Primary School, NE38 7HU. In this session we will be re-visiting the theme of HOPE. Look forward to seeing you there! Where: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church NE38 7HS. When: Sunday 8 September at 4pm. Email: newsongne@gmail.com,

Instagram: @newsongne. **Deacon Frank O'Neill**

Seven years with St Joseph and St John XXIII

I'd like to invite you to join the congregation who worship at St Bede's for 5pm Mass on Saturday 28 September.

It's just over a year since I began the Sabbatical time and I wrote explaining how I was looking at six options for the future. I'm pleased to say 'it worked'. It became clear to me during the year that the right thing to do was to retire from responsibility as a priest serving the parishes where I'd lived, and actually retire - while still being able to serve other communities when the local priest is either ill or on holiday. I've just moved into a flat in the presbytery of the Sacred Heart parish in Boldon Colliery - and I'm very happy here. But after talking to Fr Martin (the big one), it seems right to celebrate mass for a final time in the community where I lived and in the parishes I tried to serve. So, you're more than welcome that evening at St Bede's. There'll be an expansive cup of tea - and who knows, maybe more - after mass to catch up. I notice that Pope Francis reminds our Church - i.e. the Universal one, the whole Church, not just St Bede's! - marks the 110th World Day of Migrants and Refugees that weekend. I'd no idea we'd been praying for migrants for so long. I don't feel like a migrant in Boldon Colliery, though moving and change is challenging. Our diocese is trying to move and change and it is really challenging. Please feel free to gather and remember our sisters and brothers throughout the world who have to move in such awful circumstances, and the fact that I've loved being in Washington/ Birtley over those years. Take care and God bless. **Jim O'Keefe.**

Holy Hour of Prayer - As part of the National Eucharistic Congress Adoremus 2024 taking place in St Mary's Oscott on 14 September, the Bishops of England and Wales are requesting all parishes across the country to host a period of Adoration on Sunday 15 September. The objective of this Adoration in parishes is to fruitfully unite the faithful in focusing on the Eucharist in anticipation of the Jubilee Year 2025 with renewed and deepened devotion. This can be a Holy Hour or a period of prayer during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Each parish is able to decide for themselves the best time to organize this Adoration. Bishop Stephen is supportive of this nationwide Adoration across the diocese, depending on the resources available to host such a time of prayer and reflection for our local parishes and communities to enrich and nourish the faithful. Our Holy of Prayer will take place at St Bede's 4-5pm on Sunday 15 September, where there will be time for reflection and prayer around the Eucharist. All Welcome.

Comboni Missionaries - We welcome the Missionary Priests this weekend who will be speaking at Masses at St Bede's, St John Boste & Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. They will also take a collection for the Comboni Missionary work. Thankyou.

Medjugorje Pilgrimage : 1-8 June 2025. Flying from Newcastle to Dubrovnik. Led by Fr Martin Morris. The pilgrimage is almost full, a few places remaining if interested. Contact Adrian Duffy at Northern Star pilgrimages on 0161- 7732115.

Other News

Diocesan Courses - The Liturgical Formation team will be delivering a course for those who wish to become a Liturgical Leader of Celebrations of the Word and Holy Communion in the Autumn. The course, being held at St Hilda's Resource Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 7PY, runs over six sessions between 30 September through to 4 November, with full details available by [clicking here](#) or see your Parish Priest. Note that people booking for liturgical formation courses (e.g. Lay Leaders) need to be endorsed by their parish priest/deacon with booking via the Parish Office.

Diocesan Job Vacancy The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is looking to appoint to the following vacancy: **Cleaner**, St Cuthbert, Old Elvet, Durham – 10 hours a week. Closing date: 9 September. Please [click here](#) for full details or contact us on 07789 885 118.

Marriage Preparation Days- Saturday 21 September: St Robert of Newminster, Morpeth NE61 1QF. Saturday 9 November: St Mary's, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ. Engaged couples can find **more information** [by clicking here](#). To find and **book on a course**, [please click here](#).

The Medjugorje Centre (North East) has organised a Medjugorje Retreat at Minsteracres from Friday 25 to Sunday 27 October. The Spiritual Director for the weekend is Fr Martin Morris. The weekend is an opportunity to come together for prayer, talks and friendship. The cost is £195 per person. A £48 Deposit is required and more information and booking forms are available from Marian Fletcher (St Bede's) Telephone 0191 4174413.

"You must do what the word tells you, and not just listen to it." Is God asking you to consider a vocation to the priesthood. Put the word of God into action and accept the challenge from God to discern his will. **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 3 September at St Joseph's Church, Thorneyholme Terrace, Stanley, DH9 0BL between 6pm and 8pm** 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](#)

What is the Lord calling us to Be and Do? - Workshops have taken place in Stockton, Consett and Washington with plans in place for Hexham and Amble. With further modelling of spiritual conversations taking place at Ushaw and with the Diocesan Lay Pastoral Forum. The discernment workshops will continue into the Autumn term with a number of Partnerships now inviting training into their area. In Rome the latest document for the universal synod has been released aimed at those who will be attending the meeting in October 2025. A link to this document can be found by [clicking here](#). We continue to pray and unpack the draft Diocesan vision, exploring what is God calling us to Be and Do in our community? Find out more by [clicking here](#). **Amy Cameron**

Catholic Pastoral Leadership Course - Are you involved in any ministry in the Church? Are you interested in doing more for the Church? Do you want to expand your skills in pastoral leadership? A new online course in Catholic Pastoral Leadership might be what you are looking for. Liverpool Hope University has partnered with several Catholic dioceses across England and Wales to help people like you to gain fresh perspectives on Scripture and Church teaching. The 2-year course is split into 4 modules and you can complete most of the work at a time that suits you. To find out more information about the course, please visit our [website](#).

'Faith and Fellowship' Evening - The Interreligious Relations Team are holding an evening devoted to 'Faith and Fellowship' on 25 September 2024 at 7.00pm. The venue for this evening will be English Martyrs Parish Hall, Stamfordham Road, Newcastle NE5 3JR. The evening will provide an opportunity to discuss the importance of faith and fellowship in the lives of people of faith. We have six guest speakers, and the evening will provide an opportunity to discuss the similarities between people of faith. This event is being held in support of the Year of Prayer in preparation for the Jubilee Year of 2025. For more information, please [click here](#). Quick Link: [Dialogue & Unity](#)

Reflections

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

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

[Saturday Examen](#) [22nd 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](#). 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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