

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
 Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



In the Partnership of Benedict
 Birtley, Chester-le-Street, Penshaw, Sacriston, Washington

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD - 1ST - 2ND FEBRUARY 2025, Year C

Saturday 1st February	St Joseph	5pm	Conceicao Lucas Goncalves RIP
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 2nd February	St John Boste	9:30am	Lesley Thompson RIP
The Presentation of the Lord	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Eddie Ashburner RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Janet O'Neil (deceased anniversary)

First Reading: The Coming of the Lord, Malachi 3:1-4

Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his Temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Response to the Psalm: The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory!

Second Reading: The Faithful High Priest, Hebrews 2:14-18

Since the children share in flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel. Alleluia!

The Gospel: The Child Destined for the Rise and Fall of Many, Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, 'Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord') and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons'. Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the Temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, 'Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.' And his father and his mother marvelled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed - and a sword will pierce through your own soul also - so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.' And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the Temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favour of God was upon him.

Fr Martin Morris	0191 649 8257	Deacon Frank O'Neill	0779 115 5845
Fr Martin Wheaton	0770 996 1040	Deacon Tony Joy	0779 989 3419
Fr Luke Wilkinson	0191 649 8257		

Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 3rd February 2025

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 3rd February Ss Ansgar & Blaise	St Bede	10am	Fr Kevin Cummins RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Hilary Cassidy RIP
Tuesday 4th February	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Agnes Gauld
	St Joseph	7pm	Yves & Family
Wednesday 5th February St Agatha	St Bede	10am	Priest's Intention
	St John Boste	7pm	Priest's Intention
Thursday 6th February St Paul Miki	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Carl Poulter
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Neil Carpenter & Family
Friday 7th February	St John Boste	10am	Repose of the Soul of Joan Scott
	St Joseph	10am	Tony Carey RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	12 Noon	Wedding Service: Christopher Adam Kirtley & Helen Hendry
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	6pm	Eucharistic Adoration
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Penshaw Womens Guild
Saturday 8th February Ss Jerome Emilian & Josephine Bakhita	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Clare Madden RIP Birthday Memory
	St Joseph	5pm	Gerry & Billy Grigg – Golden Wedding
	St Bede	5pm	Hall & Jobe Families RIP
Sunday 9th February The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	Tom, Gladys, Colin and Marjorie Bell RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Greg Moorhouse RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	People of the Parish

In this Sunday's Gospel, we hear of Jesus' presentation in the Temple. Here, his parents were met by two figures who, filled with the Holy Spirit, recognised who He was, even as a child – Simeon, and Anna.

Simeon was promised by the Lord that he would remain living until he 'had seen the Lord's Christ'. His reaction is one that would likely scare parents today, but he allowed the Lord to work through him to confirm to Jesus' earthly parents that Jesus would grow and become 'strong, filled with wisdom', and was bold about his faith. God's promise to Simeon had been fulfilled, and he had seen Christ.

It is the prophetess Anna, however, who challenges me, and I hope will challenge you too. We hear in the Gospel that Anna 'did not depart from the Temple.' Indeed, she did not depart from the presence of the Lord, 'worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day'. Anna lived her whole life in worship of God, which resulted in both her and Simeon recognising Him.

The challenge comes with this – would we recognise the Lord? I would love to say with certainty I would, that I would recognise Him in the most-lowly person in the room, or in the person people may struggle with, or in the person society tells me is a 'bad person'. But the truth is, I'm not sure that's always the case. We are blessed to have the Lord right here with us in the Eucharist, in a mystery we will never be able to grasp, but He also comes to us in people around us. He comes to us in ways (and through people) we would expect, but also in ways we don't. Have you ever had an encounter with Jesus in a way you didn't expect?

This week, I would encourage you to try to be more like Simeon and Anna. Be more like Simeon in his bold faith, a faith that is not shaken by what others may think. Be more like Anna, in her consistent seeking of the presence of God and life of surrender and worship, spending enough time with Him to recognise Him, even in a way we may not expect.

Hannah Bartlett

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: 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:

St. Joseph's each Thursday evening 6.30pm - 7.30pm, held in the front room of the Presbytery (main door will be open, first room on left). 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:

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!

Parish Fundraising Activities - Could I please remind all groups and individuals that, when conducting any fundraising efforts within the parish, all monies raised must be banked via the Parish current account. This is at the express request of Bishop Stephen and the Diocesan Trustees in accordance with the statutory regulations.

First Friday devotions - Now that we are in a Holy Year, Pope Francis' suggestion of praying the First Friday devotion is one that we will be offering from February – October. To mark the Holy Year of Jubilee we begin our First Friday devotions at Our Lady Queen of Peace with Mass at 7pm. The Church will be open for Eucharistic Adoration from 6pm, with Benediction at 6:50pm. Please note that there will be no afternoon Adoration at Penshaw on this day.

The First Friday Masses will move to a different church in our parish every second month. There will be Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 6.15pm – 6.50pm before each Mass. The twelve promises given by Jesus to St Margaret Mary concerning this devotion are a great encouragement to the Christian life. Google "Twelve promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus – EWTN."

The Parish is planning a Parish Lenten Mission 2025, 15 March - 19 March. The Mission will be led by Sr Briege McKenna (OSC) and Fr Pablo Escriva De Romani. Sr Briege and Fr Pablo have many years experience of worldwide retreats and missions, and this will be an ideal way in keeping the Lenten season special .

Sr Briege and Fr Pablo are very much looking forward to visiting our Parishes during the second week of Lent, 16 – 19 March. In the coming weeks our Clergy will begin promoting the Mission and asking all parishioners to take some Mission Leaflets as invites to distribute among our families, neighbours and friends. Please keep the success of the Mission in your prayers. Thank you, Fr Martin Morris.

"Living Faith" Books are now available from the back of Church. These excellent booklets are a great help to the spiritual life, which includes various prayers for each day, along with a relevant reflection for each day of the week on the daily Gospel. Cost £1.50.

The Rosary will be prayed for all our intentions on the first Saturday of each month following the 10am Mass at the Village, beginning Saturday 1 February. All welcome. Fr Martin.

St Joseph's School Newsletter can be viewed [here](#).

We Welcome Bishop Stephen to our Parish this weekend. The Bishop will celebrate the 5pm Mass at St Bede's and the 11am Mass at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. Refreshments after each Mass. All welcome.

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](#).

The visit of the relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis.

Further information [here](#).

Monday is the Feast of St Blaise, the Blessing of throats will take place after each Mass that day.

Mass Streaming - please note that this Sunday the 11am Mass at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate will be streamed. The 10am Mass at Our Lady Queen of Peace will not be streamed.

Other News

LOUDfence.

St Mary's Cathedral in Newcastle is hosting a LOUDfence Workshop on Saturday 1 February at 10am. LOUDfence is a catholic movement which shares practical ways to acknowledge harm caused by abuse in any setting, through arts and crafts. All objects made in the LOUDfence workshop will form part of the liturgy in the Diocesan LOUDfence on 1 May in Alnwick. Participants are asked to bring a packed lunch with them. Light refreshments will be provided. Please bring paper, light fabric, ribbon and small objects which remind you of comforting memories, particularly in childhood.

The Year of Jubilee 2025 is a beacon of hope. We're all invited into an encounter with Jesus Christ, as his disciples of mercy, forgiveness, and social action, and to celebrate our communities. It's a chance to envision a better future, a future of hope and faith where mercy guides our actions. It's a time for forgiveness and reconciliation within our communities. We can take action to address injustices, support the vulnerable, and work towards a more equitable society. Let's embrace the spirit of the Jubilee, and unite to create a world of compassion and justice, where everyone and our whole community can grow and flourish. Please visit the Diocesan Jubilee [webpage](#) for more information and regular updates.

Marriage & Family Life Mass 2025 - Bishop Stephen will be presiding at the Mass to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage and the graces received in Family Life, which will take place on Saturday 8 February 2025, from 12 noon at St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle. All married couples will be invited with particular focus on those celebrating a significant anniversary together with bereaved spouses, separated individuals and families experiencing or have experienced domestic difficulties. Further details will be given in future newsletters and via the Diocesan website.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor". Do you listen to the voice of truth, the voice of Jesus Christ? Maybe he is inviting you to discern a vocation to the Priesthood. For more information, speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#)

A Call for Volunteers with the Gift of Music - Music makes the world of difference to our lives, especially in our worship. Vatican II recognised 'the importance of singing' in the celebration of the Mass and that it should be 'integral to worship' with 'due consideration for the culture of the people and abilities of each liturgical assembly'. The Diocesan Church Music Association (DCMA) is a body of volunteer musicians within Hexham and Newcastle who aim to help parishes in their use of music for the Mass. We offer practical help and guidance to parish musicians, considering that each parish will have its own musical 'house-style'. This may be a traditional choir-and-organ setup, an instrumental group, a praise & worship band, or perhaps unaccompanied singing. Previously we have put on singing days and workshops to highlight new Mass settings, simple Communion songs, music for the Triduum, as well as a 'keyboard-free' workshop for those parishes who do not have a pianist or organist. For more information please click: [DCMA](#)

Singing the Psalms Workshop: Save the date - 1 March 2025 - The DCMA will be hosting a workshop on singing the Psalms using the new translation, which will be led by Steven Maxson, Director of Music for Middlesbrough Diocese. This workshop will be open to all who are involved in music in parishes and schools. Further details will be available on the DCMA page shortly.

The Bible in a Year - Ascension's [Bible in a Year](#) Podcast, hosted by Fr Mike Schmitz and featuring Jeff Cavins, guides Catholics through the Bible in 365 daily episodes. Each 20-25 minute episode includes: Two to three scripture readings; A reflection from Fr Mike Schmitz; A guided prayer to help you hear God's voice in his Word.

Sharing the Rosary – You are very welcome to join us at Holy Name Parish Hall on Towers Avenue, Jesmond for a four week course exploring the Rosary, its history and its significance in Catholic prayer traditions. Each one-hour session will include opportunities to learn about the Mysteries of the Rosary, pray a shared Decade, and even make your own set of Rosary beads. The course will run on Saturdays 1 February, 8 February and 22 February 2025. Refreshments will be available from 2pm, with sessions finishing at 3.30 pm. Whether you're new to the Rosary or have prayed it for years, all are welcome. Rosary beads will be available for anyone who needs them, but feel free to bring your own—especially if they hold a special story you'd like to share. To join the course, please either email welcome@holynamejesmond.co.uk or telephone (0191) 2810940.

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. You will look at real-world issues in the light of our tradition and consider the best ways of exploring Christian faith and life with others. The two year course is split into four 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](#).

Prayer Vigil at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre (DIRC) - We started to hold in person prayer vigils at the Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre, Medomsley on the first Sunday of each month at 3pm. It is a powerful witness; we have between 25 and 35 people attending each month. The vigils are inter-faith with people from other Christian traditions as well as a group of people from the Jewish faith participating. We believe detaining women who are asking for a safe place to live goes against our faith. We are asked to welcome the stranger and feed the hungry. The vigils last about 45 minutes and as well as praying, we offer some practical support by donating cash for phone cards and toiletries, which are then made into welcome packs and taken into the centre by another charity, "Friendship Across Borders". We also take flowers to hand over to the guards who take them into the communal areas of the centre. **Our next vigil will be on Sunday 2 February 2025 at 3pm at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre, Medomsley DH8 6QY.** It would be wonderful if you could join us there, but if not, perhaps you would consider joining us in prayer from home. Please contact Liz Archibald by [clicking here](#) if you would like more information. For more information around the issues of refugees and asylum seekers, please look at our [webpage](#).

Reflections

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

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

[Saturday Examen](#) [The Presentation of the Lord](#)

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](#)