

# 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: 0191 4163583  
 Administrator: Audrey Huntley tel: 0191 4163583  
 (Tuesday & Wednesday 8am—1pm, Thursday 11am—4pm & Friday 12– 5pm)  
 Email: [StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk)  
 Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



## In the Partnership of Benedict

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

### THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT - 22ND - 23RD MARCH 2025, Year C

Saturday 22nd March	St Joseph	5pm*	<b>Kathleen Burlinson RIP</b>
<b>Vigil</b>	St Bede	5pm	<b>William Kevin Marriner RIP</b>
Sunday 23rd March	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>Kathleen &amp; Bill Burlinson RIP</b>
<b>The Third Sunday of Lent</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	<b>People of the Parish</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	<b>Tony Madden Anniversary RIP</b>

#### First Reading: Moses at the Burning Bush

Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15

In those days: Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, 'I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.' When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' And he said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then the Lord said, 'I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey.' Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you", and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I Am Who I Am.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: "I Am has sent me to you."' God also said to Moses, 'Say this to the people of Israel: "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is my name for ever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.'

**Response to the Psalm: The Lord is compassionate and gracious.**

#### Second Reading: The Rock which is Christ

1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

**Gospel Acclamation: Glory to you, O Christ; you are the Word of God. Repent says the Lord, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Glory to you, O Christ; you are the Word of God.**

#### The Gospel: Time for Repentance

Luke 13:1-9

There were some present at that very time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.' And he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vine dresser, "Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?" And he answered him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig round it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down."'

Fr Martin Morris	0191 416 3583	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 24th March 2025 (Streamed Mass \*)

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 24th March	St Bede	10am	<b>Laurence McAdam RIP</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	<b>Carl Poulter RIP</b>
Tuesday 25th March <b>The Annunciation of the Lord</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am *	<b>Margaret Glesson RIP</b>
	St Joseph	7pm	<b>Dorothy Hattam RIP</b>
Wednesday 26th March	St Bede	10am *	<b>Moira &amp; Vincent Lamb RIP</b>
	St John Boste	7pm	<b>Ann Marie Kelf RIP</b>
Thursday 27th March	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am *	<b>Linda &amp; Clive Hartis (Diamond Wedding)</b>
	St Joseph	12 Noon	<b>Holy Souls</b>
Friday 28th March	St John Boste	10am *	<b>People of the Parish</b>
	St Joseph	10am	<b>All Mothers</b>
Saturday 29th March <b>Vigil</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am *	<b>Catherine Naughton RIP</b>
	St Joseph	5pm*	<b>Jim Lamb RIP</b>
	St Bede	5pm	<b>Charlotte, Alex, Thomas &amp; Peter Ryan</b>
Sunday 30th March <b>The Fourth Sunday of Lent - Laetare Sunday</b>	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>Linda Banks RIP</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	<b>Dave Ranaghan (3rd Anniversary)</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	<b>Christopher Gonzales RIP</b>

In today's Gospel, we hear the parable of the fig tree, which reminds us of the importance of rooting out anything in our lives that does not bear fruit. This is what this Lenten season is about – letting go the things or practices in our lives which do not lead us further into a deep relationship with the Father.

What does bearing fruit look like? The language of fruit is clear throughout our faith tradition – the fruit of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3 is a fruit which had negative consequences, though in contrast, the fruit of the fig tree would bring about good. When we talk of bearing fruit, we refer to bearing the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. The fruits of the Spirit, according to Galatians 5:22-23, are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

I remember learning about the fruits of the Spirit throughout school, though I remember most vividly being in my Confirmation group at St Joseph's Birtley and discussing these and what they meant for our faith, and how we may live them out. There were only three candidates that year, but the discussions were (pardon the pun) so incredibly fruitful! This was when the concept of bearing good fruit truly came alive for me.

I wonder, how many of us listen to discussions around the fruits of the Spirit, remembering certain points here and there from school or from sacramental preparation classes, and listen in the moment, but do not allow our actions to be changed by them? Do we try to govern those fruits, deciding when it is convenient for us to be patient or gentle, or do we allow the fruits of the Spirit to govern us?

Lent is a time of reflection and repentance. This week, following our Parish mission week, which will surely bear good fruit, let us live our lives bearing the fruits of the Spirit, giving faithful witness to the Lord and His compassion. For the next week and a bit, take one of the fruits of the Spirit daily and be attentive to it. How will you live according to those fruits this week, allowing them to guide you in your day to day?

Hannah Bartlett

**Masses are generally live-streamed daily at 10am every day, except Monday, streamed at 7pm, and alternate Sundays when Mass is live-streamed at either 10am or 11am. An \* on the Mass table indicates streamed Masses.**

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 Church immediately after Stations of the Cross.

Our Lady Queen of Peace each Friday 2-3pm.

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 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!

### Stations of the Cross during Lent

Every Wednesday **OLQP** 12 Noon and **SJB** 6.30pm;

Every Thursday **St Joseph's** at 6pm;

Every Friday **St Bede's** at 6pm.

**Stations of the Cross** at **OLQP** will be followed by a simple lunch of soup and bread. All donations gratefully accepted and will be sent to St Benedict's Hospice. All welcome.

**Thank you** to all who helped make our Parish Mission a resounding success.

**Let us keep in our prayers** all those preparing for reception into the Church this Easter. Nineteen people from our two parishes are currently on the Journey in Faith programme, preparing for the Sacraments at the Easter Vigil.

**SVP 200 Club** - The March 2025 draw was made on March 7th. Congratulations to Ann Marshall of St Joseph's, Birtley who was successful in the draw.

**The children of St Bede's** are doing the CAFOD Big Lent Walk. If you would like to help them fundraise, please follow this link <https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-bedes-big-lent-walk2025>

**Blessed Carlo Acutis Relics Tour** - Our Diocese is privileged to be welcoming the Visitation of the Relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis, the first millennial beatified by Pope Francis, on 26 - 30 March.

All Parishioners are invited to A Mass with Bishop Stephen on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 7pm at St. Cuthbert's Church, New Seaham, to welcome the Relics and Eucharistic Exhibition of Blessed Carlo Acutis. See Poster at back of Church for more info. Blessed Carlo will be Canonized by Pope Francis this April.

The relics will be stopping off at Cardinal Hume School in Low Fell, Gateshead, on Saturday 29 March where everyone is invited to visit. More details can be found [here](#).

**Youth2000 Holy Hour** with Carlo Acutis. Young people are welcome to join a Holy Hour during the tour of the Carlo Acutis

relics. This will be held on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March from 6-7pm as part of the vigil at St Michael's Church, Houghton le Spring. Praise and worship music provided by Set a Fire from Durham University and Sunderland University chaplaincy.

**Derek and Maureen Hall** wish to thank Michael Thomas, Fr Luke Wilkinson, Family and Friends who made their Diamond wedding very special. Thank you for all your Love and support.

**St John XXIII YouTube Channel** - Our parish now has a YouTube channel which will allow us to record more of our parish services, events and information. Our Lenten Parish Mission services are all available there as well as the weekly Gospel and Homily videos.

You can find all these videos on our channel by [clicking here](#). Please subscribe to the channel and if you have ideas for developing it please send them via email to Lisa or Winifred by [clicking here](#).

**Congratulations** to Linda and Clive Hartis on the occasion of their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 27<sup>th</sup> March.

**Medjugorje Pilgrimage** - Thank you to all those parishioners who have booked on the pilgrimage for this June. Please note there will be a pre- pilgrimage meeting with film show on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May, 6pm in the Emmaus Room at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate.

**Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes** - In recent weeks Bishop Stephen made an appeal for adult helpers for this year's Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Can I make a further appeal for registered Nurses and Health Care Assistants. The Pilgrimage is very often the only way that those requiring care can travel, but this requires us to provide that care. All helpers are required to register their interest before 31<sup>st</sup> March. The Pilgrimage does have a nurse's fund which can offer some help with funding if required. For further information please contact the Pilgrimage Senior Nurse Liz Joy on: 07917322890 or [click here](#).

**Safeguarding - The Online Update Service – Emails from DBS-** The Update Service is a free online subscription service that allows you to keep your enhanced DBS certificates up to date. It enables the Diocese, with your consent, to complete your three yearly DBS check. Your Update Service Subscription requires an annual renewal. When this is due you will receive an email from DBS which will help you to do this. If you do not renew your subscription, it will lapse and subsequently, when your DBS is due for checking, a full application will need to be completed including identity verification. If you need any further information regarding this, please speak to your Parish Safeguarding Representative (See poster at the back of Church).

**Looking for an Adventure?** The Guides and Scouts of Europe, a Catholic scouting movement with 73,000 members across 27 countries, offers exciting opportunities for boys and girls aged 6–17. Our Gateshead group is growing, with spaces available for Beavers (boys and girls), Wolf Cubs, Scouts, and soon Wolverets and Guides for girls. Join us on this adventure! Contact Paul Hammond by [clicking here](#) or 07973 192324 or speak to Fr Luke, who is our religious adviser or collect a flyer from the back of church. Please [click here](#) for further information.

## Contactless Donations

We are trialling at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church a contactless donation plate. It will be situated at the back of church, if proved successful we will install in all 4 churches. Further details to follow.

## Other News

**Job Vacancy** - The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is looking to appoint to the following vacancy: **Safeguarding Co-ordinator**, based at the Diocesan Offices in Newcastle – full-time, permanent contract. Closing date: 25 March at 12.00pm. For full details or contact us on 0191 243 3301.

**National Catholic Leadership Programme** - This programme is for serving Deputy Headteachers in Catholic Primary and Secondary schools who are considering the role of headteacher in the next two years. It is fantastic training for the role of Catholic Headteacher, delivered by inspirational leaders across our Diocese. Please [click here](#) for further information.

**Holy Week Reflections** – The Diocese will not be producing a series of Diocesan Lenten Reflections in its usual format this year, instead they will produce a shorter booklet which will offer a daily reflection on the readings from Palm Sunday and throughout Holy Week. This is because the Year of Jubilee is making space for a different reflection writing opportunity entitled 'Scripture of Hope' in celebration of the Jubilee Year. Our Diocesan Writing Team look forward to sharing these resources with you in the coming weeks. Further information about accessing the Holy Week Reflection Booklet and the 'Scripture of Hope' reflections will be available next month. Please visit CAFOD's website by [clicking here](#) for prayer resources for Lent, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost.

**Marriage Preparation Days** - . Saturday 26 April, St Hilda, Sunderland SR5 2JD. Engaged couples can find **more information** [by clicking here](#). To find and **book on a course**, [please click here](#).

**This month's tip for sustainable living: Carbon Footprint Calculator** - Faced with record global temperatures, extreme weather events with millions of people around the world suffering the impact of climate breakdown, it can be difficult to know how to respond. One positive action we can all take is to estimate our own carbon footprint and understand how to lessen our environmental impact. Hope comes through action, however small. This month you are invited to access the [WWF carbon footprint calculator](#), which will give a concise analysis of your carbon footprint along with some ideas for reducing it.

**Old Postage Stamps, Jewellery, Medals** - David & Theresa O'Neill have been raising funds to assist the nuns of Little Sisters of the Poor carry on their wonderful work caring for elderly people including retired clergy & religious. They are not asking for financial help but rather by your donations of used postage stamps (any country or period), foreign currency (notes & coins from any country), broken or unwanted pieces of gold/silver jewellery & military medals from any conflict. If you have any old stamp albums or other items let David & Theresa know. Their contact details are: David & Theresa O'Neill, Tel: 0191 264 5771

**Answer the Call: Teach in a Catholic School** - Are you a Catholic teacher currently working outside Catholic education? Have you considered bringing your skills, experience, and faith into a Catholic school setting? Now is the time to explore how you can make a real difference in a values-driven, faith-filled learning environment. The Diocesan Department for Education are hosting an information session, for those interested in exploring teaching opportunities in our Catholic Education Trusts and schools. **Date:** Wednesday 2 April 2025 between 4.30pm - 5.30pm **Location:** The Durham Centre, Belmont DH1 1TN **Register your place** by [clicking here](#).

**St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD** are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 22<sup>nd</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> June in London. Candidates must have completed their first or second year at university and have a passion for social justice. Applications close on the 20<sup>th</sup> April. For any queries, please [click here](#)

**"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](#).

**The Joy of the Gospel** "Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey." Evangelii Gaudium, the Joy of the Gospel, looks at the new evangelisation for the transmission of the faith and has chapters on the following subjects: The Church's Missionary Transformation; The Crisis of Communal Commitment; The Proclamation of the Gospel; The Social Dimension of Evangelization; Spirit-Filled Evangelizers. The full text of Evangelii Gaudium can be downloaded [here](#).

## 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 Third 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](#)

**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](#)