

Parishes of St John XXIII & St Joseph, Birtley



Incorporating: **Our Blessed Lady Immaculate**, Washington;
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Peshaw; **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
 Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT - 5TH - 6TH APRIL 2025, Year C

Saturday 5th April Vigil	St Joseph	5pm*	People of the Parish
	St Bede	5pm	Billy Craggs (RIP)
Sunday 6th April The Fifth Sunday of Lent	St John Boste	9:30am	Holy Souls
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	People of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	In Thanksgiving to St Jude for Prayers answered

First Reading: The New Exodus

Isaiah 43:16-21

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: 'Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild beasts will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.'

Response to the Psalm: What great deeds the Lord works for us! Indeed, we were glad.

Second Reading: Pushing ahead for Olympic Gold

Philippians 3:8-14

Brothers and Sisters: I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith — that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Acclamation: Glory to you, O Christ, Son of the living God. Even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, for I am gracious and merciful. Glory to you, O Christ, Son of the living God.

The Gospel: The Woman taken in Adultery

John 8:1-11

At that time: Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?' This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, 'Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.'

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 7th April 2025 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 7th April St John Baptist de la Salle	St Bede	10am	Hodgson & Stephenson Families
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Donald & Margaret Watts
Tuesday 8th April	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am *	George Maw RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Maureen Thurlow RIP
Wednesday 9th April	St Bede	10am *	Fr John Francis Brady (RIP)
	St John Boste	7pm	Les Christie RIP
Thursday 10th April	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am *	Carl Poulter (RIP)
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Michael Ryder (RIP)
Friday 11th April St Stanislaus	St John Boste	10am *	Private Intention (MFM)
	St Joseph	10am	Marion & Bob Slavin
Saturday 12th April St Vincent Ferrer	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am *	Year Anniversary of David & Jackie Herbert
	St Joseph	5pm*	People of the Parish
	St Bede	5pm	Eilis O'Neill (RIP)
Sunday 13th April Passion (Palm) Sunday	St John Boste	9:30am	Response of the Soul O G (RIP)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Andrew Long
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	People of the Parish

'Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future'. You might be surprised to know that the quote comes from a play written by Oscar Wilde! Nevertheless, it does seem to resonate with today's Gospel reading. A woman caught in adultery was dragged before Jesus and her accusers tried to manipulate her situation to test Jesus on his understanding of the Law, looking for something to use against him. Jesus doesn't rise to the bait, but instead he starts writing on the ground. I always wondered what he might have been writing. Was he reminding the onlookers about the 10 Commandments? *Don't have strange gods before me; don't blaspheme; keep the Sabbath holy; honour your parents; don't commit adultery, or steal, or kill, or lie; don't covet your neighbour's wife or possessions.* Whatever it was he wrote, it was enough to touch the consciences of those present to the extent that, one by one, they all walked away knowing that none of them were squeaky clean. And when they had all departed, Jesus did not condemn the woman but told her to sin no more. All the 'saints' who had wanted to harm the woman were reminded of their past, and the 'sinner' was reminded that she had a future. Our world today is quick to judge and the media seems to take an unholy satisfaction in seeing someone fall from grace - we should be careful about getting caught up in such attitudes - which of us would have the right to *'cast the first stone'*? Jesus shows us a different way which echoes Isaiah's words in the first reading, *'Remember not the former things behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?'* Jesus shows us the boundless mercy of God and gives us hope that we are not defined by our failures. There is no need to go on carrying guilt and shame from our past - Jesus offers forgiveness and a chance to start again, he sees that we can be better versions of ourselves. As we start to approach Holy Week, why don't we embrace the freedom that the Sacrament of Reconciliation can bring? Like the woman in today's reading, or the Prodigal Son we read about last week, there is a better future for all of us sinners..

Deacon Frank O'Neill

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:

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

St. Joseph's each Thursday evening 6.30pm - 7.30pm, held in the church immediately after Stations of the Cross. 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

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.

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.

Easter Masses and Services – The Easter Triduum will be as follows: **Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper** St. Bede's & St. Joseph's at 7pm.

St. Bede's watching at the **Altar of Repose** until midnight.

Good Friday Services at 3pm will be held at St Joseph's, Our Blessed Lady Immaculate and Our Lady Queen of Peace.

7pm Stations of the Cross – St. John Boste.

The Easter Vigil will be held at St Joseph's at 5pm and St John Boste at 7pm. **Easter Sunday Masses** will be held in St Joseph's at 9am, St John Boste at 9.30am, Our Lady Queen of Peace at 10am, Our Blessed Lady Immaculate at 11am and St Bede's at 11am.

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!

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.

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>

Second Collection This Week – Sick and Retired Priests - At the present moment there are 67 active priests in our diocese – and just over 48 have retired. When we began Forward Together In Hope in 2014 we had 110 active priests in the Diocese. It is quite likely that by 2030 we will have much less than 50 active priests and far more who will need specialist care. These priests have spent their lives serving us in our diocese. We now have 86....and many will want to continue to serve without having the

responsibilities of being a parish priest. Our collection goes to enabling them to live as full a life as they possibly can.

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](#).

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 Wolfcubs 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. You can also collect a flyer from the back of church. Please [click here](#) for further information.

The Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured - As part of our aim to promote growth and knowledge of the Eucharist, the Association of the Eucharist offer [The Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured](#), which gives us words from Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis to guide time before the Blessed Sacrament. This resource can be used by both individuals and groups.

Holy Week Reflections – The Holy Week Reflection Booklet will be available to view and download in time for Palm Sunday [here](#). This will take the form a shorter booklet, which will offer a daily reflection on the readings from Palm Sunday and throughout Holy Week. Please visit CAFOD's website at <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/prayer-resources> for prayer resources for Lent, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost.

SVP Sing And Chat at the Black Bush.

Everyone is welcome to join us at The Black Bush, Washington Village, from 12:15 until 3 pm on Friday, 11th April.

Confirmation Programme 2025

The Confirmation programme for those in Years 9 and 10 and any young people who are older but have not been Confirmed will be starting soon. A registration form needs to be completed to join the programme. Please use this link for more information: <https://washingtoncatholic.org.uk/Groups/377546/Confirmation.aspx> If you have any questions please contact Deacon Tony Joy (07799 893419)

Mass for Pentecost - We will be hosting a Mass for Pentecost at St Mary's Cathedral again at 1.00pm on Saturday 31 May 2025. Pope Francis emphasises that a primary role of the new structure he launched in 2019, CHARIS, is to point all communities of the Charismatic Renewal to "*communion on the path ahead.*" The annual Mass for Pentecost is proving to be a blessed opportunity for sisters and brothers in Renewal to come together in communion on the path ahead for us in the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle. The Mass in 2025 will be our contribution to the Year of Jubilee, focusing, in particular, on our calling as Pilgrims of Hope. **John Wheeler, Co-ordinator Hexham and Newcastle Diocesan Service of Communion.**

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

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Washington have a vacancy for a Lunchtime Supervisory Assistant, the hours are 11.30am to 1 pm each day. If you, or someone you know is interested, please call the school office for further details the number is 0191 9172484.

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.

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: Be a zero-waste hero - Cutting down on plastic means cutting down on carbon as well. Take reusable products with you wherever you go – when you are enjoying your coffee from the local coffee-shop you are not adding to emissions by using a disposable cup. Choose products when shopping which are not wrapped in plastic or take advantage of a local zero-waste shop. This tells companies that you will not accept products packed in plastic. Use your £ to vote for change.

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 22nd - 27th 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 20th April. For any queries, please [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](#).

Adventurous Accompaniment - As we journey through this year of Jubilee, we are called to be Pilgrims of Hope. As Catholics our hope is in the Lord who is always at work in our lives. One of the keys to our faith journey is being able to recognize God's daily call and to discern God's will when we are making decisions. Our new formation programme **Adventurous Accompaniment** is designed to help us become better at walking with others, supporting them to see God at work. Find out more and book on Adventurous Accompaniment [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](#)

Pilgrimage for Pentecost Challenge! As we journey into the Easter Season, have you considered organising a Pilgrimage for Pentecost? The Jubilee motto is '*Pilgrims of Hope*' and we're invited on a spiritual journey as people of Hope, searching for an ever-deeper connection with God. Pilgrimages, journeys of spiritual and personal significance, offer profound opportunities for reflection and renewal. They can take us to sacred sites, historical landmarks, or even local places of importance, and help us connect deeply with our faith, heritage, and community. As we travel, we can meditate, pray, and share with each other, and that can give us a richer understanding of the Jubilee's themes of justice, mercy, and forgiveness. Pilgrimages are a great way to rejuvenate our spirits, strengthen our bonds with each other, and draw inspiration for the path ahead. Check out our information and resources [here](#) for some ideas and suggestions.

Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network - Each month the Holy Father will have a main prayer intention for people to use as part of their daily prayer, and he will also announce an "urgent intention" for people's prayer. A short video based on the main intention published each month and known as 'The Pope Video'. These videos can be viewed through the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#) visit now and watch this month's intention.

The Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured - As part of our aim to promote growth and knowledge of the Eucharist, the Association of the Eucharist offer [The Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured](#), which gives us words from Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis to guide time before the Blessed Sacrament. This resource can be used by both individuals and groups

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](#)

All the Links you will ever need!



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