

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



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - 24TH - 25TH MAY 2025, Year C

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|---|
| Saturday 24th May | St Joseph | 5pm* | Denis Duffy RIP |
| Vigil | St Bede | 5pm | People of the Parish |
| Sunday 25th May | St John Boste | 9:30am | Maldwyn & Eleanor Roberts RIP |
| Sixth Sunday of Easter | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 10am | Jim Devitte & Terry & Brendan Ford RIP |
| | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am* | David & Jackie Herbert RIP |

First Reading: The Council at Jerusalem. Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

In those days: Some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the Apostles and the elders about this question. Then it seemed good to the Apostles and the elders, with the whole Church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers and sisters, with the following letter: 'The brothers, both the Apostles and the elders, to the brothers and sisters who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions, it has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.'

Response to the Psalm: Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

Second Reading: The Holy City of Jerusalem. Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23

The angel carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed — on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, says the Lord, and my father will love him, and we will come to him. Alleluia.

The Gospel: The Promise of the Spirit. John 14:23-29

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. 'These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, "I am going away, and I will come to you." If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.'

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 26th May 2025 (Streamed Mass *)

| Day | Church | Time | Intention |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------|---|
| Monday 26th May St Philip Neri | St Bede | 10am | Stephen Shippen (Birthday) |
| | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 7pm* | Deceased Members of Cosgrove & Docherty Families |
| Tuesday 27th May | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am* | Violet Styles RIP |
| | St Joseph | 7pm | Deceased Stafford & McClusky Family |
| Wednesday 28th May St Augustine of Canterbury | St Bede | 10am* | Margaret Wanless (Nee Fagan) & Deceased Family |
| | St John Boste (Vigil Mass) | 7pm | A Sick Person (CB) |
| Thursday 29th May The Ascension of the Lord Holyday of Obligation | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 9:45am | Requiem Mass John Bevan RIP |
| | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 10am* | Special Intention (ATC) |
| | St Joseph | 12 Noon | Smith & Longstaff Families |
| | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 7pm | Seamus Cronogue RIP |
| Friday 30th May | St John Boste | 10am* | A Private Intention (EM) |
| | St Joseph | 10am | Louise Todd RIP |
| Saturday 31st May The Visitation of the BVM Vigil | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am* | Audrey Atkinson RIP |
| | St Joseph | 5pm* | Thomas Conway RIP |
| | St Bede | 5pm | Medjugorje Pilgrims |
| Sunday 1st June The 7th Sunday of Easter | St John Boste | 9:30am | People of the Parish |
| | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 10am* | In Loving Memory of Andrew Bell on his Birthday |
| | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am | Anne McDonagh & Deceased Family |

Reflection

On this final Sunday before the Feast of the Ascension, the church offers us a gospel reading in which Jesus tries to help the disciples come to terms with the fact that he will be leaving them - "Let not your hearts be troubled ... I am going away ... I am going to the Father ... and I have told you before it takes place so that when it does take place you may believe."

After the Resurrection, the disciples were blessed with many appearances of the Risen Jesus but they would have been anxious at the thought of Jesus going back to the Father. Apart from losing their teacher and companion, they would have been wondering how to manage without their friend and how to take on the leadership of the early church without him being physically present to advise and guide.

Today's reading from the Acts of the Apostles, for example, reveals some tension and debate about how much of Jewish faith and practice should be adopted by new converts to Christianity and tells us how the leaders of the church came to a decision which would have pleased some but not others.

Two thousand years later, as Pope Leo XIV carries on the line of succession from St Peter, we might well wonder what leadership issues he will face during his pontificate. How does the church deal with its own internal tensions and challenges? How does the church remain true to the message of the gospel and authentically challenge all that obstructs people living life to the full in a world that often seems to be spinning out of control?

In his inaugural mass, Pope Leo said, "We want to say to the world, with humility and joy: Look to Christ! Come closer to him! Welcome his word that enlightens and consoles! Listen to his offer of love and become his one family; in the one Christ, we are one."

Let's pray for wisdom, courage and good health for Pope Leo and for ourselves as together we seek to witness God's love to our needy world.

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 2pm - 3pm.
St. Joseph's 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:

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.

OLOF - Please note, the meeting on 27 May is cancelled as the club are having a trip away.

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](#).

First Holy Communions

Let us pray for all our children and their families preparing for their First Holy Communion in the coming weeks. All First Holy Communion Masses will take place on Saturday mornings throughout May and June.

Introduction to Alpha

Please join us for a series of four conversations exploring Christianity in an open and friendly group, especially for those who have little background in our faith or who have been away from church for a while. Beginning Tuesday 3 June 6.30pm - 8pm at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Washington. Please enrol through the parish website or contact our parish administrator.

Ceilidh!

You may remember some of the fun parish ceilidh nights we've had in the past with music provided by 'The Whole Shebang'. We realised this year that the band has been going 25 years and so we're planning a 25th celebration gig on Friday 4 July in the North Biddick Club in Washington to raise money for HCPT. Tickets are £7 and are available from Frank or Chris O'Neill. Come and have some fun and support a good cause!

Rosary

Join us in the Rosary every Saturday morning during the month of Mary (May) at OBLI after 10am Mass.

Cleaning at OBLI

Monthly cleaning will take place on Tuesday at OBLI after 10am Mass.

The Ascension

Thursday 29 May is the Feast of the Ascension. It is also a Holyday of Obligation. The Wednesday evening Mass at St John Boste is the Vigil Mass of the feast. Thursday Masses: 10am at Our Lady Queen of Peace, 12 noon at St Joseph's and an evening Mass at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate at 7pm.

Special Collection Next Week - World Communications

Sunday - OK - so who doesn't have a 'Smart Phone'? How do bishops learn to respond to local newspaper, TV and radio interviews? It is said there are tons of ways of communicating with people - just ask someone you know from Year 4! Our Church needs to learn how to be in touch with the world we live in. This Collection helps to train Church leaders to cope with media questions, and how to train local people to work with local media.

Contactless Donations

We are trialling a contactless donation plate at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church. It will be situated at the back of church. If it proves successful we will install one in all four churches. Further details to follow.

Other News

Bishop Stephen has issued the following statement on the announcement of a new Pope:

On behalf of the diocesan family here in Hexham and Newcastle I welcome the joyful news that Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost has been chosen to serve the worldwide Church as our new Pope. We keep Pope Leo XIV in our prayers. May the Lord bless his ministry. May he truly be the Servant of the Servants of Christ sustaining and guiding us all in our journey of faith.

Science and Faith: An Invitation to Conversation

Rev Prof David Wilkinson and the Youth Ministry Trust (YMT) warmly invite anyone interested in the conversation between science and faith to an open meeting on Wednesday, 28 May at the Emmaus Youth Village, 5:30pm-6:45pm.

We want to connect with those involved in science, technology, engineering, healthcare, and education, recognising, as Rev Prof David Wilkinson explains:

"At ECLAS and YMT, we value the work and vocation of those who work in science, technology, and engineering; we value this as a gift from God and as an opportunity for the mission and ministry of the church. We would like to talk with those who are involved in science at whatever level in university, industry, schools, or the health service about the possibility of doing work in local churches in the diocese."

This is an open invitation to begin a conversation and explore how these gifts can enrich the life and mission of our parishes. All are welcome! For more information, contact phillipsalkeld@ymt.org or 01207592244.

Corpus Christi. Eucharistic Procession with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at Ushaw

On Sunday 22 June, Ushaw will be hosting a Eucharistic Procession with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, led by Bishop Stephen Wright, starting at 3pm in St. Cuthbert's Chapel. Weather permitting, the procession will go through Ushaw's gardens, returning to the Chapel for Benediction. Teas and coffees will be available after the service. You do not need a ticket for this event, but please sign up on the sheet available at the back of church to help Ushaw to estimate numbers. Please indicate if you are bringing a car: this will help Ushaw to manage car parking requirements.

This month's tip for sustainable living: Finances, Pensions and Investments

Investigate whether your bank is investing in fossil fuels and if so, consider switching to a sustainable bank. If you have a private pension check with your pension provider whether they invest in fossil fuels and if so write and ask them to divest. Ensure any investments you hold are invested ethically, free from fossil fuels. More information about switching to a green bank is available from: [The Big Bank Switch](#).

CAFOD Prayers and Reflections - Our prayer as a global community is more important than ever. Let's stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world as we pray together with them and for all people who are experiencing poverty. Browse our collection of prayers, bidding prayers, reflections, liturgy and resources on a wide range of themes and throughout the liturgical year. Please visit CAFOD's [website](#) for prayer resources for Pentecost.

'Jubilee for All' – A Resource for Families

Jubilee for All is a new resource from CELEBRATE Trust for the Jubilee year. *Jubilee for All* has been developed for families, especially those with additional needs, to enjoy pilgrimage in their local diocese in the Jubilee Year of Hope. CELEBRATE Trust have designed short creative activities that families can choose from to enable them to draw close to Jesus, our hope, and to enable them to share that love with others. To download the resource for free, [visit here](#) and click on '*Jubilee for All*'.

The Justice and Peace Refugee Project: At the Justice and Peace Refugee Project, we provide a warm welcome to asylum seekers from many places across the world, with new clients registering every week. In March this year, 468 individuals and families were supported by the project. Your continued donations of food, toiletries and finance continue to be extremely welcome. We also continue to source fresh produce from local supermarkets, which is gratefully received by clients. Items most urgently needed can be [found here](#). The latest newsletter can be found by [clicking here](#). For more information please [click here](#).

Mass for Pentecost

We will be hosting a Mass for Pentecost at St Mary's Cathedral again at 1pm on Saturday 31 May 2025. Pope Francis emphasised 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. Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#).

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.

Reflections

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

Examen - Please follow this link to go to [Pray as You Go](#)

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.**

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