

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

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 6TH - 7TH SEPTEMBER 2025 Year C

Saturday 6th September	St Joseph	5pm	Barrett & Hattam Families
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Frank Barrett RIP
Sunday 7th September	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Private Intention (MP)
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	George Fawcett RIP

First Reading: In Praise of Divine Wisdom. Wisdom 9:13-18b

What human being can learn the counsel of God? Or who can discern what the Lord wills? For the reasoning of mortals is worthless, and our designs are likely to fail, for a perishable body weighs down the soul, and this earthy tent burdens the mind full of thoughts. We can hardly guess at what is on earth, and what is at hand we find with labour; but who has traced out what is in the heavens? Who has learned your counsel, unless you have given wisdom and sent your holy spirit from on high? And thus the paths of those on earth were set right, and people were taught what pleases you.

Response to the Psalm: O Lord, you have been our refuge, from generation to generation.

Second Reading: Paul and Philemon. Philemon 9b-10, 12-17

Beloved: I, Paul, an old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus — I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I became in my imprisonment. I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart. I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel, but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own accord. For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a bondservant but more than a bondservant, as a beloved brother — especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. Let your face shine forth on your servant, and teach me your decrees. Alleluia.

The Gospel: The Cost of Discipleship. Luke 14:25-33

At that time: Great crowds accompanied Jesus, and he turned and said to them, 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish." Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.'

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 8th September 2025 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 8th September The Nativity of the BVM	St Bede	10am	Holy Communion & Word Service
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Billy Simpson RIP
Tuesday 9th September St Peter Claver	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Gerard McCabe RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Ian Hamilton RIP
Wednesday 10th September	St Bede	10am	The Holy Souls
	St John Boste	7pm	Holy Communion & Word Service
Thursday 11th September St Deiniol	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Mr & Mrs Phil Faloon RIP
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Kathy Lawton RIP
Friday 12th September Most Holy Name of Mary	St John Boste	10am*	Muriel Simpson RIP
	St Joseph	10am	Frank McEnaney RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	Noon	Wedding Service: Stephen Martin Dawes & Colleen Kay Wyness
Saturday 13th September St John Chrysostom	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Joan Carrott RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	12:30pm	Nuptial Mass : James Anthony Harle & Katie Hannah Wilson
Vigil	St Joseph	5pm	People of the Parish
	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 14th September The Exaltation of the Holy Cross	St John Boste	9:30am	Debbie Hull (Nee O'Brien) RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Sister Joanna Healy RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	Soul of Tom Black

The old has passed away: all things are made new.

The fulfilment of the law is Christ himself, who does not so much lead us away from the letter as lift us up to its spirit. For the law's consummation was this, that the very lawgiver accomplished his work and changed letter into spirit, summing everything up in himself and, though subject to the law, living by grace. He subordinated the law, yet harmoniously united grace with it, not confusing the distinctive characteristics of the one with the other, but effecting the transition in a way most fitting for God. He changed whatever was burdensome, servile and oppressive not what is light and liberating, so that we should be enslaved no longer under the elemental spirits of the world, as the Apostle says, nor held fast as bondservants under the letter of the law.

This is the highest, all-embracing benefit that Christ has bestowed on us. This is the revelation of the mystery, this is the emptying out of the divine nature, the union of God and man, and the deification of the manhood that was assumed. This radiant and manifest coming of God to men most certainly needed a joyful prelude to introduce the great gift of salvation to us. The present festival, the birth of the Mother of God, is the prelude, while the final act is the fore-ordained union of the Word with flesh. Today the Virgin is born, tended and formed and prepared for her role as Mother of God, who is the universal King of the ages.

Justly, then, do we celebrate this mystery since it signifies for us a double grace. We are led towards the truth, and we are led away from our condition of slavery to the letter of the law. How can this be? Darkness yields before the coming of the light, and grace exchanges legalism for freedom. But midway between the two stands today's mystery, at the frontier where types and symbols give way to reality, and the old is replaced by the new. Therefore, let all creation sing and dance and unite to make worthy contribution to the celebration of this day. Let there be one common festival for saints in heaven and men on earth. Let everything, mundane things and those above, join in festive celebration. Today this created world is raised to the dignity of a holy place for him who made all things. The creature is newly prepared to be a divine dwelling place for the Creator.

From a discourse by Saint Andrew of Crete

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 here](#) to view from one of our Churches.
(or <https://www.youtube.com/@parishofstjohnxxiii>)

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 - Saturday after Vigil Mass.

Devotion to our Blessed Lady at St Bede's - The Holy Rosary will be recited every Monday morning after 10am Mass. If anyone would like to remember a loved one by bringing fresh flowers they would be very welcome and they will be displayed by the flower ladies, all welcome

OLOF (Our Lady's over 50's club) meet in the Lindisfarn Room at St Bede's Church on Tuesdays at 1pm. All welcome.

Life in the Spirit Seminars. - An opportunity to renew our lives of Faith, with a new outpouring of God's Holy Spirit. For seven weeks from 7pm - 8.30pm, beginning Thursday 25 September - Thursday 6 November. Members of the Diocesan CHARIS team will help us reflect on 'The Gift of the Holy Spirit' and the personal renewal of our Faith. Through reflection on Holy Scripture, a short talk, and testimonies, the 'Life in the Spirit' seminars aim to offer a renewed Faith in Jesus Christ, and in his gift of Salvation. The seminars take place in the Emmaus room at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. All welcome. Why not come along to one or more of the seminars? Details below, See poster at back of Church for more details.

Date	Title	Speaker
25 September 2025	God's Love	Andy Drozdziak
2 October 2025	Salvation	Fr Anthony Ohaekwusi
9 October 2025	The New Life	Christine Dixon
16 October 2025	Receiving God's Gifts	John Wheeler
23 October 2025	Baptised in the Holy Spirit	Fr Shaun O'Neill
30 October 2025	Growth	Deacon Alison Rebello
6 November 2025	Transformation in Christ	Fr Shaun O'Neill

Holy Communion for the Sick and Housebound: If you know of any parishioners who are unable to get to Mass and would like Holy Communion brought to them at home, please give their name, address and telephone number to any of our Priests.

St Bede's Toddler Group will reopen on 8 September. There are places available. The group meets on a Monday morning from 9.30am - 11am at St Bede's Parish Hall, Coach Road Estate. We welcome babies once they have had their first injections and until they go to nursery or school. The children can play, do creative activities, have refreshments and enjoy singing. The cost per session is £2. All parents, carers and children will receive a warm welcome.

Appeal for new volunteers – Thank you to all those parishioners who responded to the appeal for new volunteers. I am very grateful to all those who came forward with the offer of help and assistance in the varied areas of Parish life where more support is needed. **Fr Martin Morris.**

Sacrament of Matrimony. Let us pray for Stephen Martin Dawes and Colleen Kay Wyness and James Anthony Harle and Katie Hannah Wilson who celebrate their forthcoming Marriages in coming weeks.

Streaming Mass from our Churches. Please note we no longer use Church Services TV as our Churches now stream on our YouTube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@parishofstjohnxxiii>. At present, for technical reasons, we are only able to stream Mass from St John Boste and Our Blessed Lady Immaculate.

Lay Mission Course – Thank you to those who have already signed up for the Washington Discipleship Circle, as part of this exciting new course which brings people to discover their individual charisms and gifts and discern practical ways to put these to use in the service of the Gospel. We now have a healthy group size. If you haven't yet signed up, but are interested, please contact Paul at paul@hammond.me or Catherine at lay.mission@english.op.org. The information evening scheduled for Monday 8 September is now postponed to Friday 19 September at 7:30pm at Our Lady's. Once the course starts in October, the meetings will be fortnightly during term-time at Our Lady's, on either a Wednesday evening or Friday evening – to be agreed.

Our Lady of Sorrows – Blessing of the Pieta and Devotions - Someone has very kindly donated a Pieta Statue to St Bede's. On the **Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, 15 September**, after the morning Mass there will be a Blessing of the Statue and Marian Devotions with the opportunity to be inducted into the Brown Scapular.

Training for Readers - On the 20 and 27 September following the morning Mass at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate there will be training sessions for readings, if you read currently in any of the Churches or would like to begin to do so. Please come to one of the sessions (it is not necessary to attend both). Email Fr Luke if you have any questions luke.wilkinson@diocesehn.org.uk

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Gardens - Thank you to everyone who donated gardening tools to Our Lady's. We now have a good assortment to help to keep the gardens looking at their best.

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate are looking for volunteers who are interested in serving on the altar at 11am Mass each Sunday. Any children interested must have made their First Holy Communion. We're looking to do a practice session after Mass on Sunday 14 September.

Church cleaning at St John Boste at 10am Monday 8 September! All welcome to help!

Pilgrimage to Holy Island – Saturday 13 September 2025 -A further update regarding the above event. Coaches will be leaving from St Joseph's Birtley and Our Lady Queen of Peace at 8.30am. The coach leaving from Our Lady Queen of Peace is now full but there are still a few seats remaining on the coach from St Joseph's if you wish to come. A donation of £10 per person to cover the cost of the coaches would be very much appreciated. If you would like to come along, please contact Malcolm Bengston on 07746 973132.

If you are walking across the sands (the walk lasts about 90 minutes) we recommend that you bring a towel to dry your feet at the end of the walk. For those who do not want to walk across the sands there will be a liturgy held in St Aidan's on the island at 12 noon. Mass will be held in St Mary's church at 3pm for those who wish to go. Coaches will be leaving Holy Island at 5pm.

Churches Together in Washington. Our new community support group will offer a space for individuals to connect with others facing similar challenges or interests, providing emotional support, practical advice, and a sense of belonging. We are hoping to bring together people who are going through or have gone through similar experiences. All are welcome to come and have 'cake and coffee' to find out more or just to have a chat in a relaxed atmosphere. Our new group starts on 29 October at 6pm until 7pm. Holy Trinity Church, Washington Village, NE38 7LE, 0191 4187911 or email office.htcw@gmail.com

Education Sunday. Next weekend is Education Sunday and the Diocesan Department for Education are asking parishes to pray for our Diocesan Catholic schools, their pupils and staff. In addition, they are using the opportunity to make an appeal for governors at the end of Mass. They are inviting headteachers, school or Catholic Education Trust staff and governors to make the short appeal. The narrative has been provided. Please contact Rebecca Daghish rebecca.daghish@diocesehn.org.uk if you are able to support. Thank you.

SVP Sing And Chat at the Black Bush. Everyone is welcome at this event which will take place at the Black Bush Washington Village from 12.15pm until 3pm on Friday 19 September.

Other News

Little Sisters of the Poor – Pie & Pea Supper at St Joseph's Home in Newcastle on Wednesday 24 September at 7pm. Bingo, Raffle and Entertainment. Tickets at £8 each are available by ringing the Little Sisters on 0191 2731279.

Ukrainian Appeal - An Appeal is being made on behalf of the Ukrainian Forces. Outdoor Commodities - Camping Equipment, Hiking boots, Clothing. Physical Aids - Walking Sticks, Crutches, Zimmer Frames. Medical Products - Bandages, Plasters. Donations of any of the above will be gratefully appreciated If you can help, Please contact 07469651180.

MARY'S PLACE - St Mary's Cathedral - opposite Central Station

Every Monday morning between 10am and 1pm Mary's Place Community cafe opens its doors and offers a warm, welcoming smile that extends dignity, companionship and hope to anyone who is in need - they may be homeless, poor or feeling alone. It's a place where everyone is known by name, where they can share their stories or simply sit in silence as they share a hot meal together. It's more than a refuge it's a community - a reminder that no one walks alone. We have a team of volunteers who do various roles from preparing food, serving our guests as well as washing dishes and, of course, making our guests welcome. We work on a rota basis, usually once a month. To find out more and how to join our team please contact marys.place@outlook.com.

Alive in HOPE: A Church for MISSION. Bishop Stephen invites you to a Jubilee Day on Saturday 27 September, from 10am to 3pm at Cardinal Hume Catholic School in Gateshead. Everyone is welcome! There'll be guest speakers from the Prisons' Chaplaincy and the Justice & Peace Refugee Project, and a choice of seminars/forums to reawaken and empower us for mission. This is an opportunity to connect with old friends and new, and to celebrate our diocesan family as we explore what a Church in Mission invites us to be and do! There will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and a prayer space in the chapel, and praise and worship led by Durham musicians 'Set A Fire'. Take a look around the marketplace where there'll be stands and gifts from some of our Catholic partners and groups. Registration and refreshments from 9.15am, but please bring a packed lunch. Ample parking is available and entry is FREE but please register at <https://bit.ly/DHNAlive25> where you'll also find more information about the seminars you'll be able to join during the day. For enquiries and parish/group bookings telephone Amy on 0191 2433316. Search on Facebook, X and Bluesky using the hashtag #DHNAlive25 for the latest information and 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.

[To post a notice on this Newsletter, please click stjoh23bulletin@gmail.com](#)