

# 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 EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS - 13TH - 14TH SEPTEMBER 2025 Year C

Saturday 13th September	St Joseph	5pm	<b>People of the Parish</b>
<b>Vigil</b>	St Bede	5pm	<b>People of the Parish</b>
Sunday 14th September	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>Debbie Hull (Nee O'Brien) RIP</b>
<b>The Exaltation of the Holy Cross</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	<b>Sister Joanna Healy RIP</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	<b>Tom Black RIP</b>

#### First Reading: A Sign of Healing Numbers 21:4b-9

In those days: The people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.' Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.' So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.' So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

#### Response to the Psalm: Never forget the deeds of the Lord!

#### Second Reading: God Raised Him High Philippians 2:6-11

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

#### Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because by your Cross you have redeemed the world. Alleluia.

#### The Gospel: The Son of Man must be Lifted Up John 3:13-17

At that time: Jesus said to Nicodemus, 'No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.'

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 15th September 2025 (Streamed Mass \*)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 15th September <b>Our Lady of Sorrows</b>	St Bede	10am	<b>Special Intention (JB)</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	<b>Holy Souls in Purgatory and Unborn Babies</b>
Tuesday 16th September <b>Ss Cornelius &amp; Cyprian</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	<b>Holy Communion &amp; Word Service</b>
	St Joseph	7pm	<b>Special Intention Isabel</b>
Wednesday 17th September <b>Ss Robert Bellarmine &amp; Hildegard of Bingen</b>	St Bede	10am	<b>Priest's Intention</b>
	St John Boste	7pm	<b>Holy Communion &amp; Word Service</b>
Thursday 18th September	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	<b>Rest of the Soul Margaret Rolfe</b>
	St Joseph	12 Noon	<b>Joe Tracey RIP</b>
Friday 19th September <b>Ss Januarius &amp; Theodore of Canterbury</b>	St John Boste	10am*	<b>Cathy &amp; Ron Joy</b>
	St Joseph at St Benet's School	9:15am	<b>Children of the Parish</b>
Saturday 20th September <b>Ss Andrew Kim Tae-gõn &amp; Paul Chõng Ha-sang Vigil</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	<b>In Remembrance of Margaret Lucas</b>
	St Joseph	5pm	<b>People of the Parish</b>
	St Bede	5pm	<b>Fr John Francis Brady RIP</b>
Sunday 21st September <b>25th Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>Keith Shannon</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	<b>People of the Parish</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	<b>Bernard &amp; Clare Simons</b>

### The Exaltation of the Cross

The feast we celebrate this Sunday has had different titles throughout salvation history. The last time it was changed was in 1973. At that time it was called, 'The Triumph of the Cross'. Today we celebrate it under the title, 'The Exaltation of the Cross'.

Unlike Easter, when we celebrate the passion, death, and resurrection of our saviour, today we venerate the cross itself. That piece of wood used by God to bring his children home, out of the darkness into the splendour of his glorious light. The cost was the life of his only son, Jesus. On that piece of wood Jesus allowed himself to be tortured and humiliated for our sake.

Today, the cruelty of the Cross is not what is exalted, but God's love for us made manifest by accepting death on the Cross: "Who, though in the form of God, emptied himself, taking the form of a slave."

Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that being a Catholic, "is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event". The cross is the stage on which that salvic event took place. It represents the material link to the greatest spiritual reality. Jesus' suffering on the cross united the world to heaven. It opened a passageway that each one of us is invited to follow. A passageway to heaven. The physical cross reminds us of the spiritual reality behind it. Let us rejoice in it.

**Fr M. Wheaton**

**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.

**OLOF (Our Lady's Over 50's club)** meet in the Lindisfarne 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 the poster at back of Church for more details.

**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 unable to stream Mass from St Bede's.

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

**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](mailto:paul@hammond.me) or Catherine at [lay.mission@english.op.org](mailto:lay.mission@english.op.org). There will be an information evening on 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.

**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 this Sunday 14 September.

**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](mailto:office.htcw@gmail.com)

**Education Sunday.** Today is Education Sunday where we pray for all those involved in Catholic Education. In addition, today there will be a short appeal for school governors. If you feel that you have the skills and interest to be involved, please complete one of the forms at the back of church. Then the Diocesan Department for Education will contact you to invite you to an information evening.

**Special Collection This Week – Catholic Education** - The Catholic Church was the first provider of schools and universities in England and Wales, thanks to religious orders – there was a school on Holy Island run by St Aidan in 640! There were secret schools in farms and hedgerows throughout the Reformation in the 16th/17th centuries. The Catholic Education Service offers legal and educational advice to the Church in England and Wales and helps the Church to negotiate its way through all political discussions regarding education in this country.

**Special Collection Next Week - Evangelii Gaudium Sunday** (formerly Mission Sunday) - Pope Francis often uses the phrase 'missionary disciples' to describe those who are baptised. He wants to see every Catholic become more aware of their responsibility to spread the Joy of the Gospel in their own area. This collection helps the Bishops' Conference prepare resources to help parishes become involved in welcoming people back into active worship; to encourage 'Journeys in Faith', Alpha and RCIA and to explore ways in which local parishes can make a difference in the world they live in.

**NEW SONG!** This Sunday. Come and join us for some singing, some listening, some praying and some refreshments! All are welcome! Where: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Parish Room NE38 7HS When: 14 September 2025 at 4pm Email: [newsongne@gmail.com](mailto:newsongne@gmail.com). Instagram: @newsongne

**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.

**Our Lady Queen of Peace , SVP Conference.** We are celebrating our centenary on Sunday 28 September at our usual 10am Mass. Refreshments will be served in the coffee room after that Mass. All parishioners, including current and past members of the SVP, are warmly invited to share in our celebrations. It also gives an opportunity to meet current members of the SVP who will be able to discuss the work they do within our conference. Anyone who may want to join the SVP, please speak to Tony Smare on 07516 888326 or any SVP member.

**SVP 200 Club September Draw.** The latest SVP 200 Club draw was made on Tuesday 2 September. There were no winners from St Joseph's or St John XXIII.

**Training for Readers** - On the 20 and 27 September following the morning Mass at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate there will be training sessions for readers, if you read currently in any of the Churches or would like to begin to do so. Please come to one of the sessions. Email Fr Luke if you have any questions [luke.wilkinson@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:luke.wilkinson@diocesehn.org.uk)

**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.

### Other News

#### Sunday 21 September 2025 – Evangelii Gaudium Sunday (Home Mission Sunday)

Message from Abbot Hugh Allan, Director of Mission at CBCEW: Evangelii Gaudium Sunday calls us to be joyous in proclaiming our faith. 'Evangelii Gaudium' is Latin for 'Joy of the Gospel'. It is a Sunday more commonly known as Home Mission Sunday, a day for us as the Catholic community in England and Wales to celebrate the beauty of our faith, and our shared commitment to witness to the fullness of life in Christ. Celebrating 1,700 years since the Council of Nicaea, the theme for this year is "I believe..." as the heart of mission. More details about this can be found on the Bishops' Conference website - <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/evangelii-gaudium-sunday>

**Churches Together in England** invites you to support the call to prayer for peace in the Middle East on Sunday 21 September. A coalition of Christian agencies is coordinating an act of Christian witness that speaks to a shared commitment to peace, reconciliation, and the dignity of all people. The call to churches across Britain to pray for peace coincides with UN World Peace Day and the global call to prayer from the World Council of Churches.

**JUBILEE DAY** is fast approaching and we hope you have seen the line-up of guest speakers invited along to share their stories about being Alive in Hope: A Church for Mission. Ordinary people doing extraordinary work in our parish communities, diocese and beyond, share the joys and struggles of doing mission for the Church. Perhaps something will resonate with you? Bishop Stephen invites all of us to come to this day as a diocesan family in this Holy Year of Jubilee. Full details of the day's programme are online and in the Northern Cross, or please ring Amy to find out more. Haven't booked yet? There's still time to register at <https://bit.ly/DHNAlive25>, where you'll also find all the information about the Jubilee Day. For enquiries and parish/group bookings, telephone 0191 2433316 or email Amy at [formation.mission@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:formation.mission@diocesehn.org.uk). Saturday 27 September, 10am - 3pm, at Cardinal Hume Catholic School in Gateshead. Registration and refreshments from 9.15am, but bring a packed lunch. Ample parking is available, entry is FREE but register by Sunday 21 September.

#### Diocesan Vacancies.

**Parish Secretary**, Parishes of Our Lady Immaculate and St Cuthbert, Crook, St Thomas of Canterbury, Wolsingham and St Joseph, Tow Law. 14 hours per week, 12 Month Fixed Term Contract. Closing date: 12 noon Tuesday 16 September 2025.

**Parish Secretary**, Parish of St Bede & Ss Peter and Paul South Shields, 12 hours per week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am to 1pm. Closing Date: 12 noon Wednesday 17 September 2025.

**Parish Secretary**, St Mary's Cathedral, St Dominic's and St Michael's, Newcastle, 17 hours per week to be agreed. Closing date: 12 noon on Wednesday 17 September 2025.

**Cleaner**, St Matthew's Presbytery, Jarrow, 6 hours per week with a degree of flexibility which can be discussed during the interview process. Closing date: 12 noon Tuesday 16 September 2025.

Applicant Packs for all the above vacancies can be obtained by contacting [nell.dewhirst@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:nell.dewhirst@diocesehn.org.uk) or [human.resources@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:human.resources@diocesehn.org.uk).

Charity Registration Number: 1143450

### 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!**



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