

# 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  
Email: [StJohn23rd@diocesahn.org.uk](mailto:StJohn23rd@diocesahn.org.uk)  
Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



## In the Partnership of Benedict

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

### THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 31ST JANUARY- 01ST FEBRUARY 2026 Year A

Saturday 31st January	St Joseph	5pm	<b>Peggy and Tommy Finnigan R.I.P.</b>
<b>Vigil</b>	St Bede	5pm	<b>People of the Parish</b>
Sunday 01 February	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>Veronica McLardie RIP</b>
<b>The 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	<b>Greg Moorhouse RIP</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	<b>Cilla &amp; John Bevan RIP</b>

#### First reading: Blessed by the Lord

##### Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord. I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord, those who are left in Israel; they shall do no injustice and speak no lies, nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue. For they shall graze and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

**Response to the Psalm: *Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

#### Second Reading: Reversal of Values

##### 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Consider your calling, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'

**Gospel Acclamation: : Alleluia, alleluia. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. Alleluia.**

#### The Gospel: The Beatitudes

##### Matthew 5:1-12a

At that time: Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

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 2nd February 2026 (\* Streamed Mass)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 2nd February <b>The Presentation of the Lord</b>	St Bede	10am	<b>Margaret Hodgson &amp; Deceased Hodgson &amp; Stephenson Families</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	<b>Canon Bob Spence RIP</b>
Tuesday 3rd February <b>Ss Ansgar &amp; Blase</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	<b>Janet O'Neil RIP (Anniversary)</b>
	St Joseph	7pm	<b>Pat McAdam RIP</b>
Wednesday 4th February	St Bede	10am	<b>Special Intention (JB)</b>
	St John Boste	7pm	<b>Tony Ingoe RIP</b>
Thursday 5th February <b>St Agatha</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	<b>Eddie Ashburner RIP</b>
	St Joseph	12 Noon	<b>Elaine Hannon RIP</b>
Friday 6th February <b>St Paul Miki</b>	St John Boste	10am*	<b>Lesley Thompson (Birthday Anniversary RIP)</b>
	St Joseph	10am	<b>Jerry Nichol RIP</b>
Saturday 7th February <b>The Blessed Virgin Mary</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	<b>Alan, Syliva &amp; John Barker</b>
	St Joseph	5pm	<b>Tony Carey RIP</b>
	St Bede	5pm	<b>Betty &amp; Ned Charlton RIP</b>
Sunday 8th February <b>The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>People of the Parish</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	<b>Greg Moorhouse RIP</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	<b>Clare Madden Birthday Memory</b>

In our Gospel today we are presented with probably one of the most well-known pieces of Scripture, the Beatitudes. Given at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus proclaims “blessed” those whom the world often overlooks, including the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, and the persecuted. This term, “blessed”, coming from the Greek word, “μακάριοι” signifies a deep, internal joy that comes from participating in God’s own life, rather than just a circumstantial happiness. In them, Jesus, reveals how God draws near to those who entrust themselves to Him

The Beatitudes offer us an outline of the shape of authentic discipleship – poor, meek, merciful, obedient. To be “poor in spirit” is to live in a radical dependence on God. To “hunger for righteousness” is to desire God’s will above comfort or success. “Mercy”, “purity of heart”, and “peace making” are not private virtues but visible signs that the Kingdom of God is already alive and active in our world. In a world, that views success in terms of power, wealth and status, amongst other things, here we are presented with a counter-cultural view of how God views it, and how we should aim to live our lives, conforming to the example of Jesus.

As I have come to the end of my placement here with you, I would like to offer my gratitude and thanks for welcoming me into the parish so warmly. It has been a great privilege to live, pray and work alongside you for the past month, and has served as a great reminder of what the purpose of seminary formation is for. My thanks also to Frs. Martin and Luke for their gracious hospitality, their guidance and friendship, during this time.

With prayers and good wishes, **David Pinder**

**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

## 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. Fr Martin Morris.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confessions** - The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available in all of our Churches:

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 (Our Lady's Over 50's club)** - Please note, the club is on a Tuesday at 1pm in the Lindisfarne Room, at St Bede's! All most welcome!

**Monday 2nd February, is the Feast of The presentation of The Lord.**

On this day, we mark forty days since Christmas Day, forty days after his Birth Our Lord was presented in the temple by his Mother Mary, and St. Joseph. At both Masses on Monday candles will be blessed as we take part in the Candlemass procession.

**Safeguarding** - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and is a priority in every parish and diocesan organisation. The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is fully committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults which is at the heart of the Church's mission. The Diocese operates a zero-tolerance approach. We adopt and implement fully the policies and procedures of the Catholic Church of England and Wales, which is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church. To discuss any safeguarding concerns please contact a safeguarding officer in any of our churches - their details are on the noticeboard in the porch, or follow the contact details on our Parish Website under '[Safeguarding](#)'. Details of our Diocesan policy can be found by [clicking here](#).

**Baptisms** - Please note that there is a new system for all Baptisms in the Parish. If you want to request a Baptism, please collect a form from the church where you want the Baptism to take place, complete the form and hand it in to any member of the clergy. For more information please call 07552 733540. You can also download the form by [clicking here](#).

### Craft and Chat

St John Boste- Mon 7-9pm weekly.

Our Lady's- Tues 9.30-11.30am weekly.

New members always welcome

Any queries ring **Kath Bengston** 07743667823/ **Chris O'Neill** 07815162153

### Parish Secretary Vacancy.

To support the parish of St. John 23rd, Washington, and the parish priest with general administration. P/T - 15hours per week., based at the office at our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington village.

Complete the application form and supporting statement at

<https://diocesehn.org.vacancy/parishsecretary-17>

Contact by telephone Bernadette Aquino, 0191 - 2433301. Closing

date for applications 3rd February, 2026.

## Other News

**Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes - 31<sup>st</sup> July – 7<sup>th</sup> August 2026.**

*Celebrating 100 years since the First Diocesan Pilgrimage.*

Bookings are now open for the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes.

We travel on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July and return on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August. 2026 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the first Diocesan Pilgrimage took place led by Bishop Joseph Thorman. If you would like to book, or for further information, please contact Tangney Tours, our Tour Operator by going to their website <https://www.tangney-tours.com/tours-and-pilgrimages/diocese-hexham-newcastle/> or by calling 01732 886 666.

**Lourdes Pilgrimage – Youth Section Reminder** - A reminder that bookings for the Youth Section of the Lourdes Pilgrimage will close on 31<sup>st</sup> January. If you, or you know any young people in your parish that are interested in joining us, please get in touch as soon as possible to secure a place. For more information or to register interest, please email: [evie.rea@ymt.org](mailto:evie.rea@ymt.org)

**Appeal for Lourdes Medical team, 2026.** The diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes marks its centenary in 2026. The pilgrimage relies on the generosity of nurses, student nurses, healthcare assistants, and other volunteers. If anyone would like further information on helping with the pilgrimage, please contact the lead nurse Michelle Hall via [e-mail](#).

**Celebration of Marriage & Family Life 2026** - Bishop Stephen has kindly agreed to preside at the annual Celebration of Marriage and Family Life Mass in the Cathedral on Saturday 14 February 2026 at 12:00 noon. This open invitation will focus on couples celebrating significant anniversaries in 2026; we are sure there will be couples celebrating 25 or 50 or 60+ years anniversaries but is open also to engaged couples preparing for marriage, those who have been married since our last Mass in 2025 and all married couples. We include those widowed and bereaved during this time and all who were unable, perhaps, to visit wives and husbands in hospital and homes prior to their deaths. In these unprecedented times, we remember couples in crisis and individual adults and children experiencing difficulties and abuse in their family relationships. We wish all to know that no-one is forgotten and that the Sacramental life, despite the pressures of contemporary life and their experiences throughout the past year, is very much alive and prayed for. Anyone celebrating a special anniversary can request a certificate by completing a form with their details: <https://bit.ly/MarriageMass2026> or scan the QR code using a smart phone camera; this will take you directly to the form or contact [marriage@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:marriage@diocesehn.org.uk) or ring 0191 243 3316. Such certificates will be presented to couples by Bishop Stephen within our Mass.



**Special Collection Next Week - Racial Justice** - The simple fact is that we are all sisters and brothers – no matter what country we come from or what colour we are. Sadly, not everyone agrees with this, and it takes a great deal of education and formation for anyone of us to become less prejudiced against other people. This collection is used to develop resources to help us all become less prejudiced and ultimately, more respectful of people who are different from us. Racial prejudice is a scandal, and we must work together to deepen our appreciation of people from all countries and cultures.

**Do you have some spare time on your hands and want a fulfilling volunteer role?**

Our residential centre on Holy Island needs volunteers in 2026.

There are lots of roles:

Working with the children on our **Vinnies Summer Camps**, during the Summer holidays as a caretaker, kitchen assistants, cooks, and volunteering to work directly with the children. It's hard work, but so much fun and very worthwhile! No cost, just your time and patience for an interesting week on this beautiful island!

Or perhaps you are retired or have flexible holidays and could give some time to help at our Term Time Camps.

These Camps allow hundreds of children from the Diocese and further afield have a great residential holiday in our centre.

Guaranteed hard work but fantastic memories too!

To join our fabulous team or find out more information about any of the roles and to volunteer, please visit our website: **Holy Island SVP Vinnies Camp** <https://svp.org.uk/microsite/ozanam-camp> or contact [BarbaraT@svp.org.uk](mailto:BarbaraT@svp.org.uk)

**Fundraising Wine Tasting Evening** - The Friends of Ushaw committee are holding a fundraising wine tasting evening at Ushaw Historic House, Durham (former RC priest training of the North), on 12th February from 7pm - in case of interest to anyone in your parishes. £28pp for members of the Friends, £38pp standard ticket. There is B & B at Ushaw too. A nice Valentine's gift! Here's the link - <https://ushaw.org/whatson/wine-tasting/>

Email [meet@ushaw.org](mailto:meet@ushaw.org)

**"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 Catechism in a Year** - Sign up for Ascension's [Catechism In A Year](#) podcast with Fr Mike Schmitz, and you can: Read the entire Catechism of the Catholic Church in 365 days; Understand the essentials of the Catholic Faith and why they matter; See how Church teaching is rooted in Sacred Scripture; Absorb over 2,000 years of Sacred Tradition; Encounter God's plan of sheer goodness; Transform their relationship with the Church that Christ founded.

**The Bible in a Year** - Ascension's [Bible in a Year](#) Podcast, hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz and featuring Jeff Cavins, guides Catholics through the Bible in 365 daily episodes. Each 20-25 minute episode includes: Two to three scripture readings; A reflection from Fr. Mike Schmitz; A guided prayer to help you hear God's voice in his Word

**Mass for the Holy Land – Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April at 11.00am**

**St Joseph's Church, Birtley**

All are warmly invited to attend Mass for the Holy Land on Saturday 25th April at 11.00am at St Joseph's Church, Birtley, celebrated with members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, Northumbrian Section.

The Order supports the Christian presence in the Holy Land, assisting local Christian communities through pastoral, educational and charitable work. At a time of great challenge and uncertainty for many in the region, this mission remains especially important. This Mass offers an opportunity for the parish to pray together for peace and to stand in solidarity with Christians in the Holy Land.

Members of the Order will be present and will take part in the Mass, including a formal liturgical procession. This will also be an opportunity to find out more about the work of the Order and its mission. Parishioners, families and friends are very welcome, and all are encouraged to come along and join in prayer.

**Diocesan Vacancy** - Education Business Manager - Salary Scale from £35,000 to £37,323. Based within our Education Team at St Vincent's Diocesan Offices, Newcastle upon Tyne. Importantly you will be working in or have experience of education, ideally in a primary or secondary school setting. Similarly, knowledge and experience with Education Trusts will be distinctively advantageous. Moreover, you will need to show us how you have undertaken, reported upon and delivered professional evaluation processes, presenting findings for example to a committee, board or agency. You will lead on event planning, delivering no less than three annual conferences within the region liaising with our Communications Manager. If you are interested in being at the forefront of developing this role please get in touch with us to request an Applicant Pack by emailing Annie Leaver Head of Human Resources at [annie.leaver@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:annie.leaver@diocesehn.org.uk) The closing date for applications is 12 noon Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026 although we reserve the right to close the post early.

**Minsteracres Retreats** - We offer a varied programme of day, weekend and week-long events throughout the year. Please see the programme details by [clicking here](#).

## Reflections

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

**Examen** - Please follow the links 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

To view the sick and recently deceased list [please click here](#). To amend the information on the list [click here](#).

**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.

**Baptism** - To request a Baptism, you can download the form by [clicking here](#) or ring 07552 733540.

**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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