

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

Email: StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk

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

Parish Secretary: Anne Ridley 0191 4163583

Office Hours: Tuesday 9am - 2:30pm (Peshaw),

Wednesday & Thursday 9am - 2:30pm (Washington Village)

In the Partnership of Benedict

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



FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER, 25 - 26TH APRIL 2026 Year A

Saturday 25th April	St Joseph	5pm	Patricia Stobbart nee Ford RIP
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 26th April	St John Boste	9:30am	Louise Tobin Davies
4th Sunday of Easter	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Michael & Frances Murphy (RIP)
Good Shepherd Sunday	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	Lynn Scully (RIP)

First reading: The First Conversations

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

On the day of Pentecost Peter, standing with the Eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.' Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.' And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this crooked generation.' So those who received his word were baptised, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Response to the Psalm: *The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

Second Reading: The Example of Christ

1 Peter 2:20b-25

Beloved: If when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. I am the good shepherd, says the Lord. I know my sheep and my own know me. Alleluia.

The Gospel: The Good Shepherd

John 10:1-10

At that time: Jesus said, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.' This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.'

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 27th April 2026 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 27th April	St Bede	10am	Special Intention (MF)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Pat Gardner & Maureen Shaw. (80th Birthday) In Thanksgiving.
Tuesday 28th April	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Edward and Margaret Clark
Ss Peter Chanel & Louis Grignion de Montford	St Joseph	10am	Harry Hattam
	St. Joseph	7pm	Mary and Robert Bryson R.I.P.
Wednesday 29th April St Catherine of Sienna	St Bede	10am	Margaret Hodgson & Deceased Hodgson & Stephenson Families
	St John Boste	7pm	Fr. Patrick McKenna (RIP)
Thursday 30th April St Pius V	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Patricia Wood (nee Quinn) & albert & Mary Quinn.
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Harry Hattam RIP
Friday 1st May St Joseph the Worker	St Joseph	10am	Ursula Jobson R.I.P. (SVP)
	St John Boste	10am	Deborah Stratton (RIP)
Saturday 2nd May	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Vocations to the Priesthood
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	1pm	Callum Lewis Holliman & Rebecca Helen Dray Wedding Service
Vigil St Athanasius	St Joseph	5pm	Alex Gilfillan R.I.P.
	St Bede	5pm	Margaret Hodgson & Deceased Hodgson & Stephenson Families
Sunday 3rd May 5th Sunday of Easter	St John Boste	9:30am	Dec. Mem. Coulson family
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	People of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Emma & Eleceteoio Torres RIP

From the dialogue On Divine Providence by Saint Catherine of Siena, virgin and doctor. I tasted and I saw

Eternal God, eternal Trinity, you have made the blood of Christ so precious through his sharing in your divine nature. You are a mystery as deep as the sea; the more I search, the more I find, and the more I find the more I search for you. But I can never be satisfied; what I receive will ever leave me desiring more. When you fill my soul I have an even greater hunger, and I grow more famished for your light. I desire above all to see you, the true light, as you really are.

I have tasted and seen the depth of your mystery and the beauty of your creation with the light of my understanding. I have clothed myself with your likeness and have seen what I shall be. Eternal Father, you have given me a share in your power and the wisdom that Christ claims as his own, and your Holy Spirit has given me the desire to love you. You are my Creator, eternal Trinity, and I am your creature. You have made of me a new creation in the blood of your Son, and I know that you are moved with love at the beauty of your creation, for you have enlightened me.

Eternal Trinity, Godhead, mystery deep as the sea, you could give me no greater gift than the gift of yourself. For you are a fire ever burning and never consumed, which itself consumes all the selfish love that fills my being. Yes, you are a fire that takes away the coldness, illuminates the mind with its light and causes me to know your truth.

By this light, reflected as it were in a mirror, I recognise that you are the highest good, one we can neither comprehend nor fathom. And I know that you are beauty and wisdom itself. The food of angels, you gave yourself to man in the fire of your love.

You are the garment which covers our nakedness, and in our hunger you are a satisfying food, for you are sweetness and in you there is no taste of bitterness, O true God!

Fr. Luke

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 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/Confession 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 – Saturday after Vigil Mass.

OLOF (Our Lady's Over 50's club) is on each Tuesday at 1pm in the Lindisfarne Room, at St Bede's! All most welcome! **There will be no meeting on April 28th.**

Gift Aid update. This Sunday a member of our Parish Finance team will give a brief update on the Gift Aid scheme. I am very grateful for all donations for the upkeep of our Parish, and would like to thank all parishioners for their continued generosity. A word of thanks also to our finance committee for all their hard work throughout the year. Fr. Martin

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](#).

Please put yourself forward. If you would like to participate in taking the offerings to the altar during Mass at any church, please speak to one of the helpers who are at the church door before and after Mass.

CAFOD - PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY ISLAND – Saturday 20 June 2026

If you signed up to go on the above, could you please pay for your seats reserved for you over the next couple of weeks? The cost is £15 per seat and would be grateful if you could put your money in an envelope showing your name on the envelope and mark it as CAFOD COACH. Just place the envelope on the weekly collection plate and this will be added to the Parish income details to cover the cost of the coach and recorded accordingly. Thank you.

Message from Bishop Stephen – Pastoral Strategy

Thank you to all parishes who have completed and returned their reflections as part of our diocesan pastoral strategy. I, together with others, look forward to reading and praying through your discernments in the Spirit. It is not too late for returns to be made if you are yet to submit. We next move to a second phase as we invite local parishes to discern together in their partnerships, or with others in their neighbouring area. Information and updates will be shared on our website. Please keep this discernment in your prayers as we seek to respond to the Lord's call to worship Him and serve our communities in a flourishing and sustainable manner.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Sunday, 26 April

Bishop Stephen invites us all to pray for vocations this Sunday. Please pray particularly for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life. Please pray every day that people will respond to the Lord's call to serve Him in ordained and consecrated life. They

are intimate adventures in God's love.

In our parishes and churches and schools and chaplaincies, please offer regular time in prayer for vocations.

Pope Leo encourages us to offer time for Eucharistic adoration and to meditate faithfully on the Word of God. Prayer leads to vocations. This is not a last resort; it is the essential first resort.

For more information, prayer resources, and for enquiries please contact: vocationspromoter@diocesehn.org.uk vocationspriest@diocesehn.org.uk vocationsdeacons@diocesehn.org.uk

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi

Led by Bishop Stephen

22nd – 29th October 2027 ... £1725 per person

Places are limited to 50 pilgrims and places are allocated on a first come first served basis with payment of the deposit securing your place. The itinerary and booking details can be found on the diocesan website (www.diocesehn.org.uk) or alternatively via the parish office. The details of the pilgrimage will go live on the Diocesan website on Monday 27th April.

Special Collection This Week - Sick and Retired Priests – A collection will be taken this weekend and remain open for four weeks for private donations. With an increasing number of priests retiring, and Clergy who are sick, the care costs increase annually. Thank you for your generosity. Also **Special Collection This Week - Little Sisters of the Poor**

Lately Deceased: Joyce Wood and Billy Manning. May their souls and the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen

Afternoon Tea

Please come and join us at St. John Boste Church on Saturday 16th May 2pm-4pm to celebrate our parish community and raise much needed funds. Tickets are £5 and will be available closer to the event.

Are you ready to help spread Christ's Peace? Would you like to participate in our Parish celebration by playing music, singing or reading at our evening of **Songs of Peace and Praise, July 9th 2026?** If so please see either Maria Ashburner or Jane Everett or contact Jane by email, jeverettlane@gmail.com or text / WhatsApp 07951632593 and leave a message. Please give your contact details and information about how you would like to participate, what you would like to sing/play or read etc. Please get in touch by **Sunday 17th May 2026**. Many thanks

Sponsored Walk On Friday May 8th I will be doing a sponsored walk between the four churches in St John XXIII parish beginning with Our Lady Queen of Peace in Penshaw, then St John's, St Bede's and ending at Our Lady's. A total of almost seven miles. I have been visiting Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) in Southern Africa for the last 17 years as a trustee of a youth charity. All money raised will go out with me on June 2nd. Some of the money will go towards an outside play area for a preschool we renovated last year. The remainder will be used to help to put water into a rural community. I will be visiting each church over the next two weekends and would be grateful for any sponsorship. Many thanks. Chris O'Neill

Other News

A pilgrimage for the People of the Sea - 25—30 May 2026. Stella Maris is delighted to invite sick, retired and active seafarers, fishers and their families from the UK and EU to join the charity on its inaugural Stella Maris Lourdes Pilgrimage, from 25 – 30 May 2026. *This pilgrimage brings together those who have lived and worked at sea or in fishing communities, offering time to pray, reflect, and find renewed strength in faith and fellowship.* All major costs are covered: travel, accommodation, and meals will be provided for participants and carers. For more details and to apply please go to www.stellamaris.org.uk/lourdes/

We are excited to be advertising the role of **Church and Community Relationships Coordinator** within **Safe Families and Home for Good** in the Tees Valley.

Do you know anyone who has a real passion for seeing the church live out its mandate of loving the widow and orphan? They could be part of a team engaging with the local church, building relationships and inspiring individuals to respond to the needs of children and families on their doorsteps. If so, please direct them to full details of the role. https://safefamilies.uk/job_roles/church-and-community-relationships-coordinator-tees-valley/

The closing date is **27th April**

Marriage Preparation Days - Engaged couples can find **more information** [here](#). To find and **book on a course**, please visit our [website](#) or call the phone booking service on 0800 389 3801. (In person and online courses are available.)

Life News: Recent developments in Parliament highlight how serious the situation is for many vulnerable pregnant women. At Life, we are not involved in political debate — but we do see the reality behind the headlines. Many women face pressure, isolation, and a lack of support, increasing the risk that they feel alone or unable to continue their pregnancy. That's why our work matters. We walk alongside women, providing safe housing, practical help, and compassionate care — giving them the support they need to embrace motherhood with confidence. At this critical moment, your church can make a difference: **Pray** for the women we support; **Give** to provide essential care and housing; **Share** our services with those in need; Together, we can ensure no woman faces this alone.

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](#).

John Bradburne Pilgrimage Climb 2026 - Dear Friends, we are delighted to invite you to take part in the John Bradburne Pilgrimage Climb 2026, taking place on Saturday 13 June in the beautiful landscape of Cumbria. This special day will begin with Mass at St John The Evangelist Church, Skirwith, celebrated by Bishop Paul Swarbrick, before we set off together on a memorable climb to High Cup Nick. What to expect: A 13km (approx. 8 miles) guided climb through stunning scenery; A day of prayer, reflection and fellowship; Refreshments in Skirwith Village Hall after the walk. Please note this climb is not for the faint hearted and requires a good level of fitness, to complete the pilgrimage. Whether you join us for the full day or simply for the Mass, you are warmly welcome. There is no fixed cost to take part, but a donation towards the Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre is greatly appreciated. To book your place email: info@johnbradburne.com We look forward to seeing you on the day. With best wishes The John Bradburne Memorial Society.

Mary's Meals - Since our humble beginnings, Mary's Meals – named in honour of Mary, the mother of Jesus – has been built on a foundation of prayer and the many little acts of love offered by those who believe in our mission. During May, as we take time to honour and celebrate Our Lady in a special way, we invite your church to join us to [Pray In May](#) for the children who eat our life-changing school meals. To plan your participation, we've developed a range of easy-to-use [Pray In May resources](#). These include printable prayers for children and a bulletin notice with information to share with your parish. Please explore our resources and share them with parish groups or schools who may be interested. And remember, if you would like one of our wonderful volunteers to visit your church and share more about Mary's Meals and our work, we would be delighted to hear from you. You can contact us at info@marysmeals.org, call 0800 698 1212 or [request a talk](#) via our website.

Forming Catholic Student Leaders - Two summer courses exploring faith, ethics and leadership for sixth form students, offered by the Christian Heritage Centre at Stonyhurst. Join us for 6 days in the beautiful Ribble Valley to explore themes linked to The Common Good (Year 12, 10-15 August) and to The Human Ecology (Year 13, 5-10 July). Meet new friends, discuss and share with peers, tutors and academics, learn new skills, develop your relationship with Christ, build your character. www.christianleadershipformation.com

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](#).

Reflections

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

Examen - Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go [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 wish to request an electronic version of 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](#)
stjohn23bulletin@gmail.com