

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@diocesehn.org.uk
 Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>
 Parish Secretary: Anne Ridley 0191 4163583
 Office Hours: Tuesday 9am - 2:30pm (Penshaw),
 Wednesday & Thursday 9am - 2:30pm (Washington Village)



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 1ST – 2ND AUGUST 2026 Year A

Saturday 1st August	St Joseph	5pm	People of the Parish
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Wilf Reed RIP & A Sick Person
Sunday 2nd August	St John Boste	9:30am	Paul Iley RIP
The 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Ann Howarth RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	People of the Parish

First reading: Invitation to the Banquet.

Isaiah 55:1-3

Thus says the Lord: 'Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

Response to the Psalm: *You open your hand and fulfil us, O Lord.*

Second Reading: A Celebration of God's Love

Romans 8:35, 37-39

Brothers and Sisters: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God. Alleluia.

The Gospel: A Family Day Out With Jesus

Matthew 14:13-21

At that time: When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' But Jesus said, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.' They said to him, 'We have only five loaves here and two fish.' And he said, 'Bring them here to me.' Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

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 3rd August 2026 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 3rd August St Oswald	St Bede	10am	Tom and Tina Lamb Anniversary
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Clare & Redmond Shaw
Tuesday 4th August St John Mary Vianney	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10:30am	Funeral Mass Tom Davidson
	St Joseph	7pm	Elaine Hannon RIP (SVP)
Wednesday 5th August The Dedication of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major	St Bede	10am	Private Intention (MA)
	St John Boste	10am*	Requiem Mass for Joyce O'Brien Please note: No Evening Mass
Thursday 6th August The Transfiguration of the Lord	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Sheila Gibson
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Edith Smith RIP (SVP)
Friday 7th August Ss Sixtus II & Cajetan	St Joseph	10am	Mary Ellen Forsyth RIP (SVP)
	St John Boste	10am*	Private Intention (MA)
Saturday 8th August St Dominic Vigil	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Gerard McCabe RIP
	St Joseph	5pm	Brian & Susan Towns RIP
	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 9th August The 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	Keith & Ross Irwin
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Margaret Logan RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Golden Wedding In Thanksgiving David & Anne O'Hara

LATELY DEAD: Tom Davidson, Audrey McNay, Fr Leo Pyle and Joyce O'Brien.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.
Amen.

Today's Gospel focuses on the compassion of Jesus for those who draw close to him.

Jesus was grieving for his cousin, John the Baptist. His cruel death caused Jesus to seek solitude but the crowd follows him to this "desolate place". The Feeding of the Five Thousand has universal appeal; the miraculous multiplication of the five loaves and two fish stretches far in the human imagination down the ages. It prefigures the manner in which Jesus will provide for us spiritually in the Blessed Eucharist.

It is, more pertinently, the response of Jesus to a very human crisis, just as when his mother cajoles him at the wedding feast at Cana. He chooses to *act*. He tells the tired disciples, who just want the pressing crowd to disperse: "You give them something to eat". It is *his* miracle that feeds the crowd but he is reminding the disciples that those who gather to listen to his message become *their* responsibility just as much as *his*.

As disciples through our Baptism, there is a clear message to us. We, too, must act. We cannot act on the huge scale of the gospel but even in the smallest witness, we have the opportunity to reflect the face of Christ.

This weekend the Diocesan Centenary Pilgrimage to Lourdes, led by Bishop Stephen, is getting underway. Our pilgrims gather in worship, witness and service. The assisted pilgrims are supported by incredible volunteers, including medical staff. They choose to *act* and many do so annually. Let us keep our centenary pilgrims in our prayers over the coming week.

Lord Jesus, may we reflect on the ways in which we are called to enrich the lives of others and, with your grace, act on these.

Angela Nichols

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.

OLOF (Our Lady's Over 50's club) on Tuesday 4th August will be at 1.30pm in the Lindisfarne Room at St Bede's. The time change is to allow people to attend the Requiem Mass for the group founder Tom Davidson RIP. All most welcome!

Fr Luke New Appointment - The Bishop has asked me to take up a new appointment in the diocese. I will be moving to St Dominic's Newcastle to join the City Centre Clergy and taking up the role of Chaplain to Newcastle and Northumbria Universities. The 22nd/23rd August will be my last weekend in the parish and I'd really like you to join me for Mass on the 22nd at 10am at OBLI to say goodbye with refreshments afterwards. Fr Luke.

Healing Mass - We will offer a Mass for the sick and housebound of our parish at 10am on Saturday 15th August at Our Lady's. The Sacrament of the sick will be celebrated during the Mass, along with prayers for healing. Refreshments afterwards in the Emmaus room. All welcome.

Choir at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate- If you enjoy singing and would like to be part of the new choir at Our Lady's, you are warmly invited to come along to our next rehearsal on Tuesday 4th August at 7pm in the church. We meet every three weeks, prior to singing at 11am Mass the following Sunday. New members welcome.

Daft as a Brush - Thank you for your charitable donation for £200 from you all at the Parish of St John, Washington to Daft as a Brush. Your support directly strengthens the vital service we provide to patients undergoing chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy, ensuring they receive a bespoke, safe, and compassionate transport service to and from hospital during what can be an extremely challenging time. Thank you once again for your kindness, your commitment, and for helping us continue our mission of supporting patients throughout their treatment journey.

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 in the church and operates a zero-tolerance approach. The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is at the heart of the Church's mission. 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. Details of our Diocesan policy can be found by [clicking here](#).

Summer Raffle - SVP members will be selling raffle tickets for the SVP Summer Raffle both before and after Sunday Mass at Our Lady Queen of Peace on 2nd August Tickets are £5 per book of 5, first prize £5,000. Draw takes place on 24th September.

Other News

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Rome & Assisi - Bishop Stephen will lead a Diocesan Pilgrimage to Rome and the centre of the Eternal City before then moving onto Assisi in Umbria, the 'green heart' of Italy, and the centre of St Francis and St Clare's ministry. The Pilgrimage will take place **22nd – 29th October 2027** at a cost of £1,725 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. For information and how to book please [click here](#) or type in the link. <https://diocesehn.org.uk/news/diocesan-pilgrimage-to-rome-assisii/>

Special Collection Update - During Advent 2025 and Lent 2026, **St Cuthbert's Care** invited parishes across our Diocese to support their new service, **Fresh Start**, which aims to provide safe accommodation for women experiencing homelessness, many of whom have faced challenges linked to the justice system or substance misuse, supporting them to rebuild their lives with dignity and stability. Thanks to the generosity of parish communities, an incredible **£26,500** has been raised, which will go directly to supporting this vital service. Rooted firmly in Catholic values, the project responds to a clear gap in provision, offering hope where there is currently no statutory funding. Anticipated annual running costs are around £300,000, making the ongoing support of parish communities more important than ever. *Thank you for your support – together we can make a real difference.* For more information please [click here](#).

Heritage Open Days – 11th to 20th September - This September, national heritage festivals are taking place across the UK. They are a fantastic opportunity to welcome and introduce new visitors to our churches. Taking part can be as simple as opening up your church, or if you want to do more, perhaps offer refreshments, run activities or display some historical information - photographs are always popular! If you plan to take part, let us know and we can help promote across our social media channels. Find out more by [clicking here](#).

One Hope Project - 7 September 2026—26 March 2027 - Applications for the 2026/27 OHP Academy are open now. The OHP Academy is a six month online worship school for aspiring worship leaders, musicians and songwriters who want to invest in their leadership, grow in their practical gifting in order to serve in their local parish or group and go deeper in their journey of faith. For more information and how to apply, please visit www.onehopeproject.co.uk/ohpacademy

Little Sisters of the Poor Appeal - David and Theresa O'Neill ask you to support their fundraising for the Sisters through their collections of stamps, foreign currency, old or broken gold & silver & military medals. To date they have raised over £16,200 by these means. If you can help, contact them at: David & Theresa O'Neill, 34 Morston Drive, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 7RZ Tel: 0191 264 5771 Email: david-oneill3@sky.com

CONFESSIONS	
Church	Time
Our Lady Queen of Peace	Thursday after 10am Mass
St Joseph	Thursday after Noon Mass
St John Boste	Friday after 10am Mass
Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	Saturday after 10am Mass
St Bede	Saturday after 5pm Mass

CAFOD-DEC Venezuela Earthquake Appeal - You can help our neighbours affected by the 24th June earthquakes in Venezuela with emergency shelter, water and food. Your donation will provide essential supplies and help families rebuild their lives. Donate to the CAFOD-DEC Venezuela Earthquake Appeal today: cafod.org.uk/Venezuela or call 0300 999 0030.

You may have noticed copies of **Reflections of a Layperson** now available in church. Produced by **The Beatitude Project**, a new Catholic apostolate based in the North East, these monthly books contain the reflections of one ordinary Catholic on the previous month's daily Gospel readings, written to encourage others to grow closer to Christ through His Word. A new volume is published each month. Thanks to the generosity of one supporter, 100 complimentary copies are provided across the churches of our parish each month, allowing around 25 copies per church. If you find the reflections helpful and would like to help place additional copies in this parish or another, you can sponsor future parish editions through The Beatitude Project website. The Beatitude Project also produces faithful Catholic books and resources, including "A Modern Translation of The Imitation of Christ", with "The Rosary Companion" and "Chore to Christ – 30 Days to Love the Rosary" currently in development, alongside a small collection of handcrafted rosaries. Every purchase helps fund the printing of free parish reflections. To learn more or support the mission, visit www.beatitudeproject.org.

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children - Last September, we had a hugely successful and uplifting SPUC weekend conference, and I was personally pleased to see both known and unknown faces there! I first announced back in May - and would like to remind you - that this September we'll be holding **Two Day Conferences** in both **London** and **Glasgow**! SPUC Conferences serve the purpose of informing and uplifting supporters, and are particularly needed now at a time when we're seeing such horrors as the decriminalisation of abortion up to birth. A time like this calls for serious, committed pro-lifers to step up and contribute, and so our upcoming Day Conferences are a time for such people to gather together and recharge their batteries before going back out into the world and fighting the culture of death. The London Conference will be on **Saturday 12th September 2026** in a central London venue to be announced, and the Glasgow Conference will be on the following **Saturday 19th September 2026** in a central Glasgow venue to be announced. More details will be announced soon, so save the date and stay tuned. John Deighan (SPUC).

Church Action on Poverty - 18th October 2026 - This year's Church Action on Poverty Sunday will take place on Sunday 18th October, with a theme of "Food, faith and fellowship". A record number of churches took part last year, and interested churches are encouraged to register now. Resource packs will be sent out over the summer, containing bring and share lunch ideas, worship materials, prayer cards, Scriptural reflections, activity sheets, and inspirational stories of churches already doing great work through food. To sign up, visit church-poverty.org.uk/sunday

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.)

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](#).

The Guild of Our Lady of Good Counsel - Each year, in the summer, the donations we receive drop significantly as our supporters set off on holiday, but the number of Mothers and Expectant Mothers who we are housing, feeding and otherwise supporting does not drop during the summer! As it says in the Epistle of St James 'If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?' (2:15-16). The same is true if we say, 'You should not have an abortion because it is wrong', but then do nothing to help the mother with the practical problems that led her to consider abortion in the first place. Just to keep some Mothers in our care housed over the next fortnight we need your support. Can you donate today? **We really need to raise £8,000 pounds** in the immediate future to see us through our current needs, please donate what you can. To help us raise the funds that we need, one of our staff, Nathanael, will be walking 27 miles in one day on the 16th Annual GK Chesterton Pilgrimage. He is raising money to support the work of Good Counsel and every donation will help. We are here to assist Mothers in difficult pregnancies and afterwards with financial help, practical support, baby goods and friendship. So please do sponsor Nathanael as he raises funds to help save unborn babies from abortion with Good Counsel you can donate [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.



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