

Parishes of St John XXIII & St Joseph's, Birtley

Incorporating: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington; Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penshaw;
St Bede's, Usworth; St John Boste, Oxclose; St Joseph's, Birtley



Administrator: Audrey Huntley 0191
4163583 sj23office01@gmail.com



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

The 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 31st July 2022, Year C

The Synod Reports

You may be aware that Pope Francis initiated a Synodal process last year and the documents at various levels have been published in recent weeks. This was an opportunity for the Church at all levels to listen to everyone in a spirit of discernment by listening, prayer and reflection. I was reading the Diocesan and Bishops Conference reports in preparation for a Partnership Development meeting on Wednesday.

My first observation is that all levels of report have recorded openly all the difficult issues we may have suspected, but also some we may have not. I was concerned that as the reports became a summary of a summary of a summary that the real challenges would be lost. The opposite is what I have seen. All levels have raised similar issues. A number of groups expressed a feeling of being excluded either from the decision-making process or from the church altogether. Some of these marginalised groups I may have expected, but some were a surprise. The following are quotes from the National Synthesis Document from the Bishop's conference, so represents the documents from all the Dioceses in England and Wales.

Women – 'The place of women within the Church was the cause of "passionate, repeated and strongly expressed concern" in the synod listening. It was a constant theme, occupying substantial sections of every diocesan report,...

LGBTQ+ - "A widespread view was that people shouldn't be punished because of who they are attracted to". There was a strong call "actively to listen to the lived reality of LGBTQ+ people" and to "accompany, care for and offer healing for the past damage done to some of these baptised Catholics"

Young People - A clear link is perceived between young people's practice of faith and their participation in the life of the Church: they ask the Church "to be more encouraging and inviting", to provide "opportunities to explore and discuss faith rather than simply have faith 'done to them'". There is a complaint that older people "don't listen to the young" and do not want to share responsibility with them.

Divorced and remarried - Those who are divorced and remarried without an annulment were mentioned often as a marginalised group in the Church who "expressed great hurt at their exclusion" from the Eucharist. There was a perception of injustice, "particularly where the innocent party is concerned", along with criticism that rules barring them are "unnecessarily dogmatic and hurtful on the part of the Church".

People of Colour - ... one-third of Mass goers in the UK are born overseas - the issue of exclusion of people of colour seldom appears in the diocesan reports. The racial and cultural diversity of Catholics is seen as one of the great gifts of the Church in England and Wales. However, this diversity is not reflected in leadership roles in the Church, which are "almost exclusively white", which produces a sense among some people of colour that "decisions are not made by us, but are instead made for us".

The Traveller Community - "Catholic Traveller families generally expect not to be welcomed in parish communities up and down the country".

Those with additional needs – Overall, people of disability are making the same call as other faithful for co-responsibility and participation in decision-making. "We need to be offered and accept more responsibilities so that we can be more committed".

Traditionalists - In response to questions about marginalisation and exclusion, both Traditional Latin Mass adherents and those committed to "maintaining traditional Catholic teaching against what they interpret as harmful modifications" feel "badly treated by the bishops and by Pope Francis" and "saddened by a sense that their views are habitually denigrated and their voices left unheard and unanswered."

There are many more words under each of these headings in the full report and we should find time to read them all. There is also much hope in the documents.

In today's Gospel we hear about the rich man who, because he has had a good harvest, sits back with the attitude of 'I am all right Jack'. The above excluded groups present a challenge to us all, not just the hierarchy of the church, they are not all right. I suspect that one or more of these groups will have triggered a little prejudice in all of us. To be a Church of growth rather than decline we need to be actively welcoming to all people, especially the marginalised, as Jesus always was.

Deacon Tony Joy

Fr Jim O'Keefe 0191 416 3805

Deacon Frank O'Neill 0779 115 5845

Fr Uchenna Odenigbo 0191 416 3583

Deacon Peter Lavery 0730 505 9297

Fr Martin Wheaton 0737 736 7189

Deacon Tony Joy 0779 989 3419

Fr Vincent Waiga 0191 416 3583

Mass times for the fortnight beginning Saturday 30th July 2022

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Saturday 30th July	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Joan Barrett
St Peter Chrysologus	St Joseph's	5pm	Brian and Susan Towns
	St Bede's	5pm	The People of the Parish
Sunday 31st July	St John Boste	9.30am	The Sick of the Parish
18th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	The People of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Deceased members of the McCabe and
Monday 1st August St Alphonsus Mary de' Liguori	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Philippa Smith (nee Cox)
Tuesday 2nd August	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Paul Jones R.I.P.
	St Joseph's	7pm	Paul Smith
Wednesday 3rd August Ss Oswald & Germanus of	St Bede's	10am	Kath Beavers
	St John Boste	7pm	Paul Iley
Thursday 4th August St John Mary Vianney	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Nancy McHenry 6th Anniversary
	St Joseph's	12 noon	Michael Johnson
Friday 5th August The Dedication of the Basilica of St Mary	St John Boste	10am	Children of the Parish
	St Joseph's	10am	Michael Chapman
Saturday 6th August The Transfiguration of the Lord	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	The sick of the Parish
	St Joseph's	5pm	Peter Leeder
	St Bede's	5pm	Teresa Laidler (deceased anniversary)
Sunday 7th August 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9.30am	Mass of Thanksgiving
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	The recently deceased.
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Michael Lawton
Monday 8th August St Dominic	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Nancy White
Tuesday 9th August St Teresa Benedicta	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	The sick of the Parish
	St Joseph's	7pm	Sr Sophie Taylor
Wednesday 10th August St Lawrence	St Bede's	10am	Peggy Glendining
	St John Boste	7pm	The sick of the Parish
Thursday 11th August St Clare	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Philippa Smith
	St Joseph's	12 noon	Brian Lee and Isabella Bryden
Friday 12th August St Jane Frances de Chantal	St John Boste	10am	Peter McElhenny
	St Joseph's	10am	Margaret Hay
Saturday 13th August Ss Pontian and Hippolytus	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Mr Richardson
	St Joseph's	5pm	Fr Tony Duffy
	St Bede's	5pm	Joan Barrett (Deceased)
Sunday 14th August The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	St John Boste	9.30am	Veronica Birrell, in celebration of 80 precious years.
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	George O'Hare R.I.P.
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Harry Casey