

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: 01916498257
 Administrator: Audrey Huntley tel: 0191 4163583
 (Tuesday & Wednesday 8am—1pm, Thursday 11am—4pm & Friday 12– 5pm)
 Email: StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk
 Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 1ST - 2ND MARCH 2025, Year C

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------|---|
| Saturday 1st March | St Joseph | 5pm | Conceicao Lucas Goncalves RIP |
| Vigil | St Bede | 5pm | Gerard Cushlow (RIP) 1st Anniversary |
| Sunday 2nd March | St John Boste | 9:30am | Bill & Kathleen Burlinson RIP |
| The Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 10am | Eddie Ashburner RIP |
| | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am* | Molly French RIP |

First Reading: The Test of Speech

Ecclesiasticus 27:4-7

When a sieve is shaken, the refuse appears; so a person's filth in his thoughts. The kiln tests the potter's vessels; likewise the test of a person is in his reasoning. The fruit discloses the cultivation of a tree; so the expression of a thought discloses the cultivation of a person's mind. Do not praise a man before you hear him reason, for this is the test of people.

Response to the Psalm: It is good to give thanks to you, O Lord.

Second Reading: Christ's Victory over Death

1 Corinthians 15:54-58

Brothers and Sisters: When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 'O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! Shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life. Alleluia!

The Gospel: Judging Others

Luke 6:39-45

At that time: Jesus told his disciples a parable: 'Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye", when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye. 'For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.'

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Fr Martin Morris | 0191 649 8257 | 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 March 2025 (Streamed Mass *)

| Day | Church | Time | Intention |
|---|-----------------------------|---------|---|
| Monday 3rd March | St Bede | 10am | A Sick Person (DC) |
| | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 7pm * | Brenan Ford RIP |
| Tuesday 4th March St Casimir | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am * | Alan, Sylvia & John Barker |
| | St Joseph | 7pm | Olive Leddy RIP |
| Wednesday 5th March Ash Wednesday | St Bede | 10am * | People of the Parish |
| | St Joseph | 12 Noon | Priests Intention |
| | St John Boste | 7pm | Priest's Intention |
| Thursday 6th March | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 10am * | Phyllis Kelly |
| | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 11.30am | Funeral Service for Raymond Enright |
| | St Joseph | 12 Noon | Dorothy Hattam RIP |
| Friday 7th March Ss Perpetua & Felicity | St John Boste | 10am * | Priest's Intention |
| | St Joseph | 10am | Deacon Peter Lavery |
| | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 7pm | A Sick Person (DC) |
| Saturday 8th March St John of God | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am * | The Living & Deceased members of the Grogan Family |
| | St Joseph | 5pm | Dorothy Hattam RIP |
| | St Bede | 5pm | Nan, John, John Jnr Sweeney & Other Deceased of the Sweeney Family |
| Sunday 9th March The First Sunday of Lent | St John Boste | 9:30am | Jane & Tom Rutter & Family RIP |
| | Our Lady Queen of Peace | 10am* | People of the Parish |
| | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am | Pat Naughton RIP |

The growing pain of fruit trees

Jesus is asking us a question in this week's Gospel (Luke 6:39-45). We are being asked to look into ourselves, to reflect on our own heart. How do we do this? I'm sure most people know what I mean by the phrase, 'catching ourselves thinking'. It's a moment when we are thinking about something and we see ourselves thinking about it. These are perfect moments to reflect on our heart. So next time you 'catch yourself thinking', pause for a moment, and ask yourself, "Am I as I should be?" If we spend a few moments doing this and conclude we are indeed as we should be, we are not being truthful with ourselves. If we look with a modicum of honesty we should find ourselves blushing. Yet knowing we are sinners, works in progress, is the first vital step in growing in fruitful faith. Being truly honest with ourselves is painful, if we are doing it correctly. But we can not progress in our personal faith until we truly know our own heart. Painful as it may be, it is the path to genuine and everlasting joy.

Without taking the time to honestly scrutinize ourselves we will follow the path of the crowd. We will find ourselves in the same position as the hypocrites in our Gospel. The Lord calls them hypocrites because they judge the sins of others, so that they themselves might seem just. What we call today, 'Virtue signalling'. They see all the faults in everyone else while being oblivious to their own many sins. Instead, they should be quiet and pray for the person being publicly judged, because they too are sinners. Yet they prefer to become rotten fruit, and when we are in such a state, as the Lord teaches us, we can't bear good fruit.

The task before us is not an easy one, but we must perceive knowing that we are taking part in a great test, a test of love. So we should never stop trying until we take our last breath, confident that in the end, as St Paul tells us in our second reading this week, all will be well, "Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:54-58)

Fr Martin 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 the link <https://www.churchservices.tv/penshaw> to view from one of our Churches.

In addition, we live-stream Mass from St Joseph's, Birtley on: Saturday at 5pm.

To access live streaming from St Joseph's Birtley, please click the link <https://www.churchservices.tv/birtley>.

What's On in the Parish

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

St. Joseph's each Thursday evening 6.30pm - 7.30pm, held in Church immediately after Stations of the Cross. I do encourage as many of you as possible to spend some time in quiet prayer with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration.

Our Lady Queen of Peace each Friday 2-3pm. **Not 7th March.**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Our Lady Queen of Peace - Thursday morning after Mass and Saturday morning from 10am-11am

St Joseph -Thursday afternoon 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) -Tuesday at 1pm in the Emmaus Room, at Our Lady's in the Village! All most welcome!

Stations of the Cross during Lent

From Thursday 6 March **St Josephs 6pm**

From Wednesday 12 March **OLQP 12 Noon** and **SJB 6.30pm**

Stations of the Cross at OLQP will be followed by a simple lunch of soup and bread. All donations gratefully accepted and will be sent to St Benedict's Hospice. All welcome.

First Friday devotions - Now that we are in a Holy Year, Pope Francis' suggestion of praying the First Friday devotion is one that we will be offering from February - October. The twelve promises given by Jesus to St Margaret Mary concerning this devotion are a great encouragement to the Christian life. Google "Twelve promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus - EWTN." This coming Friday is the First Friday of the month. **There will be the first Friday Mass at Our Lady Queen of Peace 7pm, with Eucharistic Exposition from 6pm - 7pm.** (Please note there is no Eucharistic Exposition on Friday afternoon at Our Lady Queen of Peace on 7th March).

The Lenten Mission 2025, 17 March - 19 March. The Mission will be led by Sr Briega McKenna (OSC) and Fr Pablo Escriva De Romani. Sr Briega and Fr Pablo have many years experience of worldwide retreats and missions, and this will be an ideal way in keeping the Lenten season special.

Sr Briega and Fr Pablo are very much looking forward to visiting our Parishes during the second week of Lent. Our Clergy are asking all parishioners to take some Mission Leaflets as invites to distribute among our families, neighbours and friends. Please keep the success of the Mission in your prayers. Thank you, Fr Martin Morris.

Lenten Penitential Service. Our Partnership Service takes place at St. Bede's, Monday 17th March, at 7pm. Sr Briega McKenna will speak about 'The forgiveness and Healing of Sins.' There will be

several Priests available to hear confessions. All welcome to what will be a beautiful celebration of the Lord's Mercy.

NEW SONG joining with the Parish Mission! March brings us a rare opportunity to take part in our Parish Mission led by Sr Briega McKenna and Fr Pablo Escriva! So, instead of our usual meeting on the second Sunday of the month, we encourage everyone to join the events organised during the Parish Mission 17-19 March (see information in the Mission leaflet in our churches). The mission will be a great time of healing and renewal. New Song resumes on 13 April! Come and join us - all are welcome!

Where: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Parish Room NE38 7HS
When: 13 April 2025 @ 4.00 pm. **Email:** newsongne@gmail.com
Instagram: @newsongne

Let us keep in our prayers all those preparing for reception into the Church this Easter. Nineteen people from our two parishes are currently on the journey in Faith programme, preparing for the Sacraments at the Easter Vigil.

Confirmations St. Joseph's Birtley - Bishop Stephen will be coming to celebrate confirmations on Tuesday 15 July at 7pm. Please use the QR code to register for the preparation programme. Letters will be available at the back of church and at Cardinal Hume, St Leonard's and St Robert's Schools.



Scan the QR Code with your mobile phone or click [here](#).

Live-Streaming on a Sunday - Please note that from Sunday 2 March 2025 our live streaming will alternate between Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church with Mass at 11am and Our Lady Queen of Peace Church with Mass at 10am. All other times remain the same. Keep an eye on our Mass Schedule which will indicate which Masses are being streamed using an Asterix (*). Thank you.

Other News

Holy Island SVP Vinnies Camp - Volunteering is a Work of Heart. Holy Island Children's Camp is looking for new volunteers to help in their Holiday Centre on Holy Island. They are in need of young adults to help the children have a great week's holiday on the island in Summer 2025. Full training and support will be given and would suit someone wanting to give back to the Community by helping 9-12-year-olds have fun for a week.

They are also keen to attract people who would like to help by volunteering in the Kitchen/Dining room and with caretaking. Term Time Camps need lots of volunteers if they are to survive. If you could find a few days in term time to help out with serving meals, prepping salads and washing dishes they would be truly grateful. By running term time camps, Summer Vinnies Holidays for children can be sustained. Further information can be found at <https://svp.org.uk/microsite/ozanam-camp> or if you'd like to chat about the role please email BarbaraT@svp.org.uk

Looking for an Adventure? The Guides and Scouts of Europe, a Catholic scouting movement with 73,000 members across 27 countries, offers exciting opportunities for boys and girls aged 6-17. Our Gateshead group is growing, with spaces available for Beavers (boys and girls), Wolf Cubs, Scouts, and soon Wolvets and Guides for girls. Join us on this adventure! Contact Paul Hammond at paul.hammond@gseuk.org or 07973 192324 or speak to Fr Luke, who is our religious adviser or collect a flyer from the back of church. <https://gseuk.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 Justice and Peace Refugee Project This year, 2025, is a Jubilee Year in the Catholic Church with the theme ‘Pilgrims of Hope’ and it seems that the virtue of Hope is very necessary in today’s world. There are many challenges in life both at home and abroad. Famine, war, climate change, cost of living pressures and divisions in society, often fuelled by intolerance of others. Pope Francis has said: *‘In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future will bring.’* We are all invited to be pilgrims of true Hope and share it with others. The recent developments in Syria have meant that the Home Office has suspended making decisions on Syrian asylum seekers. This will result in a time of uncertainty for many of our Syrian clients. At the Refugee Project, we aim to provide a warm welcome and a listening ear to all our clients as they navigate their varied and difficult situations. This could not happen without the generous contributions of food and finance from parishes, individuals and schools and the support of our team of dedicated volunteers. Thank you to you all! We are incredibly grateful for all your support and encourage you to continue to support us this year. Items most urgently needed can be [found here](#). The latest newsletter can be found by [clicking here](#). For more information please [click here](#).

Adventurous Accompaniment - As we journey through this year of Jubilee, we are called to be Pilgrims of Hope. As Catholics our hope is in the Lord who is always at work in our lives. One of the keys to our faith journey is being able to recognize God’s daily call and to discern God’s will when we are making decisions. Our new formation programme **Adventurous Accompaniment** is designed to help us become better at walking with others, supporting them to see God at work. Find out more and book on Adventurous Accompaniment [here](#).

Blessed Carlo Acutis Relics Tour - Our Diocese is privileged to be welcoming the Visitation of the Relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis, the first millennial beatified by Pope Francis, on 26 - 30 March. This will be the final visit before Carlo’s canonization in April. The relics will be stopping off at Cardinal Hume School in Low Fell, Gateshead, on Saturday 29 March where everyone is invited to visit. More details can be found [here](#).

Walk 200km in 40 days to help fight global poverty - Challenge yourself and take on The Big Lent Walk! Walk when and where you choose over 40 days, alone or with friends. Raise money to help people as they overcome poverty. [Sign up today!](#) CAFOD and SCIAF are teaming up to bring the Big Lent Walk to Great Britain! [Read more about us](#) and our decision to join forces. Thousands of walkers from England, Wales, Scotland and beyond, will be tying up their purple laces and walking an incredible 200km this Lent to fight global poverty. So, [sign up](#) to do the Big Lent Walk yourself, or join in with your [school](#) or [parish](#). Then put your best foot forward with the biggest group of Big Lent Walkers yet.

Marriage Preparation Days - Saturday 8 March: St Joseph, Blaydon NE21 5AE. Saturday 22 March, St Mary, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ. Engaged couples can find **more information** [by clicking here](#). To find and **book on a course**, [please click here](#).

Diocesan Courses: The Diocesan Liturgical Formation Team will be offering the following day: **Day of Reflection for Liturgical Leaders of Celebrations of the Word and Holy Communion:** **Date:** Saturday 15 March 2025 **Time:** 10.30am - 3.30pm **Venue:** St Hilda’s Resource Centre, Newcastle. For further information and booking forms, please visit: [Liturgy & Prayer webpage](#).

Job Vacancy The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is looking to appoint to the following vacancy: **Parish Secretary**, based at Immaculate Heart Church, 1 Church Close, West Monkseaton, Whitley Bay NE25 9PG – 21 hours a week. Closing date: 11 March at 12.00pm. Please visit www.diocesehn.org.uk/job-vacancies for full details or contact us on 0191 243 3301.

St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 22nd - 27th June in London. Candidates must have completed their first or second year at university and have a passion for social justice. Applications close on the 20th April. For any queries, please contact KeziaH@svp.org.uk

Reflections

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

Examen - Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go

[Saturday Examen](#) [The Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

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!



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 here](#)