

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

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT - 8TH - 9TH MARCH 2025, Year C

Saturday 8th March Vigil	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

First Reading: A Wandering Aramean

Deuteronomy 26:4-10

Moses spoke to the people: 'The priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the Lord your God. And you shall make response before the Lord your God, "A wandering Aramean was my father. And he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number, and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians treated us harshly and humiliated us and laid on us hard labour. Then we cried to the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great deeds of terror, with signs and wonders. And he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, O Lord, have given me." And you shall set it down before the Lord your God and worship before the Lord your God.'

Response to the Psalm: Be with me, O Lord, in my distress.

Second Reading: Profession of Faith

Romans 10:8-13

Brothers and Sisters: What does Scripture say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For, 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

Gospel Acclamation: Glory and Praise to you, O Christ. One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. Glory and Praise to you, O Christ.

The Gospel: Jesus Tested in the Desert

Luke 4:1-13

At that time: Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were over, he was hungry. The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.' And Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone."' And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, 'To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' And Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve."' And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."' And Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."' And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

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 10th March 2025 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 10th March	St Bede	10am	Hodgson & Stephenson Families
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm *	Carl Poulter (who is sick)
Tuesday 11th March	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am *	Mary Davidson RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	65th Wedding Anniversary James & Mary Scenters
Wednesday 12th March	St Bede	10am *	Paul Monaghan & deceased Monaghan and Stephenson Family
	St John Boste	7pm	Eilis O'Neill RIP
Thursday 13th March	St Bede	9.30am	Requiem Mass for David Harland
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Trevor Westgarth RIP
	St Joseph	12 Noon	John & Betty Lee RIP
Friday 14th March	St John Boste	10am *	Bill & Leona (50th Wedding Anniversary)
	St Joseph	10am	Children of the Parish
Saturday 15th March	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am *	John & Kathleen Pearson & Deceased Relatives
	St Joseph	5pm	For Our Confirmation Candidates
	St Bede	5pm	Margaret Jones (RIP)
Sunday 16th March The Second Sunday of Lent	St John Boste	9:30am	Keith Shannon - eternal rest on his birthday
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Greg Moorhouse RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	People of the Parish

Obviously, when we read the scripture, we do so in the context of our own world and timeframe. Today's Gospel particularly seems to chime with the upending of a world order that has lasted for decades and an inversion of accepted certainties in how we treat our fellow human beings. It really is a time to check our moral compasses; to be sure of our relationship with God; to conscientiously fill ourselves with the energy and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Lent, of course, is upon us.

In the Gospel, the devil delivers three temptations to Jesus, physically weakened after forty days fasting in the desert, but, crucially filled with the Holy Spirit. Each time Jesus resists by reinforcing the power of "the Lord Your God" and the essential nature of our relationship with God. His resistance is twofold, as Son of God but also as Jesus, the son of Mary. Trust and faith in God defeat the devil but evil is always waiting "for an opportune time".

How do we relate the temptations of Jesus to the challenges we must face as Christians? Perhaps the first is the most straightforward to understand during Lent. It is easy to succumb to looking after our own needs but this can blind us to our responsibilities under the Golden Rule : *In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you. Matt. 7:12.* Our own needs cannot be paramount. Secondly, the majority of us aren't interested in world domination. However, we may feel the need to exert control in our relationships with family, friends and colleagues. Ultimately, we must put our faith in God. We are never really in charge.

The last temptation of Jesus shows the devil cleverly playing into the accepted Judaic belief in a "Messianic reveal" based around the Temple. What a spectacle that would have been! How easy faith in the Son of God, buoyed up on celestial wings! What Jesus did offer us, in contrast, was a faith fired into focus by his death on a cross, taking our sins upon himself, an act of total submission for the redemption of humanity. He was to become the perfect sacrifice for our sake. For us, the call is not to confuse success in worldly terms, with faithfulness to God. Throughout his Ministry, Jesus would uncomfortably focus on the small acts of faith of the poor, the marginalized. Those who sat at the high table were not the inheritors of the Kingdom.

In Lent, may we focus on how we live out the reality of: "Man shall not live by bread alone."

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.

Our Lady Queen of Peace each Friday 2-3pm.

I do encourage as many of you as possible to spend some time in quiet prayer with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation:

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

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

Stations of the Cross during Lent

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

Every Thursday **St Josephs** at 6pm;

From Friday 14 March **St Bede's** at 6pm.

Every Sunday **Our Blessed Lady Immaculate** at 4pm (and Benediction).

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.

Eucharistic Exposition, Rosary & Benediction. 4-6pm at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. Sunday 16th March. A time of quiet prayer and reflection asking God's Blessing on our parish Mission. All welcome. Why not visit the Church for a short time, and spend time with the Lord in quiet prayer? Refreshments after in the Emmaus room. Sr. Briege and Fr. Pablo will join us for this prayer time. Thank you.

Family Fast Day this Friday 14th March. Donation envelopes at back of Church. In today's gospel, we hear how Jesus went out into the desert. Just like Lokho and her community, Jesus knew what it was like to live in harsh conditions and at the end of the forty days he was hungry. During this difficult time, Jesus was not alone. He was filled with the Holy Spirit, who strengthened him throughout his time of preparation and prayer. Knowing that we are never abandoned — that God is always with us — let us also stand alongside and support those who are facing serious challenges in our world today.

Parish Jubilee Year Mission. Monday March 17th – 19th. Next weekend we welcome Sr. Briege McKenna and Fr. Pablo who will speak at some of our Masses and extend a warm welcome to all Parishioners to attend the services the following week. I know they will be given a warm welcome by you all, and they very much look forward to meeting all parishioners and visiting some of our schools during the Mission week. Thank you. Fr. Martin

Lenten Penitential Service. Our Partnership Service takes place at St. Bede's, Monday 17th March, at 7pm. Sr Briege 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 Briege 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](#).



SVP Sing and Chat at The Black Bush. 12.30- 3pm, Friday 14th March. 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."

The children of St Bede's are doing the CAFOD Big Lent Walk. If you would like to help them fundraise, please follow this link <https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-bedes-big-lent-walk2025>

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. **All Parishioners are invited to A Mass** with Bishop Stephen on Wednesday 26th March, 7pm at St. Cuthbert's Church, New Seaham, to welcome the Relics and Eucharistic Exhibition of Blessed Carlo Acutis. See Poster at back of Church for more info. Blessed Carlo will be Canonized by Pope Francis this 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](#).

Other News

Holy Week Reflections – The Diocese will not be producing a series of Diocesan Lenten Reflections in its usual format this year, instead they will produce a shorter booklet which will offer a daily reflection on the readings from Palm Sunday and throughout Holy Week. This is because the Year of Jubilee is making space for a different reflection writing opportunity entitled 'Scripture of Hope' in celebration of the Jubilee Year. Further information about accessing the Holy Week Reflection Booklet and the 'Scripture of Hope' reflections will be available next month. Please visit CAFOD's website by [clicking here](#) for prayer resources for Lent.

"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](#).

Safeguarding - The agency that oversees safeguarding in the Catholic Church has observed "good practice" in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle across all eight of the recognised National Safeguarding Standards.

In an audit report recently published, the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) in particular hailed major improvements in Church leadership, governance, ministry, culture and the care of those people who have been harmed. [Click here](#) to read the CSSA final report.

[Click here](#) to read the Diocesan statement in full.

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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](#).

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 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](#).

This month's tip for sustainable living: Carbon Footprint Calculator - Faced with record global temperatures, extreme weather events with millions of people around the world suffering the impact of climate breakdown, it can be difficult to know how to respond. One positive action we can all take is to estimate our own carbon footprint and understand how to lessen our environmental impact. Hope comes through action, however small. This month you are invited to access the [WWF carbon footprint calculator](#), which will give a concise analysis of your carbon footprint along with some ideas for reducing it.

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

The '50 Faces of the Holy Land' project is a photographic exhibition, curated by Friends of the Holy Land, designed to highlight the lives of the Christian people in Israel and Palestine. The exhibition with photos by Marcin Mazur, tells the stories of 50 people living in the Holy Land – Israeli and Palestinian, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Samaritan and Druze. The exhibition is coming to three churches in our Diocese during March 2025 as follows: **St Cuthbert's, Durham**: Exhibition runs from Monday 10 March until Monday 17 March 2025. **St Patrick's, Consett**: Exhibition runs from Monday 17 March until Monday 24 March 2025. Everyone is welcome, please do make time to come along and enjoy the free exhibition.

Diocesan Courses: The Diocesan Liturgical Formation Team will be offering the following courses: **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 [view here](#). **New Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion**: Commencing Wednesday 19 March 2025 (3 sessions). **Venue**: St Patrick, Langley Moor, Durham [view here](#). For further information and booking forms, please visit: [Liturgy & Prayer webpage](#).

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>

Charity Registration Number: 1143450

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 First Sunday of Lent](#)

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!



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