

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
 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

ALL SAINTS DAY - 1ST - 2ND NOVEMBER 2025 Year C

Saturday 1st November	St Joseph	5pm	Patricia Stobbart nee Ford RIP
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Clare & Stephen Bottoms RIP
Sunday 2nd November	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Teresa & Geoff Storey
All Saints Day	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Charles, Veronica & Patrick Murray RIP

First Reading: The Martyrs in Safe Keeping

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

I, John, saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, 'Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.' And I heard the number of the sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel. After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels were standing round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.' Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?' I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' And he said to me, 'These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

Response to the Psalm: *Such are the people who seek your face, O Lord.*

Second Reading: We Shall Be Like Him

1 John 3:1-3

Beloved: See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, says the Lord, and I will give you rest. Alleluia.

The Gospel: The Beatitudes

Matthew 5:1-12a

At that time: Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

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 November 2025 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 3rd November All Souls	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	9am	Holy Souls
	St Bede	10am	Kieran Cushlow RIP (Anniversary)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Florence & Vincent Woodhouse RIP
Tuesday 4th November St Charles Borromeo	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Patrick Larkin RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Kate Flood RIP
Wednesday 5th November	St Bede	10am	Vocations to the Priesthood
	St John Boste	7pm	Tom & Jane Rutter RIP & Family
Thursday 6th November St Illtud	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Lisa Taylor RIP Birthday Memory
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Billy Gaff RIP
Friday 7th November St Willibrord	St John Boste	10am*	In Thanksgiving (SB)
	St Joseph at St Benet's	9.15am	Fr Aniebiet Francis Xavier Inyang RIP
Saturday 8th November All Saints of Wales Vigil	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Deceased members of the McCabe & McCourt families
	St Joseph	5pm	Denis Welsh RIP
	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 9th November The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica	St John Boste	9:30am	Hollie Gordon
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	SVP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	Anniversary Mass for Norah & Owen Hagen

Remembering the Holy Souls in Purgatory

One of the greatest trials of our faith is the death of loved ones. The pain cuts deep and changes us forever. Death certainly changes our relationship with them, but it does not end it. That is, we are always united with our loved ones in faith, in life and death. This is why Holy Souls Day, which we celebrate this Sunday, is so important. It reminds us that we can intercede for our loved ones who have gone before us with our prayers.

In the bible the two books of Maccabees speak about the times during the Jewish revolt against Syria in the second century, before Jesus. In one incident during the war, when king Antiochus' Syrian soldiers desecrated the Temple, many of the Jews gave in to the Syrians spiritually, they lost faith. While other Jews remained faithful to God, trusting in Him and fighting on to the end, trusting in Him every step of the way. The First Book of Maccabees speaks mostly of the battles with the Syrians while the Second Book of Maccabees tells us of the trials the faithful were forced to endure. Even though they saw their sons and even their babies brutalised and killed, they remained faithful to God.

However, the most important battle against the Syrians, from our perspective, was against Georgies the Idumean. Through God's grace Judas was ultimately victorious. After the battle Judas went to bury his men who had fallen, but as he did so he found that under their tunics they were wearing pagan amulets. It was clear to him that they were slain because they had momentarily become weak and turned to the pagan gods of the Syrians. It was this that made Judas turn to God on their behalf and pray for them, even though they were already dead.

"In doing this Judas acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death." (2 Maccabees 12:43-46)
Our Gospel is Christ's great promise to those who remain faithful to him, the resurrection and eternal life. But not just eternal life, eternal life in the love of God. We refer to this as heaven. Heaven is not only a place but a state of being. When we bask in the radiance of God, as we see Him as He truly is. But to achieve this we must stand firm in the faith, like the Jews who remained faithful to God in the war with the Syrians, we too must stand firm against the overwhelming odds we face from the world. And like Judas, and the Christians of the last 2,000 years, continue to offer prayers and Masses for our loved ones who have gone before us.

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 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's 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 - The Sacrament of Reconciliation 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's – Saturday after Vigil Mass.

OLOF (Our Lady's Over 50's club) meet in the Lindisfarne Room at St Bede's Church on Tuesdays at 1pm. All welcome.

Life in the Spirit Seminars - An opportunity to renew our lives of Faith, with a new outpouring of God's Holy Spirit. From 7pm - 8.30pm - Members of the Diocesan CHARIS team will help us reflect on 'The Gift of the Holy Spirit' and the personal renewal of our Faith. Through reflection on Holy Scripture, a short talk, and testimonies, the 'Life in the Spirit' seminars aim to offer a renewed Faith in Jesus Christ, and in his gift of Salvation. The seminars take place in the Emmaus room at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. All welcome. Why not come along to one or more of the seminars? Details below, See the poster at back of Church for more details.

Date	Title	Speaker
6 November 2025	Transformation in Christ	Fr Shaun O'Neill

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Cemetery - I would like to thank all those who keep our cemetery and grounds looking clean and tidy. Thank you to all who take the time in caring for graves and plots. This is very much appreciated. The on-going costs for ground maintenance, i.e. grass cutting, tree pruning and path clearance continue to be a significant cost for the Parish, approx. £1,000 Per Month. Considering the extensive site of our Cemetery, these costs are understandable. However, following discussion at the recent Parish finance committee we now need to introduce some further means in funding the upkeep of our Cemetery grounds. I would like families to consider making a 'suggested donation' of one hundred pounds to the Parish, whenever a grave is reopened. (Council/state Cemetery charges are much higher). If anyone would like to make a personal donation for the general upkeep of our Cemetery here at Our Lady's, that would be greatly appreciated. Or why not consider leaving a donation as part of your Will for our Cemetery upkeep? All donations can be made by cheque/bank transfer via the Parish office. Thank you, Fr. Martin Morris. Parish Priest.

There will be an additional mass on Monday 3rd November, All Souls Day. 9am at OBLI, Mass intention - Holy Souls.
A plenary indulgence for the Holy Souls may be gained from midday of the eve to midnight of All Souls on the following

conditions: a prayerful visit to a church or chapel during which the Our Father and the Creed are said, to which are added sacramental confession and prayer for the Pope's intentions.

Songs of Peace and Praise - A date for next year's diary, **July 9th 2026**. The Parish is planning to hold an evening of **Songs of Peace and Praise**, starting at 7.00pm at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church. More information will be given nearer the date.
To plan for the Songs of Peace and Praise there will be a **short meeting at 11.00 am Sunday 23rd November at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church**. Anyone interested in helping to plan the event will be most welcome. It will be great if all Churches in the Parish are represented. If you are unable to attend but wish to be involved with the planning please email me, Jane Everett ejeverettlane@gmail.com Many thanks.

Parish Finance Meeting - Following the latest meeting of the finance team on 1 October 2025 please find a copy of the minutes and schedule from the meeting on the church notice board.

St John Boste, Evening Prayers - Starting from 29th October, evening prayers will be prayed at 6.45pm every Wednesday before 7pm Mass. All welcome to join in.

Remembrance Sunday - On Sunday 9th November at 4pm there will be Rosary at the Crucifix in the cemetery at Our Lady's followed by the blessing of graves.

Churches Together in Washington - Our new community support group will offer a space for individuals to connect with others facing similar challenges or interests, providing emotional support, practical advice, and a sense of belonging. We are hoping to bring together people who are going through or have gone through similar experiences. All are welcome to come and have 'cake and coffee' to find out more or just to have a chat in a relaxed atmosphere. Our new group started at Holy Trinity Church, Washington Village, NE38 7LE. For more information please ring 0191 4187911 or [click here](#).

Other News

Tradition v Change? The Nicene Creed and the Development of Doctrine - Does faith change, or does it stay the same? In this 1700th anniversary year of the first Ecumenical Council of Nicaea [which formulated the Nicene Creed we proclaim at Mass] Professor Karen Kilby from Durham University will explore the Council, the Creed and the question of development of doctrine on Tuesday 4 November at 7pm in the Holy Name Hall, Jesmond NE2 3JX. All are welcome.

What is your Jubilee Story? As the Year of Jubilee draws to a close in January 2026, the Diocese is preparing to celebrate the journey we have all walked together united as Pilgrims of Hope. Across the Diocese, communities have embraced the Jubilee in beautiful and creative ways and we are now collecting photographs, short stories and messages to form a Jubilee Legacy Collection. "Let's close this Holy Year not with a full stop, but with a radiant exclamation of hope." Please [click here](#) for further details and the closing date for us to use your submission(s) is 15th December.
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](#).

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.)

Carbon Literacy Training - Three online sessions - Join us for The Carbon Literacy Project run by North East Churches Acting Together. Three online sessions will examine the science of climate change, our own personal carbon footprints, and what we can be doing together as churches. The course can lead to Carbon Literacy Certification for those who choose to take this option. The course will run from 7-9pm on Wednesdays, November 19th and 26th, and January 14th 2026. To express an interest, please email minnie.fraser@diocesehn.org.uk

Scriptures of Hope: In response to this Jubilee Year theme of hope, our Diocesan Writing Team were invited to share a short reflection on a scripture passage which speaks to them of hope throughout the challenges and the joys of life. What followed was a beautiful collection of reflections demonstrating how the Word of God has been a powerful source of strength, peace and hope to each writer in many ways. We share four reflections each week. We hope you enjoy. Please [click here](#) to read the collection.

Emmaus Bereavement Listening Service: If you are struggling after the death of a loved one, or suffering any significant loss, and would like to share your story with someone outside your family, then a member of the Emmaus Team may be able to help. The members of the Emmaus team are trained in bereavement listening skills and are experienced in supporting those who are suffering loss. If you think we could help, please ring the Emmaus Bereavement Support Team on 07732 980740. Please leave your name and number and a member of the team will get in touch with you.

Day of Consolation - At Minsteracres on Tuesday 11th November from 10am to 4pm. A poignant retreat day for people who have experienced bereavement, grief loss or significant change. This day will offer an opportunity to share a safe space, to be heard, to share with others who have had similar experiences and to hopefully find courage, hope and consolation. Lunch and refreshments are included. Suggested Donation £40 To book [click here](#).

Appeal for Foundation Governors - Bishop Stephen is extremely grateful for the time and dedication that our school governors and Catholic Education Trust directors commit to our Diocese. We are constantly looking for new foundation governors to join local governing committees in our schools. For further information please contact Rebecca Daglish from the Diocesan Department for Education. 0191 2433313 or rebecca.daglish@diocesehn.org.uk.

Little Sisters of the Poor - Christmas Fayre - The Little Sisters of the Poor will be holding their Christmas Fayre on Saturday 8th November from 12-3pm at St Joseph's Home, Westmorland Road, Newcastle. There will be lots of stalls, raffle, home baking and refreshments. All welcome.

Fr. Dermott Donnelly founded the charity 'Significance' to enable young people to become all that God has created them to be. Significance supports YMT and the ongoing development of the **Emmaus Village** and also provides grants for particular projects which provide opportunities to young people. To raise funds, Significance has launched a Grand Draw: First prize is 2 tickets for a 'Britain's Got Talent' live semi-final in 2026, first class LNER travel and overnight stay in a London hotel and there are other exciting prizes. Each ticket costs £5 and the aim is to raise £20,000 by selling 800 books x 5 tickets. The draw will take place on Youth Sunday 23rd November 2025. Please support by buying a ticket or taking a book to sell. Raffle tickets can be sent to you by contacting significance316@gmail.com

Adventurous Accompaniment November 2025 - Sunday 9th November & Sunday 16th November 2025 - We are made to walk together. Our short formation programme Adventurous Accompaniment is designed to help us become better at walking with others, supporting them to see God at work. Over two sessions, you will explore how to accompany others whether it is informally while out talking with your neighbour or over a sustained relationship with family and friends. The 'Adventure' of this formation is that God is the one leading the way. Session 1: Sunday 9 November 1:00pm-4:00pm. Session 2: Sunday 16 November 1:00pm-4:00pm. Participants will need to attend both sessions. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available during the session. We will offer an online follow-up session in spring 2026 (details tbc) Booking deadline Monday 3 November 2025. To book [click here](#). Cost £10.

Helping Hands Needed for Care Home Garden - Do you enjoy being outdoors and lending a helping hand? St Joseph's Home (Little Sisters of the Poor) are looking for volunteers to help tend their extensive garden. We are looking for volunteers to assist with weeding, clearing undergrowth and general upkeep. Just bring yourself and we'll provide the tools. If you would like to be part of this rewarding work and share joy with the residents, please contact Sr Brigitte or Anne Whale (Tel: 0191 2731279) to get involved.

Reflections

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

Examen - Please follow the links to go to [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

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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