

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

CHRIST THE KING - 22ND - 23RD NOVEMBER 2025 Year C

Saturday 22nd November	St Joseph	5pm	Young People of the Parish
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Anne Harrison RIP (Recently Deceased)
Sunday 23rd November Christ the King	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Margaret Rolfe RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	James Arthur & Elizabeth Mary Beadle & George Leslie & Theresa Dawson RIP

First Reading: David Anointed King. 2 Samuel 5:1-3

In those days: All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, 'Behold, we are your bone and flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the Lord said to you, "You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel." ' So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel.

Response to the Psalm: *Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.*

Second Reading: The Kingdom of Forgiveness. Colossians 1:12-20

Brothers and Sisters: Let us give thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Alleluia.

The Gospel: The King of Forgiveness. Luke 23:35-43

At that time: The rulers scoffed at Jesus, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.' One of the criminals who were hanged there railed at Jesus, saying, 'Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.' And he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' And he said to him, 'Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.'

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 24th November 2025 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 24th November St Andrew Dũng-Lạc	St Bede	10am	Repose of the Soul Larry Dodds
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Peter James McQuillin
Tuesday 25th November St Catherine of Alexandria	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Sherry Hughes RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Leo McLeman RIP
Wednesday 26th November	St Bede	10am	David Ritson Junior RIP
	St John Boste	7pm	Kathleen Burlinson
Thursday 27th November	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Living & Deceased of Rannighan & McCoy Families
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Kathleen Burlinson RIP
Friday 28th November	St John Boste	10am*	Norman Smithson (RIP) 2nd Anniversary
	St Joseph at St Benet's	9:15am	Deceased Members of Killen & Callaghan Families
Saturday 29th November	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Jack Collins RIP
	St Joseph	10am	Memorial Mass for Sr Margaret McMahon SND
Vigil	St Joseph	5pm	People of the Parish
	St Bede	5pm	David Ritson Junior RIP
Sunday 30th November First Sunday of Advent	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Dennis Wilson RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Gerard McCabe RIP

The Gospel for the Solemnity of Christ the King (Luke 23: 35-43) reminds us of our situation as Christians living in a changing world, offering each of us an option. Christianity was seminal in creating the Western culture we live in today. At one time, centuries ago, life for everyone revolved around the liturgical calendar. Solemnities and feast days were not just religious days, they were the great holidays of the people, a time to spend with families and reflect on what really mattered in life. At another level the moral codes of the Church built on the decalogue, or ten commandments, formed the social and individual conscience, and were reflected in our laws and values. Although it's many decades, or even centuries, since Christianity was at its cultural high water mark. Today the world around us is changing fast. One sociologist calls it "Future shock". The pace of change is so fast we are emotionally and psychologically struggling to keep up. Whereas in the past change was slow and gentle, today it is immediate and sometimes abrupt. For example, many of us will remember a time when Sundays were special days in the week, when society stopped as one, so we could be with our families and review our week's work. However, those days are long gone. Today, as Christians, we instead find ourselves being asked some serious questions about our faith and even our relevance. Like the two thieves hanging on crosses next to Jesus, we are faced with a question. Do we fall into despair and embrace a sense of hopelessness, filling our heart with shallow pessimism? Or, do we act like the good thief, a sinner wishing to do right? Do we accept God's grace and transform despair into hope? We can easily find ourselves turning from the spiritual to the material. Taking the things that promise immediate gratification, but do not fulfil us. They merely lead us further down the spiral until we reach the bottom of the pit of hopelessness. Instead, on this solemnity of Christ the King, let us show our royal lineage as servants of Christ the King, let us work for the things that ever endure. Let us offer a helping hand to those who are struggling, give a stranger a smile instead of a frown, give a kind word instead of a harsh one. The options and choices are many, but the actual choice, the fundamental one, will be made in our heart as we wake from our slumber each morning. It is then we must remind ourselves of our ultimate goal as Christians, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

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.

Penshaw Catholic Woman's Guild - Our annual toy collection is on Sunday 7 December after 10am Mass. These gifts are distributed to the poor in the area. Please label the gift boy or girl or family. Thank you for your donation, we greatly appreciate it.

Special Collection This Week - Catholic Youth - Our Diocese is blessed! We have a dedicated team of people exploring how our young people can become more dedicated followers of Jesus. It is a tough ask! This team works alongside our Catholic Schools to help ensure that our young people look seriously at what it means to be a committed Catholic in our world today. The retiring collection after Mass supports the work of the Youth Ministry Trust (YMT), which helps young people encounter Christ through retreats, mission events and outreach across our Diocese. Gift Aid envelopes are available - thank you for your prayerful and generous support.

This Sunday is the Feast of Christ the King. It is also a special day of prayer for Youth. To mark 'Youth Sunday' Bishop Stephen has written a letter, which he asks to be made available at each church. You can collect a copy from the back of Church, or view on the Diocesan website.

St John Boste Christmas Memorial Candles - Envelopes are available for your request for Christmas memorial candles. They need to be returned by Sunday 7 December.

St John Boste - Red Mission Boxes - The Red Boxes are due for collection in the next four weeks. Agents can collect their envelopes and 2026 Calendar from Sunday 16 November. Please return monies collected by 14 December.

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Missio Red Box Donations - Your Red Boxes can be taken to Mass at Our Lady's on Sundays to be emptied until 14 December. Alternatively you can collect a Missio brown envelope from the rear of the church to take home to hold your Red Box contents. You can return the envelope with your donation to church on Sundays until 14 December. A Free Missio 2026 Calendar is available now for all donors. Many thanks for your continued generosity.

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

Looking for Rosary leaders - If you would like to lead the Tuesday night rosary at St Joseph's Birtley at 6.40pm please come along any Tuesday and join in with our small group and help share the load. We have been praying the rosary for over a year for the people of Gaza but bearing in mind Pope Leo's request we are now praying for world peace.

Songs of Peace and Praise - A date for next year's diary, **July 9 2026**. The Parish is planning to hold an evening of **Songs of Peace and Praise**, starting at 7pm 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 11am this Sunday 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

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.

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, or follow the contact details on our Parish Website under '[Safeguarding](#)'. Details of our Diocesan policy can be found by [clicking here](#).

Sr Margaret McMahon SND grew up in the Parish of St Joseph. After qualifying as a teacher she taught for a year in St Joseph's school. At 21 she entered the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. She died in October after 62 years CNN in the order. Her requiem Mass is with her Community in Liverpool on 14 November. So that her friends and Family, and fellow Diocesan Lourdes pilgrims can celebrate her life there will be a memorial mass in St Joseph's Birtley on 29 November at 10am. All are welcome.

Congratulations to the 31 young people from across the parish who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on Friday 21 November at St Bede's, at a special Mass celebrated by Bishop Stephen. They entered wholeheartedly into their preparation and have been a credit to themselves, their families and their schools throughout. Please keep them in your prayers as they take this step and continue their faith journey.

Washington Rotary Club Christmas Carols in The Village at Our Lady Immaculate, Friday 5 December at 6.30pm. Carols sung by local Primary school pupils, One Voice Community Choir, Little Onions with Readings from the Navity. Refreshments available, Free Entry.

Other News

"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](#)

Christmas Concert - Little Sisters of the Poor - The Newcastle Male Chorus and Gibside Singers will be performing a Christmas Concert in the Chapel at St Joseph's Home, Newcastle on Saturday 6 December 2025 at 7pm. The concert is in aid of the work of the Little Sisters of the Poor at St Joseph's Home. Tickets are £8 (interval drink included), available from St Joseph's Home (0191 273 1279).

Hexham and Newcastle Catholic Women's Advent Retreat. The Hexham and Newcastle Catholic Women's Advent Retreat is an opportunity for women to gather at the beginning of the Advent season for spiritual refreshment at a time when they are often at their busiest. The retreat, held at Shepherd's Dene in the peaceful Northumberland countryside, will offer you an oasis of calm ahead of the season of preparation with a combination of input, times of prayer, community and fellowship. **Venue:** Shepherd's Dene Retreat House, Riding Mill, Northumberland, NE44 6AF. **Dates:** Friday 28 – Saturday 29 November 2025. **Timings:** Arrivals from 5pm (Friday) – 2pm (Saturday). **Cost:** Residential – £135.00 (overnight accommodation and meals are included). Non-residential – £40.00 (Saturday only, meals included).

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. Read the collection [here](#).

Advent - "Worthy of the Promise!" Led by Pat Kennedy - Friday 28 November from 6.30pm to Sunday 30 November at 2pm - Time and space to find God's personal message for me. Our Advent Retreat invites you to explore the concept of waiting on the Lord. As we prepare for Christmas, this retreat offers a chance to reflect on your spiritual readiness for the season. Through guided reflections, prayer sessions, and communal discussions, we will explore themes of hope, peace, joy and love—the four traditional themes of Advent. The serene environment of the retreat centre offers a perfect setting for personal contemplation and spiritual renewal. Join us in this journey of waiting and preparation, embracing the Advent season with intentionality and grace. Suggested Donation £190. To book please [click here](#).

Catholics Connect - Are you a "young adult" in Church terms — somewhere in your mid-20s to 40s? We'd love to hear from you. We want to listen to your experiences of living as a Catholic today—your joys, your challenges, and everything in between. Your voice matters, your insights will help us understand how we can further walk alongside and support one another. Let's get together! We are pleased to welcome back Michael Thompson from Tyne & Wear Citizens, who will lead and facilitate this session. The CONNECT meeting will take place on Thursday 11 December from 6.30pm at the Tyneside Irish Centre, Newcastle City Centre. Complimentary tea and coffee will be served, and you can purchase drinks from the bar. This event is free. [Email Enquiries](#)

Evangelisation for the Terrified - 'Evangelising for the Terrified', written and produced within the Diocese, is a practical, light-hearted resource for anyone wondering how to get started in sharing their faith. It is deliberately written to be a simple, non-threatening collection of ideas that give intention and purpose to normal everyday opportunities that arise. Download a copy [here](#).

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

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.

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](#)

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