

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
Email: StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk
Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 17TH - 18TH JANUARY 2026 Year A

Saturday 17th January	St Joseph	5pm	Fred Farrar & Baby Oscar
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Paul Cockburn RIP Anniversary
Sunday 18th January	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Andrew Bell RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	Josie O'Leary

First Reading: Servant of the Lord

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

The Lord said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.' And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him — for I am honoured in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength — he says: 'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

Response to the Psalm: Behold, I have come, Lord, to do your will.

Second Reading: The Beginning of First Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

Paul, called by the will of God to be an Apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us; to all who did receive him, he gave the authority to become children of God. Alleluia.

The Gospel: The Lamb of God

John 1:29-34

At that time: John saw Jesus coming towards him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me." I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptising with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.' And John bore witness: 'I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptise with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptises with the Holy Spirit." And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.'

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 19th January 2026 (* Streamed Mass)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 19th January St Wulfstan	St Bede	10am	Joseph Dragone RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Tony Cosgrove RIP
Tuesday 20th January Ss Fabian & Sebastian	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Jack & Vera Lawless and Deceased Callaghan & Lawless family
	St Joseph	7pm	Brian & Susan Towns RIP
Wednesday 21st January St Agnes	St Bede	9.45am	Requiem Mass for Rose Alma Dougherty
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	1pm	Requiem Mass for John Cox
	St John Boste	7pm	Deceased SVP Members
Thursday 22nd January St Vincent	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Mary Maw Anniversary
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Ann Leckie RIP
Friday 23rd January	St John Boste	10am*	Our Schoolchildren
	St Joseph	10am	Pat McAdam RIP
Saturday 24th January St Francis de Sales Vigil	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Egan & Quinlan Families
	St Joseph	5pm	Dennis Welsh RIP
	St Bede	5pm	Vera Callaghan RIP
Sunday 25th January The Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Sunday of the Word of God)	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Linda Harrigan RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Mary Curtin RIP

Last week saw the end of the Christmas season in the Church's calendar. Taking down the Christmas decorations at home, always gives me time for reflection. Firstly, wondering where did time go over the Christmas period! More importantly, it gives me time to think about family and friends, the time spent with them, those missing from our festivities and the messages received in Christmas cards from others. I always re-read both the printed message and the personal message written in the cards before I send them off for recycling. Many printed messages wish me a "Merry Christmas", always a lovely sentiment, but only a few wish me "Peace and Joy this Christmas", surely the sentiment that, as Christians, we all desire, and not just for Christmas, but for life and eternity!

What is peace though? We all long for world peace and pray for this, but have any of us truly experienced world peace? Peace, to many, means absence of war and conflict. Throughout my life, there has always been war or conflict in some area of the world. We are all aware of the situation in Ukraine now, but there are many "forgotten" wars and conflicts occurring now.

Is peace safety from harm or violence? Most of us experience this peace but there are still too many who are violated, live in poverty, are abused, trafficked, exploited, or harmed in their own homes, communities, or countries.

Peace could also be understanding, celebrating and learning from differences, living together in harmony both within our own families and also the community. However, we are aware of crimes of hate, racial injustice, intolerance of others and families torn apart.

There are many things in this world that we cannot change, such as world war, but we can change how we treat others by what we do and say. As Gandhi stated,

"Your beliefs become your thoughts, Your thoughts become your words, Your words become your actions, Your actions become your habits, Your habits become your values, Your values become your destiny."

Sometimes however, we find it difficult to free ourselves from feelings such as jealousy, greed, pride and other emotions where love is "blanked out". In doing so we become blinded to our God given gift of Peace, peace within.

Today, let us pray for World Peace, but we also pray that God will help us all find the Peace within us that was freely given to each and everyone through the sacrifice of Jesus. We have all just witnessed and celebrated, through the scriptures, the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, and his baptism marking the beginning of his teaching. As his disciples through our own baptism, we are called upon to be Christ like and continue God's work on earth. Spreading God's Word and speaking out against injustice.

When we find God's Peace not only are we at peace, but we are able to spread God's Peace and help others find it too. So, when we pray for peace perhaps, not only should we pray for world peace but perhaps also pray that we can be instruments of God's Peace. As Gandhi suggests,

"Be the change that you wish to see in the world." And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts because it is for this that you were called together in one body. Always be thankful. Colossians 3:15

Jane Everett

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/Confessions - 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) - Please note, the club is on a Tuesday at 1pm in the Lindisfarne Room, at St Bede's! All most welcome!

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 to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults which is at the heart of the Church's mission. The Diocese operates a zero-tolerance approach. 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](#).

Goodbye & God Bless - Thank you for the many kind words and support. As you may have heard, Friday 16th January is my last day working for the parishes. It is the right time to move on, an opportunity arose that I had to pursue due to family circumstances, I will truly miss working with you and for you. My days working for our Churches have been varied but always a pleasure. I can only dream that the new job will offer the same. I will miss you all, may you all be happy and blessed, see you at Mass sometime Audrey xx

Baptisms - Please note that there is a new system for all Baptisms in the Parish. If you want to request a Baptism, please collect a form from the church where you want the Baptism to take place, complete the form and hand it in to any member of the clergy. For more information please call 07552 733540. We intend to make these forms available on line in the near future.

Other News

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje, 7 - 14 June 2026. Flying from Newcastle to Dubrovnik. Further info at ['Medjugorje North East.'](#). Led by Fr Martin Morris.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes - 31st July – 7th August 2026. Celebrating 100 years since the First Diocesan Pilgrimage. Bookings are now open for the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. We travel on Friday 31st July and return on Friday 7th August. 2026

is the 100th anniversary since the first Diocesan Pilgrimage took place led by Bishop Joseph Thorman. If you would like to book, or for further information, please contact Tangney Tours, our Tour Operator by going to their website <https://www.tangney-tours.com/tours-and-pilgrimages/diocese-hexham-newcastle/> or by calling 01732 886 666.

Lourdes Pilgrimage – Youth Section Reminder - A reminder that bookings for the Youth Section of the Lourdes Pilgrimage will close on 31st January. If you, or you know any young people in your parish that are interested in joining us, please get in touch as soon as possible to secure a place. For more information or to register interest, please email: evie.rea@ymt.org

Diocesan Holocaust Memorial - 21 January 2026, 7pm. St Mary's Catholic Comprehensive School, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7PE. The theme for this year's commemorations 'Bridging Generations', is a call-to-action. A reminder that the responsibility of remembrance doesn't end with the survivors – it lives on through their children, their grandchildren and through all of us. The Interreligious Relations Team are delighted to welcome **Professor Yitka Graham and Mr Nicu Ion** as the guest speakers for 2026's Diocesan Holocaust Commemoration. To book [please click here](#).

Appeal for Lourdes Medical team, 2026. The diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes marks its centenary in 2026. The pilgrimage relies on the generosity of nurses, student nurses, healthcare assistants, and other volunteers. If anyone would like further information on helping with the pilgrimage, please contact the lead nurse Michelle Hall via [e-mail](#).

Fostering North East – The fostering team is currently recruiting foster carers in Washington and will be at Asda Washington on Thursday 22 January from 10am-1pm. This would be a perfect opportunity for anyone in the parish that is considering fostering to chat to our team and gain more information. Alternatively, if you can't attend and are interested in fostering, you could visit their website and arrange to speak to the team directly. [Homepage - Fostering North East](#)

Celebration of Marriage & Family Life 2026 - Bishop Stephen has kindly agreed to preside at the annual Celebration of Marriage and Family Life Mass in the Cathedral on Saturday 14 February 2026 at 12:00 noon. This open invitation will focus on couples celebrating significant anniversaries in 2026; we are sure there will be couples celebrating 25 or 50 or 60+ years anniversaries but is open also to engaged couples preparing for marriage, those who have been married since our last Mass in 2025 and all married couples. We include those widowed and bereaved during this time and all who were unable, perhaps, to visit wives and husbands in hospital and homes prior to their deaths. In these unprecedented times, we remember couples in crisis and individual adults and children experiencing difficulties and abuse in their family relationships. We wish all to know that no-one is forgotten and that the Sacramental life, despite the pressures of contemporary life and their experiences throughout the past year, is very much alive and prayed for. Anyone celebrating a special anniversary can request a certificate by completing a form with their details: <https://bit.ly/MarriageMass2026> or scan the QR code using a smartphone camera; this will take you directly to the form or contact marriage@diocesehn.org.uk or ring 0191 243 3316. Such certificates will be presented to couples by Bishop Stephen within our Mass.



Night Falls – a new passion play by Paul Birch - 26 February 2026. Middlesbrough's St Mary's Cathedral to host powerful new passion play. Riding Lights Theatre Company presents 'Night Falls' – a new passion play by Paul Birch. Set over the four days leading up to the crucifixion, 'Night Falls' retells the Easter story through two strangers sheltering in Bethany, in the house of Lazarus – where hope, faith, doubt and grief collide, and where the impossible has already occurred. Blending music with powerful drama, this fresh and vivid production explores themes of courage, belief, loss, fear and hope that resonate widely. The performance is suitable for ages 12-plus, as some mature themes are explored. Cost: Tickets are £15 (concessions £10), with a 10% discount for groups of 10 or more. [Book here](#).

Fundraising Wine Tasting Evening - The Friends of Ushaw committee are holding a fundraising wine tasting evening at Ushaw Historic House, Durham (former RC priest training of the North), on 12th February from 7pm - in case of interest to anyone in your parishes. £28pp for members of the Friends, £38pp standard ticket. There is B & B at Ushaw too. A nice Valentine's gift! Here's the link - <https://ushaw.org/whatson/wine-tasting/>
Email meet@ushaw.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 Catechism in a Year - Sign up for Ascension's [Catechism In A Year](#) podcast with Fr Mike Schmitz, and you can: Read the entire Catechism of the Catholic Church in 365 days; Understand the essentials of the Catholic Faith and why they matter; See how Church teaching is rooted in Sacred Scripture; Absorb over 2,000 years of Sacred Tradition; Encounter God's plan of sheer goodness; Transform their relationship with the Church that Christ founded.

The Bible in a Year - Ascension's [Bible in a Year](#) Podcast, hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz and featuring Jeff Cavins, guides Catholics through the Bible in 365 daily episodes. Each 20-25 minute episode includes: Two to three scripture readings; A reflection from Fr. Mike Schmitz; A guided prayer to help you hear God's voice in his Word

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.

Diocesan Vacancy - Education Business Manager - Salary Scale from £35,000 to £37,323. Based within our Education Team at St Vincent's Diocesan Offices, Newcastle upon Tyne. Importantly you will be working in or have experience of education, ideally in a primary or secondary school setting. Similarly, knowledge and experience with Education Trusts will be distinctively advantageous. Moreover, you will need to show us how you have undertaken, reported upon and delivered professional evaluation processes, presenting findings for example to a committee, board or agency. You will lead on event planning, delivering no less than three annual conferences within the region liaising with our Communications Manager. If you are interested in being at the forefront of developing this role please get in touch with us to request an Applicant Pack by emailing Annie Leaver Head of Human Resources at annie.leaver@diocesehn.org.uk The closing date for applications is 12 noon Sunday 1st February 2026 although we reserve the right to close the post early.

Little Sisters of the Poor Appeal - David and Theresa O'Neill ask you to support their fundraising for the Sisters through their collections of stamps, foreign currency, old or broken gold and silver and military medals. If you can help, contact them at: David and Theresa O'Neill, 34 Morston Drive, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 7RZ Tel: 0191 264 5771 Email: david-oneill3@sky.com

Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network - Each month the Holy Father will have a main prayer intention for people to use as part of their daily prayer, and he will also announce an "urgent intention" for people's prayer. A short video based on the main intention published each month and known as 'The Pope Video'. These videos can be viewed through the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#) visit now and watch this month's intention.

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](#)

All the Links you will ever need!

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