

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 12noon - 5pm
 Email: sj23office01@gmail.com



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

THE SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 10TH & 11TH FEBRUARY 2024, Year B

Saturday 10th February Vigil	St Joseph St Bede	5pm 5pm	Billy Wilson RIP Margaret Jones RIP
Sunday 11th February 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste Our Lady Queen of Peace Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	9:30am 10am 11am	Louise Tobin Davies RIP Anne & John Cantwell RIP Eileen Shannon RIP

"He touched the Leper"

It would be so easy to overlook the significant moment in our Gospel this week (Mark 1: 40-45), "He touched him." That is, Jesus touched the leper.

The Law was very clear on lepers and leprosy and the most stringent of those laws was that a leper must never be touched - Many practical laws were woven into the religious dogmas of the Jews, In this way the impetus for the people to act religiously was discreetly interwoven into the hygiene and wellbeing of the community as a whole.

At first glance it may appear that Jesus is breaking the law when he touches the leper, but this is not the case. Jesus is in fact fulfilling the law. He could have simply said, as he does elsewhere, "You are cured", or in the case of the Centurion's servant without seeing the person he was healing. But in touching the leper physically he is demonstrating that he is King of the Law and so God made man, God among us.

This is the reason he goes on to tell the leper to tell no one but the priests (in order that the necessary part of the law to fulfil his mission is completed). The reason he tells the cleansed leper to tell no one other than the priests is because the people would know who he was. Theologians once called this aspect of Jesus' ministry, "Tell no one", The Messianic Secret. Many books have been written about it. The gist is that Jesus does not want to reveal fully who he is, but rather show himself to a few at first. In this way, after his Passion and resurrection they would realise what had happened and, more importantly, who he truly was and what his life, death, and resurrection meant for them and all mankind.

As Christians we believe that the Holy Spirit dwells within us. We believe that the same power that healed the leper two thousand years ago resides within each of us. Perhaps our faith is not sufficient to heal the sick, but it may be sufficient to say a kind word instead of a nasty one. Or to give a smile instead of a frown, or even to consistently put the needs of others before our own?

Fr Martin Wheaton

Fr Martin Morris	0191 649 8257	Deacon Frank O'Neill	0779 115 5845
Fr Martin Wheaton	0770 996 1040	Deacon Peter Lavery	0730 505 9297
Fr Luke Wilkinson	0191 649 8257	Deacon Tony Joy	0779 989 3419

Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 12th February 2024

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 12th February	St Bede	10am	Lisa Taylor (deceased anniversary)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	6pm	Funeral Reception Mary Maw
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Lisa Taylor
Tuesday 13th February	Our Lady Queen of Peace	9.30am	Requiem Mass Mary Maw
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Mary Maw RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Betty & John Lee RIP
Wednesday 14th February Ash Wednesday	St Bede	10am	Holly Lindley RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Priest's Intention
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	12 noon	Priest's Intention
	St Joseph	12 noon	Peter Robinson RIP
	St John Boste	7pm	Priest's Intention Fr John Gibbons RIP
Thursday 15th February	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Andrew Long RIP
	St Joseph	12 noon	Veronica Farrer RIP
Friday 16th February	St John Boste	10am	Priest's Intention Fr Patrick McMahon RIP
	St Joseph	10am	Deceased members of Callaghan Family
Saturday 17th February Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Gerard McCabe RIP
	St Joseph	5pm	Austine Linson RIP
	St Bede	5pm	Celia & Joseph Stephenson RIP
Sunday 18th February 1st Sunday of Lent	St John Boste	9:30am	In thanksgiving for a successful operation
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Michael Walker RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Joseph & Ellen Jordon

First Reading: Leviticus 13:1-2. 44-46. Leprosy

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "If a swelling or scab or shiny spot appears on a man's skin, a case of leprosy of the skin is to be suspected. The man must be taken to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests who are his sons. The man is leprous: he is unclean. The priest must declare him unclean; he is suffering from leprosy of the head. A man infected with leprosy must wear his clothing torn and his hair disordered; he must shield his upper lip and cry, 'Unclean, unclean.' As long as the disease lasts he must be unclean; and therefore he must live apart; he must live outside the camp."

Response to the Psalm: You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1. Liberty and Love

Whatever you eat, whatever you drink, whatever you do at all, do it for the glory of God. Never do anything offensive to anyone - to Jews or Greeks or to the Church of God; just as I try to be helpful to everyone at all times, not anxious for my own advantage but for the advantage of

everybody else, so that they may be saved. Take me for your model, as I take Christ.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we can see what hope his call holds for us. Alleluia!

The Gospel: Mark 1:40-45. Jesus Heals a Leper

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: "If you want to," he said, "you can cure me." Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. "Of course I want to!" he said. "Be cured!" And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, "Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery." The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

Masses are live-streamed daily at 10am everyday, except Monday when Mass is live-streamed at 7pm

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: Tuesday at 7pm; Thursday at 12 Noon; 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

Our Lady Queen of Peace Church is open on Friday afternoons from 2pm - 3pm for quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. All welcome.

Sacrament of Reconciliation - The Sacrament of Reconciliation is now available in all of our Churches:

Our Lady Queen of Peace - Thursday morning, after Mass

St John Boste - Friday morning, after Mass.

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Saturday morning, after Mass.

St Bede's - Saturday after Vigil Mass.

During Lent the Priests will be available after all Masses for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Stations of the Cross during Lent

From Thursday 15 February **St Josephs** 11.30am

From Friday 16 February **St Bede's** 6pm

From Sunday 18 February **OBLI** 4pm

From Wednesday 21 February **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 funds raised will be divided equally between St Benedict's Hospice and Cancer Research at Sir Bobby Robson's Clinic. All welcome.

OLOF - Please note, the club usually meets on Tuesdays at 1pm in the Emmaus Room, at Our Lady's in the Village, all most welcome! However, please note that the club will not meet on Tuesday 20 February.

This Sunday, 11 February is World Day of Prayer for the Sick. There will be special prayers for the sick and housebound at all Masses. There will also be silent Eucharistic adoration at **Our Lady Queen of Peace** from 4pm to 5pm, with Rosary and prayers for healing at 5pm. The Sacrament of the Sick will also be celebrated for those who would like to receive the holy anointing.

Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible continues this week on Thursday at 7pm at **OLQP**.

Sick and Housebound in the Parish - Fr Martin and Fr Luke are very happy to visit any sick or housebound parishioner with the Sacraments. The Sacrament of Holy Anointing and Confession can be a great help in such circumstances. Please contact the Priests if you know of anyone who would appreciate a visit. Clergy landline: 0191 6498257.

First Reconciliation. The Children in year four in each of our schools are currently making their first Confessions. Let us keep them and their families in our prayers as they prepare for their first Sacraments..

Peru Mission Appeal Joe Plumb, the projects coordinator, is in the UK for a few weeks before returning to Peru. He will do a short talk about the work of the Peru Mission at the 5pm Mass at St Joseph's, Birtley and the 9.30am Mass at St John Boste on the weekend of 17 and 18 February.

CAFOD family fast day this year will be on Friday 23 February 2024. Envelopes will be available for those who would like to take part in this Lenten act of solidarity with the poor and hungry of the world.

Mass Intentions: Please be aware that there are a significant number of Mass Intentions already allocated and any request for a specific date may not be possible due to an Intention previously received and allocated to the Mass on that date. If the date requested is already filled,

then the intention will be allocated to the first available Mass in the preferred church which may be a few weeks after the requested date.

Other News

The Trinity Conference 2024: Reawakening the Catholic Vision is taking place on Saturday 17 February 2024 at Leeds Trinity University. The Keynote Speaker is Monsignor James Shea, President of the University of Mary (USA) and Co-author, '*From Christendom to Apostolic Mission*'. He will be joined with talks by Archbishop Mark O'Toole, Dr Hannah Vaughan-Spruce ...and more! **What else can I expect from the conference?** There will be opportunity to browse our 'mission marketplace' where you can look through stalls and speak to people involved in evangelisation initiatives from across the UK. All delegates will also receive a hard copy of the conference publication, featuring papers written on the theme by our conference speakers and others. The day will also include a time of Eucharistic Adoration, led by the Youth 2000 Mission team. To register please [click here](#).

Pope Francis has declared a Holy Year of Jubilee for 2025, when the **Holy Door in Rome** will be opened. In preparation the Pope asks for 2024 to be a year of prayer. Please visit our Diocesan Year of Prayer [webpage](#) for more information and regular updates. Each Wednesday morning, beginning 14 February, there will be silent Eucharistic Exposition at St Bede's before Mass from 9.15am to 9.50am. A time for quiet prayer with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

Bishop Stephen will be hosting a **LOUDfence** event at the Cathedral jointly with St Nicholas Cathedral from 3 March to 6 March. It will begin with 11.30am Mass at St Mary's Cathedral on 3 March and will end with a service St Nicholas at 6pm on 6 March. All are welcome to the Mass and the final service. Both Cathedrals will be open for those days and people are welcome to come and pray or offer their thoughts for those who have suffered abuse in any way. Please click [here](#) for further details.

CAFOD Big Lent Walk - 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.

Sycamore - Online Sessions for Lent 2024

Take some time out with God during this Lenten season and join us online (via Zoom) for a series of Sycamore sessions as we explore how we can live out our 'Ministry of Love'.

The sessions will take place on Thursdays throughout Lent from 7pm to 8.15pm.

15 February	"The Existence of God"
22 February	"Who is Jesus?"
29 February	"The Holy Spirit and the Church"
7 March	"The Gift of Faith"
14 March	"Finding True Freedom"
21 March	"The Meaning of Love"

All are welcome! Each session can stand alone so there is no obligation to attend all if you can't commit to every week. Some of you may have had experience of Sycamore previously, so we'll be using an alternative set of questions which will give you more opportunities to reflect on your own experiences of faith.

Please register your interest to receive the Zoom link. You can do this by completing the online [form](#) or by calling the admin team on 0191 243 3316.

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. Details of our Diocesan policy can be found by [clicking here](#).

Volunteers Wanted - The **SVP** are looking for volunteers willing to help children put their faith into action. Could this be you? The St Vincent de Paul Society have primary school groups called **Mini Vinnies** and volunteers would support teachers or youth leaders wishing to start a group in their school or parish. They will talk to children about how they can make a difference to those living in poverty and share resources to support the group. The role is flexible but does need people with some availability during school hours (at least 2 mornings or afternoons per month) who are willing to travel within the Diocese (all costs are covered). If you are passionate about helping children discover how they can make a difference in their communities, please [click here](#) for more information. You do not have to have previous experience of working with children as all training will be given. Our next initial training day is on Tuesday 27 February 2024.

Life in the Spirit Seminars

As a team, we have been greatly encouraged by these particular words from Pope Francis, in his recent address on 4 November, about Life in the Spirit seminars:

"...today I would ask you: are the Life in the Spirit Seminars being offered in a variety of ecclesial contexts, in small and remote places and among the poor and on the peripheries? One obstacle to this might be the idea that these Seminars can only be held in large venues and with well-known leaders, whereas in reality even small parish groups and local leaders can organize them and present them to people in their area." Plans are now in place, drawing on local leaders, as Pope Francis has encouraged, to deliver Life in the Spirit Seminars from 21 February 2024, 7pm to 8.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Sunderland. The themes and speakers for the first sessions are as follows: 21 February: Andy Drozdziak on the theme of God's love. 28 February: Amy Cameron on the theme of Salvation. Details of how to book can be [found here](#).

Marriage and Family Life Mass 2024 - Bishop Stephen will celebrate Mass at St Mary's Cathedral on Saturday 17 February 2024 at 12 noon to give thanks for the Sacrament of Marriage and Family Life. This is taking place during National Marriage Week. All married couples will be invited with particular focus on those celebrating a significant anniversary together with bereaved spouses, separated individuals and families experiencing or having experienced domestic difficulties. 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 none is forgotten, and that the Sacramental life is very much alive and prayed for. Anyone celebrating a significant anniversary has the opportunity to receive a certificate of celebration on the day. Anyone celebrating a special anniversary can request a certificate by completing this [form](#) or by calling the Faith and Mission admin team on 0191 243 3316. This day promises to be a wonderful Diocesan celebration and will provide a positive affirmation of the graces of Marriage to the entire North-East community. For further information, please contact: Deacon Rob Wareing, Diocesan Lead for Marriage and Family Life [by clicking here](#) or call Mobile: 07841 530991

Diocesan Lenten Reflection Booklets - Last year's Lenten Reflection booklets were very well received. As we prepare to commemorate Jesus' salvific death and resurrection at Easter, we hope that this year's edition will once again foster prayerful reflection on the Scriptures and a renewed sense of purpose and hope amongst the people of the Diocese. The reflections have been produced by a great number of people to express the richness of our Diocesan community. The daily reflections will be available for viewing, downloading and printing from the Diocesan website by [clicking here](#). This weblink will go live in time for Ash Wednesday (14 February).

"Take me for your model, as I take Christ." The Words of St Paul today to the Corinthians. Can we conform our life to Christ and discern a vocation to the priesthood? **Come and See!** We invite men aged 18+ who might be experiencing the call from God to discern priesthood to join the Vocations Team in finding out more. Speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#)

Lent Vigil for Climate Justice 14 - 23 February outside Parliament.

Cafod are one of a number of Christian organisations supporting the above vigil. Many of us won't be able to go but could support by setting aside five minutes each day of the vigil to say the Pope's Prayer for our Earth. Those able to join in can either look up the prayer [here](#) or take a copy home with you from the back of church on February 11 and February 18.

Reflections

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

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

[Saturday Examen](#)

[6th 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](#).

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

[click](#) Scan

the QR Code with your mobile phone to go to a site containing All the Links You'll Ever Need.