

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: sj23office01@gmail.com

In the Partnership of Benedict

11TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 15TH - 16TH JUNE 2024, Year B

Saturday 15th June Vigil	St Joseph St Bede	5pm 5pm	John Hogan RIP Nelly & Bolton Fitzpatrick
Sunday 16th June 11th Sunday	St John Boste Our Lady Queen of Peace Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	9:30am 10am 11am	People of the Parish Mary Maw RIP Jim Walker RIP

First Reading: The Noble Cedar
Ezekiel 17:22-24

The Lord says this: “From the top of the cedar, from the highest branch I will take a shoot and plant it myself on a very high mountain. I will plant it on the high mountain of Israel. It will sprout branches and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Every kind of bird will live beneath it, every winged creature rest in the shade of its branches. And every tree of the field will learn that I, the Lord, am the one who stunts tall trees and makes the low ones grow, who withers green trees and makes the withered green. I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it.”

Response to the Psalm: It is good to give you thanks, O Lord.

Second Reading: At Home with the Lord
2 Corinthians 5:6-10

We are always full of confidence when we remember that to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord, going as we do by faith and not by sight - we are full of confidence, I say, and actually want to be exiled from the body and make our home with the Lord. Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing him. For all the truth about us will be brought out in the law court of Christ, and each of us will get what he deserves for the things he did in the body, good or bad.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. Alleluia!

The Gospel: Mark 4:26-34: The Seed Growing

Jesus said to the crowds: “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man throws seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. Of its own accord the land produces first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the crop is ready, he loses no time: he starts to reap because the harvest has come.” He also said, “What can we say the kingdom of God is like? What parable can we find for it? It is like a mustard seed which at the time of its sowing in the soil is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade.” Using many parables like these, he spoke the word to them, so far as they were capable of understanding it. He would not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything to his disciples when they were alone.

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 17th June 2024

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 17th June	St Bede	10am	Laurence McAdam (RIP)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Margaret Hodgson RIP
Tuesday 18th June	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Mary Maw RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Raymond Robinson RIP
Wednesday 19th June St Romuald	St Bede	10am	Golden Wedding Anniversary (Jim & Denise)
	St John Boste	7pm	Maldwyn & Eleanor Roberts RIP
Thursday 20th June St Alban	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Forgotten Souls in Purgatory
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Ray & Peter Neal RIP
Friday 21st June St Aloysius Gonzaga	St John Boste	10am	Priest's Intention
	St Joseph	10am	Holy Souls
Saturday 22nd June Ss John Fisher & Thomas More Vigil	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Catherine Naughton RIP
	St Joseph	5pm	Mark Forsyth RIP
	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 23rd June 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	Peter & Sid McElhenny RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	For the Living and Deceased members of the Guthrie Family and In Thanksgiving for the Golden Wedding Anniversary Mol & Matthew Thomas
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Harold & Catherine Leeder

Trees and Prophecy

Living and preaching about 600 BC, during Israel's exile in Babylon, the prophet Ezekiel speaks of the events of that period and predicts their outcome. He propounds a riddle and speaks an allegory to the house of Israel. The great eagle (Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon) takes off the topmost twig of a cedar tree (Jehoiachin, King of Judah) and plants a seed (Zedekiah, the successor of Jehoiachin after the deportation in 597 BC). The seed grows into a vine. Ezekiel predicts that the vine will be destroyed. A few years later, in 587 BC, following a rebellion by Zedekiah against Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian King captured and destroyed Jerusalem, and cruelly blinded Zedekiah as a punishment for daring to rise against him. When Jesus talks about the mustard seed, He too is using an allegory, trying to help people to understand that God has replanted the people of Israel in Himself and He calls ALL people to Him. With His death and resurrection, the kingdom (tree) will flourish with a place for us all. Destruction in Ezekiel becomes growth in Jesus.

Jesus was a countryman, from the rich agricultural plains of Galilee, where wheat and fruit trees abounded. It was natural for him to use such imagery to describe the Kingship of God which he was proclaiming. Today's gospel reading offers us two of the many images in Mark's chapter of parables. What did Jesus want to teach by them? Images can carry many layers of meaning. First, the seed growing secretly all the time: perhaps Jesus meant that God's purposes are accomplished in spite of our feeble and fumbling efforts; perhaps it was a warning that after long waiting the time for decision, the time of harvest had come with Jesus' own mission. Second, the mustard-seed: was this a reply to the discouraged disciples – or perhaps Jesus' critical opponents – that his motley little group of undistinguished peasants, fishermen and tax-collectors would grow into God's own mighty tree? Perhaps this is a first hint that Jesus' mission is for all nations, not just for Israel. All nations would come, nest and find a home in the branches of his mission, just as in the first reading they nest in the branches of the great cedar tree. At any rate, both images show that God is in charge, and has great plans which will be fulfilled despite our own inadequacies. What does Jesus mean to teach by these parables? More specifically, what does Jesus mean by comparing the Christian mission to a tree?

Wednesday Word

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 from 2pm - 3pm for quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. All welcome.

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

Our Lady Queen of Peace - Thursday morning, after Mass

St Joseph - Thursday after noon Mass

St John Boste - Friday morning, after Mass.

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Saturday morning, after Mass.

St Bede's - Saturday after Vigil Mass.

OLOF - Please note, the club is on a Tuesday at 1pm in the Emmaus Room, at Our Lady's in the Village! All most welcome!

Each Wednesday morning there will be silent Eucharistic Exposition at St Bede's before Mass from 9.15am - 9.50am. A time for quiet prayer with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

NEW SONG!

Join us for our next family-friendly New Song prayer event at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church on Sunday 14 July at 4pm. We'll give praise to our loving God, be inspired by praying and reflecting on God's Word and build friendship and community with others.

We look forward to welcoming back Fr Mark Millward to talk to us about God's love. All are welcome - see you there!

Where: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church NE38 7HS.

When: 14 July and 11 August @ 4pm.

Email: newsongne@gmail.com **Instagram:** @newsongne

Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help and Candlelit Vigil

The Novena takes place each Thursday at 7pm at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, until the 27th June. A petition box will be at the back of Church each week for personal petitions to be inserted. At the end of the Novena it will be taken to Lourdes on the Diocesan Pilgrimage. After the Resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples. He told them to wait in Jerusalem for the descent of the Holy Spirit. A Novena echoes this prayer of waiting and is a traditional way of coming together to pray. Together with Our Lady of Perpetual Help, we too pray to God, in thanksgiving, in petition and in praise. All welcome to make the Novena.

On Thursday 27th June our final Novena will followed by a time of individual quiet prayer by candlelight until 10pm. The evening will end with refreshments in the Emmaus room. You are welcome to join us for all or part of the evening. *Fr Martin Morris*

From the Bishop

Dear Sisters & Brothers, in order to grow as a synodal Church it is important that we all have a chance to pray and discern how the Holy Spirit is inviting us to grow in mission in our parishes and communities. To facilitate this, I together with others, offer an initial Diocesan vision for your prayerful reflection. Our discerned Diocesan commitments are: To Walk with Jesus and Enable Others to Encounter Him; To grow as One Diocesan Family- Rebuilding Relationships; Forming and Developing People for Mission; Living Justly and Caring for Our Common Home. Each of these commitments are developed in the vision. It is not my intention to impose this vision. It is offered for further reflection and

I invite all of our parishes and communities to prayerfully reflect on them. We offer accompanying resources and support to enable this reflection. Please contact your parish office if you would like hard copies of these materials which are all available on the diocesan website. With assurances and prayers + **Stephen**

"Day for Life. - The focus for this year's Day for Life is opposition to assisted suicide (euphemistically called assisted dying.) The theme for the Day for Life is: "The Lord is my Shepherd - Compassion and hope at the end of the day." The hope is to promote a culture of care at the end of life, especially for the most vulnerable, as people prepare for eternal life. Further details for the 'Day for Life' can be found at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/reasons-to-oppose-assisted-suicide> frequently asked questions on assisted suicide <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/faqs-assisted-suicide/>. Bishop's Conference of England & Wales.

Father's Day Prayers

"Heavenly Father, we thank you for our fathers. They gave us life and continue to give us the wisdom to live our lives. By their examples of love, we know ourselves. By their examples of faith, we know you better. Invigorate our fathers with the love and respect of their children so that they may be encouraged, inspired and greatly blessed. Amen."

"God our Father, in your wisdom and love you made all things. Bless our Dad. Let the example of his faith and love shine forth. Grant that we, his family, may honour him always with a spirit of profound respect. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen." —

"God, you are the giver of all life, human and divine. Bless our Dad. May he be the best of teachers for his children, bearing witness to the faith by what he says and does, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen." — **Catholic**

Household Blessings and Prayers

The Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSR)

"The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) and Diocese's policies and procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative's names are displayed on church notice boards, or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 0191 2433305 or at safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk "

St Bede's Church - If you know someone who can no longer get to Holy Mass because they are sick or housebound, and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please contact Marian Fletcher Tel: 01914174413. We also would like to encourage those from **all our churches** that are no longer able to attend mass to have a Special Minister call with Holy Communion, Please ask or get in touch with any of our Priests or Deacons.

Little Sister's of the Poor would like to invite everyone to their Summer Fayre on Saturday 29th June at St. Joseph's Home, Westmorland Road at 1pm. There will be lots of fun and games, cakes and fancy goods, something for everyone. We hope to see you all there.

ADORATION FOR VOCATIONS. Bishop Stephen, Writes,

"We continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. I am very grateful to the many parishes who set aside a dedicated time of prayer for these intentions. We may all wish to consider a regular publicised time of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament praying that the Lord will send labourers into his harvest." We now have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at Our Lady Queen of Peace each Friday 2-3pm. Each Wednesday morning at St. Bede's 9.15am - 9.50am. & St. Joseph's (**starting 4th July**) 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 in response to Bishop Stephen's appeal. Thank you, Fr. Martin Morris

Our Prayers and thoughts are with Fr. Graham William's (RIP) (Fenham) who passed away recently.

Priestly Ordination— Please pray for Deacon Joe O'Brian who will be ordained to the Priesthood in St. Mary's Cathedral on Saturday 20th July.

Benedict Partnership—Our Partnership of Parishes is under the patronage of St. Benedict. To mark St. Benedict's Feast Day, and ask the Lord's Blessing on our two communities there will be a Mass in St. Bede's on Thursday July 11th at 7pm. Refreshments in the hall afterwards. All are welcome.

Congratulations to Staff, and Governors at St. Bede's Primary school for their recent 'Good' rating in all areas of school life by OFSTED. Well done

THE 40th ST JOHN BOSTE WALK will take place on Sunday the 28th of July. Further details coming soon.

PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY ISLAND – Saturday 13th July

The coach for the above has now been booked for our Parish and will be leaving from Our Lady Queen of Peace at 8.00 prompt. Please make sure you arrive in plenty of time.

A reminder that if you are walking across the sands as part of the Pilgrim's walk then please ensure you bring additional clothing with you. For those not walking there will be a service held in St Aidan's Catholic Church on the island at 12.00 noon.

Mass will be celebrated in **St Mary's church at 3.00 pm by Bishop Stephen and Fr Jim O'Keefe**. The coach will be departing from Holy Island at 17.30.

There are still a few places available on the coach. If you would like to go, please contact Malcolm Bengston on 07746 973132.

What is the Lord Calling Us to Be and Do?: Engaging with the Synodal Vision for the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle

Modelling Spiritual Conversation Workshop: Wednesday 10 July, Washington

Location: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Village Lane, Washington, NE38 7HS

Time: 6.30pm – 7.45pm. Please arrive early for refreshments.

Booking link: <https://bit.ly/MSCWorkshop-Washington1> **Cost:** Free.

Other News

Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) 2024-2025

The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies is managed and awarded by the Board of Religious Studies on behalf of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The programme seeks to ensure that participants have a basic understanding of the central beliefs of the Catholic faith. This programme is available for catechists, lay leaders and other adults wishing to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith and Catholic education, serving teachers in Catholic and other schools, and teachers in training preparing to take up posts in Catholic schools. The 2024-2025 CCRS course programme is now available on the Diocesan website: <https://diocesehn.org.uk/education/professional-development-and-formation/#ccrs>. If anyone would like further information, they can contact Eamonn Diffley at the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, Department for Education on 0191 243 3313 or email education@diocesehn.org.uk.

Significance Festival Weekend - 29 June 2024: We look forward to welcoming you to the Significance Festival Weekend this June, in particular for the main event on Saturday 29 June, from 10.00am onwards. There will be stalls and activities, sessions for children and young people, guest speakers and live music spread across the Emmaus Youth Village, which will be open for you to enjoy in the beautiful Derwent Valley! We welcome everyone to gather for Mass for the Feast of St Peter and Paul at 3.15pm, with Bishop Stephen Wright, followed by a BBQ and Ceilidh in the evening. Individuals, families, and parish groups are all welcome. For additional details and to book, [please click here](#).

On Saturday 22nd June, the Eve of the Vigil of the Feast of St John the Baptist, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia. This is the last monthly day of prayer and fasting for life before the General Election. An election which could well result in an even more pro-abortion government than we have currently had. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed. "And the people of Nineveh believed in God; they proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least... God saw their efforts to renounce their evil ways. And God relented about the disaster which He had threatened to bring on them, and He did not bring it." (Jonah 3:5,10) Please Invite others to join the day on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/events/1037436687798327/>

The Medjugorje Centre (North East) has organised a MEDJUGORJE RETREAT AT MINSTERACRES from Friday 25th - Sunday 27th October. The Spiritual Director for the weekend is Fr. Martin Morris. The weekend is an opportunity to come together for prayer, talks and friendship. The cost is £195 per person. A £48 Deposit is required and booking forms are available from Marian Fletcher (St Bede's) Telephone 01914174413

Reflections

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

Examen -Please follow the links to go to Pray as You Go
[Saturday Examen 11th 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](#). 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!



Please [click here](#) or Scan the QR Code with your mobile phone to go to a site containing **All the Links You'll Ever Need.**

[To post a notice on this Newsletter, please click here](#)