

Parishes of St John XXIII & St Joseph's, Birtley

Incorporating: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington; Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penshaw;
St Bede's, Usworth; St John Boste, Oxclose; St Joseph's, Birtley



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In the Partnership of Benedict

**7th Sunday of Easter,
29th May 2022, Year C**

Father, may they be completely one

Only in John's Gospel do we hear this prayer of Jesus, sometimes referred to as the "High Priestly Prayer". It takes place after the Last Supper. Jesus has spoken at length to the Apostles of the challenges ahead for them and soon "the time is already here" begins: Jesus and his followers will enter the Garden at Gethsemane and Judas will betray him. But for now, Jesus raises his eyes to Heaven.



This intense discourse moves from his fragile band to whom he entrusts his message to all who believe and will believe because of this first seeding. Jesus prays for an intimate relationship between the believer and Himself, the conduit to the full glory to be found in recognizing the immensity of God's love for us. The prayer rings down the ages and calls us to respond deeply with Jesus. In so doing, we witness to God's plan of salvation.

It would take four centuries for this belief in Jesus as God the Messiah to grow from scattered communities across the Eastern Mediterranean to become the religion of the Roman Empire and to outlive it. It needs its messengers now more than ever.

It is no accident that in the First Reading today we have an account of the first martyrdom in the name of Jesus, that of the deacon Stephen. In his final moments Stephen too looks up to Heaven and is granted sight of the Glory of God. Almost as a subtext, the witnesses to his stoning throw their cloaks at the feet of a young man called Saul. Soon his life will be transformed from a path of persecution to a path of proclamation of that same Glory. Much will be demanded of Paul.

The question for us is how we work at understanding God's love for us and recognize that same dignity in every human life. What does God's love demand of us?

Fr Jim O'Keefe 0191 416 3805

Deacon Frank O'Neill 0779 115 5845

Fr Uchenna Odenigbo 0191 416 3583

Deacon Peter Lavery 0730 505 9297

Fr Martin Wheaton 0191 410 2923

Deacon Tony Joy 0779 989 3419

Fr Vincent Waiga 0191 416 3583



This Sunday's Readings...



I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord. I will come back to you, and your hearts

On the seventh Sunday of Easter, we always read from the 17th chapter of John's Gospel. The whole of this chapter is a prayer of Jesus, commending himself to the Father and expressing his care and concern for his disciples. At the end of this prayer, Jesus and his disciples depart for the garden, and Jesus is arrested.

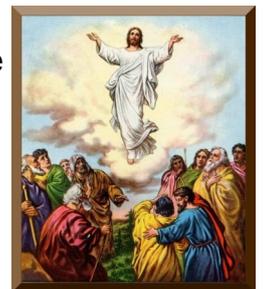
Several important themes appear in this prayer of Jesus. First, Jesus' prayer reaffirms the complete union between Jesus and the Father. Throughout John's Gospel, Jesus has been presented as the one who pre-existed with the Father and as the one sent by the Father to do his work on earth. In today's reading, we hear Jesus ask that the unity he experiences with the Father be extended to all who believe in him. He prays that we be one with each other, with him, and with the Father. We are reminded that Christ is the source of Christian unity.

Belief is a major theme in the Gospel of John. It begins in the prologue and continues in the response to Jesus' signs. Belief is the reason Jesus performs signs and the reason signs have been recorded in the Gospel. Here Jesus prays not only for those who believe in him but for all who will come to believe in him.

So our prayer this week may well centre around belief – not only for those who believe in Him, but also for those around us and for the world at large who come to believe in Him. We can perhaps also ask the Lord for grater trust in him.

The Ascension of the Lord

On 26th May, 2,000 years ago, Jesus passed on to us, his followers, the responsibility to let him be present in our modern world. 2,000 years ago, Jesus also passed on to us, his followers, the responsibility to let him continue to speak, love, and reach out to people in our modern world. 2,000 years ago, Jesus also passed on to us, his followers, the responsibility to let him continue to work in our modern world. This is the reason that we gathered together here today. This is the mystery that we celebrate in this liturgy today. This is the challenge that Scripture holds out to us today. Important opportunities for prayer.



Are you ready for the challenge?

Special Collection Next Week – Lay training Fund

The Lay Training Fund (LTF) is for all areas of adult formation and education which are not normally provided as part of parish life. The suitability of an application will be assessed by the Lay Training Fund Committee which is made of the Episcopal Vicar for Faith & Mission, lay coordinator for Faith & Mission, a clergy expert in formation, a member of the Finance team and a lay representative, normally the chair of the lay Pastoral council.

Whether we work in the Diocese or in the wider world, whether we are involved in parish life in catechesis, liturgy or other ministries, we need to understand our Faith and we need to know what the Church teaches, and be able to discern our calling, so that we can live out our vocation and mission and thus witness to the faith we have, in response to the changing needs of the Church within society. The Lay Training Fund is available to support this vision.

St Justin

"We are slain with the sword, but we increase and multiply; the more we are persecuted and destroyed, the more are deaf to our numbers. As a vine, by being pruned and cut close, shoots forth new suckers, and bears a greater abundance of fruit; so is it with us." – St. Justin Martyr

Justin was born around the year 100 in the Palestinian province of Samaria, the son of Greek-speaking parents whose ancestors were sent as colonists to that area of the Roman Empire. Justin's father followed the Greek pagan religion and raised his son to do the same, but he also provided Justin with an excellent education in literature and history.

Justin was an avid lover of truth, and as a young man, became interested in philosophy and searched for truth in the various schools of thought that had spread throughout the empire. But he became frustrated with the professional philosophers' intellectual conceits and limitations, as well as their apparent indifference to God.

After several years of study, Justin had a life-changing encounter with an old man who questioned him about his beliefs and especially about the sufficiency of philosophy as a means of attaining truth. He urged him to study the Jewish prophets and told Justin that these authors had not only spoken by God's inspiration, but also predicted the coming of Christ and the foundation of his Church.

"Above all things, pray that the gates of life may be opened to you," the old man told Justin, "for these are not things to be discerned, unless God and Christ grant to a man the knowledge of them." Justin had always admired Christians from a distance because of the beauty of their moral lives. As he writes in his Apologies: "When I was a disciple of Plato, hearing the accusations made against the Christians and seeing them intrepid in the face of death and of all that men fear, I said to myself that it was impossible that they should be living in evil and in the love of pleasure." The aspiring philosopher eventually decided to be baptized around the age of 30.

Justin was most likely ordained a deacon, since he preached, did not marry, and gave religious instruction in his home. He is best known as the author of early apologetic works which argued for the Catholic faith against the claims of Jews, pagans, and non-Christian philosophers.

Several of these works were written to Roman officials, for the purpose of refuting lies that had been told about the Church. Justin sought to convince the rulers of the Roman Empire that they had nothing to gain, and much to lose, by persecuting the Christians. His two most famous apologetical treatises were "Apologies" and "Dialogue with Tryphon."

In order to fulfil this task, Justin gave explicit written descriptions of the early Church's beliefs and its mode of worship. In modern times, scholars have noted that Justin's descriptions correspond to the traditions of the Catholic Church on every essential point.

Justin describes the weekly Sunday liturgy as a sacrifice and speaks of the Eucharist as the true body and blood of Christ. He further states that only baptized persons who believe the Church's teachings, and are free of serious sin, may receive it.

His first defence of the faith, written to Emperor Antonius Pius around 150, convinced the emperor to regard the Church with tolerance. In 167, however, persecution began again under Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

During that year Justin wrote to the emperor, who was himself a philosopher and the author of the well-known "Meditations." He tried to demonstrate the injustice of the persecutions, and the superiority of the Catholic faith over Greek philosophy. Justin emphasized the strength of his convictions by stating that he expected to be put to death for expressing them

He was, indeed, seized along with a group of other believers, and brought before Rusticus, prefect of Rome. A surviving eyewitness account shows how Justin the philosopher became known as "St. Justin Martyr."



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St. Justin (cont from previous page)

The prefect made it clear how Justin might save his life: "Obey the gods, and comply with the edicts of the emperors." Justin responded that "no one can be justly blamed or condemned for obeying the commands of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Rusticus briefly questioned Justin and his companions regarding their beliefs about Christ and their manner of worshipping God. Then he laid down the law.

"Hear me," he said, "you who are noted for your eloquence, who think that you make a profession of the right philosophy. If I cause you to be scourged from head to foot, do you think you shall go to heaven?"

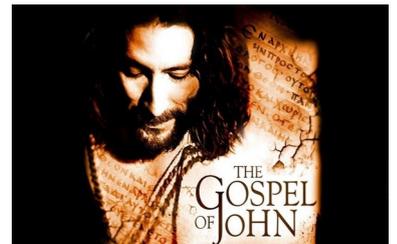
"If I suffer what you mention," Justin replied, "I hope to receive the reward which those have already received, who have obeyed the precepts of Jesus Christ." Justin was scourged and beheaded along with six companions who joined him in his confession of faith.

St. Justin Martyr has been regarded as a saint since the earliest centuries of the Church. Eastern Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Christians also celebrate his feast day on June 1.

The Prayer of Jesus

John's Gospel, Chapter 17, is referred to as Jesus' High Priestly prayer. It's a long and beautiful prayer that would be worth reading in its entirety for reflection.

Jesus begins by speaking to the Father that "the hour has come." His hour of suffering and death is upon Him. But He sees it as an opportunity for His glorification. This is an important revelation within John's Gospel and especially within this prayer. The Cross is horrible from a human perspective alone. But from the divine perspective or the will of the Father and the salvation of the world, it is glorious and the moment in which Jesus takes up His throne of the Cross. It is glorious because He perfectly fulfils the will of the Father through His freely embraced suffering.



From there, Jesus prays for the Apostles in particular. He prays for their mission so that they will have the grace they need to also embrace the will of the Father and continue the work of Jesus. He knows that it is only by embracing their crosses, in accord with the will of the Father, that they will be able to be glorified.

Lastly, Jesus prays for those who would come to faith through the ministry of the Apostles. In particular, He prays for their unity. The unity Jesus is speaking of is a oneness that comes as a result of being united with the Father in Heaven. It is this oneness that leads to glorification for all. And, once again, this oneness is achieved only by being in full union with the will of the Father.

Think upon this beautiful prayer and as you do, allow the Lord to speak to you. Hear Him calling you to perfect fulfilment and glory. But know that this is achieved by the embrace of your "hour." The Father is calling you to follow in the footsteps of His Son by laying down your life in perfect obedience to the Father's will. Embracing this cross is the path to Heaven and Jesus' prayer provides all the grace you need to say "Yes."

Father in Heaven, I choose to embrace Your perfect and holy will in all things. I accept from You the invitation to embrace my crosses in life and to enter into the hour to which You have called me. May I find true glory in this hour and may my life always give glory to You. Jesus, I trust in You.

Questions, questions, questions - and trust!

According to an ancient legend, when Jesus reached heaven, his body still showed the wounds of his crucifixion. When the people in heaven saw these marks, they were astounded to see how much he had suffered.

The angel Gabriel rose up and said to Jesus: "Lord, how greatly you suffered on earth! Do all the people on earth know and appreciate how much you went through for them and how much you love them?"

Jesus replied: "Only a handful of people know that. The rest haven't even heard of me. They don't know how much I suffered, and how much I love them."

Gabriel was shocked to hear this. "How will all the rest of the people on earth ever learn about your suffering and your love?"

Jesus said: "Just before I left, I told Peter, James, John and a few of their friends, to tell the rest of the world for me. They'll tell as many people as they can. They in turn, will tell other people. In that way, the whole world will eventually learn about my love for them."

Gabriel looked even more confused now. He knew how fickle people are. He knew how forgetful they are. He knew how prone to doubt they are. So he turned to Jesus and said: "But, Lord, what if Peter, James, and John grow tired or frustrated? What if they forget about you? What if they begin to have doubts about you? And even if none of these things happen, what if the people they tell become frustrated? What if they forget? What if they begin to have doubts about you? Didn't you take these things into account? Don't you have a back-up plan just in case?"

Jesus answered: "I did take all these things-into account, but I decided against a back-up plan. This is the only plan I have. "I'm counting on Peter, James, and John not to let me down. I'm counting on the people they tell not to let me down."

Reflections

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

You can read a monthly reflection titled, 'Post Lent' by Pat Kennedy MPS, which can be found [by clicking here](#).

Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations are free email reflections sent every day of the year. Each meditation features Richard Rohr and guest authors reflecting on a yearly theme, with each week building on previous topics, but you can join at any time! In the 2022 Daily Meditations, Father Richard Rohr invites you on a journey of understanding God as Relationship—with ourselves, each other, and the earth—in the theme of Nothing Stands Alone. Despite the uncertainty and disorder, our present moment is a great opportunity to awaken to deeper transformation, love, and hope. Amid the widespread need for healing, reality offers us an invitation to depth, to discover what is lasting and what matters. Please read Richard's Daily Meditations [here](#).

The Glory of Christ

The final chapter of Jesus's sayings at the Last supper is a prayer which both gives meaning to the sacrifice which Jesus is about to make and at the same time is a meditation on the Lord's Prayer. In today's portion Jesus speaks to his Father (also 'Our Father') with that perfect love which he will express most fully in his acceptance of torture and death on the cross. The story of the Crucifixion is not a story of rejection but is the story of the most perfect union of Father and Son in love and willing obedience. It will make the Name, that is the love, of the Father fully known ('**Hallowed be thy Name**'). It will also grant Jesus that 'glory which he had before the foundation of the world' (**Thy Kingdom come**'). But the kingdom is not complete without those who believe in Jesus and belong to him. The completion of the Kingdom is the work of the Spirit which is to come upon the Church at Pentecost. The story of its completion is, with all its twist and turns, its failures, its chastisements and its recoveries, the history of the Church.



Which petition of the Lord's Prayer is most important to you?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB



Loving God
We pray for the people of Ukraine,
For all those suffering or afraid,
That you will be close to them and protect them.
We pray for world leaders,
For compassion, strength and
Wisdom to guide their choices.
We pray for the world that in this
Moment of crisis, we may reach out
In solidarity to our brothers and sisters in need.
May we walk in your ways
So that peace and justice
Become a reality for the people of Ukraine
And for all the world.
Amen



'Our Brothers and Sisters'

This is how Pope Francis refers to all Migrants and Refugees in his 2014 day of prayer for them all. He goes on to say that 'they are to be welcomed, respected and loved.' The Bishops of England and Wales in their recent statement tell us that this plea is as urgent as ever and is based on the dignity of each person made in the image and likeness of God. Our bishops remind us that there are over 80 million people in our world displaced by war, poverty, persecution and the effects of global warming. They also appreciate that it is an extremely complex state of affairs, nonetheless, our country must 'treat them justly and honour their dignity as human persons.' The bishops then go on to say: 'The Nationality and Borders Act fails to do this...there is no illegal asylum seeker; to claim asylum is a human right'. In this excellent statement, our bishops go on to say: 'Crime is defeated by confronting the perpetrators not by punishing the victims', and that we must give witness through hospitality, a compassionate welcome and campaigning on behalf of refugees. They conclude by saying that they will continue to advocate their cause, after all Jesus said: 'I was a stranger and you made me welcome'.

MASSES ARE LIVE-STREAMED DAILY AT 10AM EVERYDAY

EXCEPT MONDAY WHEN MASS IS LIVE-STREAMED AT 7PM

IN ADDITION, WE LIVE-STREAM MASSES FROM ST JOSEPH'S BIRTLEY ON:

TUESDAY AT 6.45PM; THURSDAY AT 12 MIDDAY; SATURDAY AT 5PM

Please [click here to access live streaming of Mass](#) from one of our Churches.

To access live streaming from St Joseph's Birtley, please [click here](#).

When you go onto the Church Services TV page for our Parish you will see that there are two labels which refer to the two different cameras used for streaming. These cameras are labelled Camera one and Camera two. If you click on a camera and it does not give you the live-stream, please click on the other camera. Note that live streaming may not start until shortly before the publicized Mass time. The streamed Mass is available to view on a PC, laptop, iPad, iPhone, Android Tablet or Mobile.

When the streamed Mass has ended why not scroll down to the "Watch Videos" part of The Church Services page and select "Featured Videos"? Here you will find various current videos. In the "Watch Videos" area you will also be able to view any recorded services like funerals, baptisms, etc.

Please take this opportunity to experience one or more of the live-streamed Masses from your local Church.

READINGS AVAILABLE

This Sunday's readings are available to follow during Mass, or to read at a later time.

[Just click here](#)

CHURCH SERVICES – STREAMING MASS NOT AVAILABLE?

Sometimes we experience technical issues and the streaming of Mass from St John XXIII or St Joseph's fails. If this happens then, as we are using Church Services TV to stream, it is easy to find an alternative Mass. You can look at "What's On Now" or the schedule and select a Mass or search for a church by country, or region with in the country – there are two other churches listed in Tyne and Wear: St Charles, Gosforth and Sacred Heart, North Gosforth.

News and Events in the Parish



As we begin to learn to live with Covid, we expect that more things will start again in the Parish. Are you thinking about re-starting the Craft Group or the Prayer Group or the Bingo? The newsletter team want to put together a page that lets everyone know what is happening in the Parish. If you are re-starting any of these things, from coffee mornings to Exposition, PLEASE let us know and we will publish them in the newsletter.

In addition, if you have any news you think may be useful to other parishioners, please let us know.

To contact us please just [click here](#).



Mass times for the fortnight beginning Saturday 28th May 2022

Day	Church	Time	Intention
Saturday 28th May	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	School children of the Parish
St Godric of Fincale and St Christopher Magallanes	St Joseph's	5pm	Brian and Susan Towns
	St Bede's	5pm	Laurence Mc Adam
Sunday 29th May	St John Boste	9.30am	People of the Parish
7th Sunday of Easter	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	James McDevitte
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	People of war afflicted countries
Monday 30th May	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	People of the Parish
Tuesday 31st May	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Margaret, Dennis & Karen Whalen
The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary	St Joseph's	7pm	Mark Toni
Wednesday 1st June	St Bede's	10am	Marjorie and Tommy Scott (deceased)
St Justin	St John Boste	7pm	People of the Parish
Thursday 2nd June	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	People of war afflicted Countries
Ss Marcellinus & Peter	St Joseph's	12 noon	People of the Parish
Friday 3rd June	St John Boste	10am	Repose of the soul of Mary Davidson
Ss Charles Lwanga	St Joseph's	10am	Holy Souls
Saturday 4th June	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Nancy & Bernard Hodgson
	St Joseph's	5pm	Frank McEnaney
	St Bede's	5pm	William, Eileen Harland and deceased Family
Sunday 5th June	St John Boste	9.30am	People of the Parish
Pentecost Sunday	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Children of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Margaret Mary Wanlles & Owen & Mary Fagan
Monday 6th June	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	Sick of the Parish
Mary, Mother of the Church			
Tuesday 7th June	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Children/Youth of the Parish
St Robert of Newminster	St Joseph's	7pm	Deceased members of the Men's Choir
Wednesday 8th June	St Bede's	10am	John Fletcher and deceased Family
	St John Boste	7pm	Sick of the Parish
Thursday 9th June	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Sick of te Parish
Our Lord Jesus Christ, Eternal High King	St Joseph's	12 noon	Frank McEnaney
Friday 10th June	St John Boste	10am	Sick of the Parish
	St Joseph's	10am	Holy Souls
Saturday 11th June	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Michael & Lucy Frain Silver Wedding
St Barnabas	St Joseph's	5pm	DMs of the Baggott, Walker & Jones families
	St Bede's	5pm	Moira and Vincent Lamb (deceased)
Sunday 12th June	St John Boste	9.30am	Special Intention (PI)
The Most Holy Trinity	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Eileen Smare RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Mary & Bill O'Hara

Examen

The Examen, or Review of the Day, was a daily prayer included by St Ignatius Loyola in his Spiritual Exercises. It offers a practical help to become more attentive to God's presence and activity in our daily life, finding God in all things, noticing the patterns of our interaction with God in our experiences.

Saturday Examen – the link is [here](#)

The 7th Sunday of Easter – the link is [here](#)



Our Lady Queen of Peace

On Sunday, 5th June, in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, we are having a special coffee morning after 10.00 a.m. Mass. Perhaps you would like to wear your 'Posh Hat' or a tiara just like our lovely Queen Elizabeth II. Everyone is welcome.

Bereavement Support

Whilst bereavement is extremely hard at any time, the time spent in lockdown when funerals had to take place in very restricted circumstances have taken their toll on so many. Whilst family and friends can be immensely supportive, sometimes a bereaved person wants to talk to someone outside of their immediate circle. The Emmaus Bereavement Support Team, trained in the Ministry of Consolation, is available to support those who wish to talk about their loss. Due to current restrictions, such conversations will most likely take place on the phone, but we hope as restrictions ease, it may be possible for people to meet face-to-face again.

Since the launch of this service earlier this year, there have been a number of requests for support, and several of our listeners have been able to accompany others on their journey of loss and bereavement.

The **Emmaus Bereavement Support Service** number is **07732 980740** a member of the team will contact you promptly.

Coping with Cancer North East.

We are a cancer charity that offers free support to those affected by cancer, this includes counselling, coaching and complementary therapies. Our services are free to anyone who is or has been affected by a cancer diagnosis, including family, friends, and carers. We offer our services across the whole of the North East.

Almost everybody knows someone who is or has been affected by a cancer diagnosis and we are ready to support them. I am hoping you may be able to help us raise awareness of the charity and the ways in which we can help others. As you may already know 1 in 2 will develop cancer in their lifetime and we want to help as many people as possible. We are not asking for donations or money in anyway, only making people aware of our services.

Please [click here](#) for further information on the help that we provide.

Prayer Intentions at Mass

When we come together to celebrate mass we ‘worship God, support each other on our journey of faith, and are a visible sign of faith to the world’. This phrase is from the note our Bishops prepared to invite us all to seriously consider joining the community to celebrate together. In fact our communities are only truly communities when everyone who can, does in fact gather, there’s something missing if parishioners who can gather, don’t do so. When we gather we bring our whole selves, our hopes and our worries, what we long for and what we regret. Some people want to invite the whole community to join them in their prayer and memories, so they ask for their ‘Intention’ to be included and mentioned during mass. This may be because someone is sick, about to sit exams, are expecting a baby, or are looking for a job. It may be because it is the anniversary of death of a family member or friend, family or friends getting engaged or married. You may want to pray for peace in Ukraine, bring to mind those who have suffered abuse in the Church or anywhere else, those struggling with a relationship or are about to celebrate 60 years of marriage. We can always invite others to join us in our prayers, hopes and aspirations, and when we do, we are invited to come closer to one another and become more attentive to what matters to all of our brothers and sisters. If you would like others to pray alongside you, then simply take a Mass Offering envelope from the back of church and fill in whatever details you want to. We look forward to praying with you.

Jim O’Keefe



**A TASTE OF
FOREST CHURCH**
Saturday 11th June, 10.00am – 1.00pm
**St Mary’s Parish Church,
Shincliffe, Durham DH1 2ND**

**A morning of activities to give an
experience of the Forest Church
movement, to be led by practitioners
Julie Goodhart (Shincliffe Wild Church)
Jean Andrews (Wychwood Forest Church)**

Cost: £6
Bring a packed lunch: Drinks will be provided
For more information contact Joanne Thorns:
regionalofficer@necat.org.uk



Stella Maris invites you to a Day of Prayer & Pilgrimage
to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne

Saturday 4th June 2022

led by the Rt Rev Paul Mason,
Stella Maris Bishop Promoter, England & Wales

*A peaceful day of prayer and reflection. Join us to pray for seafarers and for everyone
involved in our ministry and charity.*

- Celtic Prayers on the Green 12noon
- Concelebrated Mass in St Mary the Virgin Church 3pm
- Saturday Safe Crossing Times 9:10am - 5:05pm

Parish groups, families & individuals all welcome.
For further information please contact Regional Port Chaplains
Paul Atkinson (07906 212 426) or Peter Barrigan (07713 924 504)

Stella Maris is an agency of the Catholic Church which supports the spiritual and practical
needs of seafarers, fishers, and peoples of the sea.

www.stellamaris.org.uk | facebook: @StellaMarisOrg
twitter: @StellaMarisOrg | instagram: @stellamaris_uk

Registered Charity numbers: England and Wales 1069833, Scotland SC043085
Registered Company number: 3320318

News from the Diocese

Catholic Social Teaching:

Catholic Social Teaching have their own monthly newsletter bringing a variety of information from its members of how CST has helped them and examples of CST in action around the Diocese. You can [read or download](#) the latest issue (May 2022) now.

Year of the Eucharist

This Diocesan Year aims to celebrate the Eucharist at the heart of the life and mission of the Church and to gather people back to the Mass and the Sacraments. We are to grow as a Diocese in our love and appreciation of the Eucharist. We are to deepen our appreciation of its celebration through the liturgy. We are to revitalise and renew our faith through a deepening prayer and devotion of the Eucharist. And we are to go out and serve the world through the nourishment we receive.

Eucharistic Festival – Save the date! On the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, our Diocese will celebrate a Eucharistic Festival at Ushaw on Sunday 19 June 2022. Further details will follow.

Bishop Robert's [Reflections](#) are available on the Year of the Eucharist page.

The second Year of the Eucharist [reflection booklet](#) 'Encountering the Son' is available to download and read. The booklet contains reflections written by voices from across the Diocese and invite us to reflect on our relationship with the Son.

All are welcome to attend the monthly **Holy Hour** on the first Sunday of each month between 2.30pm and 3.30pm, held at St Andrew's Church, Worswick Street, Newcastle. The next Holy Hour will be held on Sunday 5 June. Organised by the Association of the Eucharist, we invite you to spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament as part of this Diocesan Year of the Eucharist. Refreshments are served afterwards.

Interreligious Relations

Joint Christian / Muslim visit to Pray for Peace, an event for women and young children only. The Christian and Muslim Prayer for Peace event, which feels more poignant this year with the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, will take place on Saturday 25 June at 2.30pm at the historic Lady Chapel which is situated in Jesmond Dene. Being held at St Mary's Chapel, Reid Park Road, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne. The event is free to attendees.



In this Pentecost retreat we will reflect on the role of the Holy Spirit in John's Gospel and pray for the release of the Spirit in our lives, that we may learn how to act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with our God. There will be times of input, times of silence and times of prayer and praise to help us open ourselves more fully to God.

The retreat takes place from Friday 3 June (6.30pm) – Sunday 5 June (2.00pm).

Register your place by [clicking here](#).

A Parish Gathering

Would you like to be involved in organising or volunteering to help in a St John XXIII parish gathering, this is to help all parishes in the Washington and Penshaw cluster to come together as one? This could be either a summer fair, parish picnic, bring & buy, sports day etc, all suggestions are welcome, this is your gathering. All ages are welcome to organise, or volunteer, so this event is fully inclusive of all parishioners. Forms are available at the back of each church for suggestions and volunteers, please write down your name and contact details so we can get in touch. We hope to organise the event for the beginning of July before the school holidays. For any other details contact Stewart Bell (St John Boste) 07758934818

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

We offer our sincere congratulations to Her Majesty, The Queen of the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee.

There will be many events and activities celebrating the Jubilee during the holiday weekend from Thursday 2nd June to Sunday 5th June. To find out more please [click here](#).

The Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The Bishops' Conference establishes that, at all Sunday Masses on 4–5 June 2022, each parish prays for Her Majesty the Queen to mark her Platinum Jubilee by including an intention in the Prayer of the Faithful and by reciting at the end of Mass (after the Prayer after Communion and before the Final Blessing) the Prayer for the Queen. Parishes may also wish to sing the chant *Domine, salvum fac* and/or the National Anthem.

Model intention for the Prayer of the Faithful

We pray for Elizabeth, our Queen; may she continue to know the steadfast love of God and serve her people faithfully.

Domine, salvum fac

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the chant 'Domine, salvum fac'. The first staff begins with a large 'D' and contains the lyrics: 'omine, sál-vam fac * réginam nóstram E- lí-sa-beth: et ex-áudi nos'. The second staff continues with the lyrics: 'in dí-e, qua invocavé-rimus te.' The notation is in a simple, square-note style with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat.

(O Lord, save Elizabeth, our Queen and hear us on the day we call upon you.)

PRAYER FOR THE QUEEN

O Lord, save Elizabeth, our Queen. **R:** And hear us on the day we call upon you.

O Lord, hear my prayer. **R:** And let my cry come before you.

The Lord be with you. **R:** And with your spirit.

Almighty God, we pray, that your servant Elizabeth, our Queen,
who, by your providence has received the governance of this realm,
may continue to grow in every virtue,
that, imbued with your heavenly grace,
she may be preserved from all that is harmful and evil and,
being blessed with your favour may, with the royal family,
come at last into your presence,
through Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life
and who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen

Encountering the Son

The Vicariate for Faith and Mission has now produced the '*Encountering the Son*' booklet, which is the second of a series of three booklets to accompany the Year of the Eucharist and our Diocesan Synodal reflection. The booklet is available by [clicking here](#).

Young Adult Prayer Group

Young Adults (including uni students) from across the area are invited for a time of Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament with some music and reflection.

Held every Monday in term time from 7.00pm to 8.00pm at St. Andrew's Church, Worswick Street, Newcastle, followed by social time in a local pub.

Drop in for a few minutes even if you cannot stay for the whole hour!

Listening Ear Service

Would you like someone to talk to?

Trained listeners are available who can offer a confidential listening service to anyone who needs a listening ear. We are fortunate to have three trained in our parish, or you can request someone from another parish if you prefer. Issues might include loss, anxiety, loneliness or other matters of concern. An initial phone call can be made with the option of meeting one to one after that or continuing on the telephone.

Please contact 07384853672 leaving your name and contact details and a listener will get in touch.

'Being listened to and heard is one of the greatest desires of the human heart.'

you are invited to QUEEN'S JUBILEE PICNIC

at

ST JOSEPH'S, BIRTLEY, CHURCH GROUNDS

on

SUNDAY, 5TH JUNE 2022 from 2.00pm - 4.00pm

(we can use Parish Centre Lounge if weather inclement)

Theme Colours - **Red, White & Blue**

Fancy Dress Optional

Bring your own picnic, refreshments & flags

Prize for best home-made crown



Music

Games

Craft Table

Ukrainian families in our Parish Update

We currently have two families, that we have been made aware of, stopping with Parishioners. The host families have everything that they need and have been helping their guests settle in and also navigate through the paperwork to register for schools, work etc.

What can we do to help our Ukrainian families? The Ukrainian families want to support the country that has given them refuge, by working and paying taxes as well as sending some money home to support their families who are still there. As they are looking for work, are you aware of any jobs advertised on social media. in shop windows or word of mouth? If so, could you please contact the host families with this information.

Louise is host to a mother with a young child. Her guest is a former Deputy HR Director for a large Ukrainian hotel chain and feels that she would be most suited to admin work in an office or in retail. As she doesn't drive and has a young child, she would prefer something not too far away. Her level of English is good.

Louise's mobile number is 07432 532142.

Rachael's family are host to a mother and father with young children. The father would be happy to do most types of work, but his main skills are in construction, house maintenance and repairs and car repairs. The mother asked if there was some cleaning work she could do.

Rachael's email is rachaelreid@live.com

If you are hosting a family or are wanting to support or house Ukrainian individuals/families, there are several support groups in Facebook:

*Homes for Ukraine Sunderland & surrounding areas support group

*Sunderland for Ukraine

*UK hosts for Ukrainian families support group

*We UKrainians (this is Rachael's brother and his partner, Nadia, who can match people. You may have seen him on TV or heard him on the radio). The link to Paul's website - they have regular updates about the work they are carrying out, as well as links to donate or offer other kinds of help: <http://weukrainians.org/>

Many thanks for your continued support and prayers.

Certificate in Pastoral Ministry – starting in September 2022

Are you currently involved in Church ministry but wish you knew more about your faith? Do you sometimes lack confidence and feel you could benefit from further training and formation? Do you want to grow in your faith and ministry and perhaps find new ways to share your gifts with others? We have a course designed just for you.

The Certificate in Pastoral Ministry is an online, two-year learning experience created with the busy person in mind. It will take you on a journey of discovery about key aspects of the Catholic faith while helping you to reflect upon your own ministry and the ministry of others.

To find out more join us online for one of our information evenings: Tuesday 14th June 2022 or Wednesday 22nd June 2022 from 7:30pm - 9:00pm. To register your interest for one of the information evenings, or for further information please

email adminfaith.mission@diocesehn.org.uk.

Charity Dinner Dance at Rainton Arena - for the Peru Mission

On Friday 17th June 2022 at 7pm the Peru Mission is hosting a Charity Dinner Dance at Rainton Arena, Mecatile Road, Houghton Le Spring, DH4 5PH.

This may be your first chance to dress up for more than two years. There will be a three course meal, a brief overview of The Peru Mission's work, raffle, auction and dancing. Entertainment will be supplied by

VIRAMUNDO, a Brazilian Dance Band based in

London. Tickets cost £60 each. Please contact Tony Joy at tony.joy@lambtonpm.co.uk to make a reservation for a seat, several seats or for a table of ten persons.



St Bede's Church

Glynis Rutter along with Denise Quinn have started a parent and toddler group, all are welcome every Monday at St. Bede's Church Hall.

It runs from 9.30am to 11.15am. If anyone is interested they can email Glynis at: glynis.rutter@ntlworld.com



Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre.

You might remember a few weeks ago we appealed for items to make up 'Friendship Packs' for the women at the Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre. The Centre is now operational and will have 80 women who are seeking asylum. A local visitor group has been set up and can give 'Friendship Packs' to the women. More packs will be greatly appreciated, if you can contribute any of the items below, please leave in the box provided at the back of church or in the container outside Fr Keith Walker's back door at St. Peter's in Low Fell.

The friendship packs are made up of;

Shower gels

Moisturisers

Eye masks (for sleeping)

Ear plugs

Slipper socks

Hand-written cards saying we are thinking of them in solidarity.

Prayers for the Sick or Recently Deceased

It is important that we have the opportunity to pray for our loved ones who are sick or indeed, those who have sadly died. The parish community can help and would like to include those loved ones in their 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. (This is also to comply with Government GDPR instructions.)

[For Prayers for the Sick](#)

[For Prayers for the Deceased](#)

If you would like to include the sick, or recently deceased, in your daily prayers the names are published separately to this newsletter. They are also available on our website and will be sent with this newsletter on a regular basis.

If a request is made for prayers for someone who is currently sick their name will remain on the list for four weeks only. If you would like prayers to continue please submit another request form.

Changes to the Sick List

The circumstances of those listed on our sick list may change. If that is the case with the person you have requested prayers for, please [click here](#) and complete the form to advise us of the change in circumstances.

CHARIS (Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service)

Arrangements are now in place for **'Celebrating the gifts of the Holy Spirit: A Mass for Pentecost'** at **St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle**, at **1.00pm on Saturday 28 May 2022**. More details will be made available in the events section of the Diocesan website and shared with sisters and brothers in our contact list.

Thanks go to those from the Vicariate who have redesigned our presence on the Diocesan Website. Several people who participated in our launch events spoke of a difficulty they had experienced in finding prayers groups they could join. In our Diocese we are blessed with five well established Charismatic Prayer groups; **Anawim in Newcastle, Agape in Sunderland, New Life in Durham, Theotokos in Stockton and Bethany in Darlington**. Descriptions of each prayer group and contact details on the **CHARIS** section of the Diocesan website will hopefully now make it much easier for people to find a prayer group they can join, in addition to information on occasional larger gatherings for people from the prayer groups hosted by Emmanuel.

Please continue to pray for the work of the team.

John Wheeler

Co-ordinator

Hexham & Newcastle Diocesan Service of Communion

[Special Collection Next Week – World Communications Sunday](#)

OK – so who doesn't have a 'Smart Phone'? How does Bishop Robert learn to respond to local newspaper, TV and radio interviews? It is said there are tons of ways of communicating with people – just ask someone you know from Year 4! Our Church needs to learn how to be in touch with the world we live in. This Collection helps to train Church leaders to cope with media questions, and how to train local people to work with local media.

Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal: How you can help

Like you, CAFOD is deeply disturbed by the ongoing attacks on Ukraine.

Together, we stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people and send our prayers to our sister organisation Caritas Ukraine, and those Caritas agencies in neighbouring countries, who are already helping people affected by this conflict.



As one Caritas, we stand united with them.

We are part of one of the largest aid networks in the world – Caritas Internationalis, and because of our global reach and local presence, we are there when an emergency hits.

To read more please [click here](#).

Returning to Mass at Pentecost

An invite by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to 'Return to Mass at Pentecost' was approved by the Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference on Friday 6 May 2022.

This is the bread come down from heaven (John 6:58)

A beautiful hallmark of the Catholic faith is the profound desire to participate in the Holy Mass and share in the Eucharist. We do so with deep gratitude and joy. The Eucharist gives the Church her identity – "The Eucharist makes the Church, and the Church makes the Eucharist." It enables us to worship Almighty God, to support each other on our journey of faith, and to be a visible sign of faith in the world. This hallmark is supported and strengthened by the precept that our fundamental Christian duty is to worship God by participating in the celebration of Mass. Attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is the greatest of all privileges, sometimes referred to as "the Sunday Obligation."

Since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, until the present time, we have shared with you our judgment that the situation of the last two years has meant that the Sunday Obligation has been impeded and has needed to be fulfilled in other ways. We thank God that this situation has now changed. The pressing challenges of the pandemic have lessened significantly. Most people have resumed the wide range of normal activities, no longer restricted by the previous Covid measures. We therefore believe that the reasons which have prevented Catholics from attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation no longer apply.

To Read the full statement please [click here](#)

Migration Issues in the UK

A Statement by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales on 'Migration issues in the UK' was approved by the Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference on Friday 6 May 2022.

To read the full statement please [click here](#).

Year of the Eucharist

This Diocesan Year aims to celebrate the Eucharist at the heart of the life and mission of the Church and to gather people back to the Mass and the Sacraments. We are to grow as a Diocese in our love and appreciation of the Eucharist. We are to deepen our appreciation of its celebration through the liturgy. We are to revitalise and renew our faith through a deepening prayer and devotion of the Eucharist. And we are to go out and serve the world through the nourishment we receive.

Eucharistic Festival – Save the date! On the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, our Diocese will celebrate a Eucharistic Festival at Ushaw on Sunday 19 June 2022. Further details will follow.

Bishop Robert's [Reflections](#) are available on the Year of the Eucharist page.

The second Year of the Eucharist [reflection booklet](#) 'Encountering the Son' is available to download and read. The booklet contains reflections written by voices from across the Diocese and invite us to reflect on our relationship with the Son.

All are welcome to attend the monthly **Holy Hour** on the first Sunday of each month between 2.30pm and 3.30pm, held at St Andrew's Church, Worswick Street, Newcastle. The next Holy Hour will be held on Sunday 5 June. Organised by the Association of the Eucharist, we invite you to spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament as part of this Diocesan Year of the Eucharist. Refreshments are served afterwards.

URGENT APPEAL

You may remember Bishop Robert's pastoral letter last week was appealing for men who hearing his letter may ask themselves: 'Is God calling me?' As our churches gradually return to some kind of normality, the laity of St John XXIII should be asking themselves, 'Is my church calling me?'

We find that our pool of volunteers that used to take care of all those little activities that keep our churches ticking over is now depleted because some are no longer able or available to perform those roles,

So, is your church calling you to be a volunteer to either welcome others to the community mass, take our collections, serve at mass, read at mass, help distribute Holy Communion, count the collection and then tidy the church afterwards (to name but a few).

Is your church calling you to help with the Children's Liturgy or start one up if your church doesn't already have one? Would you be willing to help families prepare for Baptism or our children and young people prepare for the sacraments?

Is your church calling you to help clean the church, or be part of a team to print newsletters so they can once again be available at the back of **all** our churches. The list is endless.

If the answer is **YES**, you can contact Marian Fletcher (St Bede's) who will be pleased to pass your details to the relevant church groups. You can leave a message and your contact number on 01914174413 or email Marian on sj23mf@gmail.com Alternatively, express your interest to one of our priests. Thanks.

Red Box Collection - Our Blessed Lady Immaculate

Could you please bring Your Red Box to Our Blessed Lady Immaculate on Sunday 12 or Sunday 19 June to be emptied.

James McGee will be at the back of the church after 11am Mass & will be pleased to see you & thank you for your donation.

New Social Media for the Whole Parish is Here!



Check out our new Facebook for the Parish of St John XXIII as well as a totally new Instagram video & photo sharing service.

Just go to <https://www.facebook.com/ParishStJohn23>
for our parish Facebook

and to <https://www.instagram.com/stjohnxxiiiparish/>
for our parish Instagram.



If you don't have an account, it's easy to set one up to keep up to date with what's happening in our parish.

We would welcome brief articles and photographs of church groups and their activities. If you have any suggestions for content just send them to sj23social@gmail.com

If anyone would like to support the development of the new sites please contact Lisa

HOLY ISLAND VINNIE CAMP 2022 - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED URGENTLY

Holy Island Camp will be running holidays for children in 2022. Our helpers are all volunteers and in order to go ahead successfully in 2022 we urgently need new volunteers to help in the kitchens, preparing food, washing up and clearing the dining hall. We also need caretaking staff who would be able to carry out a cleaning role. The work is tiring but also fun (you would be joining an established and very welcoming team) and the young people benefit enormously from a traditional seaside type holiday. The commitment can be for as little as three days a year in Term Time or more if you are able to help on multiple weeks or through the Summer Holidays. Camp 2022 will run for the first two separate weeks of the Summer Holiday and the last two. All helpers will be required to obtain a free Diocesan DBS check and some training. If you are interested, please [click here](#)



HOLY ISLAND CAMP SOCIAL- CEILIDH - CALLING EXISTING AND NEW CAMP VOLUNTEERS AND FRIENDS

Holy island Vinnies Camp will be holding a free social/ Ceilidh

Saturday 28th May 7:30pm - 11:30pm

(Bar open)

Blackfriars @The Ouseburn

All welcome

Celebrating Mass Together Safely



We have carefully considered the safety of our parishioners in our Churches and have therefore decided to put the following in place. This will allow our Churches to be more open for Easter and beyond - so that we can celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord with a sense of Joy and Hope for the future.



We have removed the requirement to use every other bench. However, we need to respect people who remain nervous of the current situation, therefore we will offer a A4 sheet to use if space is wanted between individuals and other people.

Stewards will be available to welcome and guide as necessary.

Sanitizer – we encourage the continued use of sanitizer on entering and leaving our Churches. Please make use of this facility.

Sacristans can once again prepare all vessels for mass and arrange their clearance afterwards.

We strongly recommend the continued wearing of face coverings in our Churches.

Eucharistic Ministers are available once again to assist with Holy Communion.

We will offer a **safe Sign of Peace** during Mass.

Altar Servers can once again serve at Mass, using best safeguarding practices.

These arrangements have been put in place to maintain safety for our parishioners in our Churches, so



Confessions

The Sacrament of Reconciliation may be offered by request.
Please contact either Fr Jim, Fr Martin, Fr Vincent or Fr Uchenna to arrange.

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 our [YouTube Channel Playlist](#), visit now and watch this month's intention.



Gift Aid and Parish Finances

For those who pay Tax the Parish can gain an extra 25% if you use Gift Aid. Now is an ideal time to start Gift Aid as we are at the start of a new financial year. You can opt to use a numbered box of envelopes, or you can pay by Standing Order. Simply fill-in the form for Gift Aid (writing "envelopes" or "standing order" at the top) and if applicable the Standing Order form. The Gift Aid form should be handed-in at church and the Standing Order form posted to your bank.

We will claim 25% of your total donation for the year so be sure that you have paid enough Tax to cover the claimed amount.

The organisers at each church are Theresa McIntyre at Our Lady Queen of Peace, Paul Carpenter/Pat McAdam at St Bede's, Michael Purdy at Our Blessed Lady's, Peter Brewster at St John Boste and Tracy Wilson at St Joseph's.

Every year at this time, some donors drop out of the scheme due to retirement etc - many thanks to them for their support, sometimes over a period of decades. The extra income the Parish has received over the years has added-up to extremely large amounts and has been invaluable.

If you have any questions at all please telephone 01914168693 and we will be pleased to assist.

For those unable to Gift Aid, please donate using cash or blue envelopes (boxes are available at the back of each church - help yourself) placing your donations on the Offertory plate at church. Under "The Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme" we are able to claim 25% of these donations but only on the first £8000 donated at each Mass centre. On the main Gift Aid scheme there is no limit.

Revised Standing Order forms and Gift Aid forms are available by clicking on the following links:

[For St John XXIII](#)

[For St Joseph's](#)

We are deeply grateful for all the support we receive

Did you receive this newsletter by email?

If not, why not sign up for the next issue to be delivered straight to your inbox!

To join the 490+ parishioners who get this newsletter directly into their email inbox [Click Here](#) and complete a simple form.

Once downloaded it can be read on the screen of your computer, tablet or mobile and you will have direct access to the links in the newsletter. Of course you can also print it out for your own use or to hand on to anyone without access to email or the internet.

Did you know that this Parish Newsletter is emailed weekly to people in far off places around Britain and even to Brazil as well as parishioners in St John XXIII and St Joseph's.

For many people during recent weeks and months, faith has been greatly supported through the use of technology. We, like many other parishes, have been able to live stream Mass and have produced this Newsletter to connect with all our parishioners.

We know however, that there are many people in our Parishes who do not have access to the internet. Whenever possible we ask you to print this newsletter (you do not have to print it in colour) and provide it direct to people that you may know who do not have an internet connection.

In addition, the Diocese has established a central Diocesan prayer resource line. This phone number, 07375 934713, allows you to leave your name and address and request a posted paper prayer resource. So if you know of

QE Hospital , QE Avenue, Gateshead, NE9 6SX	
Chaplain: Deacon Peter Jones	4820000
Durham University Hospital	3332333
Chaplain: Fr Paul Tully	3332183
Newcastle Freeman & RVI	2336161
Chaplain: Fr Mariadass Pagyasamy	Church: 2733903
Sunderland Royal Hospital	5656256
Chaplain: Mrs Linda Longstaff	5699180



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](#)

You can find prayers, reflections and images on the various websites throughout the liturgical year.