

# 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](mailto:sj23office01@gmail.com)



## In the Partnership of Benedict

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

### EASTER SUNDAY, 30TH - 31ST MARCH 2024, Year B

|                      |                             |        |  |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------|--|
| Saturday             | St Bede's                   | 7pm    | <b>Gerard Cushlow RIP</b>  |
| 30th March           | St Joseph's                 | 7.30pm | <b>Father Tony Duffy</b>   |
| Vigil                | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 8pm    | <b>David &amp; Elizabeth McCourt &amp; Deceased Family</b>           |
| Sunday               | St Bede's                   | 9am    | <b>People of the Parish</b>  |
| 31st March           | St John Boste               | 9.30am | <b>Linda Banks RIP</b>   |
|                      | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am   | <b>Greg Moorhouse RIP</b>  |
| <b>Easter Sunday</b> | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am   | <b>Nan, John &amp; John Jr Sweeney &amp; Deceased Sweeney Family</b> |
|                      | St Joseph's                 | 11am   | <b>People of the Parish</b>  |

#### First Reading: Peter Instructs Cornelius

##### Acts 10:34.37-43

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: "You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses - we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead - and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name."

**Response to the Psalm: This day was made by the Lord: We rejoice and are glad.**

#### Second Reading: New Life in Christ

##### Colossians 3:1-4

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at

God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed - and he is your life - you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

**Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed: let us celebrate the feast then, in the Lord. Alleluia!**

#### The Gospel: (John 20:1-9): The Empty Tomb

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb," she said, "and we don't know where they have put him." So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

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 1st April 2024

| Day  | Church                      | Time    |                                    |
|--|-----------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|
| Monday 1st April                               | St Bede                     | 10am    | <b>Priests Intention</b>           |
|  | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 7pm     | <b>Fr Patrick Kennedy RIP</b>      |
| Tuesday 2nd April                              | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am    | <b>Kath Naughton (Poorly)</b>      |
|  | St Joseph                   | 7pm     | <b>Julie-Khan Starkey RIP</b>      |
| Wednesday 3rd April                            | St Bede                     | 10am    | <b>Moira Lamb RIP</b>              |
|  | St John Boste               | 7pm     | <b>Gerard Cushlow RIP</b>          |
| Thursday 4th April                             | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am    | <b>In Thanksgiving</b>             |
|  | St Joseph                   | 12 noon | <b>Agnes McGrahan RIP</b>          |
| Friday 5th April                               | St John Boste               | 10am    | <b>In Thanksgiving (EM)</b>        |
|  | St Joseph                   | 10am    | <b>Peter Mulcahy RIP</b>           |
| Saturday 6th April                             | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am    | <b>Pat Green RIP</b>               |
|  | St Joseph                   | 5pm     | <b>Alex Gilfillan RIP</b>          |
| <b>Vigil</b>                                   | St Bede                     | 5pm     | <b>People of the Parish</b>        |
|  |                             |         |                                    |
| Sunday 7th April<br><b>Divine Mercy Sunday</b> | St John Boste               | 9:30am  | <b>Syd and Peter McElhenny RIP</b> |
|  | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am    | <b>John Cantwell RIP</b>           |
|  | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am    | <b>People of the Parish</b>        |

## Happy Easter

The Priests and Deacons would like to wish all parishioners a very Happy Easter and every Blessing of the Risen Christ. Thank you to all those who helped prepare the Churches for the Easter services and ceremonies.

### The Lord is truly risen, alleluia!

We hear in John's Gospel that *"It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb."* How amazing that this woman, who had accompanied Jesus throughout his ministry and even stood at the foot of the cross, was now given the awesome privilege of being the very first person to be entrusted with the Good News that Jesus Christ had *"conquered death and unlocked for us the path to eternity."*

Her response, and the response of every true disciple, was to share the good news with others and so she *"came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved"*. Her joy was over-whelming and Peter and John responded by running as fast as they possibly could to witness for themselves this life-changing news of the Resurrection.

How do we respond to the Good News that the Lord Jesus, who came to live amongst us as the Son of God and to share in our humanity, who revealed to us the tender love of the Father and was willing to suffer and die for us and offer to us the gift of Eternal Life?

Do we live out the commission entrusted to us in our Baptism - *"The Lord Jesus made the deaf hear and the dumb speak. May he soon touch your ears to receive his word, and your mouth to proclaim his faith, to the praise and glory of God our Father."*

Does the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus transform our daily lives of faith so that *"our hearts burn within us"* and are we passionate in sharing the love of Christ with everyone that we meet? Do we just speak of our Christian faith, or do we demonstrate integrity in the way that we live our daily lives within our families, our relationships, our workplace and our parish communities?

Each and every-one of us is created in the image and likeness of God, is adopted by the Father through Baptism as a beloved daughter or son and is blessed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We each have a unique and irreplaceable contribution to make in building God's Kingdom, so let's all rejoice in the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus and proclaim the Good News to the whole world.

**Psalm 117: This day was made by the Lord; we rejoice and are glad.**  
Deacon Peter

**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

**Holy Week is a special opportunity to quench his** love-thirsty heart with our loving attention to all that He experiences, suffers, and expects from us. It's a great opportunity to bring our intimacy with Him back to life! We cannot even imagine the graces He has in store for those who worship Him or who humbly strive to worship Him. I invite all Parishioners to a full part in the "Great Three days of Jesus Passion- Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday." Thankyou.

**Special Collection – Next Week - Sick and Retired Priests:** At the present moment there are 67 active priests in our diocese – and just over 48 have retired. When we began Forward Together In Hope in 2014 we had 110 active priests in the Diocese. It is quite likely that by 2030 we will have much less than 50 active priests and far more who will need specialist care. These priests have spent their lives serving us in our diocese. We now have 86....and many will want to continue to serve without having the responsibilities of being a parish priest. Our collection goes to enabling them to live as full a life as they possibly can.

**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 are 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.

**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!

**International Organ Day Saturday 20th April:** Have you ever wondered what it would be like to play such a huge musical instrument? To celebrate International Organ Day why not come along to one or both sessions and enjoy an introduction to two of our historic parish organs. It is an opportunity to learn the story of our own instruments, to discover how they work and a chance to sit at the keyboard and experience the King of Instruments. Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penshaw, at 10.00 a.m. Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington, 1.00 p.m. Open to all ages, musicians and non-musicians. If you wish to attend, please contact Michael. Contact: Michael Leckenby,

07981396544, [m vleckenby@yahoo.com](mailto:m vleckenby@yahoo.com)

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

**St Bede Toddler Group** - The toddler group is now full so we have opened a waiting list. However we will have places from September as there are several children leaving to go to nursery.

Please contact Joan Formosa on 07504 579591 if you wish to add a name to the waiting list. Joan will contact you when a place becomes available.

**Divine Mercy Sunday** 7th April - Devotions at Our Lady Queen of Peace - 2.30pm. Followed by refreshments in hall. All welcome.

**Congratulations to All at St. John Boste School** on their recent Ofsted inspection grade as 'Outstanding'. Well done.

**CAFOD Fundraiser Dinner** - OBLI Parish Rooms, 25th April at 7pm. Hot & Cold Dinner & Entertainment with soft drinks. £10 per person. Tel 07703855747 to book. You may bring own Alcoholic beverages.

**CAFOD fundraiser** - support please. Do you have any unused gifts that we could use for Raffle Prizes. Please contact 07703855747 if you can help.

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Newsletter** is now available by [clicking here](#).

**The family of the late Gerard Cushlow** would like to thank everyone for the mass intentions, cards of condolence received and to the many people who attended his requiem mass. Kind donations in lieu of flowers raised approx. £400 each in aid of Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis and Alzheimer's Research UK

### Other News

**"It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name."** The new and eternal covenant has been sealed. Christ is risen from the dead. Alleluia is our song! Might God be calling you as a priest to bring peace and consolation through the Sacrament of Reconciliation? **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. The next Discernment Evening is on **Tuesday 9th April at St Joseph's Church, Thorneyholme Terrace, Stanley, DH9 0BL between 6.00pm - 8.00pm** There will be a time of Prayer, talk/discussion, followed by a meal together If you would like to attend, or for more information, Speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#)

**We Dare to Say: A resource for faith-sharing groups on the Lord's Prayer** - We Dare To Say is a resource for small group faith-sharing and for individual meditation, featuring five sessions each based on a line from the Lord's Prayer. Each session includes scripture, prayers and a reflection with questions. The connection of the Our Father with the sacraments and the devotional life is explored, and wisdom from the saints is offered for the spiritual growth of group participants and individuals alike. *'-This single short prayer of Christ has everything that needs to be said about God, his kingdom, his life, about all of us'* - Fr Alexander Schmemmann. You can access the 'We Dare to Say' resource by [clicking here](#).

**Pray the Rosary with Bishop Barron** - We are now through this holy Lenten season and we hope Word on Fire's content has helped you make this a fruitful journey. Today, we invite you to [pray](#) the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary along with Bishop Barron. Also, take this opportunity to make an [offering](#) that will support our evangelization efforts. Our videos, podcasts, homilies, and articles are all designed to help strengthen your faith and evangelize the culture. May this sacred season give us the grace to take up the crosses of our own lives with joy and unite our suffering with that of our Savior. We pray that with your [support](#), we will help bring many new souls to Christ at Easter. God bless you.

If anyone has any second-hand religious DVD's to donate to a charitable cause, e.g., Lourdes, Fatima, Medjugorje, or lives of the saints etc. Please leave them for Fr Martin Wheaton at your local church.

**SVP Society Membership Support Officer (MSO)** for the Newcastle and Hexham Diocese to support member recruitment and development, home-based role (22.5 hours per week – 3 days equivalent). It requires the ability to travel around the diocese, own transport is essential, expenses are paid. For further information and details how to apply contact Lance Philpott, Head of Membership by [clicking here](#). Closing date for applications is Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April.

**Walking Retreat - Led by the Minsteracres Team** - £15 - Wednesday 3rd April from 10am to 5pm. Enjoy a walk of seven to ten miles through the beautiful countryside around Minsteracres, with time for prayer, reflection and sharing the beauty of creation. You will need suitable footwear, warm, weatherproof clothing and a packed lunch. Please [click here](#) for more Information.

**A Circle of Prayer - Led by Joyce McAndrew** - £45 - Saturday 20th April 2024 from 10am to 4pm. This is an inviting programme which explores the beauty of music whilst incorporating responsive movement which echoes both feelings, and mood as non-verbal self-expression which touches both the soul and the imagination. Throughout this retreat you will have an opportunity to learn both... Please [click here](#) for more Information.

**Marriage Preparation Days-** Saturday 13 April: St Hilda's, Sunderland SR5 2JD. Saturday 18 May: St Robert of Newminster, Morpeth NE61 1QF. Saturday 21 September: St Robert of Newminster, Morpeth NE61 1QF. Saturday 9 November: St Mary's, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ. Engaged couples can find **more information** [by clicking here](#). To find and **book on a course**, [please click here](#).

**North East Catholic History Society** - The North East Catholic History Society is 50 years old this year. It was founded to encourage and promote the very rich Catholic History of our region. They meet five times a year for lectures and have the excellent magazine "Northern Catholic History" published yearly. Excursions to places of interest are organised for members. The Society is looking to attract new members. Currently, they meet on Wednesday afternoons at Joseph's Centre, Gateshead, directly opposite the Metro and bus interchange. We welcome visitors too. After many years of excellent service, their Programme Secretary is retiring, and they are looking for a replacement to organise talks. In recent years, they have established great contact with Ushaw and their fine group of researchers. You can read about The Society on the diocesan website or contact Margaret Henderson [by clicking here](#).

**A thank you from CAFOD**, who, once again, are inspired by the amazing support from the Catholic community in England and Wales. During Lent so many of you have responded with love – and those gifts are getting to work quickly to provide practical help to those who need it. Through [this year's Lent appeal](#) you've met James, working so hard to provide for his family. As we look forward to the blessings of Easter together, you can watch this beautiful prayer which James prays each morning [by clicking here](#). Let us join James in thanking God for all the gifts we have been given and ask God to guide and protect us as we go about our daily lives. If you haven't donated and wish to do so, you still have the chance today to share in hope and practical support to our sisters and brothers overseas. To donate please [click here](#). A heartfelt thank you for being part of our CAFOD family and for your steadfast support, in whatever way you have got involved during Lent.

**Prayer Vigil at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre (DIRC)** - We started to hold in person prayer vigils at the Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre, Medomsley on the first Sunday of each month at 3.00pm. It is a powerful witness; we have between 25 and 35 people attending each month. **Our next vigil will be on Sunday 7 April 2024 at 3.00pm at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre, Medomsley DH8 6QY.** It would be wonderful if you could join us there, but if not, perhaps you would consider joining us in prayer from home. The revised prayer vigil booklet can be found [here](#). Please contact Liz Archibald by [clicking here](#) if you would like more information. For more information around the issues of refugees and asylum seekers, please look at our [webpage](#).

**Day of Consolation - Led by Chris Smith** - £30 - Wednesday, 1st May from 10am to 4pm. An opportunity to join us on this poignant retreat day, for people who have experienced bereavement, grief, loss or significant change, giving them an opportunity to share a safe space, to be heard, to share with others who have had similar experiences and finding courage, hope and consolation. Please [click here](#) for more Information.

## Reflections

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

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

[Saturday Examen](#) [Easter Sunday](#)

## 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](#)