

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

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

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY, 6TH – 7TH APRIL 2024, Year B

Saturday 6th April Vigil	St Bede's St Joseph's	5pm 5pm	People of the Parish Alex Gilfillan RIP
Sunday 7th April Divine Mercy Sunday	St John Boste Our Lady Queen of Peace Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	9.30am 10am 11am	Syd and Peter McElhenny RIP John Cantwell RIP People of the Parish

First Reading: Christian Sharing

Acts 4:32-35

The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed for his own use anything that he had, as everything they owned was held in common. The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power, and they were all given great respect. None of their members was ever in want, as all those who owned land or houses would sell them, and bring the money from them, to present it to the apostles; it was then distributed to any members who might be in need.

Response to the Psalm: Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end.

Second Reading: Begotten by God

1 John 5:1-6

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and whoever loves the Father that begot him loves the child whom he begets. We can be sure that we love God's children if we love God himself and do what he has commanded us; this is what loving God is - keeping his commandments; and his commandments are not difficult, because anyone who has been begotten by God has already overcome the world; this is the victory over the world - our faith. Who can overcome the world? Only the man who believes that Jesus is the Son of God; Jesus Christ who came by water and blood, not with water only, but with water and blood; with the Spirit as another witness - since the Spirit is the truth.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! Jesus said: "You believe because you can see me, Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe. Alleluia!"

The Gospel: (John 20:19-31): Jesus in the Upper Room

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, "Peace be with you," and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you." After saying this he breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained." Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, "We have seen the Lord," he answered, "Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe." Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, "Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe." Thomas replied, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe." There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

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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 8th April 2024

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 8th April	St Bede	10am	Priests Intention
	The Annunciation of the Lord Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm	George Maw (deceased anniversary)
Tuesday 9th April	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Tom Pearson RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Maureen Reid RIP
Wednesday 10th April	St Bede	10am	Priests Intention
	St John Boste	7pm	Priests Intention
Thursday 11th April	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Priests Intention
	St Stanislaus St Joseph	12 noon	Michael Ryder RIP
Friday 12th April	St John Boste	10am	Priests Intention
	St Joseph	10am	Steve Hill RIP
Saturday 13th April	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	Repose of the Soul of Norman Smithson
	St Joseph	5pm	Susan & Brian Towns RIP
	Vigil St Bede	5pm	Pat Powell (recently deceased)
Sunday 14th April 3rd Sunday of Easter	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Andrew Long RIP 45th Anniversary
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Jim Walker RIP

" When the doors were locked... Jesus came and stood in their midst" (John 20:19-20)

Did Jesus order the doors to open? Did he have a key? Or did Jesus simply walk through the locked doors? How Jesus got into the upper room through locked doors is an interesting question, but not the most important point. We can debate how he got through them in his post-resurrection body and have different views, it's something open to debate. What we know as a matter of divine faith is that Jesus became present to them after his death, in bodily form. He passed through something that was closed to reach those he loved. Physical things could not stop his love for them.

"Peace be with you, receive the Holy Spirit " Jesus uses this phrase twice in our Gospel this week (John 20: 18-31). He's affirming his apostles. Firstly to calm their fear, remember they are behind closed doors because they are terrified the Jews might come for them at any moment. Secondly he wants to calm them before breathing the Holy Spirit into them, in order for them to have the power to complete their apostolic mission to the world, in every age.

The Holy Spirit transformed them from cowards hiding behind closed doors into apostolic warriors. Without fear they would go out into the world preaching the good news to everyone they met .They would transform bodies just by their healing touch or by simply casting their shadow (Acts 4: 14-17), as well as raising people from the dead (Acts 9:36-42, Acts 20:9-12) They performed these and many more miracles, such was the power of the Holy Spirit poured into them by Jesus.

What about doubting Thomas and what about us? In a way those two things are linked. We all have a little of the doubting of Thomas in us, even those strongest in faith. But we are called to believe in the Word, the Divine Logos, in the Church and the Spirit that guides her and each one of us. We are called to persevere in faith. Even when the doubting Thomas in each of us raises his head. Confident that in the end all of Jesus' words will be seen to be true, "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." **(John 20:29)**

Fr Martin Wheaton

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

Special Collection – This 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, mleckenby@yahoo.com

A Year of Prayer - In preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year 'Pilgrims of Hope', 2024 has been designated a Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. 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](#).

Synod - The Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle has been on its own synodal path over the past two years within the universal synod on synodality. The Listening Exercises were intended to 'walk together', to listen to one another, and to see how the Holy Spirit might be speaking through the people of God. The results of this have been published [here](#) if you missed them last month. We want to encourage synodal conversations and there is a day on synod skills being held at Ushaw. To help people gain confidence. I encourage anyone interested in taking a lead in synodal working to come and explore, [please click here](#) for details.

Other News

"As the Father sent me, so am I sending you." The life of a priest is guided by the Holy Spirit and he can be taken along many paths. Is the Holy Spirit guiding you to consider the discerning a vocation to the priesthood? 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.

Tyne & Wear Citizens invite you – members, friends and supporters – to our Mayoral Assembly on Monday 22 April 2024, 6.00 – 8.00pm at the Tyne Theatre & Opera House in Newcastle. At this Assembly, the main candidates will be asked to respond to some of the issues that Tyne and Wear Citizens have been campaigning on after an extensive listening campaign across the region, including the cost of living crisis, housing, racial justice in education and transport. We would love you to join us. For more information, [please click here](#).

Big Lent Walk: Please give a big thank you to everyone who donated.. We (the children of St. Bede's Catholic Primary School) raised **£650** for Cafod.

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 7th April.

Deliver Us From Evil - A set of useful prayers and supplications, humble requests for the Lord's help, that can be used by Catholics in times of fear, distress and temptation. The Catholic Truth Society (CTS) has published a new booklet by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales offering a treasury of prayers drawn from Holy Scripture and Sacred Tradition that can be used by Catholics to protect themselves from the powers of darkness. Discover the new booklet [here](#).

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.

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.

Staycation at the Emmaus Village: If you are looking for a staycation in the Derwent Valley, whilst supporting the work that YMT do for the young people of the Diocese, the Emmaus Village is the place for you. For more information and booking rates please [click our website link](#). Please [click this link](#) to download the Emmaus Village brochure.

Eamon Duffy: Holy Name Parish invites you to hear this eminent historian speak on: **Celebrity Priest: Robert Hugh Monsignor Benson and the End of the World**, on **Saturday 4 May in the church** (North Jesmond Avenue NE2 3JX). Open at 11:00 am for 11:30 am start; ends at 12:30 pm.

Reflections

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

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

[Saturday Examen](#) [Divine Mercy 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