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: 0191 4163583
Email: StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk
Parish Website: https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk
Parish Secretary: Anne Ridley 0191 4163583
Office Hours: Tuesday 9am - 2:30pm (Penshaw),
Wednesday & Thursday 9am - 2:30pm (Washington Village)

In the Partnership of Benedict
Birtley, Chester-le-Street, Penshaw, Sacriston, Washington

All Saints Day, 31st October – 1st November 2026 Year A

Saturday 31st Oct **Vigil**	St Joseph	5pm	**All Souls/ All Saints**
	St Bede	5pm	**Angela Robinson & daughter Emma Carr (RIP)**
Sunday 1st Nov **All Saints Day**	St John Boste	9:30am	**People of the Parish**
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	**Linda Harrigan (RIP)**
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	**George & Mary Bland Golden Wedding Anniversary**

First reading: The Martyrs in Safe Keeping **Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14**

I, John, saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, 'Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.' And I heard the number of the sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel. After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels were standing round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.' Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?' I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' And he said to me, 'These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

Response to the Psalm: ***Such are the people who seek your face, O Lord***.

Second Reading: We Shall Be Like Him **1 John 3:1-3**

Beloved: See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Gospel Acclamation: : Alleluia, alleluia. Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, says the Lord, and I will give you rest. Alleluia.

The Gospel: The Beatitudes **Matthew 5:1-12a**

At that time: Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'
You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.'

Fr. Martin Morris	0191 416 3583	Fr Andrew Shaw	0739 983 6695
Fr. Martin Morris	0754 470 9356	Deacon Frank O'Neill	0779 115 5845
Fr Martin Wheaton	0770 996 1040	Deacon Tony Joy	0779 989 3419
Fr Andrew Shaw	0191 649 8257		

Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 2nd November 2026 (Streamed Mass *)			
Day	**Church**	**Time**	
Monday 2nd November **All Souls Day**	St Bede	10am	**Commemoration of the Faithful Departed**
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	12 noon	**Holy Souls**
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	**June Ford**
Tuesday 3rd November **Ss Martin de Porres & Winifride**	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	**John O'Keefe**
	St Joseph	7pm	**Nora Stout (RIP)**
Wednesday 4th November **St Charles Borromeo**	St Bede	10am	**Vera & Paul Monaghan & deceased family members**
	St John Boste	7pm	**Tom & Jane Rutter & Family**
Thursday 5th November **St Faustina Kowalska**	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	**Kevin Taylor**
	St Joseph	Noon	**Bob Fish**
Friday 6th November **St Illtud**	St Joseph @ St Benet's	9.15am	**Priest's Intention**
	St John Boste	10am	**Priest's Intention**
Saturday 7th November **St Willibrord**	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am	**Deceased members of the Parish**
Vigil	St Joseph	5pm	**Viola Summers (RIP)**
	St Bede	5pm	**People of the Parish**
Sunday 8th November **The 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time**	St John Boste	9:30am	**Burdis & Bengston Families**
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	**Ann Howarth (RIP)**
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	**Mr. Oswald Shannon (RIP)**

Recently Deceased Stuart Clark,

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

All Saints Reflection by Dianne Bergant

Too often saints are depicted as people who are so extraordinary that we could never identify with them. Their commitment to God and virtue is unwavering, their trust in divine providence unshakable, and their unselfish service of others puts everything that we do to shame. Such a depiction is unfortunate, because someone who was not first a genuine human being would probably never grow into the kind of holiness to which we are all called.

What actually makes a saint? Extraordinary feats of courage or self-denial? No! It is the love that God has bestowed on us that makes us children of God. And as children of God, we are already saints, because divine life flows within us and through us. The differences between individuals have to do with the degree and character of our willingness to cooperate with God's grace and to be like God.

Today we celebrate the lives of all those who have gone before us and have tried to live with integrity. Some of them, like Agnes or Francis of Assisi, are known to the entire church. Most of them are hidden in obscurity, known only to those who were in some way touched by their lives. But these are saints of God nonetheless, making up the vast multitude described in the first reading.

Many of us have known truly saintly people. We might have seen traces of God in the corner grocer, or the woman down the street or our own parents. Saints are children of God who "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb." They are people who have plunged themselves into the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection and brought the fruits of their baptism to the lives that they lived.

The saints we have known are people who shared their possessions, who grieved over the tragedies of the world, who did not fall into the traps set by power plays, who sought to make the world better, who showed mercy, who lived authentically pious lives and who did what they could in the name of peace.

We are already God's children. With the grace of God, who knows what we might yet become?

We aim to live-stream Mass daily at 10am every day, except Monday, streamed at 7pm, and alternate Sundays when Mass is live-streamed at either 10am or 11am. Please refer to the * on the Mass table which indicates streamed Masses.

Please click here to view from one of our Churches

What's On in the Parish

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:
Our Lady Queen of Peace each Friday 2pm - 3pm
St Joseph each Thursday evening 6.30pm - 7.30pm in Presbytery.
I do encourage as many of you as possible to spend some time in quiet prayer with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration. Fr Martin Morris.

OLOF (Our Lady's Over 50's club), Please note, the club meets on Tuesday at 1pm in the Lindisfarne Room at St Bede's. All most welcome!

Special Collection This Week: Clergy Training Fund
This weekend we will have a retiring collection for the annual Clergy training fund. The fund remains open until 15th November for any private donations. Thankyou for your generosity. Copies of a letter form Fr. John Bagnall, (Diocesan Vocations director) are at the back of each Church which gives further details of this fund.

Annual Mass for the faithful departed .
Our Mass for the Holy Souls will take place on Saturday 7th November at 10am at **Our Blessed Lady Immaculate**. In this Mass we remember and pray for all our departed loved ones, during which the names of all those who have died in our parish this last year will be read out. All present will be invited to come forward to the altar and light a candle in their memory. All welcome.

Remembrance Sunday - **On Sunday 8th November** there will be silent **Eucharistic Exposition** at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church, 4-5pm. We will conclude with Evening Prayer of the dead and Benediction. All welcome.

This Sunday is the Feast of All Saints. We celebrate the lives of our Brothers and Sisters who have gone before us marked with the sign of Faith and now share in the glory of Heaven. During the 11am Mass we also celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation for Julia Ions, John James McCourt and Anabella Pope. As we receive them into full Communion with the Church we wish them every Blessing, and congratulations. We also congratulate Israel who will make his First Holy Communion.

Choir Practice
The next choir practice at Our Lady's church will take place on Tuesday November 3rd at 7pm. New members welcome.

Holy Souls day - 2nd November. In addition to our normal Mass times on Monday 2nd November, there will be Mass at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate at 12 noon to pray for all our departed loved ones. Our Lady's Church will remain open until 6.30pm that day for private prayer for the Holy souls. " A plenary Indulgence applicable to the Holy Souls may be gained from midday of the eve to midnight of All souls on the following conditions; A prayerful visit to a Church or chapel during which the Our Father and the Apostles creed are said, to which are added sacramental confession (Within the month) and prayer for the Pope's intentions. "*(Diocesan Ordo.)*

CONFESSIONS	
Church	**Time**
Our Lady Queen of Peace	Thursday after 10am Mass
St Joseph	Thursday after Noon Mass
St John Boste	Friday after 10am Mass
Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	Saturday after 10am Mass
St Bede	Saturday after 5pm Mass

Congratulations to Emmet O'Leary who next weekend becomes a Candidate for the Priesthood. As Emett is enrolled as Candidate for Holy Orders we wish him every Blessing and keep him, and all those training for the Priesthood, in our prayers.

Remembrance Day
The children of Our Lady Queen of Peace school will join the other schools in Shiney Row at a short service at Trinity Methodist Church, Shiney Row, on Wednesday 11th at 10.30am followed by laying their wreath at the Shiney Row Cenotaph. All welcome.

Other News

Remembrance Mass – Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage
A Remembrance Mass has been organised by the Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage for Friday 20th November 7.00pm at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington.
This is open to everyone, not just those who have been to Lourdes. There are special candles that can be purchased to be burned at the Mass in memory of loved ones. These are £3.00 each and available by contacting the Lourdes office – lourdes@diocesehn.org.uk

Italian Medical Charity
We have inherited the work of the former Italian Hospital in London. After it was sold to the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, the proceeds are being used to help those of Italian origin who are in need of funds for medical treatment that the NHS has difficulty in providing or for their carers. If you would like to receive information about this please visit our website at italianmedicalcharity.co.uk or write to us at IMC, Kings Lodge, Kingsway, N12 0EW.

Litte Sisters of the Poor - Christmas Fayre
The Little Sisters of the Poor will be holding a Christmas Fayre on **Saturday 21st November 2026** at St Joseph's Home, Westmorland Road, Newcastle. The Fayre is on from 12pm until 3pm. There will be a raffle, tombola, bottle stall, arts and crafts and other stalls. They will have a children's stall where everyone is a winner. Refreshments will be available. All are welcome.

RETREAT: BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD
20th–23rd November 2026
Step away from the noise and rediscover the stillness in which we become attentive to God. Led by Fr Roger Dawson SJ, Liz Lord and Steve Noone, this residential retreat explores mindfulness, psychology and the Christian spiritual life. The weekend includes talks, contemplative prayer, Mass, Adoration and time to walk, rest and reflect in the peaceful surroundings of the Stonyhurst estate. Find out more and book: https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/be-still-and-know-that-i-am-god/

Marriage Preparation Days - Engaged couples can find **more information** here. To find and **book on a course**, please visit our website or call the phone booking service on 0800 389 3801. (In person and online courses are available.)

Minsteracres Retreats - We offer a varied programme of day, weekend and week-long events throughout the year. Please see the programme details by clicking here

The Parish of St John XXIII has a dedicated YouTube channel. Here you can watch live streams of Masses. These are indicated by an asterisk next to the Mass times on pages one and two. You can also see recordings of past Masses and Gospel Homilies. The channel can be accessed here.

SCHOOL APPEAL PANEL MEMBER RECRUITMENT

The Diocesan Department for Education are seeking volunteers to become School Appeal Panel Members.

School appeal panel members play an important role in ensuring appeals are considered fairly, independently, and objectively. This rewarding opportunity allows you to support children, young people, and families within our local community. Full training will be provided. As a school appeal panel member, you will:

Listen carefully to information presented

Consider cases fairly and impartially

Contribute to independent decision-making

Help ensure a fair and credible process for all

If you have good listening skills, sound judgement, and a commitment to fairness, we would love to hear from you. For more information, please contact: education@diocesehn.org.uk

MARRIAGE PREPARATION WEEKEND

8th–10th January 2027

Our residential Marriage Preparation Weekend offers engaged couples time and space to explore the beauty of the Church's teaching of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Led by Stefan and Eleonora Kaminski, it combines a Scripture-based theological reflection with prayer, thoughtful conversation and practical exercises for couples. Find out more and book: https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/marriage-preparation/

Other News

Life in the Spirit Seminar Series: Harlow Green - 24th September 2026—12th November 2026. Join us for this opportunity to experience the new life we are promised through baptism in the Holy Spirit. Life in the Spirit seminars are being run by the Diocesan CHARIS group and you will be very welcome to attend. Many who have attended previous seminars have spoken of how it has given their faith a real boost and helped them experience God's love in tangible ways. Venue: St Anne, Rokeby View, Harlow Green, Gateshead, NE9 7UD. Cost: Free. Time: 7pm to 8.30pm. Dates and Titles of Sessions: Receiving God's Gifts – Fr Chris Warren, 5th November 2026: Baptism in the Holy Spirit – Fr Shaun O'Neill, 12th November 2026: Growth – Nikki Dickenson, 19th November 2026: Transformation in Christ – John Wheeler. Please book your place here.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Rome & Assisi - Bishop Stephen will lead a Diocesan Pilgrimage to Rome and the centre of the Eternal City before then moving onto Assisi in Umbria, the 'green heart' of Italy, and the centre of St Francis and St Clare's ministry. The Pilgrimage will take place **22nd – 29th October 2027** at a cost of £1,725 per person. Places are limited to 50 pilgrims and places are allocated on a first come first served basis with payment of the deposit securing your place. For information and how to book please click here or type in the link. https://diocesehn.org.uk/news/diocesan-pilgrimage-to-rome-assisi/

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, 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. Read More Quick Link: Accompaniment in Difficult Times.

Reflections

Diocesan Weekly reflections can be found by clicking here.

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

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

To view the sick and recently deceased list please click here. To amend the information on the list click here.

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.

Baptism - To request a Baptism, you can download the form by clicking here or ring 07552 733540.

Parish Newsletter If you wish to request an electronic version of 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 stjohn23bulletin@gmail.com