

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



26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 26th – 27th September 2026 Year A

Saturday 26th Sept. Vigil	St Joseph	5pm	Peter Lavery RIP
	St Bede	5pm	John Graham RIP
Sunday 27th Sept. The 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	Tina & Ted Dickinson RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	A Sick Person (S)
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	People of the Parish

First reading: The Justice of God

Ezekiel 18:25-28

Thus says the Lord: 'You say, "The way of the Lord is not just." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life. Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.'

Response to the Psalm: Remember your compassion, O Lord.

Second Reading: God Emptied Himself in Christ

Philippians 2:1-11

Brothers and Sisters: If there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy; complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord, and I know them, and they follow me. Alleluia.

The Gospel: Doing the Will of the Father

Matthew 21:28-32

At that time: Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." And he answered, "I will not", but afterwards he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, "I go, sir", but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterwards change your minds and believe him.'

Fr Martin Morris 0191 416 3583
 Fr Andrew Shaw 0191 649 8257
 Deacon Tony Joy 0779 989 3419

Fr Martin Wheaton 0770 996 1040
 Deacon Frank O'Neill 0779 115 5845

Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 28th September 2026 (Streamed Mass *)			
Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 28th September Ss Wenceslaus & Lawrence Ruiz	St Bede Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am 7pm	Angela Reid RIP Anniversary Holy Souls
Tuesday 29th September Ss Michael, Gabriel & Raphael	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate St Joseph	10am* 7pm	James Irving James Scott RIP
Wednesday 30th September St Jerome	St Bede St. John Boste	10am 7pm	A Sick Person (PM) Private Intention (M)
Thursday 1st October St Therese of the Child Jesus	Our Lady Queen of Peace St Joseph	10am 12 Noon	Sarah Hughes Harriet and John Hogan RIP
Friday 2nd October The Holy Guardian Angels	St Joseph St John Boste	10am 10am*	Requiem Mass – Bob Fish Hugh McHugh
Saturday 3rd October	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Vocations to the Priesthood
Vigil	St Joseph St Bede	5pm 5pm	Deceased McLoughlin Family Fr John Francis Brady RIP
Sunday 4th October The 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste Our Lady Queen of Peace Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	9:30am 10am 11am*	People of the Parish Robert Hudson RIP Anniversary Repose of the Soul of Tom Davidson & All Fallen Soldiers

Recently Deceased: Fr John Coyle and Lucy Merrington.

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

Doing God's will!

There's a character in today's Gospel that could easily escape our notice, and if that did happen it would suit him down to the Ground! He's your 'cross me heart' 'sure as God' 'you can count on me.' Type of character. He's all promise and no delivery. His word is anything but his bond. He'll collect you on the dot, and the dot disappears into thin air. He'll be home at six, and you're still waiting at ten. He'll have the money back to you in no time, and 'no-time' never comes. He'll ring you first thing in the morning, and you're still waiting! He was supposed to turn up in the vineyard two thousand years ago, and they're still waiting!

Reliability, trustworthiness, are beautiful qualities in another. We all appreciate punctuality, it shows a certain respect for others, I think.

One thing is clear in today's reading's, is the importance of doing God's will. When Our Lady said 'Yes' to God at the Annunciation, she really meant it, and she saw it through. She was a woman of her word. So important is our 'Yes' to God, that the sinner does it in our first reading from Ezekiel, when he becomes law abiding and honest. The first son does it in the Gospel when he repents of his initial refusal and goes to work in the vineyard. The tax- collectors and prostitutes likewise conform. Jesus does it in today's second reading when he embraces the human condition and offers his life for us on the Cross.

It's our 'Yes' Christ is seeking in today's reading's. When it costs us to do the right thing, for integrity's sake. When the price of accepting the Cross is high, when we just don't want to go into the vineyard.... But we do. History is full of Men and Women who have said 'Yes' to God in some of the most challenging situations, and that 'Yes' brought them and others to true freedom and greatness. In Jesus, each of us receive the invitation to 'Go into his Vineyard.' May we have the generosity to give him a resounding 'YES' and follow it through.

Fr. Martin Morris

We aim to live-stream Mass daily at 10am, 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

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) is on each Tuesday at 1pm in the Lindisfarne Room at St Bede's. All most welcome!

Special Collection Next Week: CAFOD Family Fast Day.

Parish 'LIFE' Group. - We are hoping to begin a 'LIFE' Group in the parish soon. The group will work closely with the project of The Guild of Our Lady of Good Counsel network, in supporting Mothers and Expectant Mothers with housing, feeding, and other practical difficulties. They will also promote the Annual day for Life, and the January 'white flower appeal'. A short meeting will be held in the office at Our Lady's after 10am Mass on Saturday 3rd October for any parishioner who may wish to know more. All welcome.

Newsletter – Unfortunately we have had to temporarily suspend the circulation of the electronic version of this newsletter due to a change in the software we use. We are actively looking for ways to recommence the circulation as soon as possible. An electronic version can be found on our website or by following this link:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cAQVaRrN1zeQO5TPvC5FCKkORXwclD57/view?usp=sharing>

Family Fast Day – Harvest Family Fast Day will be on Friday 2nd October. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and on behalf of the Catholic community in England and Wales, CAFOD reaches out to people living in poverty with the practical help they need, but they can only do this thanks to the support of parishes like ourselves. Put your faith into action by praying, fasting and giving support to your neighbours. Use the CAFOD envelope in Church, donate on line at cafod.org.uk/envelope call 0303 303 3030.

The God who Speaks – Throughout the month of September, Creation Care invites us to take a closer look at our creation care responsibilities. The Jubilee Garden Project is an invitation to heal, transform and rebuild our relationship with God, with neighbours and with the earth. [More information here.](#)

St Joseph's School, Washington – Nursery and Reception Open Evening - 29th September, 4.30pm – 5.30pm. For more information contact enquiries@wsj.bwcet.com or (0191) 917 2484.

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

100th Anniversary of World Mission Sunday – 18 October – World Mission Sunday is the one Sunday in the year when the Mass is celebrated exclusively for Missionary activity. Donations are collected at these worldwide Masses and they go, in their entirety, to support churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young or poor. Envelopes will be available for donations at our churches on 18th October to support this work or you can make your donation online at the Missio website (<https://missio.org.uk>).

Other News

The Season of Creation runs until 4th October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. This is a Jubilee Year marking the 800th Anniversary of the death of St. Francis. Bishop Stephen will celebrate 11.30am Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral on Sunday 4th October and all are welcome to attend. The Diocese continues to share daily reflections via their [Facebook page](#) and invite you to share your own Celebrations of Nature from across our Diocese.

Ministeracres - The Medjugorje Centre (North East) has organised a retreat from Fri 9th - Sun 11th October. Fr. Martin Morris will be leading the retreat. The cost is £205 per person. A £50 Deposit is required. Although this is not a parish organised event, several people have shown interest but transport to Ministeracres is a problem. Some already going with cars have offered to car share. If there is enough interest a minibus could be booked but at an extra cost. For more information or booking forms please contact Marian Fletcher - Telephone 0191 4174413. For information about Medjugorje see - <https://www.medjugorje.hr/en/>

Pie and Pea Supper - The Little Sisters of the Poor are holding a Pie and Pea Supper on Wednesday 7 October at 7pm at St Joseph's Home. Tickets cost £8 and are available from St Joseph's on 0191 2731279.

Children and the Word - 17 October 2026 - Each Sunday, God's people gather together to celebrate in Word and Sacrament the mystery of Our Lord's death and resurrection. The celebration of the Mass includes everyone, both young and old. The key aim of Liturgy of the Word with Children is to proclaim a Gospel translation and facilitate interactive discussion appropriate to children. "Children and the Word" is a diocesan day of Refreshment and Reflection on Sunday Children's Liturgy and Godly Play and is prepared and led by the Liturgical Team. Date: Saturday, October 17th, Time: 10.00am-3.00pm. Cost: £15 (payable by parish or attendee as appropriate) Venue: St Hilda's Diocesan Resource Centre, West Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 7NL. Teas and coffees provided but participants will need to bring a packed lunch. Booking is essential – please register [here](#)

On Saturday 12th September, a Blue Plaque was unveiled at the Birtley-Elisabethville RC Cemetery, in the parish of St Joseph's. There are sixty buried here: military men and civilians: fathers, mothers, children - some of the 6,000 Belgians who moved to Birtley during the First World War to work in the National Projectile Factory. Fr Martin Wheaton blessed the site that has become an annual pilgrimage for many across the UK and Europe – all with fascinating stories to tell and photographs to share.

The North East Catholic History Society was founded in July 1974 to promote research into the history of the Roman Catholic Church in the north eastern counties of England. It's interests extend from the mediaeval period to the recent past and cover all aspects of the Church's life – biographical, cultural, institutional, architectural and sociological. A programme of talks for 2026-27 has been released - they take place at St Joseph's Church in Gateshead and all are very welcome to attend. For more information [please click 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](#).

Church Action on Poverty - 18 October 2026 - This year's Church Action on Poverty Sunday will take place on Sunday 18th October, with a theme of "Food, faith and fellowship". A record number of churches took part last year, and interested churches are encouraged to register now. Resource packs will be sent out over the summer, containing bring & share lunch ideas, worship materials, prayer cards, Scriptural reflections, activity sheets, and inspirational stories of churches already doing great work through food. To sign up, visit church-poverty.org.uk/sunday

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: 1st October 2026: God's Love – Andy Drozdziak, 8th October 2026: Salvation – Fr Anthony Ohaekwusi, 22nd October 2026: The New Life – Christine Dixon, 29th October 2026: 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/>

For Our Lady! For Our Faith! On the Vigil of All Saints — Pray the Rosary Through the Heart of Newcastle Sat 31 Oct 2026. The world needs our prayers. If not you, who? If not now, when? Key times: 10:00 a.m. Mass — Lady Chapel, St Dominic's, 11:00 a.m. Procession to Grey Street, 11:30 a.m. Rosary & Chaplet of Divine Mercy 12:45 p.m. Shared table — bring food to share. The event is being organised jointly by the Men of St Joseph and the Bairs of Wor Lass. Please contact Peter if you are attending (for numbers) or if you have any questions. Email: the.real.pete.forbes@gmail.com or text 0772 931 8686.

Grow as One Diocesan Family - Across the Diocese, we want to encourage a greater understanding of Gift Aid and increase the number of eligible parishioners who choose to Gift Aid their donations. Every Gift Aid Declaration generates additional income for our parishes at no extra cost to the donor, helping to support mission, ministry and pastoral life within our communities. You can sign up to Gift Aid online via our website, read about the difference the additional funding has made to a number of our churches and view our frequently asked questions. Every tick makes a difference!

Stamps, Coins & Watches - Donations can still be made to support fundraising for Little Sisters of the Poor. Used stamps, foreign or withdrawn currency and old or broken jewellery can be left at St Joseph's Home on Westmorland Road or at St Mary's Cathedral. Nearly £30,000 has been raised through the collection of seemingly worthless items so please check drawers for any hidden gems!

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](#).

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.



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