

# 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  
 Administrator: Audrey Huntley tel: 0191 4163583  
 (Tuesday & Wednesday 8am—1pm, Thursday 11am—4pm & Friday 12— 5pm)  
 Email: [StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk) Parish Website:  
<https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



## In the Partnership of Benedict

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

### EASTER SUNDAY - 19TH - 20TH APRIL 2025, Year C

|   |                             |        |                    |  |
|---|-----------------------------|--------|--------------------|--|
| Saturday 19th April<br><b>Vigil</b>       | St Joseph                   | 5pm*   | <b>Easter Mass</b> |  |
|   | St. John Boste              | 7pm    | <b>Easter Mass</b> |  |
| Sunday 20th April<br><b>Easter Sunday</b> | St. Joseph                  | 9am    | <b>Easter Mass</b> | <b>Priests Intention</b>                   |
|   | St John Boste               | 9:30am | <b>Easter Mass</b> | <b>People of the Parish</b>                |
|   | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am*  | <b>Easter Mass</b> | <b>Peter James McQuillan 80th Birthday</b> |
|   | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am   | <b>Easter Mass</b> | <b>Sheila McGovern</b>                     |
|   | St Bede                     | 11am   | <b>Easter Mass</b> | <b>Priests Intention</b>                   |

#### First Reading: Peter Instructs Cornelius

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

In those days: Peter opened his mouth and said: 'You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and caused him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

**Response to the Psalm: This is the day that the Lord has made; Let us rejoice in it and be glad.**

#### Second Reading: New Life in Christ

Colossians 3:1-4

Brothers and Sisters: If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

**Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed; let us therefore celebrate the festival in the Lord. Alleluia.**

#### The Gospel: The Empty Tomb

John 20:1-9

On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going towards the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on the head of Jesus, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

***Fr. Martin and fellow Clergy wish all Parishioners every Blessing for the Easter Season, and an abundance of grace from our Risen Saviour Jesus Christ.***

|                   |               |                      |               |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Fr Martin Morris  | 0191 416 3583 | Deacon Frank O'Neill | 0779 115 5845 |
| Fr Martin Wheaton | 0770 996 1040 | Deacon Tony Joy      | 0779 989 3419 |
| Fr Luke Wilkinson | 0191 649 8257 |                      |               |

| Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 21st April 2025 (Streamed Mass *) |                             |         |  |
|---|-----------------------------|---------|--|
| Day   | Church                      | Time    | Intention  |
| Monday 21st April   | St Bede                     | 10am    | Connie & Barney Casey, daughter Maureen & grandson Christopher |
|   | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 7pm*    | Priest Intention   |
| Tuesday 22nd April  | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am *  | John Barker RIP  |
|   | St Joseph                   | 7pm     | Harriet Rowntree RIP   |
| Wednesday 23rd April  | St Bede                     | 10am*   | John Barker RIP  |
|   | St John Boste               | 7pm     | Joe & Dorothy Carr (RIP)                                       |
| Thursday 24th April   | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am    | Terry & Brendan Ford & James McDevitte                         |
|   | St Joseph                   | 12 Noon | Deceased Members of the Haigh & McCauley Families              |
| Friday 25th April   | St. John Boste              | 10am    | Priestly & Religious Vocations                                 |
|   | St Joseph                   | 10am    | Frank McEnaney RIP   |
| Saturday 26th April   | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am    | Cyril & Nancy Bunting & Deceased Relatives                     |
|   | St Joseph                   | 5pm*    | Alec Proctor RIP   |
|   | St. Bede                    | 5pm     | People of the Parish   |
| Sunday 27th April   | St John Boste               | 9.30am  | Deceased members of the Coulson Family                         |
| <b>Divine Mercy Sunday</b>  | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am    | Eddie Ashburner RIP  |
|   | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am*   | Gerard, Jim & Betty Hardy RIP                                  |

## The Empty Tomb

In the early hours the two women come feeling their way along walls and through gaps, gingerly finding the right footing on the rough and uneven ground, their progress slow and nervous, the route hidden in darkness but plotted in their mind's eye. The darkness robs them of sight accentuating the acute sensory deprivation that death brings; of losing the sight and sound of him, his touch and embrace, aroma and the taste of him in the bread and wine of that last meal fading now on their tongues. They are driven by a deep longing, yearning and painful ache from the depths of their souls to find him again. Like a widow, maybe you, waking at 3am the space by you empty, an ache driving you to get up and open the wardrobe door and bury your face amongst familiar shirts and jackets to find an aroma or texture to make the beloved present. They carry spices to perform the ritual preparation of the body, postponed by their Sabbath observance. Our familiar rituals of grief have been altered and postponed by Covid19. The spices will fill the tomb and their senses with their heady, sweet aroma, filling their lungs too and stinging their eyes with tears as the ritual expresses their excruciating loss and proclaims all is different now!

A Stone unexpectedly found rolled away raises their anxiety and panic, how much more do we have to suffer?

Has death not taken enough that even what is left is taken away? Relatives have stood in our time at the doors of A&E or hospital wards unable to accompany their quarantined loved ones, 'they have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.' John 20: 2 Their sensory deprivation is suddenly filled by a vision. A messenger clothed in white, whose angelic light had once led the shepherds to his birth now carries the Paschal Light, struck and fanned to flame in our liturgy tonight: 'let earth be glad, as glory floods her, ablaze with light from her eternal King' Exsultet. The pale light of dawn now clears the way, so not gingerly but purposefully they and we are impelled to go, hastily carrying the Paschal Light to others, filling up the senses of the broken, lost, frightened, sick, dying and grieving with the light of hope that love has overcome. 'He is Risen' Alleluia!

**Masses are generally live-streamed daily at 10am every day, except Monday, streamed at 7pm, and alternate Sundays when Mass is live-streamed at either 10am or 11am. An \* on the Mass table indicates streamed Masses.**

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: 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

#### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Our Lady Queen of Peace each Friday 2-3pm.

St. Joseph's each Thursday evening 6.30pm - 7.30pm, held in Church. I do encourage as many of you as possible to spend some time in quiet prayer with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** - The Sacrament of Reconciliation is now available in all our churches.

Our Lady Queen of Peace - Thursday morning, after Mass.

St Joseph - Thursday after Mass.

St John Boste - Friday morning, after Mass.

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Saturday morning, after Mass.

St Bede's - Saturday after Vigil Mass.

**Divine Mercy Sunday celebrations:** St. Bede's, 2.30pm.

27<sup>th</sup> April. Divine Mercy chaplet, Rosary & Benediction.

Refreshments afterwards in Hall. All welcome.

**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!

**Every Blessing and Congratulations** to our new parishioners who were received and confirmed into the Catholic Faith last evening at the Easter vigil. May the Lord bestow upon you an abundance of Faith and Holiness in your lives. Thank you to our Catechists who have helped our candidates prepare for the Sacraments.

**Thank you** to those parishioners who attended the 'feedback' meeting on the recent parish mission, and to those who forwarded thoughts by e-mail. In the coming weeks we will be offering an 'Alpha' Course, for new enquirers to the Faith, 'The Life in the Spirit' seminars, (beginning in September) - an opportunity for any parishioner to renew our lives of Faith in the power of the Holy Spirit; more opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration and praying with scripture. I am very grateful for these ideas to help deepen the spiritual life of our parishes. **Fr. Martin Morris**

#### Confirmation Programme 2025

**The Confirmation programme** for those in Years 9 and 10 and any young people who are older but have not been Confirmed will be starting soon. A registration form needs to be completed to join the programme. Please use this link for more information: <https://washingtoncatholic.org.uk/Groups/377546/Confirmation.aspx>

If you have any questions please contact Deacon Tony Joy (07799 893419)

**Alpha** - an established introductory series of talks exploring Christianity for those who have little background in our faith or who have been away from church for a while is beginning after Easter. Curious about faith?

**The Parish of St. John XXIII** invites **YOU** to our **Alpha** course. Join a series of conversations that explore the Christian faith in an

open, friendly group at **Our Blessed Lady Immaculate parish rooms beside St Joseph Primary School Washington Village.**

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April at 6.30pm-8pm for 10 weeks

**Please register** via the parish website or parish administrator or please take an invitation from the back of church if there is someone you know who may be interested or would like more information.

**Holy Island SVP Vinnies Camp - Volunteering is a Work of Heart.** Holy Island Children's Camp is looking for new volunteers to help in their Holiday Centre on Holy Island. They are in need of young adults to help the children have a great week's holiday on the island in Summer 2025. Full training and support will be given and would suit someone wanting to give back to the Community by helping 9-12-year-olds have fun for a week. They are also keen to attract people who would like to help by volunteering in the Kitchen/ Dining room and with caretaking. Term Time Camps need lots of volunteers if they are to survive. If you could find a few days in term time to help out with serving meals, prepping salads and washing dishes they would be truly grateful. By running term time camps, Summer Vinnies Holidays for children can be sustained. Further information can be found by [clicking here](#) or if you'd like to chat about the role please email [BarbaraT@svp.org.uk](mailto:BarbaraT@svp.org.uk)

**The children of St Bede's** are doing the CAFOD Big Lent Walk. If you would like to help them fundraise, please follow this link <https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-bedes-big-lent-walk2025>

**Looking for an Adventure?** The Guides and Scouts of Europe, a Catholic scouting movement with 73,000 members across 27 countries, offers exciting opportunities for boys and girls aged 6-17. Our Gateshead group is growing, with spaces available for Beavers (boys and girls), Wolf Cubs, Scouts, and soon Wolfcubs and Guides for girls. Join us on this adventure! Contact Paul Hammond by [clicking here](#) or 07973 192324 or speak to Fr Luke, who is our religious adviser. You can also collect a flyer from the back of church. Please [click here](#) for further information.

**St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School**, Washington have a vacancy for a Lunchtime Supervisory Assistant, the hours are 11.30am to 1 pm each day. If you, or someone you know is interested, please call the school office for further details the number is 0191 9172484

#### Strawberry Tea:

**Our Lady Queen of Peace Church** will be holding a special coffee morning after 10.00am Mass on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May. This is in celebration of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE day, so our Strawberry tea will have a 40's theme. Please feel free to wear an item that is 40's inspired! There is no cost involved but we are hoping to receive donations of scones, jam, strawberries, whipped or clotted cream and small cakes. To ensure we do not receive too much food, please sign the list at the back of Church to indicate if you are able to donate any of those foods. You do not need to donate to attend and all are welcome.

#### Contactless Donations

We are trialling at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church a contactless donation plate. It will be situated at the back of church, if proved successful we will install in all 4 churches. Further details to follow.



## Other News

**National Catholic Leadership Programme:** This programme is for serving Deputy Headteachers in Catholic Primary and Secondary schools who are considering the role of headteacher in the next two years. It is fantastic training for the role of Catholic Headteacher, delivered by inspirational leaders across our Diocese. Please [click here](#) for further information.

**This month's tip for sustainable living: Be a zero-waste hero** - Cutting down on plastic means cutting down on carbon as well. Take reusable products with you wherever you go – when you are enjoying your coffee from the local coffee-shop you are not adding to emissions by using a disposable cup. Choose products when shopping which are not wrapped in plastic or take advantage of a local zero-waste shop. This tells companies that you will not accept products packed in plastic. Use your £ to vote for change.

**Adventurous Accompaniment** - As we journey through this year of Jubilee, we are called to be Pilgrims of Hope. As Catholics our hope is in the Lord who is always at work in our lives. One of the keys to our faith journey is being able to recognize God's daily call and to discern God's will when we are making decisions. Our new formation programme **Adventurous Accompaniment** is designed to help us become better at walking with others, supporting them to see God at work. Find out more and book on Adventurous Accompaniment [here](#).

**"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor".** Do you listen to the voice of truth, the voice of Jesus Christ? Maybe he is inviting you to discern a vocation to the Priesthood. For more information, speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#)

**Pilgrimage for Pentecost Challenge!** As we journey into the Easter Season, have you considered organising a Pilgrimage for Pentecost? The Jubilee motto is 'Pilgrims of Hope' and we're invited on a spiritual journey as people of Hope, searching for an ever-deeper connection with God. Pilgrimages, journeys of spiritual and personal significance, offer profound opportunities for reflection and renewal. They can take us to sacred sites, historical landmarks, or even local places of importance, and help us connect deeply with our faith, heritage, and community. As we travel, we can meditate, pray, and share with each other, and that can give us a richer understanding of the Jubilee's themes of justice, mercy, and forgiveness. Pilgrimages are a great way to rejuvenate our spirits, strengthen our bonds with each other, and draw inspiration for the path ahead. Check out our information and resources [here](#) for some ideas and suggestions.

**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 Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured** - As part of our aim to promote growth and knowledge of the Eucharist, the Association of the Eucharist offer [The Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured](#), which gives us words from Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis to guide time before the Blessed Sacrament. This resource can be used by both individuals and groups.

**St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD** are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 22<sup>nd</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> June in London. Candidates must have completed their first or second year at university and have a passion for social justice. Applications close on the 20<sup>th</sup> April. For any queries, please [click here](#)

**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 the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#) visit now and watch this month's intention.

**The Joy of the Gospel** "Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey." Evangelii Gaudium, the Joy of the Gospel, looks at the new evangelisation for the transmission of the faith and has chapters on the following subjects: The Church's Missionary Transformation; The Crisis of Communal Commitment; The Proclamation of the Gospel; The Social Dimension of Evangelization; Spirit-Filled Evangelizers. The full text of Evangelii Gaudium can be downloaded [here](#).

**Little Sisters of the Poor Appeal** - David and Theresa O'Neill ask you to support their fundraising for the Sisters through their collections of stamps, foreign currency, old or broken gold & silver & military medals. To date they have raised over £16,200 by these means. If you can help, contact them at: David & Theresa O'Neill, 34 Morston Drive, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 7RZ Tel: 0191 264 5771 Email: [david-oneill3@sky.com](mailto:david-oneill3@sky.com)

## 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](#)

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