

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
 Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



In the Partnership of Benedict

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

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY - 26TH - 27TH APRIL 2025, Year C

Saturday 26th April	St Joseph	5pm*	Alec Proctor (RIP)
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 27th April	St John Boste	9:30am	Deceased members of the Coulson Family
Divine Mercy	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Eddie Ashburner (RIP)
Sunday	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	Gerard, Jim & Betty Hardy (RIP)

First Reading: The Early Community

Acts 5:12-16

Many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the Apostles. And they were all together in the Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns round Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Response to the Psalm: Give praise to the Lord for he is good, his mercy endures for ever.

Second Reading: A Vision of the Lord, Jesus Christ

Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, 'Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches.'
 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash round his chest. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, 'Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this.'

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. You believed, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia.

The Gospel: Jesus in the Upper Room

John 20:19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.' Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord'. But he said to them, 'Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.' Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.' Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

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 28th April 2025 (Streamed Mass *)			
Day	Church	Time	Intention
Monday 28th April St George Patron of England	St Bede	10am	Margaret Hodgson (RIP)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Carl Poulter (RIP)
Tuesday 29th April St Catherine of Sienna	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am *	John McCoy (RIP)
	St Joseph	7pm	Tony Carey (RIP)
Wednesday 30th April St Pius V	St Bede	10am *	Catherine Connolly (RIP)
	St John Boste	7pm	Pope Francis (RIP)
Thursday 1st May St Joseph the Worker	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am *	Felicity Miller
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Audrey Atkinson (RIP)
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Patricia McKenna (RIP)
Friday 2nd May St Athanasius	St John Boste	10am *	Pope Francis (RIP)
	St Joseph	10am	John Littlewood (RIP)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	11.45am	Norma Mary Carr Requiem Mass
	St Bede	7pm	First Friday Mass (Eucharistic Exposition 6pm)
Saturday 3rd May Ss Philip & James	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am *	Cath Naughton (RIP)
Vigil	St Joseph	5pm*	Alec Gilfillian (RIP)
	St Bede	5pm	Margaret Hodgson (RIP)
Sunday 4th May The 3rd Sunday of Easter	St John Boste	9:30am	Christie , Frazer & Joy Families
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	People of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Emma de Torres & Jose Eleuterio Torres Anniversary

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed”

There is a lot going on in today's Gospel from John. The apostles are still living uneasy days after the tumultuous events of the first Easter. For them, and for us, there is a clear message; Jesus cannot be stopped by locked doors and he keeps coming back. No matter the barriers, Jesus will work on doubtful minds and his message of peace never fails.

The fearful apostles are gradually being equipped to go forth, in the place of Jesus. The power to forgive sins is transferred to the apostles and subsequently passed down the priestly ministry as the sacrament of reconciliation. Thomas was not present when Jesus first appeared to his band of frightened humanity in the upper room. Is not his moment of doubt relatable? How many of us, feeling a little left out, wouldn't have responded in the same way? He demanded physical proof and Jesus gives him just that, in a very visceral way, when he appears among them eight days later. Jesus is uncompromising as he confronts Thomas with the wounds inflicted on him by humanity. In so doing, not only does he reinforce the miracle of his resurrection, but he foreshadows the martyrdom which awaits them all. As in Him, human pain will be surpassed by the energising miracle of salvation.

The apostle Thomas will travel far, according to tradition, as far as Kerala, in southern India, where his martyrdom will await him. Let us not define him by this moment of doubt. Perhaps rather than “doubting” we should preface Thomas with “all of us some of the time” In these days of locked doors, the appearances of Jesus shapes the apostles more fully for their mission. They are the founders of the first stumbling communities of Christians, who will often be ostracised. The Gospel writers will provide their sustenance.

It is important for us to recognise our own locked door moments, our fears, our doubts and lay them before Jesus. We reach out to the Living Lord to say “Peace be with you” There is nothing stronger.

Angela Nichols

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 the church. I do encourage as many of you as possible to spend some time in quiet prayer with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation:

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 this afternoon, April 27th at St. Bedes, 2.30pm. Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary & Benediction. Refreshments in the hall afterwards, 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 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.

Confirmation Programme 2025

Confirmation Programme 2025 - Registrations close on 9th May!

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)

Prayer for our Deceased Pope

God, Who, in Thine ineffable providence, didst will that Thy servant Francis ... should be numbered among the high priests; grant, we beseech Thee, that he, who on earth held the place of Thine onlybegotten Son, may be joined forevermore to the fellowship of Thy holy pontiffs. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. **Amen**

CAFOD Lenten Walk

Sheila Casey

Walked 457.7 Km (284.4 Miles), **Raising £805.**

Thanks to all who supported me,

Special thanks to Pauline, Jane, and Joe for all their

encouragement.

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

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 Wolvets 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 11th May. This is in celebration of the 80th 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.

Safeguarding - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and is a priority in every parish and diocesan organisation. The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is fully committed in the church and operates a zero-tolerance approach. The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is at the heart of the Church's mission. We adopt and implement fully the policies and procedures of the Catholic Church of England and Wales, which is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church. To discuss any safeguarding concerns please contact a safeguarding officer in any of our churches - their details are on the noticeboard in the porch. Details of our Diocesan policy can be found by [clicking here](#).

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

The Year of Jubilee 2025 is a beacon of hope - We're all invited into an encounter with Jesus Christ, as his disciples of mercy, forgiveness, and social action, and to celebrate our communities. It's a chance to envision a better future, a future of hope and faith where mercy guides our actions. It's a time for forgiveness and reconciliation within our communities. We can take action to address injustices, support the vulnerable, and work towards a more equitable society. Let's embrace the spirit of the Jubilee, and unite to create a world of compassion and justice, where everyone and our whole community can grow and flourish. Please visit the Diocesan Jubilee [webpage](#) for more information and regular updates.

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](#).

Evangelisation for the Terrified - 'Evangelising for the Terrified', written and produced within the Diocese, is a practical, light-hearted resource for anyone wondering how to get started in sharing their faith. It is deliberately written to be a simple, non-threatening collection of ideas that give intention and purpose to normal everyday opportunities that arise. Download a copy [here](#).

Reflections

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

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

[Saturday Examen 5th Sunday of Lent](#)

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](#)