

# 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

## EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 2ND - 3RD AUGUST 2025 Year C

|  |                             |        |   |
|--|-----------------------------|--------|---|
| Saturday 2nd August<br><b>Vigil</b>                      | St Joseph                   | 5pm*   | <b>Stella Atkinson RIP</b>              |
|  | St Bede                     | 5pm    | <b>Joan &amp; Frank Barrett RIP</b>     |
| Sunday 3rd August<br><b>18th Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> | St John Boste               | 9:30am | <b>Paul Iley RIP, Anniversary</b>       |
|  | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am   | <b>Intentions of Sr Brieghe McKenna</b> |
|  | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am*  | <b>People of the Parish</b>             |
|  | St Bede                     | 4pm    | <b>Reception - Frank Barrett</b>        |

### First Reading: Vanity of Vanities. Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23

Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. Sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

**Response to the Psalm: O Lord, you have been our refuge, from generation to generation.**

### Second Reading: Risen with Christ. Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11

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. Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

**Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Alleluia.**

### The Gospel: The Dangers of Wealth. Luke 12:13-21

At that time: Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.' But he said to him, 'Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?' And he said to them, 'Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of one's possessions.' And he told them a parable, saying, 'The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, "What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?" And he said, "I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' " But God said to him, "Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" So is the one who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.'

|                   |               |                      |               |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|
| 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 4th August 2025 (Streamed Mass \*)

| Day   | Church                      | Time    |   |
|---|-----------------------------|---------|---|
| Monday 4th August<br><b>St John Mary Vianney</b>                                | St Bede                     | 10am    | <b>Requiem Mass - Frank Barrett</b>                             |
|   | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 7pm*    | <b>Fr Philip O'Brien RIP</b>                                    |
| Tuesday 5th August<br><b>The Dedication of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major</b> | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am    | <b>Holy Communion &amp; Word Service</b>                        |
|   | St Joseph                   | 7pm     | <b>Tony RIP (Rila's Husband)</b>                                |
| Wednesday 6th August<br><b>The Transfiguration of the Lord</b>                  | St Bede                     | 10am    | <b>Holy Communion &amp; Word Service</b>                        |
|   | St John Boste               | 7pm     | <b>Holy Souls</b>   |
| Thursday 7th August<br><b>Ss Sixtus II &amp; Cajetan</b>                        | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am*   | <b>Priest's Intentions</b>                                      |
|   | St Joseph                   | 12 Noon | <b>25th Wedding - Kennedy</b>                                   |
| Friday 8th August<br><b>St Dominic</b>  | St John Boste               | 10am*   | <b>Frank Barrett RIP</b>  |
|   | St Joseph                   | 10am    | <b>Harriet Hogan RIP</b>  |
| Saturday 9th August<br><b>St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross</b>                  | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 10am*   | <b>Lawrence &amp; Cecilia Holland &amp; Deceased Family RIP</b> |
| <b>Vigil</b>  | St Joseph                   | 5pm*    | <b>Nancy Loughlin RIP</b>                                       |
|   | St Bede                     | 5pm     | <b>People of the Parish</b>                                     |
| Sunday 10th August<br><b>The 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>        | St John Boste               | 9:30am  | <b>Keith &amp; Ross Irwin</b>                                   |
|   | Our Lady Queen of Peace     | 10am*   | <b>Vincent Kelly</b>  |
|   | Our Blessed Lady Immaculate | 11am    | <b>Jim Walker RIP</b>   |

***“So is the one who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.”***

Today's Gospel is sometimes referred to as the parable of the Rich Fool. It is significant in that the presence of God is not hidden behind a contemporary figure of authority, the vineyard owner, the Father landowner, that would be relevant to the crowd, but is unashamedly and directly God. And what is his first word? "Fool!" This is a very serious parable indeed.

This display of divine impatience is sparked in Jesus by a question from a man in the crowd, angry that his brother does not seem to want to share the family inheritance. You can almost see Jesus' eyeroll in his response. This is not the purpose of his mission at all. Some tech billionaires beware!! In the parable which follows, the rich man is seen operating in a vacuum of self interest. His crops are so plentiful, his only response is to tear down and build bigger barns in the smug expectation of his expected outcome: "relax, eat, drink and be merry". No one else figures in this equation. God, however, appears to crush this ambition; the rich man's soul is required that very night.

Jesus is emphasising the need to "acquire treasure" in our soul's relationship with God. That is the only richness that matters. It is a call to share with others; to value our spiritual growth as part of a community more than our bank balance.

From Ozymandius to Scrooge, the folly of the rich and powerful man persists but God in this parable gives a stark warning. How we react to it matters.

**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 here](#) to view from one of our Churches.

(or <https://www.youtube.com/@parishofstjohnxxiii>)

**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 2pm - 3pm.

St. Joseph's 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.

### 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.

**Devotion to our Blessed Lady at St Bede's** - The Holy Rosary will be recited every Monday morning after 10am Mass. If anyone would like to remember a loved one by bringing fresh flowers they would be very welcome and they will be displayed by the flower ladies, all welcome

**OLOF (Our Lady's over 50's club)** - The OLOF group meet in the Lindisfarne Room at St Bede's Church, Coach Road on Tuesdays at 1pm. All welcome.

**Appeal for new volunteers – Can you help out?** We are blessed with many parishioners who give of their time and effort in enabling our Parishes to run so well, I am very grateful for everyone's support. However, we are in need of more help with the following areas of Parish life: Accounts/Book-keeping, Administration/Office Work, Catechists for Baptism, Gardening/Grounds Maintenance. If you think you could help out in any of these areas please visit the following link and leave your details, and one of the Priests will contact you. **Paper copies of the form are also available at the back of church.** Thank you, Fr Martin Morris. <https://forms.churchdesk.com/f/nbyAuLzPpY>

**St Bede's Toddler Group** is now closed for the school holidays. Several of our members have left to start nursery or school in September. We have vacancies for next term. We welcome babies once they have their first injections and until they go to nursery or school. The session is on Monday mornings from 9.30am-11am in St Bede's Parish Hall and costs £2. The children can play, do creative activities, have refreshments and enjoy singing. We restart on Monday 8 September. To save a place text Joan Formosa on 07504 579591.

**Newsletter emails** - Please note that we are currently having an issue emailing the newsletter to [@btinternet.com](mailto:@btinternet.com) email addresses, as the messages are being blocked as spam. We will resolve this as soon as possible.

**Our Blessed Lady Immaculate** will be one of the locations hosting an exciting new initiative coming to the UK, that seeks to form lay

people for mission. The 'Dominican Lay Mission' project brings people to discover their individual charisms and gifts and discern practical ways to put these to use in the service of the Gospel, in their secular contexts and so sanctify the world. The course takes place over three years, for 26 weeks of each year, and comprises a weekly one hour video to watch at home in your own time; a fellowship meeting twice per month at Our Lady's on a Friday at 7.30pm; an annual retreat and a day workshop. The course starts in September. There will be an information evening at Our Lady's at 7.30pm on Monday 8 September. For more information or to register your interest, email [lay.mission@english.op.org](mailto:lay.mission@english.op.org) or speak to Fr Luke.

**Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Gardens** - We would welcome donations of any unwanted gardening tools such as forks, spades, trowels, secateurs etc. for volunteers keeping the borders tidy. Please bring them to church or ring Chris O'Neill on 07815162153 if you need them collected. Thank you.

**Holy Communion for the Sick and Housebound:** If you know of any parishioners who are unable to get to Mass and would like Holy Communion brought to them at home, please give their name, address and telephone number to any of our Priests.

**Holyday of Obligation** - Friday 15 August is the Feast of The Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven. As well as the usual Mass times that day (10am at St John Boste and St Joseph's), there will be an evening Mass at 7pm at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. Following this Mass Fr Martin and Fr Luke would like to invite you to a 'Cheese and Wine' celebration in the Emmaus Room to celebrate the Holyday. All welcome.

**New Song Summer Picnic!** Come and join us for the New Song Summer Picnic! Bring your picnic and a chair round to the grassy area at the back of church after the 11am Mass on Sunday 10 August. There will be music and games but, most of all, a chance to get together and have fun! Sunshine is guaranteed! All are welcome! Where: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church NE38 7HS. Email: [newsongne@gmail.com](mailto:newsongne@gmail.com), Instagram: @newsongne

### Pilgrimage to Holy Island – Saturday 13 September 2025

An update regarding the above event. We have arranged for two coaches to collect everyone which will be leaving from St Joseph's, Birtley and Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penshaw at 8.30am. If you have not already done so, could you please provide the £10 per person charge as soon as possible to go towards the cost of the coaches. There are still a few places available on the coaches. If you would like to go, please contact Malcolm Bengston on 07746 973132.

**Streaming Mass from our Churches.** Please note we no longer use Church Services TV as all our Churches now stream on our Youtube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@parishofstjohnxxiii>.

## Other News

**Minsteracres - Rosary Rally Saturday 16 August 2025 from 12 noon to 3pm** - Please bring a packed lunch. The day will commence with the celebration of Mass at 12 noon followed by the Rosary Rally and Benediction from 2pm.

**Year of Jubilee Calendar** - A calendar of all the key dates and events for the Year of Jubilee, currently from June to December 2025, in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has been produced and will be updated periodically. **Download the calendar [here](#).** You can also view or download the Vatican's calendar of major events by visiting their Jubilee website [here](#).

**The 2025 National Jubilee Walking Pilgrimage of Hope** - 24 August 2025 -14 September 2025. What does it mean to be a 'pilgrim of hope'? The *Pilgrimage of Hope* will be an opportunity for Catholics in England and Wales to witness to their hope in the crucified and risen Christ. It will be a national walking pilgrimage with four main Ways converging at the Cathedral of St Barnabas, Nottingham, on Saturday 13 September 2025, the eve of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The Ways will bless our nations with a Sign of the Cross and with the gospels. For more information please [click 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 and silver and military medals. To date they have raised over £16,200 by these means. If you can help, contact them at: David and 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)

**Alive in HOPE: A Church for MISSION.** Bishop Stephen invites you to a **Jubilee Day** on Saturday 27 September, from 10 am to 3pm at Cardinal Hume Catholic School in Gateshead. Everyone is welcome! There'll be guest speakers from the Prisons' Chaplaincy and the Justice & Peace Refugee Project, and a choice of seminars/forums to reawaken and empower us for mission. This is an opportunity to connect with old friends and new, and to celebrate our diocesan family as we explore what a Church in Mission invites us to be and do! There will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and a prayer space in the chapel, and praise and worship led by Durham musicians 'Set A Fire'. Take a look around the marketplace where there'll be stands and gifts from some of our Catholic partners and groups. Registration and refreshments from 9.15am, but please bring a packed lunch. Ample parking is available and entry is FREE but please register at <https://bit.ly/DHNAlive25> where you'll also find more information about the seminars you'll be able to join during the day. For enquiries and parish/group bookings telephone Amy on 0191 2433316. Search on Facebook, X and Bluesky using the hashtag #DHNAlive25 for the latest information and updates.

**Safeguarding** - The agency that oversees safeguarding in the Catholic Church has observed 'good practice' in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle across all eight of the recognised National Safeguarding Standards. In an audit report recently published, the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) in particular hailed major improvements in Church leadership, governance, ministry, culture and the care of those people who have been harmed. [Click here](#) to read the CSSA final report. [Click here](#) to read the Diocesan statement in full. [Click here](#) to read the CSSA statement in full.

**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 Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor".** Thinking about a vocation to the Priesthood? For more information, speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#)

**A Call for Volunteers with the Gift of Music** - Music makes the world of difference to our lives, especially in our worship. Vatican II recognised '*the importance of singing*' in the celebration of the Mass and that it should be '*integral to worship*' with '*due consideration for the culture of the people and abilities of each liturgical assembly*'. The Diocesan Church Music Association (DCMA) is a body of volunteer musicians within Hexham and Newcastle who aim to help parishes in their use of music for the Mass. We offer practical help and guidance to parish musicians, considering that each parish will have its own musical '*house-style*'. This may be a traditional choir-and-organ setup, an instrumental group, a praise & worship band, or perhaps unaccompanied singing. Previously we have put on singing days and workshops to highlight new Mass settings, simple Communion songs, music for the Triduum, as well as a '*keyboard-free*' workshop for those parishes who do not have a pianist or organist. **We welcome new members to join the Diocesan Church Music Association team.** Our current team members are all from the Durham area, but our aim is always to have representatives from all areas of the Diocese to help inform and plan our work. Quick Links: [DCMA](#)

**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. Download a copy [here](#).

## Reflections

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

**Examen** - Please follow this link to go to [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

**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 stjoh23bulletin@gmail.com](#)