

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

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 29TH - 30TH NOVEMBER 2025 Year A

Saturday 29th November	St Joseph	5pm	People of the Parish
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	David Ritson Junior RIP
Sunday 30th November	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
First Sunday of Advent	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Dennis Wilson RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Gerard McCabe RIP

First reading: The Vision of Peace. Isaiah 2:1-5

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Response to the Psalm: Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

Second Reading: The time is near. Romans 13:11-14a

Brothers and sisters: You know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. Show us, O Lord, your mercy, and grant us your salvation. Alleluia.

The Gospel: Like a Thief in the Night. Matthew 24:37-44

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: 'For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'

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 1st December 2025 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 1st December	St Bede	10am	Priest's Intention
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Repose of the Soul of Sid Abbott
Tuesday 2nd December	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Janet Fawcett RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Recovery from illness J.V.
Wednesday 3rd December St Francis Xavier	St Bede	10am	Holy Souls
	St John Boste	7pm	Kieran Cushlow (RIP anniversary)
Thursday 4th December St John Damascene	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Tony Cosgrove RIP
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Dennis Duffy RIP
Friday 5th December	St John Boste	10am*	A Sick Person (AO)
	St Joseph	10am	Jerry Nichol RIP
Saturday 6th December St Nicholas	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Vocations to the Priesthood
Vigil	St Joseph	5pm	Sarah & Cornelius Bartley & Terence McGee
	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 7th December Second Sunday of Advent	St John Boste	9:30am	Ian McIntyre
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Margaret Logan RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	Norah & Owen Haggen

MAKE A DIFFERENCE THIS ADVENT

There is a wonderful air of mystery surrounding Christmas Carols that have been handed down from generation to generation without any record of their origin. In 1921, a music scholar visiting the town of Policka in Bohemia at Christmastime wrote down a carol sung for him by a Czech peasant girl, it was called 'The Birds.' The carol tells of a cuckoo, a pigeon, and a dove all coming to see the Christ child and expressing their joy that 'Christ was in the world.' The carol inspired the life size Nativity scenes that can be seen to this day, displayed in the market squares of the Czech Republic. Czech Catholics suffered under four decades of Communist oppression (1948 - 1989). The Christmas carol, 'The Birds' was a hymn that carried the people through those very difficult times, embodying a faith that filled the people with the true hope of God with them. Carols can be very powerful.

As can the Crib too. Do you know the very first Crib was made by St Francis of Assisi on Christmas Eve 1223, in Greccio Italy. St Francis wanted to bring the love of God to so many people in a practical way, and his idea of a Crib in the village square had an immediate impact on the local people, many of them returning to the practice of the Faith.

So this Advent why not go 'Carol Singing'? Why not place a Crib at the front of your home or in the window. Such simple things can be powerful reminders to our world today that God has a name, Emmanuel - God with us and for us!

A Blessed Advent to all Parishioners.

Fr Martin Morris

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

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. Fr Martin Morris.

Sacrament of Reconciliation - The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available in all of 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.

OLOF (Our Lady's Over 50's club) - No meeting on Tuesday 2 December.

Penshaw Catholic Woman's Guild - Our annual toy collection is on Sunday 7 December after 10am Mass. These gifts are distributed to the poor in the area. Please label the gift boy or girl or family. Thank you for your donation, we greatly appreciate it.

St John Boste Christmas Memorial Candles - Envelopes are available for your request for Christmas memorial candles. They need to be returned by Sunday 7 December.

St John Boste - Red Mission Boxes - The Red Boxes are due for collection in the next four weeks. Agents can collect their envelopes and 2026 Calendar from Sunday 16 November. Please return monies collected by 14 December.

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Missio Red Box Donations - Your Red Boxes can be taken to Mass at Our Lady's on Sundays to be emptied until 14 December. Alternatively you can collect a Missio brown envelope from the rear of the church to take home to hold your Red Box contents. You can return the envelope with your donation to church on Sundays until 14 December. A Free Missio 2026 Calendar is available now for all donors. Many thanks for your continued generosity.

St John Boste, Evening Prayers - Evening prayers will be prayed at 6.45pm every Wednesday before 7pm Mass. All welcome to join in.

Looking for Rosary leaders - If you would like to lead the Tuesday night rosary at St Joseph's Birtley at 6.40pm please come along any Tuesday and join in with our small group and help share the load. We have been praying the rosary for over a year for the people of Gaza but bearing in mind Pope Leo's request we are now praying for world peace.

Songs of Peace and Praise - A date for next year's diary, **9 July 2026**. The Parish is planning to hold an evening of **Songs of Peace and Praise**, starting at 7pm at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church. More information will be given nearer the date. To plan for the Songs of Peace and Praise there will be a **short meeting at 11am this Sunday at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church**. Anyone interested in helping to plan the event will be most

welcome. It will be great if all Churches in the Parish are represented. If you are unable to attend but wish to be involved with the planning please email me, Jane Everett

ejeverettlane@gmail.com

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, or follow the contact details on our Parish Website under '[Safeguarding](#)'. Details of our Diocesan policy can be found by [clicking here](#).

A Weekly Reflection and Daily Readings for Advent 2025.

Advent is a time of preparation and to reflect, and hold onto, the messages of hope, peace, joy and love which God promised to us in the birth of Christ Jesus. Members of our Diocesan Writing Team offer this Advent resource to help guide a daily space for reading of the Scripture, reflection and prayer. In it you will find a reflection based on the theme of each week of Advent and an easy-to-follow reference to the readings for each day. The reflections will be available to view and download on the homepage of the Diocesan website from Friday 28 November www.diocesehn.org.uk.

Advent Spiritual devotions. On the four Sundays of Advent there will be the opportunity of sharing in a special time of prayer in preparation for the Nativity of Our Lord.

Sunday 30 November 4pm, Our Lady Queen of Peace. - Advent Evening Prayer and Benediction.

Sunday 7 December 4pm, St. John Boste - Advent Evening Prayer and Benediction.

Sunday 21 December 4pm, Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Advent Eucharistic Adoration and Rosary.

The Advent 'Walk with me' booklets are now available at the back of Church, with a meditation for each day of the Advent season.

Advent Penitential services. Tuesday 9 December 6-7pm St Joseph's Birtley. Thursday 11 December 7pm St. Bede's.

Advent Candlelit Vigil & Blue Christmas Service. You are warmly invited to share in a quiet time of prayer and reflection in preparation for Christmas. The candlelit vigil will take place on Friday 12 December from 6pm-9pm in Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church. There will be tea/coffee and mince pies in the Emmaus Room afterwards, so please come for all or part of this quiet time in the run up to Christmas.

The annual Blue Christmas Service will take place on Saturday 13 December at 11.15am also in Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church. In this service we remember our loved ones who have passed away and whom we miss especially at this time of year.

Next Monday 8 December is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, whilst it is not a Holyday of Obligation it is the Feast Day of Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. We will have an extra Mass that day at 9.30am in Our Lady's, which will be offered for the people of the Parish. All welcome.

Washington Rotary Club Christmas Carols in The Village at Our Lady Immaculate, Friday 5 December at 6.30pm. Carols sung by local Primary school pupils, One Voice Community Choir, Little Onions with Readings from the Navity. Refreshments available, Free Entry.

Churches Together Christmas Carol Service. Everyone is warmly welcomed to the annual Ecumenical Christmas Carol Service on Wednesday 10 December 7pm at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, followed by refreshments.

New Song. Thank you everyone for a wonderful 2025 full of praise, worship, fellowship and prayer. We are taking a break for Christmas so we look forward to seeing you in the New Year! Next session: 11 Jan 2026 4pm in the Emmaus Room at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Church with Fr Shaun O'Neill. We can't wait! Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

MASSES OVER CHRISTMAS

The following shows the Mass times and venues for Christmas. Please note the changes from the usual Mass times.

WEDNESDAY 24th DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas Vigil:

5.00pm St Bede, Washington

6.00pm Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington*

7.00pm St Joseph, Birtley (Carols from 6.30pm)

7.30pm Our Lady Queen of Peace (Carols from 6.30pm)

8.00pm St John Boste

Mass through Midnight:

11.30pm Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Washington*

THURSDAY 25th DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS DAY

10.00am Our Blessed Lady Immaculate

10.00am Our Lady Queen of Peace*

10.00am St Joseph Birtley

FRIDAY 26th DECEMBER – BOXING DAY

10.00am St John Boste*

10.00am St Joseph's, Birtley

* Indicates streamed Masses.

Benedict Partnership of Churches Annual Christmas Card. Our Benedict Partnership of Churches in Washington, Penshaw, Birtley, Chester-le-Street & Sacriston has once again produced a Christmas Card. It contains our Christmas message to everyone and details of our Christmas Services. It will be available very soon in all of our churches. Please feel free to take them for your family and also for those who may not have been to church for a while. **Everyone is welcome to come home to church especially for Christmas.**

St Robert of Newminster Christmas Coffee Morning. It's that time of year again when we invite you lovely parishioners to join us for our Christmas coffee morning here in St Robert's. Monday 15 December, 9.30am - 11am. Join us for Christmas cheer, fun, bingo and songs! If you would like to attend, please contact Anne Marie at St Robert's on 01917161700, email: amckenna@str.bwcet.com or complete this online [form](#). Please could we have final numbers no later than Thursday 11 December.

Other News

"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](#)

Reflections

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

Examen - Please follow the links 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

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.

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.



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