

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>



In the Patnership of Benedict

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

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, 7 - 8 MARCH 2026 Year A

Saturday 7 March Vigil	St Joseph	5pm	Pat & Bill Stobbart RIP
	St Bede	5pm	Phyllis Kilburn & William
Sunday 8 March The Third Sunday of Lent	St John Boste	9:30am	Jane & Tom Rutter & deceased members of Rutter Family
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	People of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Kenneth Connolly RIP

First reading: Water from the Rock. Exodus 17:3-7

In those days: The people thirsted for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?' So Moses cried to the Lord, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.' And the Lord said to Moses, 'Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.' And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarrelling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the Lord by saying, 'Is the Lord among us or not?'

Response to the Psalm: O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'

Second Reading: Peace with God through Jesus. Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

Brothers and Sisters: Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Gospel Acclamation: Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God. Lord, you are indeed the Saviour of the world; give me living water, so that I will not be thirsty. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.

The Gospel: The Samaritan at the Well. John 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

At that time: Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?' (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.' Jesus said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water. Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.' The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah is coming — he who is called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things.' Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am he.'

Many Samaritans from that town believed in him. So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.'

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 9 March 2026 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 9 March St Frances of Rome	St Bede	10am	Pat Naughton RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Jim Rodriguez RIP
Tuesday 10 March	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Margaret & John Barrett
	St Joseph	7pm	Peter Robinson RIP
Wednesday 11 March	St Bede	10am	Kevin Marriner RIP Anniversary
	St John Boste	7pm	John McCoy RIP
Thursday 12 March	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	John Cox RIP
	St Joseph	12 Noon	Marlene Tindale (Nee Ford) RIP
Friday 13 March	St Joseph	10am	Sick of the Parish
	St John Boste	10am*	Birthday Memories
Saturday 14 March Vigil	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Jack & Vera Lawless and Deceased Callaghan & Lawless Family
	St Joseph	5pm	People of the Parish
	St Bede	5pm	Paul Monaghan (RIP Anniversary) & Deceased Family
Sunday 15 March The Fourth Sunday of Lent Laetare Sunday	St John Boste	9:30am	Les Christie RIP
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Joe Lawton RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	People of the Parish

Reflection

Today's gospel offers us one of the most beautiful and personal encounters in the New Testament: Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well.

Jesus is sitting at Jacob's well during the hottest part of the day. A woman comes alone to draw water. She is likely avoiding others. She carries not only her water jar, but also her past, her shame, her complicated story. Jesus says to her, "Give me a drink." and with these simple words, the Saviour of the world begins a conversation which crosses religious, cultural and moral boundaries - Jews did not associate with Samaritans and men did not publicly address women in this way.

But Jesus doesn't see labels, or history, or sin - all he sees is a soul thirsting for something more. He sees a woman searching for meaning, for forgiveness, for a love that is genuine. He sees a woman who has sought fulfilment with things which ultimately did not satisfy and, as he gently reveals the truth of her life, he seeks not to shame her, but to free her. Instead of walking away, she stays, she listens and she believes and that day she becomes free.

As we continue to journey through Lent, Jesus will find us in the ordinary circumstances of our lives. Wherever we are seeking fulfilment in things which do not really satisfy, he will offer us something more. He is not afraid of our past. He does not avoid our broken places. He waits patiently, ready to offer living water.

Let us pray for the grace to open our hearts and drink deeply of Jesus' love and mercy. And may we, like the Samaritan woman, become free - and ready to share this Good News with others.

Deacon Frank O'Neill

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 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/Confession 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 – Saturday after Vigil Mass.

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!

Baptisms - Please note that there is a new system for all Baptisms in the Parish. If you want to request a Baptism, please collect a form from the church where you want the Baptism to take place, complete the form and hand it in to any member of the clergy. For more information please call 07552 733540. You can also download the form by [clicking here](#).

No Stations of the Cross this Sunday at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. Stations resume next Sunday 15 March at 4pm followed by a short time of Eucharistic Adoration.

Lenten Penitential service. An opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Confession, Wednesday 25 March 7pm at St John Boste (no Mass that evening).

Thank you to everyone who returned the Lenten family Fast envelopes for CAFOD.

Discernment Evening at St Bede's Hall, 19 March, 6.30pm-8pm. An opportunity to hear an introduction to Bishop Stephen's 'Pastoral Strategy' ten year programme. In a prayerful atmosphere we will look at the four questions underpinning this initiative, worship, service, communion and teaching, and reflect together on how this best describes the Mission of our Parish both now and for the future, and the challenges we face, with finance and sustainability. All welcome.

Please put yourself forward. If you would like to participate in taking the offerings to the altar during Mass at any church, please speak to one of the helpers who are at the church door before and after Mass.

Stations of the Cross During Lent

Our Lady Queen of Peace, Wednesday Noon, tea/ coffee afterwards

St John Boste, Wednesday 6.30pm

St Joseph, Thursday 11.30am before Mass

St Bede, Friday 6pm

We Dare to Ask - This year's Lenten resource 'We Dare to Ask' is inviting parishioners to prepare their hearts and minds to renew their Baptismal promises during the Easter celebrations. Through Baptism, we are united with Christ and given our mission to image him in our homes and communities. This resource aims to contextualise our vocation within God's plan of Salvation, Christ's self-gift and the Sacramental Life of the Church. The world tempts us in all manner of ways yet by God's grace, we can turn back to him with contrite hearts to ask his mercy and forgiveness. We stand to renew our Baptismal promises: to ask for his life, his grace and to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to renew and restore our covenant relationship with Jesus, that we may live in an ever-deepening union with him as his baptised son or daughter. A Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle booklet, with a forward by Bishop Stephen, is available to view or download by [clicking here](#). It provides a resource for small group faith-sharing and for individual meditation, with five sessions on the theme of our Baptismal Vocation. Alternatively you can access each session's materials individually by [clicking here](#).

This Lent Children at St Bede's Catholic Primary School are supporting CAFOD and joining other schools around the country to help fight poverty around the world. To raise money, they are going to complete a Big Lent 'Walk-a-thon' where they spend a whole day, Tuesday 31 March, taking turns walking around the school fields. From the start of the day until the end there will always be a member of St Bede's walking, come rain or shine! We would love you to sponsor us. You can do so by dropping a donation off at the school office, passing on a donation to a member of school staff at Wednesday morning Mass or scanning the QR code/visiting our JustGiving page [here](#).



Scan to donate

NEW SONG!

Come and join us for the March New Song! Come and be nourished by God's word and some great company! We are very happy to welcome Emma Wynne (Diocesan Faith & Mission Department) as our guest speaker. All are welcome! (NB. We're in the Emmaus Room - not the Parish Room over at the school!)

Where: Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Emmaus Room. NE38 7HS

When: 8 March 2026 4pm.

Email: newsongne@gmail.com. **Instagram:** @newsongne!

SVP Sing And Chat. Everyone is welcome to join us at The Black Bush, Washington Village, from 12:15 until 3 pm on Friday 13 March.

Group 735 HCPT The Pilgrimage Trust are holding a fundraising Ceilidh on Friday 13 March 7pm to 11 pm at North Biddick Club, Fatfield. Music by *The Whole Shebang*. Our Group Target is £1390 to sponsor a Special Needs Child for a life changing Pilgrimage/Holiday in Lourdes at Easter. Price, which includes a finger buffet, is £8. Under 16s free if accompanied by a ticket bearing parent or guardian. Tickets available after each Mass at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. Donations of raffle prizes will be much appreciated. Do please join us for this joyful event.

Friday 20 March is the feast day of our great northern Saint Cuthbert.

Join us at Chester-le-Street St Mary's and Saint Cuthbert Anglican Church at 10.30am to begin our walk, all welcome.

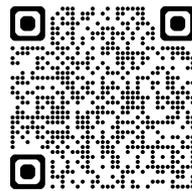
Cuddy's Corse is the classic pilgrimage route from Chester-le-Street to Durham Cathedral. Mostly on good paths or along quiet roads but some paths cross fields which could be muddy. The distance is about 7-8 miles

Songs of Peace and Praise 9 July at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church. "Peace begins with a Smile" (St Teresa of Calcutta).

Can you help put a smile on the faces of others and spread a little peace? This invitation is for everyone! Members of our Parish, our schools and other denominations or faiths, our local communities. Peace was given by Christ for everyone! We are looking for people, any age, to help lead our Parish in an evening of song and praise. You can sing solo or be part of a duet or larger group or choir. You may play an instrument, be a member of a band or orchestra, any number or size. School, college and community groups are most welcome. We are also looking for anyone who might like to create poetry or read on the evening, scriptures, prayers, poetry or prose. Please do not hide your talents! Share them and help us all to spread Christ's Peace. If you would like to participate, choose your piece of music, hymn or song about peace or praise and then start practicing. Contact details will be given at a later date. Many thanks.

Cafod Big Lent Walk. Please collect a leaflet after Mass and see how you can support CAFOD'S work by walking or praying this Lent. This Lent, CAFOD is telling the stories of how we accompany communities who are striving to grow food and care for their families in the face of increasingly severe droughts and floods in South Sudan, in Bangladesh and in Zimbabwe. You can donate [here](#).

Our parish school(s) are part of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust, a family of 47 schools based in Northumberland, Gateshead, Sunderland and Durham. To find out more about our Trust, and to access the latest newsletter, please use this QR code. Please also follow the Trust social media on our website [here](#), Facebook @ Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust and LinkedIn @ BWCET.



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](#)

A Day of Renewal from Emmanuel Charismatic Community - 28 March 2026. St Mary's Catholic School, Newcastle. The Emmanuel Charismatic Community in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle invite you to a day of renewal, with guest speaker Michelle Moran titled 'Holiness in today's world: Life does not have a mission – but is a mission.' Michelle Moran is an internationally renowned speaker, who was personally appointed by Pope Francis in 2016 to help establish CHARIS, and she was President of International Charismatic Renewal Services in the Vatican from 2006 – 2017. During the day of renewal, there will be a celebration of the Vigil Mass of Sunday and will have prayers for healing. We ask that you bring a packed lunch with you to this day, and there is no charge for attending, but a collection will be taken on the day. To book your place, please contact the Emmanuel Team by [clicking here](#) or call/text 07546 302832.

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](#).

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 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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