

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@diocesohn.org.uk

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

Parish Secretary: Anne Ridley 0191 4163583

Office Hours: Tuesday 9am - 2:30pm (Penshaw),

Wednesday & Thursday 9am - 2:30pm (Washington Village)

In the Partnership of Benedict

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



PALM (PASSION) SUNDAY, 28 - 29 MARCH 2026 Year A

Saturday 28 March	St Joseph	5pm	People of the Parish
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 29 March	St John Boste	9:30am	Kathleen & Bill Burlinson
Palm (Passion) Sunday	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Brendan & Terry Ford & Jim McDevitte RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	Catherine Beavers Anniversary

First reading: The Song of the Servant

Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backwards. I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. But the Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

Response to the Psalm: *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

Second Reading: Raised High Through Suffering

Philippians 2:6-11

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel Acclamation: Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory. Christ became for us obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

The Gospel: Jesus Enters Jerusalem

Matthew 21:1-11

When Jesus and his disciples drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord needs them", and he will send them at once.' This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 'Say to the daughter of Sion, "Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden."' The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!' And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, 'Who is this?' And the crowds said, 'This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.'

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 30 March 2026 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 30 March	St Bede	10am	A Holy Soul (T)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Jim Rodriguez RIP
Tuesday 31 March	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Pat & Catherine Naughton RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Simon Roy Toole RIP
Wednesday 1 April	St Bede	10am	Nan, John & John Jr Sweeney & deceased family members
	St John Boste	7pm	Priest's Intention
Thursday 2 April	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Elizabeth Faghy. RIP anniversary
Holy Thursday	St Joseph	7pm	People of the Parish
Friday 3 April	St Joseph	3pm	Solemn Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Good Friday	St Bede	3pm	
	St John Boste	3pm*	
Saturday 4 April	St Joseph	5pm	People of the Parish
Vigil - Holy Saturday	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	7.30pm*	Christine Mitchell (RIP)
Sunday 5 April	St John Boste	9:30am	James, Alice & Terrence McGee
Easter Sunday	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	People of the Parish
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Thanksgiving for 90th Birthday (BW)
	St Bede	11.15am	Michael Gates RIP

With Palm Sunday we enter into Holy Week; a repeating of the dramatic story of the culmination of the sacred mission of Jesus Christ; his resurrection and our path to salvation. We all know the narrative very well indeed; from the collection of the donkey and colt in Bethphage, scripture is being fulfilled. Today's first reading from Isaiah: "I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting" leads us directly into the horror and majesty of Matthew's Passion. Today we leave church with our blessed palms, taking the echoes of today's liturgy back into our homes.

As Christians we cannot but contemplate on the great chasm between events in the Middle East and the humble entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Two weeks ago, at his weekly Angelus in St Peter's Square, Pope Leo called for a ceasefire. Later in a homily in a Roman parish, he gave witness to the message of a Saviour who enters Jerusalem without the bravado of power: "Today many of our brothers and sisters in the world are suffering because of violent conflicts, caused by the absurd claim that problems and disagreements can be resolved through war, when instead we must engage in unceasing dialogue for peace.....Some even go so far as to invoke the name of God to justify these choices of death, but God cannot be enlisted by darkness. Rather, He always comes to bring light, hope and peace to humanity." (Reuters)

Our prayers this week should be shaped by the image of our newly- folded Palm crosses; sacrifice and love for our fellow human beings. Events are moving quickly and the news cycle is struggling to keep up. By the time this reflection appears, the situation may have improved. I pray that is the case. There is and will be millions of lives shattered and communities displaced, just as in Gaza, the Ukraine and South Sudan. As we begin our participation in the arc of Holy Week, we hold them in our prayers, Lord Jesus.

In Christ, in his true Majesty, we place our prayers for peace.

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

Special Collections:

Good Friday - Holy Places

Easter Sunday - Sick and Retired Priests (Open until 26th April)

What's On in the Parish

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Our Lady Queen of Peace each Friday 2pm - 3pm (Not Good Friday)

St Joseph each Thursday evening 6.30pm - 7.30pm (Not Holy Thursday)

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!

Holy Week Eucharistic Adoration - At Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Wednesday 1st April, 6-8pm. Why not come along and spend some time with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist ?

Holy Thursday Watching at the Altar of Repose at Our Lady Queen of peace following Mass of the Lord's supper until Midnight.

Confirmations - We pray for Henry, Marsden and Christopher who will be received into the Catholic Faith, and make their Confirmation and first Holy communion during the Easter vigil next Saturday at Our Lady's.

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](#).

Bishop Stephen's Review and Ten Year Strategy – Thank you to everyone who attended the meeting last Thursday at St. Bede's. It was a great turnout and much appreciated. If it gave us all a deeper awareness of the challenges facing our parishes and the diocese in the coming years, then I think it was worth it. There will be a follow-up meeting on Thursday 9th April 6.30pm at St. Bede's hall, offering an opportunity to reflect on the four questions together. Owing to the very quick time-limit on this project, could all forms be returned to one of the Clergy no later than Sunday 19th April. Thankyou, Fr. Martin Morris

Stations of the Cross During Lent

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

St John Boste, Wednesday 6.30pm

Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Sunday 4pm

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](#).

Additional Events During Holy Week:

Good Friday, Ecumenical Outdoor Service of Witness, 11.30am at the Cenotaph, Shiney Row.

Easter Sunday, Ecumenical Dawn Service at 6.15am, Sightline Hill, Herrington Park.

All Most Welcome.

Chrism Mass - Bishop Stephen will celebrate the annual Chrism Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral on Wednesday 1st April 11am. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

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

Holy Week and Easter Services

Maundy Thursday No morning Mass

Evening Mass 7pm St Josephs and Our Lady Queen of Peace

Good Friday No morning Mass

Solemn Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ

3pm St Joseph's, St John Boste and St Bede's

7pm Stations of the Cross Our Blessed Lady Immaculate

Holy Saturday No Masses

Easter Vigils

5pm St Joseph's 7:30pm Our Blessed Lady Immaculate

Easter Sunday

Masses at the usual times inc St Bede at 11.15am.

Cleaning for Easter at St John Boste Church. The cleaning will be at 10 am on Monday 30th March! Everyone most welcome to help!

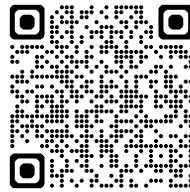
YOU DID IT!! The HCPT Ceilidh was a huge success. Thanks to the generosity of many people the target was exceeded and £1769 was raised. The very strict Safeguarding rules of HCPT do not allow me to give much detail. I have just been advised that your sponsorship is for a Tyneside girl with the beautiful name of Hope and, joy upon joy, she will be making her First Holy Communion with us at our Holy Mass in the Chapel at Hosanna House. Thank You, Thank You and may God Bless all of you. Grandad Len.

One year ago this week we had a Parish Mission, led by Sr Briega McKenna and Fr Pablo. The talks are still available on YouTube. You may find it helpful as a Lenten exercise to watch them again. I would particularly recommend the talk given by Sister on the 18 March at Our Lady's titled, "Jesus the vine, and we the branches." An excellent reflection on 'Prayer in the Christian life.'

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.

Our parish schools 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.



Daily Reflections for Holy Week can be found [here](#). It is a beautiful compilation of reflections, written by members of our diocesan Writing Team, based on the daily Gospels as we travel through Holy Week: beginning on Passion Sunday and ending with an Easter Sunday reflection by Bishop Stephen.

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](#)

St Mary's Cathedral – changes to mass times - 13 April 2026—29 May 2026. In order to replace the failing tungsten filament lights in the Cathedral with more efficient LED lighting and to improve the sound system and repaint, it is necessary to temporarily restrict access to our Cathedral. Closing the main body of the church ensures both the health and safety of our clergy, congregation and visitors and helps to keep the maintenance schedule to an absolute minimum. Works will begin on Monday 13th April and will continue until Friday 29th May during which time our Cathedral Masses will move to our city centre churches. The [Pauline Bookshop](#) and [Cloisters Café](#) are not affected by these works and will continue to operate as per their usual opening times. Mary's Place will also remain open on a Monday 10am – 1pm. Cathedral Mass times (13th April – 29th May) Sunday 9.30am Mass will be celebrated at St Michael's, Sunday 11.30am Mass will be celebrated at St Michael's, Sunday 6.30pm Mass will be celebrated at St Dominic's. Mon – Fri 12:05pm Mass will be celebrated at St Andrew's. Saturday 10am Mass will be celebrated at St Andrew's

Marriage Preparation Days - Engaged couples can find **more information** [here](#). To find and **book on a course**, please visit our [website](#) or call the phone booking service on 0800 389 3801. (In person and online courses are available.)

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 wish to request an electronic version of 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](#)