

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>
 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



DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY, 11 - 12 APRIL 2026 Year A

Saturday 11 April	St Joseph	5pm	John Littlewood
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Colin Stratton and Thomas Humby (RIP)
Sunday 12 April	St John Boste	9:30am	Kathleen Burlinson.
Divine Mercy Sunday	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Andrew Long RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	People of the Parish

First reading: A Community of Peace

Acts 2:42-47

The believers devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the Apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the Temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they shared their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

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

Second Reading: A Sure Hope

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith — more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire — may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

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: The Peace of the Risen Christ

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 13 April 2026 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 13 April St Martin I	St Bede	10am	Alma Dougherty (RIP)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Michael Leckenby (In thanksgiving for service to Parish)
Tuesday 14 April	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Charles & Margaret Callaghan & Deceased Lawless & Callaghan Family
	St Joseph	7pm	Reg Cordon RIP
Wednesday 15 April	St Bede	10am	Anne Conway (RIP)
	St John Boste	7pm	John & Vera Frazer
Thursday 16 April	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Theresa & Geoff Storey (RIP)
	St Joseph	12 Noon	George Stagg RIP
Friday 17 April	St Joseph	10am	Veronica Farrer RIP
	St John Boste	10am	Service of the Word
Saturday 18 April Vigil	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	David & Jackie Herbert Anniversary
	St Joseph	5pm	Patrick Stobbart nee Ford RIP
	St Bede	5pm	Catherine Naughton RIP 2nd Anniversary
Sunday 19 April 3rd Sunday of Easter	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Ray Enright (RIP)
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	John Gonzales RIP

The second Sunday of Easter was designated Divine Mercy Sunday by Pope John Paul II at the start of the new millennium, in the year 2000. In his sermon on 30th April 2000 he said, 'In the various readings (for today), the liturgy seems to indicate the path of mercy which, while re-establishing the relationship of each person to God, also creates new relationship of fraternal solidarity among human beings.' We know that we are blessed with the mercy of God for each one of us, and because of that we are called to show mercy towards others.

The first reading today from the Acts of the Apostles paints a wonderful picture of the fraternal solidarity that existed with the members of that very early church, 'And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need'. That is true fraternal solidarity!

They still had that strong connection to the Temple in Jerusalem and, 'And day by day, attending the Temple together'. The temple will have been one of the busiest places in the city of Jerusalem, so the witness of a large group of followers of Jesus going together to the Temple to meet and preaching the Good News to anyone who would listen, would have been very powerful, and probably dangerous. As well as maintaining that connection to the Jewish Temple they also has their unique Christian worship where they would be, 'breaking bread in their homes'.

I suspect that all of us would like to experience something of that early church way of life and faith; I know I would:

Sharing everything for the good of all.

Going out as a community to spread the Good News.

Celebrating the Eucharist together.

Caring for those in need.

We hear that this way of life gained them the respect of many ordinary people, 'praising God and having favour with all the people.'

In what ways might we live our faith in a way that we praise God and are looked up to by everyone?

Tony Joy

Charity Registration Number: 1143450

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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!

Today, Sunday April 12th Is Divine Mercy Sunday. Devotions at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate. 2.30pm with blessing of the Divine Mercy Image. All 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](#).

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. 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. Some useful links: Bishop Stephen's introduction to the Diocesan Pastoral Strategy: <https://youtu.be/25eZ7qGfVEY?si=6MLJc4q3xBxG2IPt> Webinar recording: [Pastoral Strategy Orientation and Guidance webinar](#) Link to the Parish page on the Diocesan website: [Pastoral Strategy: Parishes - Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle](#)

Thankyou, Fr. Martin Morris

'NEW SONG'! - Our last shared table was a celebration of community and great food, so we thought an Easter feast was in order! We'd love you to join us - bring yourselves and some food to share. 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:** 12 April 2026 @ 4.00 pm. **Email:** newsongne@gmail.com **Instagram:** @newsongne

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.

One year ago 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 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.'

CAFOD Holy Island Pilgrimage - Saturday 20 June - There are still a few seats left on the coach going to Holy Island. If you would like to go on the coach can you please contact Malcolm Bengston on 07746973132. The coach will be leaving from Our lady Queen of Peace at approx. 8.30am (exact time to be confirmed) and return at approx. 6.30 pm. Thank you.

Afternoon Tea - Please come and join us at St. John Boste Church on Saturday 16th May 2pm-4pm to celebrate our parish community and raise much needed funds. Tickets are £5 and will be available closer to the event.

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.

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

Job Vacancy – Assistant Cook - An exciting opportunity is available at St Joseph's Care Home (Little Sisters of the Poor, Newcastle) for an Assistant Cook. Hours available: 37.5 hours per week, including evenings and weekends. Note, sponsorship for this role is not available and applicants must have the right to work in the UK, which will be checked if successful. For more information, please contact St Joseph's Home (Tel No. 0191 2731279)

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.)

Life News: Recent developments in Parliament highlight how serious the situation is for many vulnerable pregnant women. At Life, we are not involved in political debate — but we do see the reality behind the headlines. Many women face pressure, isolation, and a lack of support, increasing the risk that they feel alone or unable to continue their pregnancy. That's why our work matters. We walk alongside women, providing safe housing, practical help, and compassionate care — giving them the support they need to embrace motherhood with confidence. At this critical moment, your church can make a difference: **Pray** for the women we support; **Give** to provide essential care and housing; **Share** our services with those in need; Together, we can ensure no woman faces this alone.

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](#).

John Bradburne Pilgrimage Climb 2026 - Dear Friends, we are delighted to invite you to take part in the John Bradburne Pilgrimage Climb 2026, taking place on Saturday 13 June in the beautiful landscape of Cumbria. This special day will begin with Mass at St John The Evangelist Church, Skirwith, celebrated by Bishop Paul Swarbrick, before we set off together on a memorable climb to High Cup Nick. What to expect: A 13km (approx. 8 miles) guided climb through stunning scenery; A day of prayer, reflection and fellowship; Refreshments in Skirwith Village Hall after the walk. Please note this climb is not for the faint hearted and requires a good level of fitness, to complete the pilgrimage. Whether you join us for the full day or simply for the Mass, you are warmly welcome. There is no fixed cost to take part, but a donation towards the Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre is greatly appreciated. To book your place email: info@johnbradburne.com We look forward to seeing you on the day. With best wishes The John Bradburne Memorial Society.

Mary's Meals - Since our humble beginnings, Mary's Meals – named in honour of Mary, the mother of Jesus – has been built on a foundation of prayer and the many little acts of love offered by those who believe in our mission. During May, as we take time to honour and celebrate Our Lady in a special way, we invite your church to join us to [Pray In May](#) for the children who eat our life-changing school meals. To plan your participation, we've developed a range of easy-to-use [Pray In May resources](#). These include printable prayers for children and a bulletin notice with information to share with your parish. Please explore our resources and share them with parish groups or schools who may be interested. And remember, if you would like one of our wonderful volunteers to visit your church and share more about Mary's Meals and our work, we would be delighted to hear from you. You can contact us at info@marysmeals.org, call 0800 698 1212 or [request a talk](#) via our website.

A pilgrimage for the People of the Sea - 25—30 May 2026. Stella Maris is delighted to invite sick, retired and active seafarers, fishers and their families from the UK and EU to join the charity on its inaugural Stella Maris Lourdes Pilgrimage, from 25 – 30 May 2026. *This pilgrimage brings together those who have lived and worked at sea or in fishing communities, offering time to pray, reflect, and find renewed strength in faith and fellowship.* All major costs are covered: travel, accommodation, and meals will be provided for participants and carers. For more details and to apply please go to www.stellamaris.org.uk/lourdes/

Forming Catholic Student Leaders - Two summer courses exploring faith, ethics and leadership for sixth form students, offered by the Christian Heritage Centre at Stonyhurst. Join us for 6 days in the beautiful Ribble Valley to explore themes linked to The Common Good (Year 12, 10-15 August) and to The Human Ecology (Year 13, 5-10 July). Meet new friends, discuss and share with peers, tutors and academics, learn new skills, develop your relationship with Christ, build your character. www.christianleadershipformation.com

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](#).

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.**



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