

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

THE TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 29TH – 30TH AUGUST 2026 Year A

Saturday 29th August	St Joseph	5pm	Mary Sheilds RIP
Vigil	St Bede	5pm	Michael Gates
Sunday 30th August	St John Boste	9:30am	John Cassidy
22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	Audrey McNay RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	People of the Parish

First reading: Jeremiah Complains to God. Jeremiah 20:7-9

O Lord, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughing-stock all the day; everyone mocks me. For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, 'Violence and destruction!' For the word of the Lord has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say, 'I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name', there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.

Response to the Psalm: *For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.*

Second Reading: The People of God. Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, enlighten the eyes of our hearts, so that we may know the hope to which he has called us. Alleluia.

The Gospel: The Cross of Jesus. Matthew 16:21-27

At that time: Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.' Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.'

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 Andrew Shaw	0191 649 8257		

Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 31st August 2026 (Streamed Mass *)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 31st August St Aidan	St Bede	10am	Special Intention (MF)
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	Thanksgiving for our Priests
Tuesday 1st September	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Paul Raymond Lyons RIP
	St Joseph	7pm	Louise Howell (Operation)
Wednesday 2nd September	St Bede	10am	Betty Walker, Adam & Harry Reah
	St John Boste	7pm	Fr Leo Pyle RIP
Thursday 3rd September St Gregory the Great	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Souls in Purgatory
	St Joseph	Noon	Beloved Wife Christine Thompson RIP 4th Anniversary
Friday 4th September St Cuthbert	St Joseph	10am	Sarah Jane Beveridge RIP (SVP)
	St John Boste	10am*	A Sick Person (D)
Saturday 5th September	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	Vocations to the Priesthood
Vigil St Teresa of Calcutta	St Joseph	5pm	Fr Aniebiet Francis Xavier Inyang RIP
	St Bede	5pm	Colin Stratton & Thomas Humby
Sunday 6th September 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	St John Boste	9:30am	People of the Parish
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	Linda Harrigan RIP
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	Gerard McCabe RIP

LATELY DEAD: Sheila Tweedy, Joyce O'Brien, Jack Lawrie and Frank Casey.
May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.
Amen.

‘The way you think is not God’s way but man’s’

There is no doubt about it, Jeremiah had a tough life. In fact he’s known by some people as ‘the weeping prophet’. We’ll hear in the first reading today how he accuses God of seducing him into becoming a prophet and deceiving him about the personal suffering his mission would involve. Throughout his prophetic ministry from about 628BC to about 580BC, he appears to be the most plaintive and heartbroken of all the prophets. He is burdened by a ministry he does not want and is pained by the hostility of his own people, which he deeply resents. He is commissioned to tell the people of Judah and Jerusalem that their sins have earned them defeat and exile. He warns them that God’s help is not automatic, that they might as well surrender to the Babylonian armies, because God will not help them.

Jeremiah’s message, not surprisingly, is seen as treason and he is attacked by the crowds, imprisoned and tortured. His painful vocation isolates him from his family and friends; he becomes a laughing stock around the streets of the city. He is no robot, he is hurt and bewildered by how people respond to him. He suffers so much he tries early retirement, but it doesn’t work because he cannot extinguish the fire burning in his heart. He cannot imagine how despite his warnings, life goes on in the city, everything appears to be business as usual. He did indeed have a tough life.

It rather looks as though St Peter will have had a great deal of sympathy for him. Peter didn’t fancy the idea of suffering either. Last week we heard how he recognised Jesus as the chosen one, the anointed one, and Jesus told him that this insight had come from his Father. Today, three verses later, Jesus sees him as ‘satanic’, as an obstacle, because he only saw things as man saw them and didn’t see them from God’s point of view. Jesus, like Jeremiah, knows that his relationship with his Father will involve personal suffering, anguish and rejection. Peter is having none of this and tries to deflect Jesus away from this way of thinking. Peter wants to banish suffering from the agenda. Jesus sees Peter at this moment as a tempter, an obstacle, someone who simply doesn’t get that to know Jesus is bound to lead to suffering.

In 2016 an amazing American Jesuit called Dan Berrigan died aged 94. He was an activist for social justice throughout his life and one of his phrases was: ‘If you’re going follow Jesus, you’d better look good on wood’. Once we take seriously the call to follow Jesus, then we too will suffer frustration and contempt. However, we will not be alone, the Lord will be with us every step along the way to the fullness of life.

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.

OLOF (Our Lady's Over 50's club), Please note, the club meets on Tuesday at 1pm in the Lindisfarne Room at St Bede's. All most welcome!

Special BBC Songs of Praise Christmas Concert to be recorded at the spectacular Glasshouse International Centre for Music in Gateshead on Tuesday 6th October.

Join Aled Jones and some very special guests at the iconic Glasshouse for a spectacular Christmas concert. Bring your singing voice and Christmas jumper for an evening of classic carols and traditional hymns. For free tickets book [here](#) or [email](#) or telephone 020 8530 8154.

Parish 'LIFE' Group. - We are hoping to begin a 'LIFE' Group in the parish soon. The group will work closely with the project of The Guild of Our Lady of Good Counsel network, in supporting Mothers and Expectant Mothers with housing, feeding, and other practical difficulties. They will also promote the Annual day for Life, and the January 'white flower appeal'. A short meeting will be held in the office at Our Lady's after 10am Mass on Saturday 3rd October for any parishioner who may wish to know more. All welcome.

Stand with Palestinian families: Write to the Trade Secretary today. The suffering in the Holy Land has gone on for far too long. One of the greatest obstacles to building peace is the ongoing expansion of illegal settlements across occupied Palestinian territory. As settlements expand, Palestinian families are driven from their homes, often amid repeated violent attacks, and are forced to watch while settlers take over. The result is widespread poverty and suffering. That is why we are calling on the trade secretary, Jonathan Reynolds, to ban trade with settlements, including ending the import of produce grown on illegally occupied land. Write to the Trade Secretary [here](#).

Special Collection This Week: Lay Training Fund: This fund was established to help lay men and women explore what it means to be a Catholic in the world – as local councillors, folk involved in local politics, influencing decisions made that make a difference in our local communities. It is about being really active in the local Community as Catholics – given that Jesus invited his followers to make a difference where they lived. To find out more, please contact [Amy Cameron](#) of the Faith and Mission Vicariate.

We welcome Fr Jacek Socha to our parish this week. Fr Jacek is from Gdania near Gdansk, Poland. You're very welcome Fr Jacek.

A warm welcome to Father Andrew Shaw as our new Assistant Priest. Father Andrew will live in the Presbytery at Our Lady Queen Of Peace. We wish him many happy years here in our parish.

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](#).

LOURDES CENTENARY BALL - SAT 5TH SEPTEMBER 2026 - NEWCASTLE CIVIC CENTRE.

The Hexham & Newcastle Lourdes Pilgrimage Hospitalite invite all to the Lourdes Centenary Ball taking place at the Newcastle Civic Centre on Saturday 5th September between 7pm and 11.30pm. Please order your tickets using this [link](#). Direct any questions to the President of Hospitalite, Claire James [here](#).

Eucharistic Adoration and Exposition. This Sunday afternoon, 30th August, 4pm - 5.30pm at Our Lady Immaculate. Why not visit Church for a short while and spend some time with the Lord in quiet prayer. "In the Eucharist we come into immediate contact with the risen Lord Jesus" Pope Leo XIV). "The more time we spend with Jesus in the Eucharist, the more holy we become (St Carlo Acutis).

Bishop Stephen's Review. Thank you to all those parishioners who attended meetings over the last few months, both in our own parish, and those in Sunderland and Washington. Your contributions were appreciated. Following the wider partnership meetings at Sunderland and Houghton-le-Spring, a summary document has been produced outlining all responses received, this is called 'Combined Local Communities Return Form.' I emphasise this is a summary of responses received, and does not reflect any final decision on any matter. The next stage of the review is for these responses to be forwarded to Bishop Stephen and his representatives at Deanery level, for consideration. The Return Form and the Executive Summary can be viewed [here](#) and on the parish website, and some paper copies are also available at the back of each Church. Thank you, Fr Martin Morris

A Message from Father Luke

Serving in Washington and Penshaw these past three years has been an incredible joy. I'm sure you will make Fr Andrew Shaw as welcome as you've made me. I wanted to say thank you to everyone for your kindness and welcome over the years, for faith and friendliness, and as I leave, for your incredible generosity. I'm somewhat nervous about the new appointment, but knowing that you're praying for me is certainly smoothing the path ahead. Thank you and be assured of my ongoing prayers. If you're ever in St Dominic's do say hello! God Bless, Fr Luke.

CONFESSIONS	
Church	Time
Our Lady Queen of Peace	Thursday after 10am Mass
St Joseph	Thursday after Noon Mass
St John Boste	Friday after 10am Mass
Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	Saturday after 10am Mass
St Bede	Saturday after 5pm Mass



The Parish of St John XXIII has a dedicated YouTube channel. Here you can watch live streams of Masses. These are indicated by an asterisk next to the Mass times on pages one and two. You can also see recordings of past Masses and Gospel Homilies. The channel can be accessed [here](#).

Catechism Instruction for new Inquirers to the Catholic Faith - OCIA. Beginning Wednesday September 30th 7pm in the Emmaus Room at Our Lady's. Please register with Fr Martin Morris before attending.

The winner of the charity draw 21/8/20266, for Back on the Map based in Hendon, was Mrs Leoni Stratton. Congratulations to her and thanks to all who supported the charity!

Other News

Special Collection Update - During Advent 2025 and Lent 2026, **St Cuthbert's Care** invited parishes across our Diocese to support their new service, **Fresh Start**, which aims to provide safe accommodation for women experiencing homelessness, many of whom have faced challenges linked to the justice system or substance misuse, supporting them to rebuild their lives with dignity and stability. Thanks to the generosity of parish communities, an incredible **£26,500** has been raised, which will go directly to supporting this vital service. Rooted firmly in Catholic values, the project responds to a clear gap in provision, offering hope where there is currently no statutory funding. Anticipated annual running costs are around £300,000, making the ongoing support of parish communities more important than ever. *Thank you for your support – together we can make a real difference.* More information [here](#).

Minsteracres - The Medjugorje Centre (North East) has organised a retreat from Friday 9th - Sunday 11th October. **Fr Martin Morris** will be leading the retreat. It is open to anyone from our diocese and beyond, who supports or is interested in Medjugorje. The cost is £205 per person. A £50 Deposit is required and booking forms are available from Marian Fletcher - Telephone 0191 4174413.

For information about Medjugorje see - <https://www.medjugorje.hr/en/>

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children. We are just over a month away from the first of our two SPUC Day Conferences, and I'm pleased to say we have four fantastic speakers confirmed (two at each Conference)! In London we will be joined by Bernadette Smyth and Sarah Morse. And in Glasgow, we will be joined by Sara Spencer and John Mason. To find out more about these speakers, and to book your place at one of the Conferences, click the link [here](#).

Life in the Spirit Seminar Series: Harlow Green - 24th September 2026—12th November 2026. Join us for this opportunity to experience the new life we are promised through baptism in the Holy Spirit. Life in the Spirit seminars are being run by the Diocesan CHARIS group and you will be very welcome to attend. Many who have attended previous seminars have spoken of how it has given their faith a real boost and helped them experience God's love in tangible ways. **Venue:** St Anne, Rokeby View, Harlow Green, Gateshead, NE9 7UD. **Cost:** Free.

Time: 7pm to 8.30pm. **Dates and Titles of Sessions:** **24th September 2026:** Introduction, **1st October 2026:** God's Love – Andy Drozdziak, **8th October 2026:** Salvation – Fr Anthony Ohaekwusi, **22nd October 2026:** The New Life – Christine Dixon, **29th October 2026:** Receiving God's Gifts – Fr Chris Warren, **5th November 2026:** Baptism in the Holy Spirit – Fr Shaun O'Neill, **12th November 2026:** Growth – Nikki Dickenson, **19th November 2026:** Transformation in Christ – John Wheeler. Please book your place [here](#).

"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](#)

Forming and Developing for Mission - We are delighted to share our programme exploring and supporting pastoral councils. Our series of videos looks at everything from purpose and membership, to resolving conflict and letting the Spirit lead. *"We are not simply called to better ideas, but to convert hearts."* Each video has a supplementary document summarising key themes and suggested group discussion points. The role of the pastoral council is an essential one - mission-driven, transparent and joy-filled supporting both clergy and laity in shared responsibility. Consider our themes and let us know what you think. For more information please [click 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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