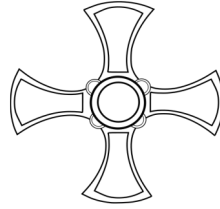


**Saint Bede's
Catholic Church**
Catholic Row
BEDLINGTON
NE22 6HS



**Saint Robert of Newminster
Catholic Church**
Oldgate
MORPETH
NE61 1QF

Parishes of the St Benet Biscop Partnership, Northumberland

Parish Priest: Reverend Father Peter J Stott

St Robert's Presbytery, Collingwood House, Oldgate, Morpeth, NE61 1QF

☎ 01670 513410 | ✉ strobertainewminster.morpeth@diocesehn.org.uk | peter.stott@diocesehn.org.uk | peterjstott@aol.com

St Bede's Church and Presbytery, Catholic Row, Bedlington, NE22 6HS

☎ 01670 823258 | ✉ stbede.bedlington@diocesehn.org.uk

Deacon: Reverend Stephen Boulter | stephen.boulter@diocesehn.org.uk

Parish Secretary: Mary Carter

Office Hours | Tuesday and Thursday, 9.30am—3.30pm at St Robert's | Wednesday, 9am – 5.30pm at St Bede's

www.strobertainmorpeth.com | www.stbedesbedlington.co.uk | Northumberland Listening Service ☎ 07732 980740

First Sunday of Advent - 3rd December 2023

A man goes on a journey leaving his slaves in charge, each with a job to do. A doorkeeper keeps watch to alert the slaves as to his master's return. The story illustrates the time of waiting between Jesus' first coming as a little baby at Christmas to his second coming on Judgement Day. Did the slaves really need a doorkeeper to alert them to the master's return? After all, waiting for the second coming shouldn't be the same as waiting for a bus! The point is not to wait for the master's return before hurling ourselves into great busy-ness. We have to spend our waiting time in preparation and constant readiness.

"Keep alert," we are told "keep awake." We are asked to keep alert and awake not for fear of being caught out like naughty school children, but in a spirit of 'keeping our eye on the ball.' We all know how we would like to contribute. Each of us is aware of our unique place on the planet and how we would like to be remembered. Sadly, all too often it is easy for us to 'take our eye off the ball' and get caught up in other concerns.



The news is full of people who have reached the end of their life unexpectedly. None of us has been afforded an exact time and date for our final preparations. Instead we are asked to live in a permanent state of readiness seizing every opportunity on a daily basis to prepare for God's Kingdom. Our Advent goal needs to be about waiting in readiness from this day until our last.

Today's invitation is to decide on our plans and bring them to fruition. Just in the same way as we draw up any other plan, we need to do the same for our Advent goals. In the same way as we put our plans in a diary, it helps to put our spiritual plans in a diary too. Who are we going to help today and how? Whose life can we impact and by when? It probably sounds hugely trite, but we need to put Judgement Day in the diary!

Please take this Newsletter home with you, so that you know what's happening in your parish this week



During this time we are asked to pray for The Harvest, the Fruits of Human Work, and the Reverent Use of Creation; Students and Teachers; The Spread of the Gospel; Justice and Peace in the World; Prisoners and their Families; All Victims of War; Young People. Please pray for those we know who are unwell, as well as the many who have no one to pray for them; for those in hospital and for all undergoing treatment for serious illnesses. We pray in this month of November for the souls of all the faithful departed; for all who have died

recently including **Christine Foster** [Morpeth] whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated on Thursday 7th December at 10am at St Robert's Church; for **Ray Potter** (Nedderton) whose Funeral Service will be held at St Bede's Church on Tuesday 12th December; for **Peggy Bullen**, (Morpeth), aged 104 years, whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated on Wednesday 13th December at 10am at St Robert's Church; and for all whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Offertory Collection - 25th / 26th November
St Bede's Church: £187.80 / St Robert's Church: £574.49



Advent Alms for St Cuthbert's Care

Advent begins THIS WEEKEND and as usual we will be supporting the work of our Diocesan Charity, **St Cuthbert's Care**, with our **Advent Alms**. There will be a Retiring Collection on the First and Third Sundays of Advent [3rd and 17th December] for the work of St Cuthbert's Care.



CAFOD Appeal for the Holy Land

The situation in Gaza does not get better, in fact it deteriorates the longer time goes on, with people suffering in so many ways. There will be a Retiring Collection on the Second Sunday of Advent, Saturday 9th / Sunday 10th December, to allow CAFOD and its Holy Land partners to respond to the desperate need in the Holy Land. If you wish to make a donation, you can do so then.



Standing Orders or Payments by BACS

Many thanks to all who contribute to the weekly collections by Standing Order. This probably remains the easiest way to make a contribution to the Church. If you need our bank details to set this up, please see the information below, or contact us for a Bank Mandate. If you do not wish to set up a Standing Order, but do want the availability / flexibility of contributing directly from your bank account via BACS when you want to, you can set us up as a payee in your banking app on your mobile phone. Our bank details are...

Morpeth
Sort Code 40-34-18
Account Number 32010755
Name of Account "DHN Morpeth St Robert of Newminster"
~~~~~ ~~~~~ ~~~~~

**Bedlington**  
Sort Code 40-34-18  
Account Number 81163620  
Name of Account "DHN Bedlington St Bede"

**Donate to your Parish Online**

You are now able to make a donation to your parish via the Diocesan Website. Click onto <https://diocesehn.org.uk/> click on DONATE at the top of the page and then scroll down until you come to the parish you wish to donate to and then follow the onscreen instructions.

**Diocesan Gift Aid Scheme**

Do you pay UK Tax and give regularly to our church collections? You could join the Gift Aid Scheme! We gain an extra 25% of your offering, at no extra cost to you. Contact the Parish Office or Peter Smith for further details.

**Advent Service**

The Catholic Women's League will be leading an Advent Service on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, at 2pm, in St Robert of Newminster Church. It will be a wonderful opportunity on the First Sunday of Advent to come along and share what the spirit of Advent is all about. Refreshments will be served in the Church Hall after the Service. **Everyone is welcome.**



**Reflections for the Season of Advent**

There is a new resource on the diocesan website of Advent Reflections for every day during this season ([www.diocesehn.org.uk/news/the-season-of-advent-2/](http://www.diocesehn.org.uk/news/the-season-of-advent-2/))

**Migrants and Refugees Day**

"Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay". On December 3<sup>rd</sup> the Church commemorates St Francis Xavier. This is the day chosen by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People to mark World Migration Day. Each year there is a message from the Holy Father reflecting on the plight of migrants and refugees. "Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay" is the theme chosen by the Holy Father for the 109<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees (WDMR). Pope Francis intends to promote a renewed reflection on a right that has not yet been codified at the international level: the right not to have to migrate or, in other words, the right to be able to remain in one's own land.

**The Journey in Faith Group**

The Journey in Faith Group will meet on the following dates this year, from 7pm—8.30pm.

\* Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December The Sacrament of Baptism

\* Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December The Sacrament of Confirmation

Please pray especially for those who are enquiring about becoming full members of the Church who are attending these meetings.

**Prayers for Deacon Stephen**

Please keep Deacon Stephen in your prayers. This week he began a course of treatment which will continue for every weekday for a further three weeks. Please keep him in your prayers during this time.

**Sacrament of Baptism**



Any Parents hoping to have their child baptised are asked to speak to Fr Peter or Deacon Stephen, as we need some basic details from you. Get in touch with us to make an appointment so that we can also book you onto the next Baptism Meeting, which will be held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

**SVP Appeal**

St Robert's SVP Conference would like to have a whiteboard and easel / stand on which they could appeal for any specific things that are needed from time to time, whether it be for a specific case we are dealing with or for the asylum seekers or Blackfriars drop in centre. Do you have a whiteboard and / or a stand which you are no longer using and which you could donate for this purpose? If so, please contact Gerry Harber (Tel 517829) or Richard Copeland (Tel 220532).

**St Robert's SVP Conference**

The next meeting of St Robert's SVP will be on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 pm in the upper church hall.

**CAFOD World Gifts**

CAFOD World Gifts Catalogue are now available in Church. These catalogues list all the different ways you can reach out to the poor and less fortunate around the world by buying gifts in the name of a loved relative or friend for Christmas. Full details are available in the Catalogue or on the CAFOD website [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)

**New to The Parish?**

Are you new to our Parish? Or have you moved? You can scan this QR code with your mobile or tablet and complete an online form; or type this link into your search engine [https://form.jotform.com/Fr\\_Peter/new-parishioner--updated-info](https://form.jotform.com/Fr_Peter/new-parishioner--updated-info) and complete the form.



**Childrens Liturgy Groups**

Please remember that we have Children's Liturgy Groups at both St Bede's and St Robert's Churches. We invite all children of First and Primary School age to attend the liturgy at St Bede's Vigil Mass each Saturday evening or at the 9am Mass at St Robert's Church.

**Readers**

We are looking for new readers to join our teams of readers at both St Bede's Vigil Mass and at the 9am and 11am Masses at St Robert's Church. We have had one response so far at St Robert's. We're happy to have children from School read and **we also appeal for younger adults, in their 20s and 30s to get involved; if anyone is willing to read at either St Bede's Church or St Robert's Church, please speak to Fr Peter.**



**Altar Servers Appeal**

We still have no young servers for the 11am Mass; and only have one young server at the Vigil Mass at St Bede's. Please ask the younger children who are coming to Mass regularly, in Year 5 and above and who have made their First Holy Communion to consider becoming an Altar Server.



### Thriving or Closing: Where is your parish going?

**Are you worried about what will happen to your church in a couple of years time? Are you worried about how few young families regularly attend Mass with their children?** Don't miss the Catholic Parish Summit launch event happening on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Will my parish still be here in 10 years? If it were to close, would the community even notice? In the face of such sobering thoughts, the good news is that parishes can come to new life if they live their missionary identity and make new disciples. *Think it's time to take a more serious look into the problem of church decline?* If you're passionate about your parish and desire to see growth, whether you are clergy or laity, please join Bishop David Oakley and Fr James Mallon on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 7pm—8:15pm in our free online event, "Thriving or Closing: Where is your parish going?" So don't wait – register today! Use this link for further information ... <https://divinerenovation.tfaforms.net/ff/CPSPDecember>

### Volunteering in the Parish

This note has been in the newsletter for several months now. Please remember that all new volunteers to any role in our parishes need to complete a Volunteer Registration Form, which will also ask for the names of two people able to give references for you. Please contact Fr Peter or Parish Office if you need one of these forms. If anyone has any queries about this, please do not hesitate to contact Fr Peter or our Safeguarding Representatives - John Carr and Mary Beaton at St Robert's and Mary Carter at St Bede's. If you think you should complete a form or you should have a diocesan DBS for something you do in the Parish, please do not leave it until it is too late otherwise you may not be able to carry out something which you have always done. Better to err on the safe side and check, rather than not do anything at all and find out that the paperwork cannot be completed in time.

### Diocesan Safeguarding Guidelines

All who help out in our parishes as volunteers, must be made aware of the Diocesan Safeguarding Guidelines. Every parish has been asked to make those guidelines known to all parish volunteers. An email has been sent to those whose up to date details we have on file. If you have not received an email, it's probably because we do not have your correct details, in which case we ask that you send an email to the parish office with your details. For those who do not have email, we will make paper copies of the guidelines available. If you are able to scan the QR code here, you will have access to a copy of the guidelines.



### Woolly Hats Appeal



Stella Maris [formerly Apostleship of the Sea] gratefully accepts donations of woolly hats for seafarers. You can imagine the need for these at sea or onboard ship at this time of the year. Do you have some wool? Can you knit woolly hats for seafarers? Give it a go and hand them into St Robert's and we'll pass them on to Marian Bell, our Stella Maris parish rep, for passing on to the Chaplain, for seafarers who use our local ports.

### Food Donation for Foodbanks and Refugees

We are very grateful to the many parishioners who donate regularly to the boxes and bins we have available at our churches to collect food for our Foodbanks and for the Refugees and Asylum Seekers in our diocese. Please continue your support for these people and donate any non-perishable food, toiletries and well as some treats for adults and children if you are able to.



### Booking the Parish Hall

Please remember that if you wish to use the Parish Hall, you should book it through our Parish Office. At St Robert's, there are many users of the Hall, so it is necessary to book in advance rather than just expecting it to be available. It costs £20 per hour for use of the Hall or the Meeting Room for private uses or for any group that charges others to come to their event. Parish Groups usually use the Hall free of charge, but it is always best to speak to Fr Peter about this. At St Bede's there is very little use of the Hall at the moment but we're always open to discussion for anyone who wishes to hire it for use.

### Newsletter via email

We currently email the Newsletter to over 50 parishioners but we wish to try and encourage more people to receive the Newsletter this way to make us more environmentally friendly. At the moment we print 85 Newsletters for St Bede's and 170 Newsletters for St Robert's each week, at a cost of 8p per copy. Can you be more environmentally friendly and help us to be? Send us your email address and we will add you to the mailing list and we can cut down on the amount of newsletters we print.

### First Confession Preparation

First Confessions will be celebrated in a couple of weeks time. A wonderful time for our children and their families.

- \* Preparation meeting at St Bede's Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> December
- \* Preparation Meeting at St Robert's Hall on 7<sup>th</sup> December.
- \* Sacrament of Reconciliation at St Bede's Church at 6pm on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December
- \* Sacrament of Reconciliation at St Robert's Church at 6pm on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December.

Parents are asked to talk to their children about going to Confession and perhaps some of the things they think they will need to "confess"

### Carol Service



We are holding a Carol Service for both St Robert's and St Bede's Churches in St Robert's Church on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. This will begin at 7pm and seasonal refreshments of Mince Pies and Wine will be served in the Parish Hall afterwards. Everyone Welcome.

### Carol Service

### Opera and Carols

St Robert's First School are holding 'Opera and Carols' in St Robert's Church on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December, at 7.30pm, followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies in the Hall afterwards. Tickets available from the School.

### Bonus Ball

The winners of Week 8 of the Bonus Ball were Martin Gales and Rita O'Malley with number 49. Congratulations and best wishes for the next draw.



### Marys Meals Appeal

Until 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024, every donation received by Marys Meals 'Double The Love' appeal will be matched, up to £1 million. Thanks to a group of generous supporters, your kindness will go even further. The impacts of rising costs, climate change and conflict have brought fear and uncertainty to many children and right now our life-changing school meals have never been more important. It costs Mary's Meals just 10p to provide a child with a nutritious school meal and, with the cost of feeding a child for a whole year being just £19.15, we know that small change really can make a big impact. Food & education changes the story for these children, allowing them to break the cycle of poverty for themselves and their communities. Pray for our work.' [marysmeals.org.uk](http://marysmeals.org.uk)



### Invitation from the Sacred Heart Sisters

The Society of the Sacred Heart arrived in England on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1842 and the celebration of 180 years in this country draws to a close on December 8<sup>th</sup>. The sisters in Fenham, would like people to join them for Mass in St Robert's Church, Bolbec Road, Fenham at 6pm on that day. Bishop Seamus will be the celebrant, as he was the College Chaplain for many years. To have some idea of numbers for the Mass leaflets, please RSVP to [rsjcifenham@yahoo.com](mailto:rsjcifenham@yahoo.com) or leave a message on ☎ 0191 422 3840.



### Sick and Retired Priests Fund

Donations can be made payable to "The Northern Brethren Fund" and sent to the Treasurer, Father Ian Jackson at St Joseph's Church, Coast Road, Blackhall, Hartlepool, Co. Durham, TS27 4HW. BACS payments are also possible. Please contact Fr Peter.

### Thank you from Significance

The Trustees of 'Significance' thank everyone who supported the Grand Draw and all those who donated prizes. 1,606 tickets were sold which realised £8,030.00. The funds raised will help Significance to continue to support the Emmaus Village and provide opportunities for young people to recognise their own worth and value. Congratulations to all our winners: Danielle Dowson (St John's Catholic School, Bishop Auckland), Jamie Adams (St Mary's Cathedral), Sr Hilda (Oaklea Convent), Sarah Boyd (Dunston, Gateshead).

### Little Sisters of the Poor—Nurse and Carer Vacancies

Exciting new job opportunities are now available at St Joseph's Care Home (Little Sisters of the Poor, Westmorland Road, Newcastle) for care assistants and nurses.

- \* Care Assistant: Shifts are 8am - 3pm, 3pm - 9pm
  - \* Nurse: Shifts are 8am - 4pm, 1pm - 9pm
- Excellent rates of pay. For more information please contact Lee-Marie Thornley on 07856 256095 or email [lee.marie@lspLondon.co.uk](mailto:lee.marie@lspLondon.co.uk)

# Masses, Intentions and Services This Week

|                                                                                      | St Robert of Newminster Church, Morpeth                                                                                               | St Bede's Church, Bedlington                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December</b><br><i>Weekday</i>                            | 9.40am The Rosary<br><b>10am Mass:</b> Patrick Adair<br>1.30am—11am Adoration and Confessions                                         | 5pm - 5.20pm: Confessions<br><b>5.30pm Vigil Mass:</b> McGinn & Bruce Families       |
| <b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December</b><br><b>First Sunday of Advent</b>               | <b>9am Mass:</b> Helen and Douglas Cone<br><b>11am Mass:</b> People of the Parish<br>2.00pm Advent Service                            |                                                                                      |
| <b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December</b><br><i>Weekday</i>                              |                                                                                                                                       | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br><b>10am Mass:</b> People of the Parish  |
| <b>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December</b><br><i>Weekday</i>                             | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br><b>10am Mass:</b> Christina Foster                                                       | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br>10am Service of Word and Communion      |
| <b>Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December</b><br><i>Weekday</i>                           | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br>10am Service of Word and Communion                                                       | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br><b>10am Mass:</b> Cox and Hogg Families |
| <b>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December</b><br><i>St Andrew</i>                          | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br><b>10am Requiem Mass:</b> Christina Foster<br><i>Followed by Cremation a Bockenfield</i> | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br>10am Service of Word and Communion      |
| <b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December</b><br><i>The Immaculate Conception of the BVM</i> | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br>10am Service of Word and Communion                                                       | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament<br><b>10am Mass:</b> Jim Craik             |
| <b>Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December</b><br><i>Weekday / Saturday of Our Lady</i>     | 9.40am The Rosary<br><b>10am Mass:</b> Bob Watson<br>10.30am—11am Adoration and Confessions                                           | 5pm - 5.20pm Confessions<br><b>5.30pm Vigil Mass:</b> People of the Parish           |
| <b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December</b><br><b>Second Sunday of Advent</b>             | <b>9am Mass:</b> Ted Lewington<br><b>11am Mass:</b> People of the Parish                                                              |                                                                                      |



## The Holy Father Pope Francis' Intentions for December 2023

For persons with disabilities: We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.



### Diocesan Job Vacancies

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has the following job vacancies:

- Safeguarding Adviser, based at the Diocesan Offices, Newcastle – full-time, permanent. Closing date: 12<sup>th</sup> December
- IT Manager, Diocesan Offices, Newcastle – full-time, permanent. Closing date 12<sup>th</sup> December

Full details of both vacancies are available on the diocesan website.

### Legacy and Your Will

Earlier this year, St Bede's Church, Bedlington received a substantial donation from the estate of Mr Vincent Allison. We are extremely grateful that Vince, a faithful member of the parish community at Bedlington, chose St Bede's Church as his main beneficiary. Please do not forget our churches - St Bede's and St Robert of Newminster - in your Will. It does help enormously in the running of our parishes.

### Message from Holy Island SVP Camp

'Are you interested in your child having a holiday in 2024? Let them join us for a week on Holy Island. They'll stay in our Centre and be looked after by DBS checked and trained helpers who will ensure they have a safe, fun time. We do lots of interesting and enjoyable activities such as rock pooling, longball, football, rounders, craft and art, table tennis, long ball, quizzes and competitions and marathons as well as laser tag, silly sports, sand castle building, swimming and scavenger hunts. Girls and boys can be aged 9-12 and it is a great way for them to meet new people and make friends from all over the North East. A week's all-inclusive holiday costs a donation of £150 and can be paid in instalments. In some circumstances children may be able to receive partial or full funding to attend. If you're interested, or know of a child who could benefit from such a holiday, please visit our website for further details at: <https://www.svp.org.uk/microsite/holy-island> Applications open from 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023'.

### Christmas Concert at Little Sisters, Newcastle

The Newcastle Male Chorus and Gibside Singers will be performing a Christmas Concert at St Joseph's Home, Little Sisters of the Poor, Newcastle on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.00pm. The concert is in aid of the work of the Little Sisters of the Poor here in St Joseph's Home. Tickets are £8 (interval drink included), available from St Joseph's Home.

### Retrouvaille: A Programme for Married Couples

Do you need some help in your marriage? Retrouvaille has helped many couples find new hope, nourishment and growth in their marriages. If you want to uncover or reawaken the love, trust and commitment that brought you together and work through difficult times in your marriage, please contact Retrouvaille. There is no group therapy or group work. Our next programme commences with a Virtual weekend on 8<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024 or there is a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Call or text ☎ 07887 296983 or ☎ 07973 380443, email [retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com](mailto:retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com) - or visit [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk) to see what they have to offer.

### African and Caribbean Catholic Community

There is a Mass for the African and Caribbean Catholic Community living in the diocese, on the last Sunday of every month at 2pm at St Joseph's Church, Gateshead, NE8 1LX, (right behind the Interchange for Metro and Buses). For more information please contact Fr Anthony Ohaekwusi on 07407 486 865 or email him on [africancommunitydhn@gmail.com](mailto:africancommunitydhn@gmail.com)

### Thought for the day

"Too often, too late comes too soon."

### Confessions for Christmas

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December and Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December, Confessions with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will be extended from **10.30am until 11.30am** to give a little extra opportunity for you to go to Confession before Christmas to have quiet prayer time for those would like.

