

The Parish of the Durham Martyrs
*Incorporating the Churches of Our Lady of Mercy
& St. Godric, St. Joseph and St. Bede*

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Parish Newsletter – 22nd March 2026



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Bishop Stephen has invited all parishes to participate in a Pastoral Strategy following his recent Pastoral Letter. There is a certain urgency to the process. We will therefore begin the process on Wednesday when the Parish Council meets. It will be then presented to the wider parish. It is hoped that this consultation will be completed by the end of April. I will keep you updated.

Well done to all the Staff at St. Godric's School on their recent outstanding RE Ofsted. We, as parish, are very fortunate to be benefiting from the input and generosity of staff who are very involved in many parish activities and ministries. Well done.

Last Sunday we witnessed the very public expression of thanks for a Catholic education when in her Oscar winning speech, Jesse Buckley thanked the Ursuline Sisters for what they did for her. The school's message of congratulations to Jesse sums up so much of what our Catholic Schools try to do for the children in their care at both primary and secondary levels.

In a Facebook post March 16, the Ursuline Secondary School in Thurles said it is "immensely proud to congratulate past pupil Jessie Buckley on her Oscar win for Best Actress at the 2026 Academy Awards."

"The tender, intuitive and resilient portrayal of Agnes Shakespeare in 'Hamnet' that brought her this accolade marks an extraordinary high point in what has been a stunning career to date," the post read.

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“Following Jessie’s remarkable career trajectory has filled us with great pride and her work has brought honor to our school community through her remarkable passion, talent and commitment to her craft,” it continued.

“From our school stage, and onto the world stage, Jessie’s success is testament to her exceptional ability and hard work. She has always been, and is now more than ever, an inspiration to all those associated with our school.”

Feast Day

Wednesday, 25 th March	The Annunciation of the Lord
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Prayers – please keep in your prayers:



Kitty Trainor	Ian Baillie
Mary Armstrong	Rose Simpson
Nigel Anthony Cunningham	Rita Harrison
Mary Wright	Danny McCann
Anthony Gibson	Robin Humphrey
Josephine Lyons	Rita Harrison
Sheila Owens	

Anniversaries:

Elizabeth Glaister	Edith Quinn
Peggy Thompson	Jim Harrison
John McMahon	Gloria Webb



Sympathy – we extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Margaret White (late of Newton Hall) whose **Funeral Service** will take place on **Wednesday 8th April at 1.00pm in St. Joseph’s**, followed by cremation in Durham at 2.00pm. *Requiescat in pace.*

Our final **Lunch Club before Easter will be next Wednesday, March 25th**. The Mini Triduum will be in Holy Week, 1st April, then we will start again on Wednesday, **22nd April**. Wishing all our guests and helpers a happy and holy Easter. Looking forward to seeing you all again soon. New guests are always welcome- as, of course, are new helpers! Pat and Kathleen.

The
Season
of
Lent



Sunrise Services at 7.30am continue in the Jubilee Room at St. Joseph's, and take place every Tuesday and Thursday morning throughout Lent. The final service will be on Tuesday, 31st March.



Care for Creation (formerly Laudato Si') Group

7.30pm Monday 30th March in the Franciscan Friary.

Every month we meet to talk about how we as a parish and as individuals can better care for Creation, our common home. All are welcome.

Remaining Lenten Charity Soup Lunch

Date	Group
27 th March	Bereavement Group

Lenten Stations of the Cross Fridays at 7.00pm followed by Holy Communion



Date	Venue	Group
March 27 th	St. Joseph's	Sanctuary 21
April 3 rd – Good Friday	St. Joseph's – 10.00am	Confirmation Group

Easter Masses/Services - Please note that there will be a Penitential Service at St. Joseph's on Tuesday, 31st March, at 7.00pm.

Day	Date	Time	Church
Mini Triduum	1 st April	2.00pm	St. Joseph's
Holy Thursday	2 nd April	7.00pm	St. Godric's
Good Friday	3 rd April	3.00pm	St. Joseph's
Holy Saturday	4 th April	7.00pm	St. Joseph's
Easter Sunday	5 th April	9.00am 10.30am	St. Godric's St. Joseph's

Celebration of the Mini Triduum – a celebration of the Mini Triduum for the sick and housebound has been organised for the **Wednesday of Holy Week – 1st April**. This will take place at **2.00pm in St. Joseph's Church**, followed by a 'Celebratory Tea' in the Jubilee Room provided by the SVP.

A list is available at the back of church for anyone wishing to attend. Please enter your name and tick if transport is required, leaving a contact telephone number.

Diocesan Reflections for Holy Week

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. There are a few copies at the back of each church.

[Daily Reflections for Holy Week 2026.](#)



There will be a Parish Easter coffee morning this **Monday 23rd March**. It will take place immediately after the 9.15 Service of the Word and Holy Communion in St Bede's Room in St Godric's School.

All proceeds are for Women In Need in India. Everyone is very welcome.



Save the Date

Saturday 4th July, 7pm a Summer Concert at St Godric's, given by the St Godric's Choir.

Parish School News



St Leonard's Catholic Secondary School
<https://stleonardsdurham.bwcet.com/>

Here at St Leonard's we celebrated the final Mass in our school Chapel before moving into our new building. On the Feast of

St. Patrick, Year 9 pupils gathered to lead the liturgy with confidence, writing prayers, creating a prayer focal point and playing music during communion.

Fr Andrew spoke about how our tradition of carrying and sharing the Catholic faith continues into our new build, just as it once was brought to the Chapel where we gathered. Mr Simmons reminded pupils at the end of Mass how our new building will be filled with new items which are important to us, however some of the most special items in our school will be brought and transition with us from our school chapel: the altar, tabernacle and lectern.

We're so proud of all pupils and staff who have led and celebrated Mass and times of prayer and celebration in our school chapel over the years and we look forward to building on this in our new space.



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
<https://stjosephsgilesgate.bwcet.com/>

Wednesday 25th March - the children in Year 5 and 6 will be attending Mass in church at 10am. All families and friends

are welcome to attend.

Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th March - Parental Consultations will be held in school from 3.30pm to 6pm.

Thursday 26th March - we are getting a visit from Jet and Ben the Police Dogs following the work Year 5 and 6 children did with the Mini Police. The children are looking forward to meeting the dogs and their handlers and learning more about what their role is within the local area.

Friday 27th March at 2pm - we would like to invite families and friends into school for our **Easter Bonnet Parade**. Come and watch the children showcase their creative bonnets, full of colour and imagination. There will also be an exciting Easter raffle with lots of lovely prizes to be won. Refreshments and Easter treats will also be available. We look forward to celebrating together and hope you can join us for this special occasion.



St Godric's Catholic Primary School
<https://stgodricsdurham.bwcet.com/>

We have loved spending time with our families during this season of Lent with our stay and pray sessions. This week,

Year 4 families joined us as we reflected on God's compassion for us all.

Next week we will be celebrating World Maths day and Year 2 have a trip to Beamish Museum on Wednesday to learn all about what it was like to go to school in the Victorian times.



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School
<https://stthomasmorebelmont.bwcet.com/>

Please join our St. Thomas More Community at a Lenten mass on **Friday 27th March**. It would be wonderful for our

families and parishioners to join us at **St. Joseph's Church at 10:00am**. The friends of St. Thomas More, PTA group, will also be serving some refreshments, afterwards, for those who don't have to rush back to work.

In school this week, each class is getting ready for spring by learning a different 'spring themed' song. We will be performing these, to our families, at 2:30pm on Friday 20th March. We hope to see you there - to welcome in the spring equinox!



Can we thank everyone who was able to come to support the youth group at their Stations of the Cross service and to say a huge thank you and well done to all of the young people who led us on Jesus' journey during the service.

Can we please also remind everyone again that the youth group will next meet on **Saturday 28th March, after 5pm Mass** and about the fun event after Easter Sunday Mass at St Joseph's.

Children's Liturgy – St. Joseph's - The Children's Liturgy Team are planning another fun Easter celebration for the children again this year, along with tea and coffee for anyone else who would like to come along after Mass at **St. Joseph's on Easter Sunday morning**,

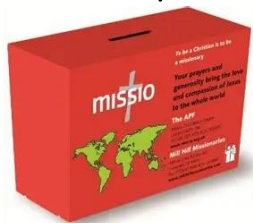


There will be crafts, games, a scavenger hunt and plenty of prizes.

Also donations of cakes will be gratefully received. If you need further information or have any questions, please contact durhammartyrparishyouthgroup@gmail.com

Justice and Peace Group - A donation of £200 has been sent to Cafod. This money was raised at the recent Justice and Peace Lent Soup Lunch and from donations for coffee at St. Godric's. Thanks to all parishioners for their support

Missio APF/Mill Hill collections for the month of March 2026 St. Godric and Bede



Red mission boxes / donations from St. Bede's will be collected by sponsors in the usual way during March.

Please bring those for St. Godric's to Sunday Mass on 22nd or 29th March. Many thanks for your continued support and generosity.

Events at Ushaw - The St. Mark Passion – Oliver Tarney

Saturday 28 March, 7:30 pm, St Cuthbert's Chapel, Ushaw - On the evening before Palm Sunday at the start of Holy Week, the Durham Singers will present a powerful semi-staged performance of Oliver Tarney's St Mark Passion, a dramatic and deeply moving musical journey into the heart of the Passion story. It will be an unforgettable evening. Tickets and further information: www.durham-singers.org

Mass Intentions for the Week

22nd March 2026

	St Godric's	St Joseph's
Saturday 21 March	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Thomas Hardy and Belle Blakey
Sunday 22 March 5 th Sunday of Lent	9.00am Cecylia Urbaniak and Margaret White (Newton Hall) 3.00-4.00pm – Exposition	10.30am In thanksgiving for a Golden Wedding (J>), Brid Mulcahy and Deceased members of the Barrett and Conway Families
Monday 23 March	NO MASS	9.15am Service of Word and Holy Communion
Tuesday 24 March	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am – Special Intention (MT), and 100 th Birthday Remembrance (HK)	7.30am Sunrise Service with Holy Communion
Wednesday 25 March	NO MASS	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am - In thanksgiving for a 67 th Wedding Anniversary (A&BC) St. Joseph's Yrs.5 and 6 attending.
Thursday 26 March	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am Deceased Priests of the Diocese	7.30am Sunrise Service with Holy Communion
Friday 27 March	NO MASS	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am St. Thomas More School Easter Mass in church
Saturday 28 March	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Olga Kenna and Dorothy Coggins
Sunday 29 March PALM SUNDAY	9.00am Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord 3.00-4.00 – Exposition	10.30am Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

St. Cuthbert's

Sun 22	Mon 23	Tue 24	Wed 25	Thurs 26	Fri 27	Sat 28	Sun 29
10.00am and 6.30pm	NO MASS	12.15pm	7.00pm	12.15pm	12.15pm	9.15am	10.00am and 6.30pm