

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

Parish Priest: Fr. Colm Hayden



TELEPHONE: 07483 369 561
EMAIL: durham.martyrs@diocesehn.org.uk
WEBSITE: www.durhammartyrs.co.uk
Mill Lane, Gilesgate, Durham DH1 2JG

Parish Secretary: Mrs M. D. Towers

Parish Newsletter – 20th – 25th September 2026 25th Sunday of the Year

Parish Priest Fr. Colm Hayden

Parish Secretary: Mrs. M, D. Towers

Office hours: Tuesday-Friday, 8.30am-4.00pm

Parish mobile: 07483 369 561

Hospital Chaplain Fr. Paul Tully-01388 818 544/0191 3332183

(Please telephone the Chaplain if you have someone in hospital who would like a visit)

For bereavement support, please contact the Parish Secretary

And so a new term begins in schools. We welcome Leanne Dixon to St Joseph's, as the new Head Teacher. The various catechetical programmes begin again. Baptismal programmes continue, as usual. The First Communion programmes also begin. Changes this coming term mean only children who are baptised Catholic will receive Holy Communion in June. This stands to reason. If a child is a Catholic, then that's child receives Holy Communion for the first time in June. The First Communion Mass for all three schools of St. Josephs, St. Thomas Mores and St. Godric's will take place in St. Joseph's. Again, being practical is essential when numbers coming forward for First Communions have dwindled so much over the years. We will have a review of catechesis for all three Sacraments with those involved in preparing the children-and parents-for these important stages.

Sacrament Type General Trend in the UK

Infant Baptism ● Steep Decline — Down roughly 30% to 50% compared to 2019 pre-pandemic baselines. Church Marriage ● Historic Lows — Making up roughly 10% or less of overall British marriages. First Holy Communion ● Steady Decline — Impacted directly by fewer children being raised in active parishes. Adult Baptism / Confirmation 📈 Significant Growth — Reaching 10-to-15-year highs across both main Christian Churches. What the statistics don't mention is that less children are being born and that both schools and parishes are being bolstered by people from outside and now resident in the UK.

Continued/....

My thanks to Margaret Wallace, who steps down after 18 years chairing the Bereavement Group.

Mentioning Catechists and others again reminds us of the great contribution of volunteers in our parish, for whom I cannot say enough by way of appreciation Thank you all.

Breda Gallagher is 90 this Friday the 18th. Congratulations dear Breda. I was privileged to be a part of the prayer group hosted in Breda's home, but it was listening to the long list of people visited by Breda during our weekly SVP meetings that was so powerful. Bless Breda on this day.

We had an excellent Finance Meeting this week and it's reassuring to know the parish finances are healthy and in good hands. Thanks everyone for your generosity last weekend towards Bro Johns chosen charity of the Nepal Disaster.

The First away day of our Youth Group is this weekend. I look forward to celebrating Mass with you on Sunday. Let's keep them in our prayers.

Can I also mention the Baby Bank. Such is the initiative of our parishioners that this new venture for those in need - and there are many-will begin in October. Please support.

Young Kris Bethapudi will be making a brief appeal on behalf of Cafod at both Sunday Masses this weekend. Well done Kris.

Feast Days

Monday, 21 st September	St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Wednesday, 23 rd September	St. Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio) P
Thursday, 24 th September	Our Lady of Walsingham
Saturday, 26 th September	Ss. Cosmas and Damian MM



Prayers – please keep in your prayers:

Mary Armstrong	Rose Simpson	Sigrid Peyerimhoff
Nigel Anthony Cunningham	Maureen Milsom	Rita Harrison
Josephine Lyons	Christina Reid	Amanda Hyland
Tom Kimmit	Shirley Harrison	
Mary Crilley	Sheila Wressel	

Anniversaries:

Ann-Margaret Hannigan	Billy Lee
Peter Humble	Jason Clough
Frank McGoay	Anthony Shaw
Nicholas Mascarenhas	Margaret Graham
Joanna Hopper	Peter Mahan



Forthcoming Funeral

Robin Humphrey, whose Funeral Service will take place at St. Godric's on Thursday, 1st October at 12.00pm followed by burial in South Road Cemetery.

St Francis of Assisi - Patron of Ecology

At 7.30pm on Tuesday 22nd September, the Franciscan Friary is holding its third seminar for the Year of St Francis.

Br. Paul will speak about why St. Francis was named the patron saint of ecology and what we can learn from him.



Missio APF/Mill Hill collections for September 2026 Ss. Godric & Bede - St Bede's red mission boxes / donations will be collected by sponsors in the usual way during September. Please bring those for St Godric's to Sunday Mass on 20th or 27th September. They will be

collected, emptied and returned to church. A big thank you for your continued support through your prayers and kindness.

*Thank
You!*

From Br. John

Dear Parishioners - By the time you see this, I'll be ensconced in my new Franciscan community in the roman City of Chester. I never expected this to happen so soon, though I had thought earlier on that I could well finish up here in my home town.

I wanted to share with you something of my pure pleasure and amazement surrounding my time of 'farewells'. I was gobsmacked by your most kind and loving words of appreciation which hopefully I'll remember for many a long time.

So many, many thanks and may God Bless you with many blessings in the days ahead and keep you safe in his hands.

Donation to the Nepal Flood Disaster on behalf of Br. John - Thank you to everyone who contributed to both the collections for one of Br. John's charities and the two farewell events over the past two weekends. The magnificent sum of £1173.97 was received from both St. Godric's and St. Joseph's and Br. John asked for the money to go to the Nepal Disaster Fund.



Happy Birthday Breda! It is with great pleasure that we wish Breda Gallagher a very Happy 90th Birthday today, 18th September. For those who don't remember Breda, she was a parishioner at St. Godric's (and also of St. Bede's). She left the parish a few years ago to be nearer to her daughter in North Yorkshire.

Macmillan Coffee Morning – Wednesday 23rd September 10.45am

Coffee mornings are normally held at St Joseph's Church each Wednesday after morning Mass, donations are totally optional and any funds raised are allocated local charities. All parishioners and the wider local community are always welcome to come along and enjoy a good chat and refreshments.



This Wednesday 23rd September will be dedicated to Macmillan Cancer Support. Please come along and join us to support this if you can.



St Vincent
de Paul Society
England and Wales
Turning Concern into Action

Save the Date: SVP Fish and Chip Outing

The SVP are going to Colman's at South Shields for a fish and chip lunch on **Tuesday, 6th October.**

If you would like to go, please put your name on the sheet at the back of church. Transport will be provided, leaving St. Joseph's at approximately 11.30am.

Safeguarding

Thank you to all parents who have returned the consent forms for their child to undertake the role of alter server.

This is a gentle reminder that it is a requirement of the Diocese that any child who undertakes this role must have parental consent. Can all parents please ensure that you have returned any forms by **Tuesday 6th October.** Unfortunately any child who does not have written consent after that date will be unable to carry out the role until written parental consent is received.

If you need any further information please contact Gillian MacArthur, the parish safeguarding representative.

Fairtrade Fortnight starts on Monday 21st September

There are two posters at the back of each church, and petition forms to sign asking the government to encourage traders and shops to take more responsibility for selling goods that are fairly traded. This is in keeping with the Season of Creation as all workers and producers should receive a fair wage. You can sign online by scanning the QR code on the back of the petition forms

Fairtrade - you are invited to a FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE being hosted by the Fairtrade Friends group of St. John Boste West Durham. **Sunday September 27th at 4pm., St. Joseph's, Langley Park, DH7 9TA**

Guest speaker is Jenny Medhurst. Jenny has been a Fairtrader for many years. She is a Fairtrade retailer and a campaigner. Jenny will be taking the Fairtrade 2026 focus as the subject on which she will talk. 'Do it Fair - for people, Pay and Planet'

Fairtrade refreshments will be served after the Service. All are welcome. Any questions please call 07982126077. Thank you.

Message from Low Newton Women's Prison

Tuesday, 13th October, 5.30-7.00pm

Low Newton, the women's prison within our parish, are inviting representatives from local churches to gather in the prison chapel for an ecumenical prayer service, praying for our prisons, prisoners and the staff and volunteers who minister to them. If you are interested in representing the parish at this event, please contact the parish office.

See poster at the back of each church.

Tip for Sustainable Living

Ditching the car and using pedal and people power to get around is one of the simplest things we can do to help the environment. It's a carbon busting habit we can all form to do our better place to live. More people walking, cycling, or using public transport means a cleaner environment with less pollution, less congestion and less traffic noise. *(Care for Creation Group)*

DURHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER CREATION TIME UNITED SERVICE:

"Living Water: Biodiversity as God's blessing."

4 pm Sunday September 20th at Waddington Street URC.

Everybody is welcome to this celebration of God's wonderful Creation. Please stay for a tea or coffee and biscuits.

MINISTRY MORNING The parish of St. Bede and St. Cuthbert (Sacriston & Chester-le-Street) are holding a ministry morning, and people from across the Finchale partnership are welcome to attend.

The day is called "Being an active parishioner in the age of AI and our pastoral strategy in a time of change". Members of Faith & Mission will lead us in this reflection and input on **Saturday 3rd October, 9:30am to 12:30pm** in the Eardulph Centre, at St. Cuthbert's Chester-le-Street.

Formation & Mission Development

Life in the Spirit seminars

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.

All are welcome to join us at St Anne's, Harlow Green, NE9 7UD on **24th September, 7.00pm** for an introductory session to hear how the seminars prepare us to open to a new life in Christ through the Holy Spirit. For further information about the other dates, please visit <https://bit.ly/LifeInTheSpiritCDSC> See poster at the back of church.

Parish School News



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

A huge thank you to everyone who attended our Macmillan Coffee Afternoon in school. We appreciate your support and generosity in

helping us raise money for such a wonderful cause. Your kindness means so much.

- Wednesday 23rd September, Year 5 and 6 will be attending Mass in church at 10am. All families and friends are welcome to attend.
- Thursday 24th September St. Leonard's Catholic School will be hosting a Year 6 Open Evening. The event will begin at 5.30pm at St. Leonard's School.
- Friday 25th September we will be celebrating European Day of Languages in school. This is a wonderful day of celebrating diversity, communication and learning about different languages and cultures across Europe.



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

A big thank you to Mr. Simmons and Mrs. Curry for coming in and talking to our Y5 and Y6 parents about St.

Leonard's. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to hear about the school and ask questions.

Next Friday we have our Macmillan coffee morning led by the Friends of St. Godric's. This is in the school hall, starting at 9am. Please come along if you are able.

Mass Intentions for the Week

20 September 2026

	St Godric's	St Joseph's
Saturday 19 September	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Vocations to the Priesthood
Sunday 20 September	9.00am Frank and Bernard McGoay 3.00-4.00pm – Exposition	10.30am Raymoind Sweeney 1 st Anniversary
Monday 21 September	NO MASS	9.15am Service of Word and Holy Communion
Tuesday 22 September	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am Special Intention (MT)	NO MASS
Wednesday 23 September	NO MASS	9.30am - Exposition 10.00am Anita and Bill Nichols (St. Joseph's Yrs 5 & 6 in attendance)
Thursday 24 September	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am Robin Humphrey	NO MASS
Friday 25 September	NO MASS	9.30am - Exposition 10.00am Deceased Priests of the Diocese
Saturday 26 September	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Belle Blakey
Sunday 27 September	9.00am The sick of the Parish 3.00-4.00pm – Exposition	10.30am Mary and Kevin Crilley & Family

St. Cuthbert's

Sun 20	Mon 21	Tue 22	Wed 23	Thurs 24	Fri 25	Sat 26	Sun 27
10.00am and 6.30pm	NO MASS	12.15pm Service of Word & Holy Communion	7.00pm Service of Word & Holy Communion	NO MASS	12.15pm Service of Word & Holy Communion	NO MASS	10.00am and 6.30pm