



Parish Newsletter

11th January 2025 – 18th January 2026

The Baptism of the Lord

Parish Priest Fr. Colm Hayden

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(Please telephone Fr. Paul if you have someone in hospital)

We begin our new year in a spirit of hope, despite the unpredictability of world events.
“Even if the hopes you started out with are dashed, hope has to be maintained.”
Seamus Heaney.

The wonder of parish/community existence is the small expressions of hope. Criticism of church often misses the real strength of what church is at a local level. The numerous groups that help alleviate loneliness and isolation, be it those living alone, those coping with dementia, the newly arrived student, the vibrancy of teenagers. This is life. Sadly, many who just tip the fringes at occasional encounters of Baptism, Holy Communion, marriages and funerals, don't experience the enormous gifts of parish life. The Christmas services were very well attended and that was great, but it can be a sentimental part of a festive package that, good as it is, misses the true miracle of what the vulnerability of the God/child brings on a daily basis, and most importantly is experienced daily especially in the Eucharistic gathering ie Mass.

“People use drugs, legal and illegal, because their lives are intolerably painful or dull. They hate their work and find no rest in their leisure. They are estranged from their families and their neighbours. It should tell us something that in healthy societies drug use is celebrative, convivial, and occasional, whereas among us it is lonely, shameful, and addictive. We need drugs, apparently, because we have lost each other.”

Wendell Berry.

Continued over/....

This year we hope to continue extending our parish reach out beyond the confines of the familiar to the unfamiliarity of what we can do by way of supporting local projects. Great strides have been made, but so much more is possible.

The younger generation parishioners are stepping up to the challenge, especially by responding to Bishop Stephen's last pastoral letter. A healthy productive dialogue with the bishop has already begun in response to his letter. This is our future, and we are seriously blessed with highly motivated and energetic young people who will carry the parish into the future building on the established foundations of so many loyal parishioners, both past and present.

Sadly, we lost Canon Bob Spence this week after a long illness. Canon Bob was always the essence of kindness and good humour, which veiled a very sharp intellect. Always challenging, but never judgmental, he combined pastoral care with academic pursuit. All done in a spirit of creating open conversation with a deep love of church. May he rest in peace.

Finally a big thank you to you for your support and generosity to me at Christmas.

Feast Days

Monday, 12 th January	St. Benet Biscop
Tuesday, 13 th January	St. Hilary Bp, D
Saturday, 17 th January	St. Anthony of Egypt Ab

Prayers – please keep in your prayers:



Kitty Trainor	Emma Turnbull
Mary Armstrong	Ann Close
Sheila Owens	Rose Simpson
John Barrett	Veronica O'Reilly
Nigel Anthony Cunningham	Marek Earnshaw
Mary Wright	John Doyle

Anniversaries:

Nancy Edgerton	Pamela Neill
Rafete Meqa	Paul Hann
Frank Wilson	Bessie Hirst
Harry Troughear	John Doyle
Peter Barry	



Sympathy – we extend our sympathy to the families and friends of the following parishioners:

Dorothy Coggins and Margaret Nancarrow who sadly passed away over the Christmas period.

The Funeral Service of Margaret Nancarrow will take place at St. Joseph's on Wednesday, 21st January at 1.00pm followed by burial in Shadforth.

Funeral arrangements are currently not known for Dorothy Coggins.

Forthcoming Funeral

Joanne Fryer – Funeral Service at St. Joseph's Church, 12.00pm on Friday, 16th January, followed by cremation in Durham at 1.00pm

St Bede's Chapel Eucharistic Services - Please note the change in starting time
Eucharistic services will be at 9am on Mondays & Wednesdays.

The regular coffee morning in aid of Women in Need will remain at 9:15am

Baptism – we welcome into our parish community Amelia Elizabeth Peyton Ward, who will receive the Sacrament of Baptism next Sunday, 18th January, after the 9.00am Mass at St. Godric's.



Laudato Si' Group

7.30pm Monday 19th January in the Franciscan Friary. Every month we meet to discuss how we as a parish can better care for Creation, our common home. New members welcome.



The family of Marek Earnshaw wish to extend a sincere thank you for all your prayers. He is responding to treatment better than was expected.

Journey in Faith – will resume on Thursday, 22nd January at 7.00pm. The topic will be Catholic Social Teaching, All welcome.

Advent Charity Soup Lunches - thanks to all who made a variety of soups, those who came along and enjoyed them, or helped in any way. A total of £185 was raised for the three charities.

A note from the Justice and Peace Group

Please note that there will be a **Justice and Peace meeting** on Sunday 11th January after 9.00am mass at St. Godric's. All welcome.

Also there will be a **Holy Hour** with some prayers and readings for Peace, on **Peace Sunday**, which is **Sunday 18th January**, 3-4 pm at St Godric's.

A Note of Thanks from the Friars

On behalf of all the friars, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our parishioners for the many Christmas cards, kind messages, and generous gifts we received over the Christmas season. Your thoughtfulness, prayers, and support are deeply appreciated and were a great encouragement to us.

We assure you of our continued prayers for you and your families as we journey together in the year ahead. **Br Lixson OFMcap.**



Thank you from Sanctuary 21

A big thank you to the children at St Joseph's School for the Christmas gifts that you very kindly donated. These were delivered on Christmas day and will be distributed to those in need who are sleeping rough in our City.

We hope you all had a lovely Christmas. Thanks also to the many parishioners who have kindly supported Sanctuary 21 this Christmas and throughout the year.

Last, but by no means least, thank you to the team of parish volunteers who give their time each week, and the back-up team who often step in at short notice to ensure that we can offer a welcome and hospitality to our vulnerable guests.

Finally to everyone, if you think you may be able to support our work please contact me or, why not drop in to Sanctuary 21 for a coffee between 10.30 – 13.30 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and meet Karen and Darryn, Salvation Army Church Leaders, or one of our volunteers.

Best wishes for 2026, Peter Thompson – Parish Link for Sanctuary 21



There will be a coffee morning on **Monday 19th January** in St. Bede's Room in St. Godric's School. It will take place immediately after the 9.15 Service of the Word and Holy Communion.

All proceeds are for Women in Need in India.

Everyone is very welcome.

Church cleaning at St. Godric's - A Happy New Year to all our cleaning volunteers. Meena and members of her prayer group have kindly offered to take over the cleaning of the church this month. The next cleaning date is **Tuesday, 10th February**. All welcome.

School News



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

New Year. At St. Godric's, we look ahead with optimism, continuing to support our children to grow in confidence, kindness and faith, guided by our shared values.

A reminder that if you wish to apply for a place at St. Godric's School starting in September, the closing date is 15th January. Applications can be made via the Durham Council website: <https://www.durham.gov.uk/OnlineServices>



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

We are so happy to welcome back staff,

children, families and friends to our school and as we begin a New Year it brings us new opportunities to learn and grow.

On Wednesday 14th January the children in Year 5 and 6 will be attending Mass in church at 10am. All families and friends are welcome to attend

SVP Sudan Appeal

For a number of years we have appealed for your support in relieving the suffering of mothers and babies in a war torn country. Through the generosity of people like you, 700 children are fed nutritious meals each week at feeding stations. 2800 adults have been trained on our vocational training schemes over the past 5 years. In addition, 13000 people have received medical treatments provided by our medical centres a year.



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

If you would like to contribute to this worthy cause please make out a cheque payable to 'SVP Twinning' - put it in an envelope, with your name on the front, and give it to Chris Brennan or any other SVP member. To make a donation directly to the SVP please click the following link: <https://fundraising.svp.org.uk/page/134642/donate/1>

Thank you, once again, for your generosity.

200 CLUB – RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscriptions for January 2026 - December 2026 are now due, before the January draw. The annual cost is still £12 per number and cheques should be made payable to SVP 200 Club.

Could members please put subscriptions, cash or cheque, in an envelope with your name and address and place them in the box at the back of church. Thank you.

All profits from this enterprise go to the SVP food bank in Newcastle so members not only have the opportunity of winning a prize in the monthly draw but, more importantly, will be helping to provide emergency food parcels for needy families and hot meals for the hundreds of homeless people who visit St Vincent's each week.

Can I take this opportunity on behalf of The Tyne Central Council President and his Board, to thank you all for your past and hopefully future support for this very worthwhile cause. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas, God Bless. Janet.

Durham Martyrs' Lunch Club

We look forward to meeting again on January 14th. We always have room for more guests and helpers. Just let Pat or Kathleen know - Pat (07943016225) and Kathleen (07759130837).

From the Diocese

You are warmly invited to a Day of Enrichment and Reflection, led by David Wells — a time to pause, listen, and explore what it truly means to flourish as individuals and as a community.

Pope Leo reminds us that the vision of a flourishing life is often distorted in today's world:

"Today, a flourishing life is often confused with a materially wealthy life or a life of unrestricted individual autonomy... Yet we know this is not enough. We see this in affluent societies where many people are struggling with loneliness, despair and a sense of meaninglessness."

We will gather together on **Friday 16th January 2026, 11.00am - 3.30pm at the Durham Centre, Belmont Industrial Estate, Durham** for a day of listening and renewal.

To reserve your place on this day, please visit: [Building the City of God - A Place of Human Flourishing – Fill out form](#) no later than Tuesday 13th January, 2026.

Diocesan Vacancy

Education Business Manager - Salary Scale from £35,000 to £37,323

Based within our Education Team at St. Vincent's Diocesan Offices, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Importantly you will be working in or have experience of education, ideally in a primary or secondary school setting. Similarly, knowledge and experience with Education Trusts will be distinctively advantageous. Moreover, you will need to show us how you have undertaken, reported upon and delivered professional evaluation processes, presenting findings for example to a committee, board or agency.

You will lead on event planning, delivering no less than three annual conferences within the region liaising with our Communications Manager.

You will have the ability to handle sensitive information with discretion and confidentiality and have both excellent verbal and written communication skills.

If you are interested in being at the forefront of developing this role please get in touch with us to request an Applicant Pack by emailing Annie Leaver Head of Human Resources at annie.leaver@diocesehn.org.uk The closing date for applications is **12 noon Sunday 1st February 2026** although we reserve the right to close the post early. Shortlisting will be undertaken 13th February 2026, with interviews scheduled for Thursday 19th February 2026.

A full copy of the Job Advert is on the parish notice boards,

Forthcoming Events at Ushaw

Sung Vespers (Evening Prayer): You are invited to join us for Vespers in St. Cuthbert's Chapel at 4pm on **Sunday 18th January**. Please note that this is not a concert performance, but an opportunity to pray together the Evening Prayer of the Church. All are welcome to join us for the service, and no ticket is required.

Chapter & Verse is Ushaw's new book group which welcomes all readers who are interested in reading and discussing books about faith and religion. The group meets monthly to read a mix of fiction and non-fiction with a religious theme or connection. The next meeting of the book group is on **Tuesday 20th January** at 1.30pm. For this meeting we will be reading *A Time to Keep Silence* by Patrick Leigh Fermor. Come along and join the conversation, even if you have not had time to read the book! No pre-booking is required, and the event is free with Ushaw membership or a day pass.

Christian Unity: On **Friday 23rd January** at **2.30pm** there will be a **Service for Christian Unity** in St. Cuthbert's Chapel, Ushaw. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from the 18th – 25th January – the octave before the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. Ecumenism is very important to all at Ushaw, and we take every opportunity to welcome fellow Christians to the stunning St. Cuthbert's Chapel to pray together. The service is open to all. Please invite your friends from other Christian churches, so that together we can pray for unity.

Wine Tasting at Ushaw:

Friends of Ushaw are holding a fundraising wine tasting evening at Ushaw Historic House, on Thursday 12th February 2026 at 7pm.

Tickets are £28pp for members of the Friends, £38pp standard ticket. Booking is via <https://ushaw.org/whatson/wine-tasting/>

Contact - email meet@ushaw.org , tel. Ushaw 0191 373 8500 .

Durham Churches Together

Durham Churches Together would like some more Committee members from our Parish. DCT runs events such as the New Year's Eve vigil in the Cathedral and the Good Friday Procession from the Market Place. If interested, please contact Matt Pallister on 07929-796599.

United Lunch to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Tuesday 20th January

The United Lunch to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) will be at **Waddington Street United Reformed Church on Tuesday 20th January**. The speaker this year will be Rev. John Squares, Methodist Superintendent Minister. Proceedings commence at 12 noon with a cup of tea or coffee. All are very welcome. Anyone who could very kindly offer to make soup or provide cheese or fruit please contact Charles Jolly, DCT Chair: charles.jolly13@btinternet.com. People do not need to register, but it will help catering to know approximate numbers. If you hope to attend, please text 07484243885.



Mass Intentions for the Week

11th January 2026

	St Godric's	St Joseph's
Saturday 10 January	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Phil Casey John Doyle Anniversary
Sunday 11 January	9.00am Vocations to the Priesthood 3.00-4.00pm – Exposition	10.30am Liam Hayden and George Silcock
Monday 12 January	NO MASS	9.15am Service of Word and Holy Communion
Tuesday 13 January	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am Dorothy Coggins and Frank Wilson	NO MASS
Wednesday 14 January	NO MASS	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am Margaret Nancarrow
Thursday 15 January	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am World Peace	NO MASS
Friday 16 January	NO MASS	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am – Lewis Jack 12.00pm – Funeral Service of the late Joanne Fryer
Saturday 17 January	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Bede Murray Anniversary and Joanne Fryer
Sunday 18 January PEACE SUNDAY	9.00am Deceased Priests of the Diocese 3.00-4.00 – Exposition	10.30am Arthur Binks Anniversary and Annie Whitehead

St. Cuthbert's

Sun 11	Mon 12	Tue 13	Wed 14	Thurs 15	Fri 16	Sat 17	Sun 18
10.00am and 6.30pm	NO MASS	NO MASS	7.00pm	9.15am	12.15pm Service of Word & Holy Communion	12.15pm	10.00am and 6.30pm