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@dioceseln.org.uk
WEBSITE: www.durhammartyrs.co.uk
Mill Lane, Gilesgate, Durham DH1 2JG

Parish Secretary: Mrs M. D. Towers

-

Parish Newsletter – 29th November 2026
The First Sunday of Advent



Parish Priest: Fr. Colm Hayden
Parish Secretary: Marjorie Towers 07483 369 561
Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 8.30am-4.00pm
Hospital Chaplain Fr. Paul Tully - 01388 818 544/ 0191 3332183

As you will read in the bulletin, we return to St. Leonard's for Christmas. This wasn't an easy decision. Unlike so many occasions in the past, we now have a good supply of priests in the parish to celebrate Christmas in both churches. But the need to gather as one parish is too important.

As you will know from previous years, Christmas at St. Leonard's afforded an opportunity - and space - for returning family members to gather in comfort. Young people in particular were able to reconnect with old friends, especially school friends. There will be some disruption for parking at St. Leonard's because of the continued building programme, but representatives from St. Leonard's will speak at all parish Masses a week or two before Christmas to prepare to guide us.

I do hope you all join us. More info as we near the big day.

Regarding the earlier time on Christmas Eve: again a decision not taken lightly. More and more younger families are coming to the Christmas Eve Mass. Whilst midnight Mass will always be an important part of Christmas, the need to gather as one is important too. Also, and sadly, night time has become less safe. These are realities that weigh up when and how we celebrate Christmas.

So let us make these first celebrations in the new St. Leonard's a wonderful experience of the one parish of the Durham Martyrs together.

Feast Days

Monday, 30th November	St. Andrew, Apostle, Patron of Scotland
Thursday, 3rd December	St. Francis Xavier P
Friday, 4th December	St. Osmund Bp/St. John Damascene P, D

Prayers – please keep in your prayers:



Sheila Wressel	Rose Simpson
Nigel Anthony Cunningham	Shirley Harrison
Mary Crilley	Amanda Hyland
Kathleen & Ernie Gowland	Matt Pallister
Sigrid Peyerimhoff	Rita Harrison

Anniversaries:

Bryan Moran	John Hannon
Michael Wilkinson	Peter Reid
Sheila Bell	Bob Eccles
Patricia Finn	Frank Harrison
James Bowes	Mary Morland



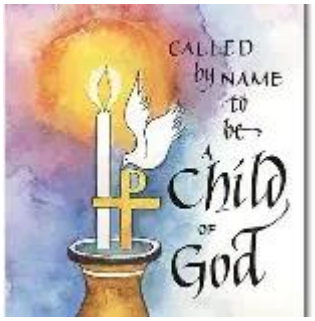
Sympathy – we extend our sympathy to the family and friends of the late Katie Iliffe, whose Funeral Service will take place at St. Giles Church on **Friday, 11th December at 1.45pm** followed by **cremation at 3.00pm**.

……..and also to the family and friends of the late Maria Bernadette Frances Aydon, whose Funeral Service will take place at St. Joseph's on **Friday, 18th December at 12.00pm,** followed by **burial at Belmont.**

Our sympathy also to the family and frienda of the late Tom Kimmitt who died this week. Funeral arrangements are not confirmed at this time.

Forthcoming Funeral

Peter Ross Craig – Wednesday, 2nd December, 11.00am-12.00pm at Durham Crematorium. R*equiescant in pace*.



Baptism

We welcome into our parish community Cecelia Clare and Sophie Greaves, who will receive the Sacrament of Baptism after the 9.00am Mass at St. Godric's this Sunday, 29th November.

Advent Charity Soup Lunches



Below are the dates and groups hosting our Advent Charity Soup Lunches:

Friday 4th December SVP
Friday, 11th December – Justice & Peace
Friday, 18th December – 'Mary Ward Loreto UK' which works against Human Trafficking in Albania.

Christmas Mass Times



This year we will be returning to St. Leonard's for our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses:

Thursday, 24th December, 5.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas
Friday, 25th December, Christmas Day Mass, 10.00am
Saturday, 26th December, St. Stephen's Day Mass, 10.00am, St. Godric's
Saturday, 26th December, Vigil Mass, 5.00pm, St. Joseph's

On Monday 7th December there will be a parish Christmas coffee morning in St. Bede's Room in St. Godric's School.



It will take place immediately after the 9.15am Service of the Word and Holy Communion. All proceeds are for Women in Need in Nagpur, India. Everyone is very welcome.

Parish Community Christmas Fayre - 10:30 - 12:30 Saturday 28th November.



Our Christmas Fayre is upon us. Thank you so much for your generous support and fantastic variety of donations to make this happen.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Weekly Reflections and Daily Readings for the Season of Advent 2026

Advent invites us to pause and remember a deeper preparation taking place beneath the activity of the season. It is a time to ready our hearts for the coming of Christ, drawing close again to the gifts of hope, peace, joy and love revealed in God's promise fulfilled through Jesus. To assist with this, members of our diocesan writing team have produced a series of weekly reflections. Each week explores one of the central themes of the season, providing prayerful reflections alongside references to the daily readings. The collection will conclude with a reflection for Christmas Day by Bishop Stephen.

The reflections are available to view and download on the diocesan website. https://bit.ly/DHNAdvent2026



The SVP will be holding their annual Christmas Party this coming **Saturday, 5th December** in the Jubilee Room at **St. Joseph's from 12.00 noon.**

ST GODRIC'S CONCERTS - Last Saturday, 21st November, the Durham University Chamber Choir put on a magnificent concert featuring German choral masterpieces including works by Bach, Brahms and Mendelssohn. The theme was " Light of the Soul" bringing together some of the richest music in the German sacred tradition. Thank you to our parishioner-stewards for their support on the night.

Next Concert

The next concert on Wednesday 9th December at 7.30pm is by the Dunelm Consort, another highly talented university music group of musicians and singers. Again help with stewarding would be appreciated. Tickets can be purchased at the door on the night.

REMINDER - FILM NIGHT SPECIAL - 'The People's Emergency Briefing', is an important film explaining much about Climate change, and how we can better understand how it could affect us. It will be shown in the **Jubilee Room at St. Joseph's on Wednesday, 2nd December at 7.00 pm.**

Please put this in your diary and come along. All over 16's are welcome. It is introduced by Chris Packham, with other celebrities involved. It is not a long film there will be time for discussion and still to be away by 8.30-9.00 Refreshments provided.



Carol-Singing at Dryburn Hospital - Fr. Paul Tully, our Catholic Chaplain at Durham Hospital, would like some singers to join his Carol-Singing group to sing on the Wards.

We are asked to meet in the Chapel on the middle floor corridor at 6pm on Thursday 17th December. For more info, please contact Paul Crilley at: pfc256gmail.com

PARISH OF THE DURHAM MARTYRS YOUTH GROUP

Join Us for a Mexican Posada!

Friday, 12th December

In the Jubilee Room after 5pm Mass at St Joseph's.





Ages 7–15

Join us for a Mexican celebration!

Advent 2026 - Note from CAFOD

'Peace on Earth' is the at the heart of the Christmas message. We are invited to pray for peace – for families in Gaza and for all those living through conflicts around the world.

There are a few prayer cards inviting parishioners to **light a candle for peace** on CAFOD's **online votive stand** and share a prayer for communities living through conflict. You can do this by scanning the QR code on the back of the prayer card.

Parish School News

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

The season of Advent begins next week and we start our Christmas preparations.

On Monday, we have are looking forward to our annual Christmas film night with PJs and hot chocolate!

A reminder that applications for a **Reception place starting in September 2027 must be submitted by 15th January**. If you would like to arrange a tour of our school, please contact us at info@stgd.bwcet.com.

We also have Nursery places available from January. Anyone interested is welcome to join us for an information meeting in school on **Wednesday 2nd December at 10.00am to find out more**. We look forward to meeting you.

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

If you would like to arrange a tour of our school, please contact us at stjd@stjd.bwcet.com or contact the school office on 01913865611. We also have Nursery places available from January.

- **Saturday 28th November at 11pm**, the St. Joseph's School Choir will be singing in church at the Christmas Fayre. All families and friends are welcome to attend.
- **Sunday 29th November at 10.30am** the children who are preparing for the sacrament of First Holy Communion will be attending Mass with their families.
- **Monday 30th November,** the children in Year 4 will be leaving for their residential retreat to the YMT and will be returning to school on Wednesday 2nd December. They will be taking part in interactive workshops, faith exploration and team building activities.
- **Wednesday 2nd December**, the children in Year 5 and 6 will be attending Mass in church at 10am. All families and friends are welcome to attend.
- **Friday 4th December** is a Non-Uniform Day. Any donations of Bottles will be greatly received to support our Christmas Fayre.

Mass Intentions for the Week

29th November

	St Godric's	St Joseph's
Saturday 28 November	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Belle Blakey
Sunday 29 November 1st of Advent	9.00am John Carré Anniversary (Baptism after Mass) 3.00-4.00pm – Exposition	10.30am Drina Byrne (RIP Coatbridge) and Terence Barron RIP
Monday 30 November	NO MASS	9.15am Service of Word and Holy Communion
Tuesday 1 December	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am Fr. Jim Daly MHM	NO MASS
Wednesday 2 December	NO MASS	9.30am - Exposition 10.00am Bernard Joseph Robson (St. Joseph's Years 5 and 6 attending)
Thursday 3 December	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am World Peace	NO MASS
Friday 4 December	NO MASS	9.30am - Exposition 10.00am Deceased Priests of the Diocese
Saturday 5 December	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Ken and Hannah Mary Drane and Frank Harrison
Sunday 6 December 2nd of Advent	9.00am The sick of the Parish 3.00-4.00pm – Exposition	10.30am Birthday Remembrances of Richard Harrison and Alf Carr

St. Cuthbert's

Sun 29	Mon 30	Tue 1 Dec	Wed 2	Thurs 3	Fri 4	Sat 5	Sun 6
10.00am and 6.30pm	NO MASS	12.15pm	7.00pm	12.15pm	12.15pm	9.15am	10.00am and 6.30pm