

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



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Parish Secretary: Mrs M. D. Towers

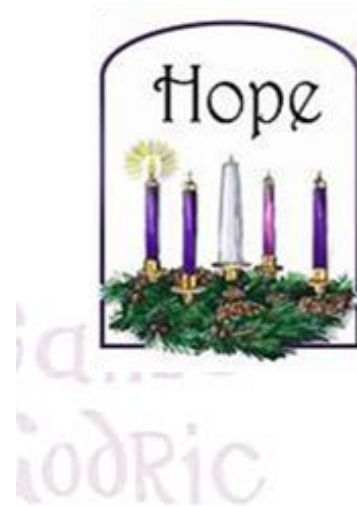
Parish Newsletter – 30th November 2025 The First Sunday of Advent

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

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



Making the House Ready for the Lord by Mary Oliver

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
still nothing is as shining as it should be
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
uproar of mice - it is the season of their many children. What shall I do?
And under the eaves and through the walls the squirrels
have gnawed their ragged entrances - but it is the season when they need shelter, so
what shall I do?
And the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard.
With the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow:
What shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
up the path to the door. And still I believe you will Come, Lord: you will when I
speak to the fox, the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-geese, know that
really I am speaking to you whenever I say,
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.

Feast Days

Wednesday, 3 December	St. Francis Xavier P
Thursday, 4 December	St. Catherine of Alexandria V, M
Saturday, 6 December	St. Nicholas Bp



Prayers – please keep in your prayers

Kitty Trainor	Ann Close
Mary Armstrong	Syd Inglis
Sheila Owens	Liz Murray
Margaret Nancarow	Veronica O'Reilly
Danny McCann	Marek Earnshaw
Rose Simpson	Nigel Anthony Cunningham
John Barrett	Emma Turnbull

Anniversaries

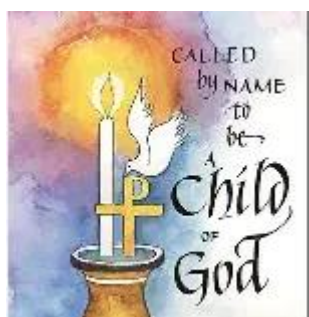
Sheila Bell	Patricia Finn
James Bowes	John Hannon
Peter Reid	Bob Eccles
Frank Harrison	



Sympathy – we extend our sympathy to the family and friends of the late Ryszard Menzel, whose Funeral Service will take place on **Thursday, 4th December** at 1:00pm Durham Crematorium. *Requiescat in pace.*

Forthcoming Funeral

Phil Casey, Friday 5th December in St. Joseph's at 12.00pm followed by cremation



Baptism

We welcome into our parish community Caleb Thomas Patterson who will receive the Sacrament of Baptism after the 10.30am Mass at St. Joseph's this Sunday, 30th November.

Our first Advent Charity Soup Lunch will be hosted by the Justice and Peace Group this coming **Friday 5th December**.

Everyone welcome.



PARISH SCHOOL NEWS



St Godric's Catholic Primary School

<https://stgodricsdurham.bwcet.com/>

If you have a child who will turn 3 before January 1st 2026, come along to our open morning on Wednesday 3rd December at 10am in the school hall. This will include a chance to visit Early Years and tour the school. Spread the word!

We start the season of Advent next week, marking the beginning of the liturgical year. Across the next four weeks, we will focus on preparing for the celebration of Jesus' birth through the themes of hope, peace, joy and love.

We would like to welcome you in school during this time to join us with some of the celebrations:

Nativity performance - either 2pm on Wed 10th Dec or 9am on Thursday 11th Dec.

Christmas songs/carols led by Y3/4 – 9.15am Wednesday 17th Dec

Christmas songs/carols led by Y5/6 – 9.15am Thursday 18th Dec

We simply ask that if you would like to attend any of the above events, you give school a call on 01913847452 so we can ensure we have enough seats.



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

<https://stjosephsgilesgate.bwcet.com/>

On Tuesday 2nd December EYFS will be going on a trip to Hardwick Park to step into story time with Stickman. The day will involve storytelling, craft activities, interactive park trails, sensory experiences, and free time to explore the play equipment.

On Wednesday 3rd December the children in Year 5 and 6 will be attending Mass in church at 10am. All families and friends are welcome to attend.

On Friday 5th December we would like to welcome everyone to our Christmas Fayre in the school hall at 2pm. Join us for festive fun, seasonal treats and a sprinkle of Christmas magic. All are welcome.



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

At St. Thomas More, we look forward to joyful anticipation and hopeful waiting as we enter the season of Advent. As a school, we have lots of cheerful preparations planned as we await Christmas.

Our Year 4 pupils will also be receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation, in school, on Wednesday 3rd December as the first part of their Holy Communion journey. We look forward to welcoming Father Colm into school, to share this important part of the Sacrament with us.



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

A celebration of joy, jingles and harmony

This year our music ensembles will be performing on Tuesday 16th December at St. Joseph's Church in Gilesgate.

Tickets will be free but are limited. If you would like to book tickets, please click on the link below. Performers will not require a ticket.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/st-leonards-presents-sounds-of-christmas-tickets-1967528033312?aff=oddtcreator>

Christmas Mass Times



Wednesday, 24th December

St. Joseph's 5.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas

Thursday, 25th December

St. Godric's 7.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas

St. Godric's 9.00am Christmas Day Mass

St. Joseph's 10.00am Christmas Day Mass

Friday, 26th December

St. Godric's 10.00am St. Stephen's Day Mass

Journey in Faith

On Thursday 4th December the topic will be Confirmation. Please come along if you would like to learn more about our Faith. For further information speak to Marjorie in the parish office, 07483 369 561.



A huge thank you to all the young people who joined our session last week! We had so much fun making Christmas crafts, playing games, and sharing a delicious meal together—including roast turkey. We are also incredibly grateful to all the volunteers who have helped run this and previous sessions. You are truly AMAZING!

We'll be meeting again on **December 13th after the 5pm Mass at St Joseph's Church.** This time we'll be hosting a Posada—a Mexican-style celebration that takes place in the run-up to Christmas.

If you're planning to come, or if you have any questions or suggestions, please email us at: durhammartyrsparishyouthgroup@gmail.com



Christmas Party

The SVP will be holding their annual Christmas Party this coming **Saturday, 6th December** in the Jubilee Room at **St. Joseph's** from **12.00 noon.**

A Weekly Reflection and Daily Readings for Advent 2025

Advent is a time of preparation and to reflect, and hold onto, the messages of hope, peace, joy and love which God promised to us in the birth of Christ Jesus. Members of our Diocesan Writing Team offer this Advent resource to help guide a daily space for reading of the Scripture, reflection and prayer. In it you will find a reflection based on the theme of each week of Advent and an easy-to-follow reference to the readings for each day. The reflections will be available to view and download on the homepage of the Diocesan website from Friday 28 November www.diocesehn.org.uk.

CONFIRMATION 2026

We will be soon launching our programme preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you are interested in learning more about this programme or signing up to receive the Sacrament please let Sarah & Ciaran know by email to www.sacramentofconfirmation2025@gmail.com

Those in Y8 and older are welcome to receive the sacrament in May this year. The programme consists of 6 preparation sessions where we explore the Sacrament and a wonderful retreat.

DECEMBER CONCERTS - 5th and 11th December

If any parishioners are able to help with stewarding on the evening it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact me .

Joe Hughes

Email joe.hughes2017@hotmail.com

From the Diocese

A Weekly Reflection and Daily Readings for Advent 2025

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News from Durham Cathedral

Advent

The Advent Procession is one of the most moving and inspiring acts of worship of Durham Cathedral's year and we want you to be a part of it, together with your guests. It takes place on Saturday 29 November at 6.00 p.m. and is repeated on Sunday 30 November at 6.00 p.m. and it lasts about 75 minutes.

The Cathedral Choir moves throughout the Cathedral and the light grows as the service unfolds. It is a real opportunity to encounter God amidst ancient stones and hallowed prayer and it creates a wonderful sense of anticipation for Christmas with candles and lots of incense. You can see a flavour of what the service is like [in this short video](#).

You don't need a ticket. There will be plenty of room. Just turn up after the doors open at 5.00 p.m. and be seated by 5.45 p.m. on either night. Get there in good time for the best seats. If you have attended this service before, you won't want to miss it. If you haven't, do come this year and experience something very special.

Matthew Holloway-Strong

Lay Clerk and Office Assistant for Liturgy and Music

A SERVICE FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE AT 5.30 pm IN DURHAM CATHEDRAL

All are warmly welcomed to Durham Churches Together's traditional all-age candle-lit service, arranged with the generous help and support of the Cathedral clergy and vergers.

Join the musical procession from the Market Place at 5 pm on New Year's Eve or make your own way to the Cathedral in good time for the 5.30 pm start.

	St Godric's	St Joseph's
Saturday 29 November	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass John Hanley
Sunday 30 November 1 st Sunday of Advent	9.00am John Carré 1 st Anniversary and Cecelia Pinkney Birthday Remembrance 3.00-4.00pm – Exposition	10.30am Ken Haswell and Christopher & Veronica Kelly
Monday 1 December	NO MASS OR SERVICE	9.15am Service of Word and Holy Communion
Tuesday 2 December	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am Colin and Estelle Wild, and a Private Intention	NO MASS OR SERVICE
Wednesday 3 December	NO MASS	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am - The Sick of the Parish St. Joseph's Yrs 5 and 6 attending
Thursday 4 December	9.30am – Exposition 10.00am John Hanley	NO MASS
Friday 5 December	NO MASS	9.30am - Exposition 10.00am Norman and Alex Wright and Bryan Moran 12.00pm Funeral Service of the late Phil Casey
Saturday 6 December	NO MASS	5.00pm Vigil Mass Frank Harrison and Peter Reid Anniversary
Sunday 7 December 2 nd Sunday of Advent	9.00am The Sick of the Parish 3.00-4.00pm – Exposition	10.30am Alf Carr Birthday Remembrance and Roger Charlton

St. Cuthbert's

Sun 30	Mon 1 Dec	Tue 2	Wed 3	Thurs 4	Fri 5	Sat 6	Sun 7
10.00am and 6.30pm	NO MASS	9.15am	7.00pm	12.15pm	9.15am	9.15am	10.00am and 6.30pm