

St Joseph and St Wilfrid Weekly Newsletter

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF HEXHAM & NEWCASTLE REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1143450

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Week Commencing 22nd December 2019 ≈ (OF) ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent ≈ (EF)



Jesus, Others, Yourself

The Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, Christmas Day

The Creator robes Himself in flesh, and mission impossible begins. Since the dawn of time the pages of pagan mythology filled men's imaginations to the brim with wondrous stories. Educated men who could read and write Latin and Greek, broad-minded men trained in philosophy, believed that the forests were thick with fairies, that the god of war launched thunderbolts across the sky, that a wise man carried the moon and the stars in a box, and that ravens prophesied. Some ancients wore a leather pouch around their necks stuffed with crystals to ward off evil spirits. Others bowed to the morning sun to thank that great ball of fire for rising. And then...it all ended. A tired world retreated as man's true story swept like fire over the earth. In 380 A.D. an imperial decree established the faith preached by the Apostle Peter to the Romans as the religion of the empire. Grass grew high in the Roman Forum. Weeds pushed through the cracked marble slabs of the ancient temples. Cows grazed where senators in white togas once offered incense to the god of this or the god of that. The priests walked away. Pagan altars crumbled. The vestal virgins found husbands. No one cared. Gorgeous marble was removed from abandoned temples and reused to clad Christian Basilicas in glory. Candles now burned before a new God-man hanging on a cross. Slowly, imperceptibly, God the Father's hands were moulding and forming and shaping a new Christian culture—our culture. Christmas is the night the future began. When we hear now that a cow jumped over the moon, that a nocturnal fairy trades coins for teeth, or that a pot of gold sits at the end of the rainbow, we chuckle and slap our knee. The river of mythology had always run parallel to the river of philosophy. But in Christ these channels merge. In the Christian land, the river of truth flows into the river of the imagination. Ancient myths did not precisely disappear but were purified and fused with the new Christian reality. Magic and meaning formed into one beautiful, sacramental, compelling, intellectually satisfying force. Yet the Christian God became a man, not a book. And He did not come just to end mythology but in order to die. God came so close to us that we killed Him. God became man, paradoxically, so that He could cease to be God and taste death. Without this sacrifice, without this being-for-death, we would be unable to interpret nature, suffering, love, death, or war. We did nothing to merit such a generous, self-emptying God. There is nothing here but grace. At Christmas, then, we commemorate not our search for God but God's search for us. His searching and finding was His first mission. It is our duty to respond to this mission. God's search for us does not cease as December rolls over into January. Christ's voice never quiets and His steps never pause. Every day of every year He is walking at our side, waiting for our response: "Yes" or "No." And with that "Yes" or "No," our eternity hangs in the balance. A small God is an attractive God. Christmas is the day of days for this reason—it is easy to believe in God today. Christmas makes it simple to say "Yes" to God's plan for our lives. Yet that baby, like all babies, grows up. And as He grows, He will become more demanding and more specific in His expectations of us. And our responses to Him will become nuanced and more complex. He will be a bit harder to love and much more challenging to serve. Christ will not judge us from a crib at the end of time. When His eyes sparkle like diamonds and His voice crashes like thunder at the Last Judgment, He will be the towering Christ. So while we fall in love with the Babe in the manger, we must mature with Him as the years pass. There's a thousand ways to begin a story: "So, there I was"; "In a land far, far away"; "Once upon a time." The Christian story starts, "This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about..." This wondrous beginning leads to a tragic middle and a rousing end. It is the story of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, God with us. He is born of Mary but is, more deeply, from the Father. The Christ Child is the wordless Word who begins His daring mission in all humility. He beckons us closer to the crib for a moment, but many stay at His side their entire lives. We stay because we have real questions that demand real answers that can be found nowhere else except in the Church. While all other stories fade, the Christ story becomes more and truer as we mature. This story alone gives meaning to death, purpose to suffering, cause for joy, and consolation to the broken. This story alone rises above any one culture, city, language, or nation. Its plot is everyone's drama, its heartbreak everyone's sorrow, and its victory everyone's prize. This is the story of Jesus Christ, and this story begins today.

Christ in the manger, Your humble coming as man fills us with hope that our lives matter, that God is truly with us, and that we are never alone, even in death. You shared our human nature in every way but sin, and so give us hope that we will one day share life in heaven with You.

REMEMBER

Find us on Facebook

Jesus First,
Others Second
Yourself Last

A Very Happy and
Peaceful Christmas
to All

24th December
Christmas Vigil Mass
5pm at both
churches.

Latin Midnight Mass
at St Joseph's

25th December
Christmas Day Mass
with blessing of new
toys
10am at St Joseph's

13th January
Book Club 7pm

MAY 2020 ROME
4th-8th May

YOUTH CHOIR

Aged 7-17yrs? Enjoy singing? Like to join a choir? There will be a meeting for all interested parties in the New Year.

COMMUNITY CHOIR

Will begin again in January. For more information speak to Mrs. Teresa Dewhurst.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Resumes in January

All children aged 3-6 are welcome
For more information speak to Fr Michael or Peter Armstrong

BECOMING a CATHOLIC

Will resume in the New Year

BOOK CLUB

New members always welcome. We are reading 'The Day is Now Far Spent' by Cardinal Robert Sarah, books now available from the sacristy at discounted price of £14.85 courtesy of the cathedral bookshop - see Fr Michael. We will meet to discuss it on **Monday 13th January at 7pm**

Project Gambia 4th and 5th of January

"The Project Gambia team will be visiting our parish on the 4th and 5th of January to speak about their work with Deaf children in The Gambia. They will be greatly appreciative of any support received, both prayerful and financial (in the retiring collection)".

PILGRIMAGE to ROME 2020

4th - 8th May. Booking Forms will be given out at the beginning of the New Year when a deposit of £200 per person will also be required.

Northern Catholic Calendar available at the back of church. Ring bound £3.50/Flat £3.00

PLEASE NOTE ALL NOTICES FOR BULLETIN
MUST BE SUBMITTED BY MIDDAY ON
THURSDAY

ST JOSEPH'S

Confessions: Wednesday after Mass & Saturday 12-12.30pm

Exposition: None this week

Piety Stall

Will be open **EVERY Sunday** from after 10am Mass until 11.45am

ST WILFRID'S

Confessions: Before Mass on Saturdays

Exposition: Saturday 4.30 - 4.55

Many thanks to Fr Martin Wheaton for saying Mass at St Wilfrid's on Christmas Eve.

MEDJUGORJE IRISH CENTRE PILGRIMAGES

APRIL - OCT 2020:

7 Night Stay and Airport Shuttle service from Dubrovnik or Split for €266 per person sharing. Book any flight - any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service. Call us for further info and book the dates that suit you. Tel.

020 3239 8662 or email reservations@med-irishcentre.com.

EUCCHARISTIC ASSOCIATION

Holy Hour held at St ANDREW'S WORSWICK STREET on the first Sunday of the month.



PARTNERSHIP AND DIOCESAN NEWS/EVENTS

Revised Diocesan Academy Policy

The Diocesan Academy Policy has been revised with the aim that our diocesan schools will become academies within one of four Diocesan education trusts by July 2022. Underpinning the Diocesan Academy Policy is the desire and need to ensure the promotion, preservation, protection and future development of Catholic education within the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle so that it is fit for the mission of the Church. There are 156 schools in our diocese educating 53,600 children. 45 of our schools are currently academies. The implementation of this policy will happen in two stages:

Stage 1: consolidation of existing academies and trusts into one base trust

Stage 2: conversion of voluntary aided schools to academy status within their regional trust

Whenever voluntary aided schools convert to academy status, they will join their single regional trust as equal partners with all schools within the trust. All schools in the region will be included in the process from the outset. In establishing these trust structures and having a single system in our Diocese, we aim to ensure that the children and young people in our schools will continue to receive the very best educational opportunities and life fulfilling experiences, within communities which have the teachings of Christ and his Church at the very centre. A Catholic trust model where every school has its place will mean that no individual school will be left isolated or vulnerable in a rapidly changing environment. It will ensure that the uniqueness of each individual school is celebrated and the unique contribution of each is recognised and appreciated. In order for this policy to be fulfilled, the Bishop expects all schools to continue to work together as a Diocesan family for the good of Catholic education in our Diocese. Through the trust structures the aim is to facilitate greater sharing, adding strength and capacity to our system and ensuring that all schools are supported and included. In this way we will better fulfil the mission of Catholic education within the Church.

MASS TIMES, INTENTIONS AND SERVICE TIMES

Day	DATE	St Wilfrid's	TIME	St Joseph's	TIME
Saturday	21 st	Priest's Intention	5.00pm		
Fourth of Advent	22 nd	Polish Mass	11.00am	People of the Parish Intentions of Fr M Withoos	10.00am Mid-Day (EF)
Monday	23 rd	Holy Souls	10.00		
Tuesday	24 th	Christmas Carols First Mass of Christmas Barker & Smallman families Polish Mass Polish Mass	4.30pm 5.00pm 9.00pm 10.30pm	John Reid Christmas Carols and Readings First Mass of Christmas People of the Parish Intentions of GP	12.05 4.45pm 5.00pm Midnight (EF)
Wednesday	25 th	Polish Mass Polish Mass	10.00am 12 noon	Blessing of new toys Margaret McCann	10.00
Thursday	26 th St Stephen	Joint English/Polish Mass Moiria Brown	10.00	NO MASS	12.05
Friday	27 th St John	NO MASS		Blessing of wine Tommy Matthews	12.05
Saturday	28 th Holy Innocents	Priest's Intention	5.00pm	Pat Turnbull	11.00 (EF)
Sunday	29 th	Polish Mass	11.00am	People of the Parish Mona Richardson	10.00 am Midday (EF)

"EF" = EXTRAORDINARY FORM OF THE MASS IN LATIN ACCORDING TO 1962 ROMAN MISSAL

Priest's sick communions: None this week

Remember in your prayers those who are sick; especially Pat Palmer, Bernadette Hand, Albert Hanley, Eva Barnwell, Mona Richardson, Sheila Gibertson and Pat Wallace.

COLLECTIONS: - ST JOSEPH'S £546.72

ST WILFRID'S £195.59

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