

Masses and Services this week

Sunday 24th December	9.00am Mass	Des McLaughlin	4th Sunday of Advent
	11.00am Mass	Deceased and Sick Members of the CWL	
	11.30pm Carols		
Monday 25th December	12.00am Midnight	John MacDonald	Christmas Day The Nativity of the Lord
	10.00am Mass	People of the Parish	
Tuesday 26th December	10.00am Mass	Nancy Hall	St Stephen, first Martyr
Wednesday 27th December	10.00am Mass	Fr Jim's Intentions	St John, Apostle
Thursday 28th December	10.00am Mass	Bobby Turnbull	The Holy Innocents
Friday 29th December	10.00am Mass	REQUIEM MASS: Dorothy Devitt	St Thomas Becket
Saturday 30th December	10.00am Mass	Shelagh Doherty	6th Day, Octave of Christmas
Sunday 31st December	9.00am Mass	Dec'd membs O'Neil & McAllister families	The Holy Family
	11.00am Mass	Fr Jim Doherty (Illness)	
	6.00pm Mass	Molly McKee	

Devotions This Week

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	8.30am — 9.00am 10.30am—12noon	Monday to Friday Saturday
The Angelus	9.00am	Monday to Friday
The Rosary	9.40am	Saturday Morning
Confessions (Sacrament of Reconciliation)	No Confessions on Saturday, but available anytime on request	
Divine Mercy Devotions	7.00pm	Thursday

Ministries Next Week: 31st December 2017

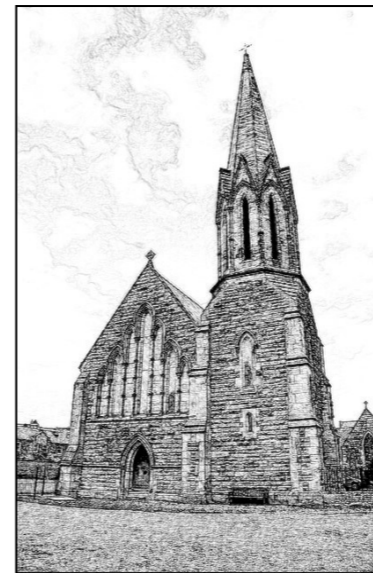
	9am Mass	11am Mass	6pm Mass
Welcomers	K Offen J Offen	G Swift G Davison	S Matthews G Snaith
Readers	M Boyle J Offen	J McClarence B Cudd	D Butler S Smith
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion	A Wilson K Wilson N Givens	V Shearer D Shearer G Davison	T Edwards M Illingworth A Smith
Altar Servers	E Walker Barras F Lawson	A Kinghorn L Kinghorn	D Dowd C Bradley
Children's Liturgy	Leader:	Companion:	

Neighbouring Parish Telephone Numbers

Fr Ian Hoskins, Longhorsley 01670 788344	Fr Shaun Purdy, Ashington 01670 812200
Fr Malcolm Cairns, Amble 01665 710252	Fr Stephen Watson, Ashington 01670 812200
Fr Lee Barrett, Cramlington 01670 712476	Fr Oliver Keyes, Alnwick 01665 6020124

The Pope's Intention for December

The Elderly - That the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming the new generations.



The Parish of Saint Robert of Newminster, Morpeth In the Brinkburn Partnership, Northumberland

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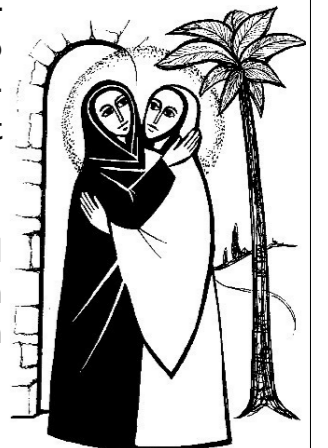
Sunday 24th December 2017 — 4th Sunday of Advent

“Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you Do not be afraid, for you have found favour with God.” Imagine for one moment, that instead of the Angel Gabriel speaking those words to Mary, that they had been spoken directly to you. How would you feel? It would of course be a life changing moment ... a moment filled both with great excitement and of great uncertainty. In that moment you would know that life would never be the same again. In that moment you would know that God had great plans for you. How must Mary have felt? It must have taken huge courage for her to agree to conceive God's Son. By saying 'yes' to God's plan she was allowing her whole life to be turned upside down. By saying 'yes' she was to turn her back on the security of the normal life she had planned with Joseph, her husband-to-be.

God's call to Mary is what we refer to today as the “Annunciation” which means an announcement or a calling. There are other places in the Bible where we see people called unexpectedly from the normality of their hum-drum lives to serve God. The calling is always a two-way thing. God requires a response. Of course we don't have to respond to God's call if we don't want to. Mary didn't have to say 'yes' to God's plan. She could have declined and lived out her years in trouble free comfort.

God still calls people today. Sometimes the call is insistent, as many who have been called to religious vocation will testify. Often the call is less obvious, and yet we are told that God has called each of us, and that for each of us there is a role to play. We are favoured and chosen just as Mary was. The main difference is that Mary responded fully to her unique role, whilst we remain hesitant and halfhearted, plagued by doubts as to our worth. Answering God's call isn't a comfortable business. Answering God's call might involve difficult decisions and hardship; but it might also be hugely rewarding, exciting and invigorating. How do we see God's call? Do we see it as a great burden, or as a great gift? Although Mary was young and uneducated, she had the faith to see that what the Angel Gabriel was offering her in calling her for God was a great gift.

The call is to us all. How does God call each of us? What talents skills and characteristics do we each possess that God can use? Advent is a time in which we can look for the ways in which God is calling us a time in which we can decide on the answer will give.





Please pray for: The spread of the Gospel; Harvest; The fruits of Human Work; The reverent use of creation; Justice and Peace in the World; All victims of War; Young People; Prisoners and their Families. Please pray for those who are sick, especially for Fr Jim Doherty; for all who have died recently including Dorothy Devitt of Fenwick Grove who died last week and whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated on **Friday 29th December** at 10am; and for all whose anniversaries occur at this time

Offertory Collection – 17th December Total Offertory £909.75

Christmas Wishes

I would like to take this opportunity to offer you all my prayers and best wishes for a very happy and holy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. In particular I thank you all for the support received throughout the year, to the many people who help throughout the parish and all those who enable us, as a parish community, to be effective witnesses in our town to the catholic faith we profess. May we be filled with the blessings the Lord gives us and help us continue to proclaim our faith throughout this blessed season and into 2018. Fr Peter.

Sunday Morning Tea and Coffee

Tea and Coffee is served in the Church Hall after the 9am and 11am Masses each Sunday. Everyone is welcome.

Welcome

If you are new to our parish or are a visitor to Morpeth and attending our church this weekend, we hope you feel very welcome amongst us. If you are new to the parish, do we have your contact details? Email us with your details of address etc.

Parish Newsletter

Please e-mail any items for the parish newsletter, by 12noon on Thursdays to the parish office email address which is morpeth.strobertnewminster@rcdhn.org.uk or drop in a note at the Presbytery.

Advent Alms

Today is the last opportunity to make a donation to the Advent Alms which support our local diocesan Charity, St Cuthbert's Care. They do great work in local communities throughout the diocese, supporting the elderly, the disabled, families and running day care centres, drop-ins, the Alan Shearer Centre and St Catherine's Care Home in Newcastle and Holy Cross Home in Sunderland. There will be a basket at the door as a retiring collection on Sunday morning for this.

Mass Times

Please note that all Weekday Masses this week will be celebrated at 10am. On Friday the 10am Mass will be a Requiem Mass for Mrs Dorothy Devitt.

Divine Mercy Devotion

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 28th December at 7pm in the church.

Please note that there are **No Confessions** next Saturday morning, but are available on request at any time throughout the week.

2018 Northern Catholic Calendar

The 2018 edition of The Northern Catholic Calendar is now available. The price is £3.00. This book gives contact details for all parishes, priests, communities and associations in the diocese.

Pilgrimage to Poland

There are several places still available on the Pilgrimage to Poland from April 23rd - 30th 2018, visiting Krakow, Czestochowa and Auschwitz. Direct flights from Newcastle to Krakow have been booked, guided tours are included, centrally located hotels with half board en-suite accommodation, a full spiritual programme is organised visiting the Shrine of Our Lady at Czestochowa, St Faustina's Shrine and Divine Mercy Basilica, and Pope St John Paul's Shrine in Krakow. Booking Forms are available from Fr Peter.



National Eucharistic Congress 2018

"Adoremus", the National Eucharistic Congress takes place in Liverpool from 7th - 9th September 2018. Our diocesan organiser has to submit all delegates names to the national organisers by the middle of January, so if anyone is interested you are asked to let Fr Peter know by next weekend please.

Children's Liturgy Study Day

The Diocesan Department for Liturgy have arranged a Study Day for Catechists on Saturday 3rd February from 10.30am - 3.30pm at St Hilda's Resource Centre in Newcastle. Booking is essential and because these places usually fill up very quickly. The Parish Office has the Booking Form if anyone is interested in attending. But be quick to let us know if you wish to go.

Repairs to the Church Roof

Brendan Teasdale Masonry Conservation of Amble have been instructed to begin the repairs to the Church roof and to replace the stone cross. It is now 12 weeks since the damage was caused by the cross falling off the roof. We have been informed that plastic sheeting has been fitted to the damaged roof area to cover up the holes in the roof until such time that the holes can be replaced and slates renewed, once the scaffolding has been removed.

Consultation on School Admission Arrangements

Where changes to admission arrangements are intended, all schools are required to consult before these are determined and published. The consultation will run from Monday 4th December 2017 - Monday 22 January 2018.

- **St Robert's R C First School 2019/20**
The policy for consultation for 2019-20 is available on the School Website. A consultation response form is available by request from the school. The governing body will consider all comments received before they determine the arrangements for 2019-20.
- **St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy 2019/20**
The policy for consultation for 2019-20 is available at <http://www.st-benetbiscop.org.uk/> A consultation response form is available by request from the school by contact Mrs Jane Marriot-Lodge on Tel 01670 822795 or Marriot-Lodge@pax-christi.co.uk The governing body will consider all comments received before they determine the arrangements for 2019-20.

Epiphany Carol Service

We will be having a Carol Service on Friday 5th January at St Robert's Church at 6.30pm, to celebrate the Feast of Epiphany. This has been greatly received in recent years and has proved to have been a great evening together. Refreshments will be served afterwards in the Church Hall. All welcome.
Appeal to our Young People: Would you like to be a king or a young reader for the Epiphany Carol Service? Please contact Clive Rich on 01670 511623 or sign up on the sheet at the back of church.

Partnership Meetings

- **Partnership Spirituality Network Meeting:** Friday 12th January at 10.30am at St Bede's, Bedlington.
- **Partnership Finance Meeting:** Wednesday 18th January at 7pm at St Bede's, Bedlington
- **Partnership Development Group:** Wednesday 24th January at 7pm at St Bede's, Bedlington

Baptism Preparation Meeting

The next Meeting for Baptism preparation will be held on Thursday 18th January at St Bede's Church Hall, Bedlington. Parents requesting Baptism will be expected to attend one of these meetings. Any parents wishing to organise a Baptism should make an appointment to discuss this with Fr Peter.

Wansbeck Valley Foodbank

If you can help, the Wansbeck Valley Foodbank is constantly looking for donations of non-perishable food. Donations can be left in the box at the back of Church.

Society of St Vincent de Paul

South Sudan Appeal: Many thanks to those who have already contributed to this appeal, £310 has been sent off so far but further donations or standing orders will still be very welcome. A further supply of the forms is on the church noticeboard for you to gift aid a single donation or better still to set up a standing order to secure the work for the longer term. Alternatively cash donations may be handed to any SVP member clearly identified for this purpose. Please help if you can. Thank you.

SVP Meeting

The next meeting of the SVP will be on Wednesday 3rd January at 7.30pm in the Presbytery. New members would be welcome. Why not come along?

Christmas Crib Collections

We have been asked by the Bishop to support the work of the "Friends of the Holy Land" during the Christmas Season with a Crib Collection. Baskets will be available at the Church crib for donations, which will support the Christians in the Holy Land.



Parish Secretary Appointment

We are pleased to announce that Mrs Bernadette Rich has been appointed as the new Parish Secretary following interviews on Thursday morning. Bernadette is a parishioner and is known to many in the parish and we look forward to her taking up her new appointment on Monday 8th January. We take this opportunity to offer our best wishes to Lisa Mills who finished her work with us on Friday and who will begin her new role at a school in Bedlington in January, but we will still hopefully see her around at Sunday 11am Mass.

Reverse Advent Calendar

Very many thanks to everyone who responded to the appeal for the Reverse Advent Calendar, for 'Changing Lives' which provides specialist support for thousands of vulnerable people and their families, every month. Councillor Alison Byard, who was liaising with us on this, and who collected the first donations had to come back again this week to collect a second amount of gifts and she posted her delight at this on the Facebook page "Morpeth Matters". Well done to everyone who helped.

Heritage Lottery Funding and Parish History

Through the Heritage Lottery Funding we are delighted to have two new books available on the history of our parish and church and on the Statues of the Church. Copies of these books are available from the back of church or from the Parish Office. We have also been able to have a video of the church professionally produced. This video with regional TV and Radio presenter Peter Grant introducing, explains many of the significant historical monuments of our church and includes some wonderful drone camera forage of the outside of the church. This is now available on the Parish website (History Section) and Facebook page. We have now attached a plaque to the wall in the porch to remind us and visitors of the Heritage Lottery Funding that we received to enable us to carry out the work.



Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes

Booking Forms for the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes are now available from the Parish Office. The Pilgrimage is from 27th July—3rd August, with a direct flight from Newcastle Airport. 2018 marks the 160th Anniversary of the Apparitions in Lourdes to St Bernadette. See Fr Peter for further details.



The Centre for Catholic Studies 10th Anniversary

To mark this anniversary the CCS are holding a special anniversary conference: 'Catholic Theology in the Public Academy: Searching the Questions, Sounding the Depths' in Durham from Wednesday 18th to Friday 20th April 2018.... The Anniversary Conference will combine a number of elements:

- An Academic Symposium, with a series of 20 and 30 minute papers by leading academics and younger scholars, exploring key issues in contemporary Catholic theology, Catholic studies, and the multiple interface between church and world in the current global context;
- A 10th Anniversary Public Lecture given by Baroness Nuala O'Loan on 'Catholicism and Public Life';
- A Mass of Thanksgiving, to be celebrated by the Rt Rev. Séamus Cunningham, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, in Durham Cathedral (by special permission of the Dean and Chapter);
- A Festive Dinner in the Great Hall of Durham Castle (University College);
- A Celebratory Dinner at St Chad's College, followed by an evening of musical entertainment and celebration.

All welcome. Conference packages range from £50 to £210, with conference accommodation also available. To book your place at the conference please visit: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/theology.religion/ccs/events/ccsannivconference/> The deadline for conference registration is 5th March 2018, but we would encourage you to book your place early as there are a limited number of places and we anticipate this will be a very popular event.

