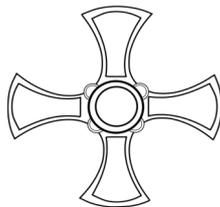


**Saint Bede's
Catholic Church**
Catholic Row
BEDLINGTON
NE22 6HS



**Saint Robert of Newminster
Catholic Church**
Oldgate
MORPETH
NE61 1QF

Parishes of the St Benet Biscop Partnership, Northumberland

Parish Priest: Father Peter J Stott

St Robert's Presbytery, Collingwood House, Oldgate, Morpeth, NE61 1QF
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www.strobertsmorpeth.com | www.stbedesbedlington.co.uk | Northumberland Listening Service 📞 07732 980740

Sunday 20th March 2022 - Third Sunday of Lent (C)

When people die, especially in tragic or premature circumstances, we are left with a sense of injustice. There are some who will question what kind of God we have who can allow such unfairness. But the bottom line is that life simply isn't metered out to us in equal proportions. Death simply happens. There is no intent behind a natural disaster, and because there is no intent there can certainly be no injustice. In biblical days people imagined that fatal disasters and terminal illnesses were sent as some kind of punishment from God. Had the victims brought about their own fate by living sinful lives? What will Jesus' answer be? No, of course untimely death is not sent as a punishment! But whilst we are pondering the fragility of our lives, Jesus reminds us that any one of us could die in similar circumstances. We only have to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. None of us can bank on living to a ripe old age, and so we must consider how well we are prepared to live and how well we are prepared to die.

At first, today's reading feels uncomfortable. The parable of the fig tree reads like a threat. The tree is not bearing any fruit and so the master commands that it should be axed. A compassionate gardener begs that the tree be given a second chance, and so the master grants another year. It feels like a threat... bear fruit or else! But Jesus knows that threats don't bring out the best in us. Like the gardener who tends the tree and nurtures it, so Jesus is there for all who need a second chance. For those of us who make a commitment to live life in a better way, Jesus is there to support and guide us towards our goals. The parable has moved from something that sounds like a threat to something that sounds like a promise.... something inspirational!

Lent is a time to address some begging questions. How many years have we spent making the same old mistakes? What must we do to make life different? It sounds obvious, but to achieve different results, we must do something different. We are invited to ask God for help in setting new priorities, and we must achieve results that reflect God's love for us, and our love for God.





At this time of the Church's year, we are asked to pray for Peace on Earth; Openness to the Word of God; Christian Unity; The Sick and those who Care for them; Victims of Trafficking and Those who work to comfort them; The Unemployed: Please pray for those we know who are unwell, as well as the many who have no one to pray for them; for those in hospital; for many people who have COVID-19 at the moment; for all who have died recently, including **Sirio Nardini** (Morpeth) whose Committal will be held at West Road Crematorium, Newcastle at 12.30pm followed by a Service at St Roberts Church on Tuesday 22nd March at 1.45pm; for **Charles Cramer** whose Funeral Service is to be held at St Bede's Church on Thursday 24th March at 1.30pm; and for all whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Collections at St Bede's Church for February

Many thanks for your offerings to the weekly collections either in church or via the Bank. They are greatly appreciated.

- Loose plate collections: **£663.70**
- Standing orders/bank transfers: **£1,063.00**

Children's Liturgy Group



Our Children's Liturgy Groups have started at both the Vigil Mass at St Bede's Church and the 9am Mass at St Roberts Church. We are very grateful to our Catechists and helpers who are leading this. We encourage all Children at school, up to Yr5 to join the Children's Liturgy Group. Children older than that should remain in Church for Mass.

Confirmation Programme

The Confirmation Programme continues on Monday evenings at St Bede's Church for those who are preparing to be confirmed ... 21st March, 6.30pm; 28th March, 6.30pm; On Friday 1st April 2022, at 7pm, Bishop Robert Byrne will celebrate the Confirmation Mass at St Bede's Church. Please keep these young people in your prayers

Refreshments after the Mass of Confirmation

We are to have to simple refreshments after the Mass of Confirmation - of tea and coffee with cake and biscuits. If you would like to be involved and bake some cakes for those attending the Mass, please contact our parish offices and inform us of your offer of help. It is a Friday in Lent so it would be inappropriate to have anything with meat or too extravagant!!



Funeral Thanks

Pat Fanning and Family would like to thank everyone who came to Brian's Requiem Mass, for all the Mass Offerings, lovely cards, offers of help and comfort. The CAFOD collection came to £550.00. Thank you all very much

Catholic Women's League

The next CWL meeting will be on Thursday 24th March, at 11am, in St Roberts Church Hall. This will be the Annual Review Meeting with the Election of Officers.

Clocks Change



Please remember that the clocks change next weekend. They go **forward** one hour next Saturday evening.

Your Gift Aid Status

Has your status for Gift Aid changed in the last year? Have you told us? Are you no longer paying tax? We need to know. Please contact us to tell us, otherwise we might be claiming for something we are not able to do! We do not know your status, if you do not tell us. Please contact us at the Parish Office. Likewise if you feel you would like to join the gift Aid scheme if you are a UK taxpayer, let us know and we will let you have the correct paperwork.



Heritage Open Day Support

Heritage Open Days will be held in September. This may seem a long way away. But if St Robert's Church and Presbytery is to take be involved in this, we need to know we have enough help to do this, with people prepared to help erect displays in Church and the Presbytery and others willing to be available on the day to welcome visitors. If you think you could be available in preparation and on the day please let us know by contacting Fr Peter or Bernadette in the Parish Office where we will keep a list of who is offering help.



Cards for Occasions

We have a small selection of cards for Mothers Day and Easter at the back of Church.



Stations of the Cross

We celebrate and pray the Stations of the Cross this week after the Services of Word and Communion on Tuesday and Thursday at St Robert's Church, Morpeth.

Online Lenten Reflections

As we begin the third week of Lent, it is not too late to join in with the Diocesan Lenten Reflections which are available on diocesahn.org.uk/living-the-faith/liturgy-prayer/#seasonal

Lenten Lunches

The Lenten Lunch on Friday 11th March raised **£146.00** for CAFOD and Mary's Meals. 'Churches Together In Bedlington' (CTIB) will be holding Lenten Lunches at Trinity Church in Bedlington, from 12 - 1pm on 17th March, 24th March, 31st March and 7th April. Soup and light refreshments will be served. All are welcome.



Teas and Coffees



Teas and Coffees are now available after the Vigil Mass at St Bede's Church and also after the 9am Mass at St Robert's. We do not have any volunteers at the moment to provide tea and coffee after the Sunday 11am Mass at St Robert's Church. If anyone else can assist with preparation of tea and coffee please let us know.

The Wednesday Word

"Wednesday Word" Reflections on the Sunday readings, for both adults and children can be accessed at wednesdayword.org It is a wonderful resource for both parishes and for Schools to help focus on the forthcoming Sunday readings. Paper copies of The Wednesday Word are also available from St Robert's Church



Newsletter by Email



We are now printing more newsletters as more people come back to Mass, but you could help us offset our carbon footprint by receiving the Newsletter by email. You will receive the e-version newsletter on a Friday evening rather than waiting for the paper copy at Sunday Mass. Email us with your details.

Wedding Anniversary Congratulations

Christine and Les Foster celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary on Thursday 24th March. We wish them every blessing and all our prayers and best wishes on this special occasion.

Preparing for Baptism

The next Baptism Preparation Meeting will be held in May at St Bede's Church. Parents requesting Baptism for a child are asked to contact us to make arrangements to attend this Meeting. **PLEASE NOTE: Please telephone the office to speak about Baptisms, please do not send in an email. Better still speak to Fr Peter or Deacon Stephen when you come to Mass.** Parents are asked to meet with Fr Peter (or Deacon Stephen if for St Bede's Church) to fill in the paperwork and then after the Baptism Preparation to meet once again to set a date for the Baptism. **Please note that one parent must be a baptised catholic for Baptism in the Catholic Church and it is also hoped that the catholic parent or even the whole family has been to Mass recently**, especially as at the Baptism the parents will be promising to bring their child up "in the practice of the faith". According to Canon Law, Godparents should be Catholic. Those who are Christians of other denominations can be Witnesses. Those who are not Baptised, and those who declare as having no faith, agnostic or atheist cannot stand as Godparents.



New Parishioner and Updated Information

Are you new to the Parish? Have you completed the "Keeping in Touch" form with your details? Are you a regular parishioner who has moved house and need to update your details? Please complete one of the forms available at Church and send back to us. If you want this form emailed to you, please let us know and then you can complete it on your own computer and email it back to us.

Rosary Chain for Peace

Could you join the Rosary Chain by saying one decade of the Rosary each day during Lent and offer it for Peace in the World? There are still several "mysteries" that have not been signed for. To take part all you have to do is sign your name on the form at the back of Church, and say that Decade of the rosary each day. If everyone on the list does this then we will eventually have a complete Rosary (the Four Mysteries) said every day.



The moment has come when God asks the Holy Father to make, in union with all the bishops of the world, the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, promising to save it by this means.

Our Lady to St. Lucia, Tui, 13th June 1929



Consecration of Russia and Ukraine

On Friday 25th March in the Vatican, the Holy Father Pope Francis will lead special prayers to consecrate Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In 1917 at Fatima, Portugal, Our Lady appeared to the three shepherd children. One message she left with them was "I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays [of each month]. If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church." As the terrible situation continues in Ukraine, it is right that the Holy Father should pray for peace and particularly in the light of what was said at Fatima, consecrate Russia and Ukraine to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart. We too must play our part and pray for peace and follow the instruction of Our Blessed Lady

Vigil for Peace in Ukraine

There will be a Vigil of Prayer for Peace in Ukraine on Friday 25th March at 7pm at St Robert's Church, Morpeth. All are welcome to attend to pray for peace; to pray for the babies and children, to pray for the women and the elderly finding shelter, to pray for those in the hospitals; to pray for the men fighting on their streets to save their country.



Ukraine Appeal

There has been a tremendous outpouring of support for the people of Ukraine during this very difficult time. The situation for people still in Ukraine is desperate. People here may still be wondering how to support. Those who were collecting clothing and other goods seem to be overwhelmed with donations received and are now asking for financial donations which can be used in Ukraine and amongst refugees at the border crossings of Ukraine. There are many organisations raising funds to support the people of Ukraine but some Catholic Charities doing this are ...

- The CAFOD Website ... cafod.org.uk ... and click on the DEC Appeal for Ukraine.
- Aid to the Church In Need website ... acnuk.org and click on their link for the Ukraine Appeal
- Caritas website <https://www.caritas.org/ukraine-appeal-22/> has a donate button and explains what they have done in Ukraine since the 2014 Russian invasion into Eastern Ukraine. Caritas Ukraine has helped nearly 826, 500 people affected by the humanitarian crisis. Its work is crucial especially for the most vulnerable people, such as the elderly and children.
- The Jesuit Refugee Service also has a donate button on their website ... jrseurope.org/en/news/ukraine-jrs-in-action-to-welcome-refugees/ and explains what they do to support refugees from Ukraine

A prayer for Ukraine

Loving God, we pray for the people of Ukraine,
for all those suffering or afraid,
that you will be close to them and protect them.

We pray for world leaders,
for compassion, strength and wisdom to guide their choices.

We pray for the world that in this moment of crisis,
we may reach out in solidarity to our brothers and sisters in need.

May we walk in your ways
so that peace and justice become a reality
for the people of Ukraine and for all the world.

Amen

CAFOD Fast Day

CAFOD Fast Day was marked on Friday 11th March. Envelopes are available today if you wish to make a donation. These will be available for a couple of weeks, so please just hand in the envelopes at the Offertory during Mass or post through the Presbytery letterbox. This Fast Day collection will allow CAFOD to support those who need help the most in those areas



of the world that is affected by warfare and violence. CAFOD immediately supported Caritas International with a £100,000 donation and continues to support those there who need help, but it is also supporting other troubled areas of the world such as Sierra Leone where people suffer daily because of ongoing fighting in that country.

Using our Halls

We have Church Halls at both St Bede's and St Robert's which are available for parish use throughout the day. Other denominations in Bedlington and Morpeth seem to have thriving activities throughout the day during the week, while our Halls stand empty not being used. If anyone wants to consider events for the parish - Coffee Mornings, activities and events, craft groups, book clubs, discussion groups, scripture or prayer groups - with somebody who is prepared and committed to leading these events, please speak to Father Peter. Outside Groups / Non-Parish Groups can also book the Hall at the usual rates. If interested please speak to either Bernadette or Mary in our Parish Offices, or to Father Peter.

Damaged Car

A car was left in the car park at St Robert's last Friday evening (11.03.22). It was broken into. We do not encourage anyone leaving their cars in the car park overnight. Please note that the Diocese does not accept any responsibility for damage to any cars left overnight in the car park. The garages were also attempted but access was not gained. According to social media, other properties in the town were also targeted the same night.

The Northern Cross

Copies of The Northern Cross for March are now available at the entrance of St Robert's Church. Pick your copy up now at your church. Alternatively, you can subscribe online here <https://northerncross.org.uk/subscriptions/>



Diocesan Vacancy

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle is looking to appoint a new Senior Administrator in the Safeguarding Team. The role will be based in the Diocesan Offices in Newcastle and is full-time. Closing date for applications: 23rd March 2022. Please visit www.diocesehn.org.uk for full details or contact the HR team on ☎ 0191 243 3301



The Diocesan Year of the Eucharist

There are several aims of the Year of the Eucharist ...

- To celebrate the Eucharist at the heart of the life and mission of the Church and to gather people back.
- To grow as a Diocese in our love and appreciation of the Eucharist.
- To deepen our appreciation of the liturgical celebration of the Eucharist through the rites.
- To revitalise and renew our faith through a deepening prayer and devotion of the Eucharist.
- To go out and serve the world through the nourishment of the Eucharist.

Each one of us has the opportunity to achieve these aims in our daily lives. During this Year of the Eucharist can you make the extra effort to attend daily Mass? Can you travel to Morpeth or to Bedlington to get in an extra Mass? Or come back to Sunday Mass and celebrate the Eucharist with your parish community. Come to Saturday morning Mass and stay on for half an hour of quiet prayer. Come to Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament before Mass for some quiet prayer.



Inner Healing Course

Do you feel called to accompany those seeking inner healing? The Diocesan Faith and Mission Department will be providing training in this ministry, initially to help you discern how God may be directing you. A residential training course will take place at Minsteracres Retreat Centre and will run across 2 sessions: Session 1: 22nd - 23rd April 2022; Session 2: 15th - 16th July 2022. The cost of the course is £180.00 per person. For more information look for the poster on your parish notice board, or contact the Vicariate for Faith & Mission admin team who can provide further details and application forms. adminfaith.mission@diocesehn.org.uk

Songs of Praise at Corbridge

You are warmly invited to a special Songs of Praise music recording of hymns and songs at St Andrew's Church, Corbridge. Recording takes place on Monday 21st March 6.30pm—9.30pm at St Andrew's Church, Market Place, Corbridge, Northumberland, NE45 5AA. To apply for free tickets, please send your name, address, contact phone number and number of tickets requested to SOPcongregations@avantimedia.tv. Please include 'Songs of Praise Corbridge' in your subject header. Alternatively, you can call us on J 07734 030 888 to book your tickets. We would love to see every seat filled, so please only apply if you know you are able to come.



Masses and Intentions this week

	St Robert of Newminster Church Morpeth	St Bede's Church Bedlington
Saturday 19th March <i>St Joseph</i>	9.40am The Rosary 10am Service of Word and Communion	5.00pm - 5.20pm: Confessions 5.30pm Vigil Mass: Michael Mulhall
Sunday 20th March 3rd Sunday of Lent	9am Mass: People of the Parish 11am Mass: Sheila Brown (K&BB)	4pm Holy Hour and Stations of the Cross
Monday 21st March <i>Weekday of Lent</i>		10am Mass: Northern Brethren Fund: Mary Finley
Tuesday 22nd March <i>Weekday of Lent</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass: Deceased Relatives & Friends (AB) <i>(followed by Stations of the Cross)</i> 1.45pm Funeral Service Sirio Nardini	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion
Wednesday 23rd March <i>Weekday of Lent</i>		10am Mass: Northern Brethren Fund: Mary Finley
Thursday 24th March <i>Weekday of Lent</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass: Brian Fanning (AB) <i>(followed by Stations of the Cross)</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion 1.30pm Funeral Service Charles Cramer
Friday 25th March <i>The Annunciation of the Lord</i>		10am Mass: Northern Brethren Fund: Mary Finley
Saturday 26th March <i>Weekday of Lent</i>	9.40am Rosary 10am Mass: S Ivashko (MG) 10.30am—11am Adoration and Confessions	5.00pm Confessions 5.30pm Vigil Mass: Elizabeth Charlton & Wilf Bateman
Sunday 27th March 4th Sunday of Lent	9am Mass: Sylvia Thompson 11am Mass: People of the Parish	



The Holy Father Pope Francis' Intentions for March 2022

A Christian Response to Bioethical Challenges: We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.



Livestreaming Mass from St Robert of Newminster Church

Masses at St Robert of Newminster Church can now be viewed on YouTube at <http://bit.ly/StRobert>. Masses are streamed live at 9am on Sunday, 10am on Tuesday and 10am Thursday, or available as a recording on the above Parish YOUTUBE site anytime. Are you able to assist with the tablet control and laptop for the Livestream of Masses. **If you are able to help at the 9am Mass on a Sunday or at the 10am Mass on a Tuesday or Thursday, please let Fr Peter know as soon as possible.**



Food Donations

The Diocesan Justice and Peace Group need donations to support refugees and asylum seekers. If you can help with any of the following items, please leave in the box in the Church porch. **Tinned Tomatoes; Chickpeas; Tinned Fish (e.g. tuna); Biscuits, Rice, Sugar, Toilet Roll, Shampoo, Shower Gel, Soap, Deodorant, Toothpaste, and Toothbrushes.**



Wansbeck Food Bank and Matthew Project Donations

We now have an extra box [with a red lid] at the back of St Robert's Church for the Wansbeck Valley Foodbank [financial donations can also be made online] and the food bin for the Matthew Project is at the back of St Bede's Church. Donations of all non-perishable food items are welcome to be placed into the bins for those less fortunate than ourselves.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

The Pilgrimage to the Holy Land is still planning to travel in October, and there are places still available. If anyone is interested in joining the group, please contact Gill at Tangney Tours on 01732 886666 for further information or for booking forms.



Programming and Playing of Electronic Hymnal

We are still looking for someone, or perhaps a couple of people at St Bede's Church, to take on the responsibility for the programming of hymns and playing them via our electronic hymnal at our Saturday evening Masses. Singing with accompaniment makes it much easier! If you can help and are willing to do this, please let Fr Peter know.



COVID Guidelines and Coming to Mass

We now have only two things that we ask when you come to Church.

- * **Please continue to use the Hand sanitiser** on entry to Church, before coming forward for Holy Communion and also at any time you move around Church, eg after checking the Lectionary or lighting candles and returning to your bench.
- * **We also ask that you continue to wear a Face covering;** all those attending church, for whatever Mass or celebration, including Baptisms and Funerals, are encouraged to wear a face covering, not only for your own benefit but to protect those near you in Church.

If you have COVID or symptoms of it

You are invited back to Mass but obviously you have to have common sense about the spread of the virus. If you have tested positive for the coronavirus, or someone very close to you has, you should not attend church until your period of isolation has ended and you have two negative lateral flow tests. In this way we can continue to keep church a safe place for all those who do attend.

Synod 2021 -2023

Catholic Women Speak, an international forum for dialogue and awareness-raising around issues to do with women in the Catholic Church, invites Catholic women to take part in a survey that will form part of a submission to the Synodal process. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete and is available in six languages, with further information available here: <https://catholicwomenspeak.com/catholic-women-international-synod-survey>

