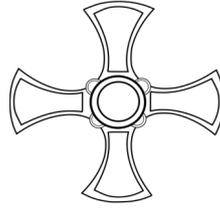


**Saint Bede's  
Catholic Church**  
Catholic Row  
BEDLINGTON  
NE22 6HS



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

## Parishes of the St Benet Biscop Partnership, Northumberland

**Parish Priest: Reverend Father Peter J Stott**  
St Robert's Presbytery, Collingwood House, Oldgate, Morpeth, NE61 1QF  
☎ 01670 513410 | ✉ morpeth.strobertnewminster@rcdhn.org.uk

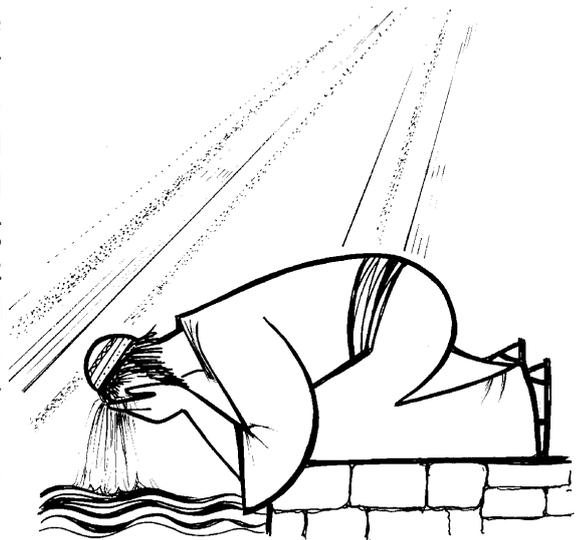
**Parish Deacon: Reverend Stephen Boulter**  
St Bede's Presbytery, Catholic Row, Bedlington, NE22 6HS | ☎ 01670 823258 | ✉ bedlington.stbede@rcdhn.org.uk

**Parish Secretary: Mary Carter**  
Office Hours | Tuesday and Thursday, 9.30am—3.30pm at St Robert's | Wednesday, 9am – 5.30pm at St Bede's  
www.strobertsmorpeth.com | www.stbedesbedlington.co.uk | Northumberland Listening Service ☎ 07732 980740

## Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023 - Fourth Sunday of Lent, Year A

Today Jesus cures a man who has been blind from birth, but it is not the blindness of the man himself that is central to this story but the blindness of those around him. The Pharisees are pretty sure they know who Jesus is and they are fairly certain that he is not of God. Consequently, they are completely non-plussed by Jesus' miracle. They question the cured man over and over as though seeking some other explanation. The Pharisees are unable to believe the evidence before their eyes. They are just as blind as the blind man once was. They are blind to the truth because they refuse to see it.

Jesus chose to cure the blind man, not simply because he felt a sympathy for him but because he wanted to display how God can work through any one of us. Jesus could see that the blind man would make a persuasive evangelist, and he was right. The cured blind man, unlike his frightened parents, spoke out boldly and persistently first proclaiming Jesus as a prophet, and then as he gained more insight, that this man was the Son of God. Even so, the short-sighted Pharisees were not convinced. Their belief that only Moses could act as spokesperson for God, rendered them totally myopic when it came to Jesus. Perhaps there is a lesson here for all of us. Are we so blinkered in what we believe and how we worship, that we are unable to see the broader picture that would allow our faith to move forwards?



Jesus' miracle and choice of subject teaches that God can work through any one of us. In the circumstances of our lives we can show others how God works. In our skills and talents we too can be evangelists, we just need the vision and a little bit of lateral thinking.

*Please take this Newsletter home with you, so that you know what's happening in your parish this week*



During Lent we are asked to pray for: Candidates for the Sacraments; Women; The Needy and Hungry of the World; Penitents and Wanderers. 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 and for all undergoing treatment for serious illnesses. We pray for all who have died recently, including:

**Angelina Nardini** (Morpeth) whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated at St Robert's Church on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March at 10am; and for all whose anniversaries occur at this time.

#### Church Collections

4<sup>th</sup> March, St Bede's: **£198.39** / 11<sup>th</sup> March, St Bede's: **£180.70**  
12<sup>th</sup> March, St Robert's: **£532.55**

#### Lenten Alms

Our Lenten Alms collections go towards St Cuthbert's Care, as it is our diocesan tradition to support them at this time. They are continuing their fundraising to purchase a vehicle across their two nursing homes. Check their website for all their work throughout the diocese <https://stcuthbertscare.org.uk/> Your continued support allows them to offer the little extras that mean the world to the residents at Holy Cross Home and St Catherine's Home. Each Sunday a basket will be available for Lenten Alms for St Cuthbert's Care.

#### CAFOD Family Fast Envelopes

Many thanks to everyone who supported the CAFOD Family Fast Appeal recently. We have raised **£190.00** at St Bede's and **£413.50** at St Robert's. Thank you for your continued generosity.

#### Soup Lunches for Lent

Soup Lunches for Lent have been very popular over recent weeks and so far we have raised **£569.00** over four Friday lunches. All Donations received will be split between **CAFOD** and **Mary's Meals**. There are two more lunches left on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> and Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March. Thank you for supporting and thanks to those who have made the soup and served it.



#### Collection Envelopes

The new Collection Envelopes at St Robert's Church are now available as the current ones end soon. There are named envelopes for all who Gift Aid their donations or who have Standing Orders and we ask that you take the envelopes. However, as a number of people who donate by Standing Order have said they don't want their envelopes, we will have to change the system for next year to prevent us throwing away so many unwanted boxes of envelopes again.

#### Setting up a Standing Order

Would you like to set up a Standing Order so that your Offering to the Church comes directly out of your Bank Account automatically? Please contact the Parish Office for Bank Details or a paper Mandate to complete to hand to your bank. If you are setting this up, it is important for us to know that you are doing so or that you have done this, with a quick message to the parish office.

#### Donate to your Parish Online

You are now able to make a donation to your parish via the Diocesan Website. Click onto <https://diocesehn.org.uk/>, click on DONATE at the top of the page and then scroll down until you come to the parish you wish to donate to and then follow the onscreen instructions.

#### Tea and Coffee

Tea and Coffee is available after the 5.30pm Vigil Mass and after the 9am Mass every week; and after 11am Mass on the first Sunday of the month. *If anyone is willing to help with the preparing of Tea and Coffee after the 11am Mass on a Sunday, it would be appreciated so that we can offer it more regularly.*

#### The Three Cs

The next gathering of the 3C's will be on Monday 20th March, from 2pm until 4pm in St Robert's Church Hall. All Welcome.

#### Do something extra for Lent

We are asked to try to do something for Lent. That may include **fasting** or giving up something ... a certain food or from something we enjoy for the six weeks; it may include doing something extra for Lent, so for example coming to Mass on weekdays during Lent if at all possible or coming along a little earlier for Adoration, or **praying** the Stations of the Cross; or it may even be just making a **donation** to a charity during Lent. Whatever you decide to do for Lent, try to do something, rather than letting it just go by like any ordinary time of the year.



#### Praying Through Lent

As we now begin the fourth week of Lent you may be wondering how your prayer life is ..... This website from the USA might just give you some help if needed. <https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/>

#### Lenten Reflections

The Vicariate for Faith & Mission has now produced the second booklet of Lenten reflections, ahead of the beginning of Lent on Wednesday. The reflections have been contributed by a mix of clergy, religious and lay people to express the richness and variety of our diocesan community. The Lenten reflection page on the diocesan website can be found here: <https://bit.ly/DHNLent2023>

#### Reading the Gospel of St John in Lent

During the weekdays and Saturdays of Lent, The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales is delivering daily podcasts from the Gospel of John – "the disciple whom Jesus loved". Starting with an introduction from Canon Christopher Thomas, 'Reading John in Lent', telling us how "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" – Jesus Christ, the only Son from the Father. Follow the Gospel through all 22 chapters concluding on the Friday of Easter Week. Join us as for 'Reading John in Lent'. Taken from the English Standard Version of the Bible. You can listen to all the podcasts at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/series/reading-john-in-lent/>



#### Bedlington Churches Together - Lent Gatherings

Instead of the traditional soup and a roll, there will be tea and coffee and refreshments (savoury scones or cakes). The emphasis is on coming together for fellowship and worship during Lent. These will take place at the Salvation Army in Bedlington, for six Fridays in Lent between 11am and 12 noon. *(Please note the earlier time than previously!)* The last quarter of an hour will be devoted to a time of worship led by one of the leaders of our churches.

#### Clocks Change



**Advance Warning:** Please remember that the clocks **GO FORWARD** one hour next weekend - 25<sup>th</sup> / 26<sup>th</sup> March. Remember to change you clocks before you go to bed next Saturday or you could end up missing the morning Mass!

#### Catholic Women's League

The next meeting of CWL will be on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, at 11am in St Robert's Church Hall.

### Hexham and Newcastle Diocesan Review

The investigation (commissioned by the Dicastery for Bishops at The Vatican) has issued a survey to be completed by parishioners if you wish to do so. This is an anonymous survey, all answers are provided in complete confidence, and you are asked to give your own individual views. Please note that this survey is only open until **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March** 2023. The survey can be accessed at <https://forms.gle/wevQ6zrjlt8SCxNq5> or through the Diocesan website or by pointing your camera to this QR code and you will be taken to the survey. Please complete the survey only once, even if you hold more than one role in the Diocese.



### Photographer needed

Is anyone good with a camera or at taking photos? The company who maintain St Robert's website want a number of landscape photos as soon as possible of the Church, inside and out. Can you help?

### St Robert's SVP

The next meeting of St Robert's SVP will be on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March commencing at 5pm.

### St Robert's Senior Parishioners Social

The annual social for senior parishioners will take place on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March, 3pm to 6pm. As in the past, the SVP would welcome donations of prizes for the raffle at the social. Please leave them with any SVP member or at St Robert's Presbytery.

### Preparing for Baptism

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May at St Bede's Church, Bedlington. Please speak to Fr Peter or Deacon Stephen after weekend Mass to make arrangements to attend this meeting. For Baptism in one of our Churches, parents should live within the Parish Boundaries and be attending Mass regularly in one of our churches.



### Partnership Meeting

The next meeting of our St Benet Biscop Partnership will be held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. The reps for St Robert's Parish are Michael Quincey and Chris Smith and the reps for St Bede's are Deacon Stephen and Sandra Boulter.

### Catholic Nursing Home Vacancies

There are vacancies in the Catholic Nursing Homes run by St Cuthbert's Care - St Catherine's Home in Newcastle and Holy Cross Home in Sunderland. Should you wish to know more information, please contact Gill Ennis, St Cuthbert's Care Registered Manager, on 07779 248 185 and she will be delighted to help.



### Supporting local Food Banks and Refugees

We have boxes at the back of our Churches to help support the work of local Food banks. You can donate to Bedlington Food Bank at St Bede's Church and Wansbeck Valley Food Bank at St Robert's Church. At both churches there is also a bin / box available for food to be donated to refugees that are supported through the diocesan Justice and Peace Network and SVP at Newcastle. All support with food for those less fortunate are greatly appreciated.

### St Robert's Parish Council Meeting

The next meeting of St Robert's Parish Council will be held on 13<sup>th</sup> April. Although it is about 4 weeks away, but I would like to take this chance to invite people to come along and to get involved with the Parish Council, especially some of the younger people and parents from the Parish. We need to keep the existing people who attend because of their knowledge and experience, but also think about the future of the parish and how we plan for days when the "regulars", the steady parishioners that we rely on, are no longer able to attend. There needs to be some planning for the future, with input from younger people in the parish. Please give it some thought and put the date in your diary.

### "Love the Stranger"

The Government's 'Illegal Migration Bill' has received a lot of publicity and media interest in the last ten days or so. This week, the Bishops of England and Wales issued their document '**Love the Stranger**', a new publication that presents a Catholic response to migrants and refugees. It places the human being at the heart of our pastoral outreach, looking beyond statistics and policies to the person – each with a name, a face and a story. You can read or download the document at [www.cbcew.org.uk](http://www.cbcew.org.uk) It draws on scripture and how refugees and migrants have been spoken about throughout the scriptures and in papal teaching over many decades. "Everyone who makes a dangerous journey across the Channel to build a better life here has a name, a face, and a story. Bishops presenting the document this week stated, "People are driven from their homes by poverty, conflict, persecution, natural disasters, or other factors that prevent their flourishing. Many have links to the UK or family members already living here. Yet, far too often, there are no safe routes open to them. "While we all wish to end dangerous Channel crossings, this new legislation treats migrants and refugees as a problem to be solved rather than brothers and sisters towards whom we have responsibilities. Establishing more safe routes, and genuinely understanding people's individual circumstances are essential to meeting these. "As Christians we call for the human person, made in the image and likeness of God, to be put at the heart of public policy." Please, if able, write to our MP Ian Lavery asking him to oppose this Bill.

### Catholic Social Action Network (CSAN)

CSAN are profoundly concerned about the Government's Illegal Migration Bill, introduced in the House of Commons on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023. This Bill, if passed, will not only deny those people fleeing war and persecution their right to seek safety in the UK and apply for asylum, but will punish them, based on how they came here, not whether they need protection. This would amount to an asylum ban. The Bill would:

- Remove the right to seek refugee protection in the UK for those who arrive irregularly.
- Breach the UN Refugee Convention, of which the UK is a founding signatory.
- Fail to provide the safe routes we need now.
- Leave thousands of men, women, and children in limbo, detained, and denied a fair hearing.

Read more on [www.csan.org.uk/news/csan-statement-on-the-illegal-migration-bill/](http://www.csan.org.uk/news/csan-statement-on-the-illegal-migration-bill/)

### Altar Servers

If any young people wish to join our team of Altar Servers, you would be very welcome, because our teams are actually very small! If you have made your First Holy Communion, please contact Fr Peter and we will make arrangements for you to begin.

### Easter Cards available

Easter Cards will be available in St Robert's Hall TODAY [19<sup>th</sup> March] after 9am Mass and before 11am Mass. After today the remaining selection will be available on the stand at the back of Church until Easter.

### Livestreaming of Mass

Livestreaming of our Masses from St Robert of Newminster Church is available on YouTube via this link [ <http://bit.ly/StRobert> ] Are there any volunteers to help with the Livestreaming, please contact Fr Peter or Marian Bell.

### Thank You for your support

The "Big Brew Coffee Morning" held recently at St George's Church made £235, and after the Charity Meal held recently in aid of Ruhi Akhtar's Charity "Refugee Biryani and Bananas" £1,000 has been handed over to support her work. Thank you for your support.

**Coronation Weekend:** Is anyone organising or does anyone want to organise any parish events for the Coronation weekend in May?

# Masses and Intentions this week

	St Robert of Newminster Church, Morpeth	St Bede's Church, Bedlington
<b>Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March</b> <i>St Joseph</i>	9.40am The Rosary <b>10am Mass:</b> Fr Peter's Intentions 10.30am Adoration and Confessions (until 11am)	5pm - 5.20pm: Confessions <b>5.30pm Vigil Mass:</b> People of the Parish
<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March</b> <b>Fourth Sunday of Lent</b>	<b>9am Mass:</b> Sylvia Thompson <b>11am Mass:</b> People of the Parish	4pm Stations of the Cross
<b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March</b> <i>St Cuthbert, Patron of the Diocese</i>		9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament <b>10am Mass:</b> In Thanksgiving (MC)
<b>Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March</b> <i>Weekday of Lent</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament <b>10am Mass:</b> Raymond & Margaret Taylor Walker & Family 10.30am Stations of the Cross	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion
<b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March</b> <i>Weekday of Lent</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament <b>10am Mass:</b> Maureen Goonan
<b>Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March</b> <i>Weekday of Lent</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament <b>10am Mass:</b> Teresa O'Driscoll 10.30am Stations of the Cross	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion
<b>Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March</b> <i>Weekday</i>	<b>10am REQUIEM MASS:</b> Angelina Nardini <i>Followed by Cremation at Northumberland Crematorium</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion
<b>Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March</b> <i>The Annunciation of the Lord</i>	9.40am The Rosary <b>10am Mass:</b> Terry Macy 10.30am Adoration and Confessions (until 11am)	5pm - 5.20pm: Confessions <b>5.30pm Vigil Mass:</b> Wilf Bateman & Elizabeth Charlton
<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2023</b> <b>Fifth Sunday of Lent</b>	<b>9am Mass:</b> People of the Parish <b>11am Mass:</b> Brown and Nicholson Families	4pm Stations of the Cross



## The Holy Father Pope Francis' Intentions for March 2023

For victims of abuse: We pray for those who have suffered harm from members of the Church; may they find within the Church itself a concrete response to their pain and suffering.



**TOY SALE**

### Christian Aid Coffee Morning and Toy Sale

The Morpeth Christian Aid Group are holding a Coffee Morning and selling (second hand) toys on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April at St George's URC Church, from 10am to 12noon - outside if the weather is fine enough. We would appreciate any donations of toys for sale at this event, and look forward to you joining us for a cuppa.

### Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC)

There will be a meeting at St. Paul's Church in Alnwick on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 7pm to establish a new local SPUC Branch. Everyone is warmly invited to attend. Earlier in the evening, from 5-6pm, there will be Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and an opportunity to venerate a first-class relic of St. Gianna Molla, the great pro-life heroine canonised in 2004 by St. John Paul II. Following Adoration, there will be a short talk on the life of St. Gianna. For further details, please contact Terry Graham, SPUC Northern Development Officer, on 07549 068226 or by email at [terrygraham@spuc.org.uk](mailto:terrygraham@spuc.org.uk)

### CAFOD Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal

CAFOD is still responding with support of provision of food, water, shelter, medical assistance and winter kits for survivors of the Earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. Your donations in recent months have made that quick response possible. Let us join CAFOD in praying for our sisters and brothers affected by the earthquakes and the winter weather. Your support for CAFOD throughout the year allows our Catholic agency to act quickly when disasters strike. For more details visit CAFOD's Turkey Syria Emergency Appeal online at <https://cafod.org.uk/give>.

### Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2023

Pilgrimage Booking is now available by following this link to the website of Tangney Tours <https://www.tangney-tours.com/pilgrimages/lourdes/newcastle-lourdes> The Pilgrimage will be for 7 nights from £870, from 28<sup>th</sup> July - 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023 by Air from Newcastle.



### Handel's "Messiah" at Alnwick

Alnwick & District Choral Society are performing Handel's "Messiah" with Professional Soloists & Chamber Orchestra on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April at 7.30pm, at St Paul's Church, Alnwick. Admission £15.

### Day of Prayer for Life

On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (the Solemn Feast of the Annunciation), there will be a Day of Prayer for Life - in particular for the unborn and for pregnant women - including Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Rosary and an opportunity to venerate the relics of St Gianna Molla at Saint Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle following the 10am Mass until 4pm, organised by members of SPUC



### The Universe Catholic Weekly

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### Being Admitted to Hospital

If you, a friend or relative are admitted to hospital, a visit can be arranged by the chaplaincy team. You can contact the chaplaincy via the hospital switchboard on 0344 811 8111 and ask to be put through to the chaplaincy department. If the call is urgent, please ask the nurse to contact the Roman Catholic Priest on call. We now have three Chaplains for the Northumbria NHS Trust - Fr Steven Forster, Fr Sebastian Thekkeyil and Deacon Stephen Boulter, who cover Wansbeck Hospital Ashington, NSECH (Cramlington) and Rake Lane Hospital (North Shields). The local priests of Morpeth, Whitley Bay, Cullercoats, North Shields, Wallsend and Forest Hall also provide emergency cover when the Chaplains are not on call.