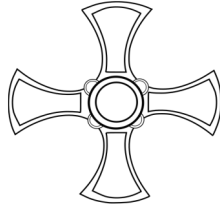


**Saint Bede's
Catholic Church**
Catholic Row
BEDLINGTON
NE22 6HS



**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

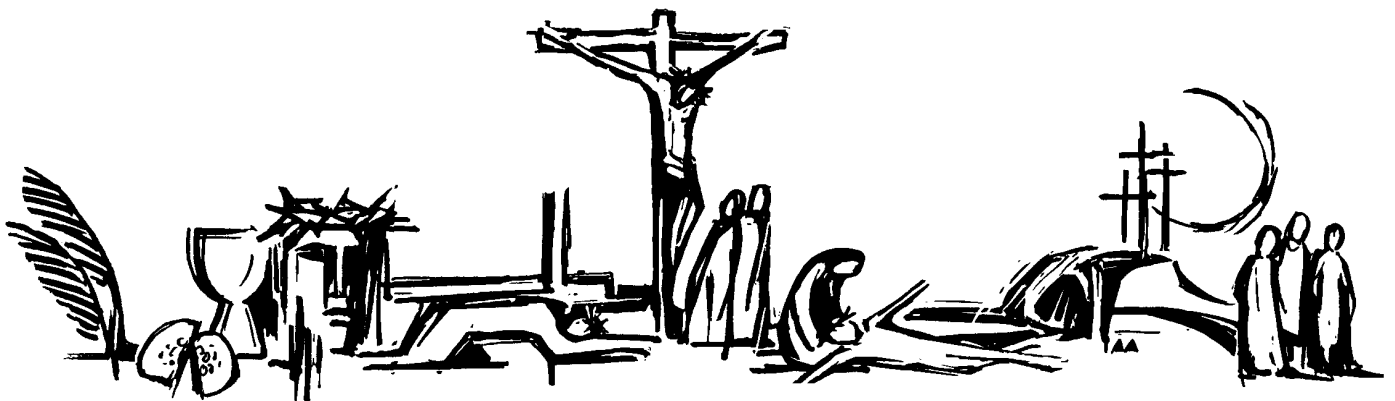
Sunday 2nd April 2023 - Palm Sunday

Today we recall the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and we hear again the story of the Passion. But as we stand in church waving our palms and reading our Mass books or Missalettes, we have to be aware that we are doing more than just re-reading a two thousand year old story. What point is there in simply remembering a sequence of events? There is only a point in remembering Jesus' Passion if it truly impacts on our twenty first century lives.

We don't need to have been around at the time to imagine how it must have felt to be a part of the crowd that greeted Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem. We know what it's like to be swept along with a crowd. We know how we can be brave as part of a crowd... infallible even. We remember the crowd that supported Jesus so enthusiastically at the beginning of the week and how it mysteriously melted away by the end, to be replaced by a different crowd shouting for his crucifixion. Are we any better than those original supporters? Can we stand up for Jesus as individuals when the going gets tough?

We remember Jesus' journey from Palm Sunday to Good Friday. We remember that it's a journey he made with no hint of compromise. How easy it would have been for Jesus to have bypassed Jerusalem altogether, but what would have been the point of that for us two thousand years on. There is no room in Christianity for compromise.

We remember the death of Jesus as a supreme act of love. Jesus taught that we were worth all that pain and suffering. Do we leave the church today simply to catch up with our Facebook accounts and enjoy our Sunday lunch, or do we consider how we should live our lives from this day on knowing that Jesus considered us worth his ultimate sacrifice?




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 **Jim Thompson** [Bedlington] and for all whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Church Collections: 25th / 26th March,
St Bede's: **£ 141.53** / St Robert's: **£408.10**

Lenten Alms

Thank you very much for your support of the Lenten Alms Collection for the work of  **St Cuthbert's Care** Enabling People. The Lenten Alms collected at St Robert's Church is **£1,017.10** and **£331.39** at St Bede's Church. Check their website for all their work throughout the diocese <https://stcuthbertscare.org.uk/>

Soup Lunches during Lent

Soup Lunches for Lent have been very popular over recent weeks. Another **£135.00** was raised on Friday bringing the total raised during Lent to over **£900**. All Donations received will be split between **CAFOD** and **Mary's Meals**. Many thanks to everyone who organised each week and to all who supported.



Golden Wedding Congratulations

We send our congratulations and best wishes to **Deacon Stephen and Sandra Boulter** who celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary (50years) on Friday 7th April. We thank them for their contribution to Parish life and we wish them all our congratulations and prayers on this special occasion, hoping that they can celebrate this special day, even though it is on Good Friday!!



Holy Places Collection

There will be a Retiring Collection TODAY (Palm Sunday) and on Good Friday for the Holy Places Collection. This collection is used by the Holy Father to support the Holy Places and People in the Holy Land, the land of Jesus birth, ministry, death and resurrection.



Readers for Holy Week

We need Readers for our Easter Services. Please sign up on the forms that are the back of Churches for Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil.

St Robert's Church Cleaning for Easter

The main church cleaning for Easter will take place on **Wednesday 5th April**, after the Service of Word and Communion. If you are able to come along and help with the cleaning it would be greatly appreciated.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Confession will be available this week at 10.30am, after the weekday Masses on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. There are no other opportunities for Confession until Saturday 15th April.

Diocesan Chrism Mass

The Diocesan Chrism Mass will be celebrated on Holy Thursday at 11am at St Mary's Cathedral in Newcastle. This is the Mass in which our Priests renew their Priestly Promises and during the Mass, the Oils for the coming year - Oil of Catechumens, Oil of Chrism and the Oil of the Sick - are blessed by the Bishop. There will be over 70 priests present at the Mass which will be celebrated by Bishop Emeritus Seamus Cunningham. All are welcome to attend the Mass.



The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper



The night before Jesus died he had supper with his closest friends, the Apostles, the Last Supper. This is the same day we recall the beginnings of the Priesthood and the Institution of the Eucharist. We will come together at St Robert's on Thursday evening to celebrate this Mass and to remember this gathering of Jesus with his friends and what he asked of them, as well as remembering how he gave Himself to the world.

The Watching

It is customary after the Mass on Holy Thursday that we have the time of "Watching", a time of prayer from the end of Mass until 10pm, when we are asked to spend time in prayer, remembering the prayer and the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus endured during his final hours. Please consider giving time to this quiet prayer on Thursday Evening. While some might wish to remain in Church quietly after Mass, others could go home after Mass, have a cup of tea or coffee and then come back for the watching.!

Good Friday Afternoon

The main service for all Catholic Churches on Good Friday is the afternoon Service, usually at 3pm when we commemorate the Passion and Death of the Lord. It is the only day we do not celebrate Mass. We encourage you to come along as we have the opportunity to take part in the Veneration of the Cross on which Jesus died.



Day of Fasting and Abstinence

Good Friday is Day of Fasting and Abstinence. Fasting means that the amount of food we eat is considerably reduced, applicable for all aged 18-59. Abstinence means that everyone over 14 years give up a particular kind of food or drink or form of amusement (eg we do not usually eat meat on Good Friday as well as refraining from other 'luxuries' that day). It is a solemn day and this should affect the things we do and the way we behave.



Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil is considered to be the most important Mass in the Church's year, so we do ask you to try and come along on Saturday evening to St Bede's for the Mass. It begins with a Blessing of Fire and blessing of the new Easter Candle, followed by a Vigil of Readings and Prayers before the Mass of the Resurrection, during which we rejoice at the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. If you can, come along to this Mass at 7pm on Saturday evening.



Walk of Witness

The Morpeth Walk of Witness at 11am onwards on Good Friday is a wonderful opportunity for all the Christians in the town to give witness to the faith and belief in Jesus. If you are around, we invite you to walk in the Procession from St James Church rather than just being a bystander. Many people take photos of the Walk, but this is not a photo opportunity, nor is it a spectacle, but it is an act of worship ... come, join in and give witness. We will end in the Market Place with a Service followed by refreshments served by St Robert's Catholic Women's League. *The Bedlington Walk of Witness unfortunately takes place at 3pm and so clashes with our Service in Church at 3pm.*



Altar Servers

If any young people wish to join our team of Altar Servers, you would be very welcome, because our team is actually very small! If you have made your First Holy Communion, please contact Fr Peter and we will make arrangements for you to begin. If there are currently young people in Year 4 interested in becoming Altar Servers, please let us know so that we might begin some preparation for the coming weeks before June.

Users of St Robert's Hall

All users of St Robert's Church Hall are asked to make sure that they turn the heating off at the end of use.

Setting up or Reviewing a Standing Order

Would you like to set up a Standing Order so that your Offering to the Church comes 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. Have you had a Standing Order for a while and haven't changed the amount you give? Do you still give today the same amount you gave 20 years ago? With Phone Apps and mobile banking it is much easier to alter the amount you give and can be done in just a few minutes. Please consider increasing the amount you give if possible.

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.

Gift Aid

Do you pay UK Tax and give regularly to our church collections? You could join the Gift Aid Scheme and we could claim an extra 25% from HMRC at no extra cost to you. Contact the Parish Office for further details.



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 TODAY. *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.*

St Robert's SVP

The next meeting of St Robert's SVP will be on Wednesday 12th April at 7.30pm.

Preparing for Baptism

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 11th 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.



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 and donations of food for those less fortunate are greatly appreciated.



Theft from our charitable boxes of food

Each week one or two people are entering the church porch at St Robert's and stealing items from the boxes of food that you have been donating. One person appears on a bicycle and quickly runs into church to take what he can. Someone else has been seen just quietly walking away with a haversack filled with items. Perhaps these people really need these items! Do we move the boxes elsewhere so that items cannot be taken or do we lock the church during the day, or just keep it as it currently is?

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.**



"Serving those who have served us well"

The Diocesan Sick and Retired Priests' Collection will be taken on the weekend of 15th and 16th April 2023, and the Fund will remain open until 5th May for anyone who might like to make further or individual donations. This collection goes to support our Sick and Retired Priests who have served our diocese over many years and we wish to make sure that this Fund is also there for future retired priests. Recent years have been very difficult and income has drastically dropped. If people were to give a suggested minimum of £5 or £10 per person in recognition of all the priests who have served their parishes over many years, it would be a great gesture as we "serve those who have served us well". For further information on Gift Aid, one-off larger donations, or a bequest in your Will, please do not hesitate to contact us on ☎ 0191 586 4319.

St Robert's Parish Council Meeting

The next meeting of St Robert's Parish Council will be held on 13th April at 7pm in the upstairs meeting room of the Hall. Although it is still a few weeks away, 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.

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). Some of the local priests also provide emergency cover when the Chaplains are not on call.



Lourdes Pilgrimage

Have you ever thought about travelling on Pilgrimage to Lourdes in response to the call of Our Blessed Lady? Every year, many people generously offer their service to those who stay in the Accueil (hospital) and need some additional care and support from volunteers like yourselves. This could include making a cup of tea, having a chat, helping in the dining room or assisting a Pilgrim in attending the various Masses and services which take place during Pilgrimage week. We need you! In order to provide care for all of the applicants for the Accueil, we need more registered adult helpers. We do not have enough at present and do not want to disappoint those Pilgrims who are so looking forward to travelling with us. The dates of travel are from Friday 28th July to Friday 4th August 2023. Financial help with the cost of travel and accommodation is available in the form of a subsidy for this year only. If you would like any further information, please email: lourdes@rcdhn.org.uk or telephone: 0191 528 1992 The link to register as an adult helper is: <https://forms.office.com/e/ZHWW4DD5ny> Please note, registration will close on Wednesday 5th April. All forms MUST be received by this date

Diocesan Vacancies

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has the following vacancies:

- Administrator, Vicariate for Faith and Mission (maternity cover) – full-time. Closing date: 18th April 2023.
- Senior Administrator, Dept for Education, Diocesan Offices, Newcastle – full-time. Closing date: 18th April
- Parish Secretary and Cleaner (2 roles) – St Patrick's, Langley Moor, Durham – part-time. Closing date: 12th April

Please visit www.diocesehn.org.uk for full details or contact them on ☎ 0191 243 3301

Masses and Intentions this week

	St Robert of Newminster Church, Morpeth	St Bede's Church, Bedlington
Saturday 1st April <i>Weekday of Lent</i>	9.40am The Rosary 10am Mass: Charles & Elsie Macy 10.30am Adoration and Confessions (until 11am)	5pm - 5.20pm: Confessions 5.30pm Vigil Mass:
Sunday 2nd April Palm Sunday	9am Mass: Helen and Douglas Cone 11am Mass: People of the Parish	4pm Stations of the Cross
Monday 3rd April <i>Weekday in Holy Week</i>		9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass: Hugo & Ann McCusker 10.30am Confessions
Tuesday 4th April <i>Weekday in Holy Week</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass: Special Intentions (JS) 10.30am Stations of the Cross 10.30am Confessions	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion
Wednesday 5th April <i>Weekday in Holy Week</i>	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion	9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass: 10.30am Confessions
Thursday 6th April Holy Thursday Paschal Triduum	7pm Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper: Patricia Fox 'Watching' until 10pm 9.50pm Night Prayer	
Friday 7th April Good Friday	9.30am Office of Readings and Morning Prayer 10am Children's Stations of the Cross 11.30am Ecumenical Walk of Witness, beginning at St James' Church, Morpeth, to Market Place for Service 3.00pm Commemoration of the Lord's Passion	3.00pm Commemoration of the Lord's Passion
Saturday 8th April Holy Saturday	9.30am Office of Readings and Morning Prayer	7.00pm Easter Vigil: People of the Parish
Sunday 9th April 2023 Easter Sunday	9am Mass: People of the Parish 11am Mass: Special Intention	



The Holy Father Pope Francis' Intentions for April 2023

For a culture of peace and non-violence:

We pray for the spread of peace and non-violence, by decreasing the use of weapons by States and citizens.



Ongoing Catholic Education

It is easy for the children in Bedlington whose parents wish for them to continue in their catholic education, because St Bede's is a feeder school at the end of Year 6, into St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy. The situation in Morpeth is very different and sadly there is no direct link with ongoing catholic education for the children of Year 4 at St Robert's First School, and Chantry and Newminster Schools seem to be the only option. However, it may be possible to transfer to Year 5 at St Aidan's School at Ashington or St Bede's School at Bedlington. It is also possible to transfer from the Morpeth Schools at the end of Year 6 to go into Year 7 at St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy. We are not sure if these options are ever put to parents, especially if a catholic education is considered important. Headteachers of all schools, as well as Fr Peter will be available for anyone who wants further advice. It is so disappointing that parents do not have the same simple choice in Morpeth as they do in other parts of the local catholic community.

Coming Soon - A Diocesan Day for Catechists

Are you involved with Baptismal Preparation, First Holy Communion, Confirmations, Marriage Preparation, RCIA, Children's Liturgy or other faith sharing initiatives? We are excited to host the largest gathering of Catechists the diocese has seen in recent times. This will be a special opportunity to come together and renew our approach to sacramental preparation and faith-sharing post-pandemic. Whether you are a seasoned catechist or just considering becoming one, we want you to join us. We will be sharing key principles from the New Directory of Catechesis and affirming good practices, as well as providing new ideas and inspiration. Individuals and parish groups are welcome. To register your interest/book a place, please visit bit.ly/DHND0C23.

Pope John Paul II Award

We are still looking for a volunteer to take on the role of Coordinator of the Pope John Paul II Award at St Robert's. If interested, please let Fr Peter know.



Nurturing Christian Hope in the North East

You are invited to join a free interactive event for all those involved in churches, Christian social action and related research, to learn & work together on shared priorities and action as they engage with wider communities in the North East of England. The event is being organised by the William Leech Research Fund, on Saturday 17th June 2023, 12:00 – 17:00 (at Cornerstones, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3TF), as it listens to regional priorities and seeks to support research on Christian social ethics and practical theology in the North East. Those interested can find out more and book a place at the event using the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nurturing-christian-hope-in-the-north-east-connecting-research-practice-tickets-559629676427>

Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid Week this year runs from 14th to 20th May. Organisers need some people willing to deliver Christian Aid envelopes to a street or two, all very local, and people willing to allow their house to be used as a return address for those who wish to post their envelope through the letter-box. We always need more volunteers, especially on the new estates. Please put your name on the list at the back of church, indicating what you are prepared to do and please provide a contact telephone number. Thank you.

St Robert's Senior Parishioners Social

Very many thanks to all the volunteers who helped at last Saturday's Social to make it such a success. The SVP could not have done it without you, and we think all our guests had a great time due to your efforts. So thank you very much.