



So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.' *John 1:23*

**THE PARISH OF OUR LADY AND ST PHILIP NERI**

**Immaculate Heart of Mary - Lobley Hill  
St Mary - Whickham  
St Philip Neri - Dunston**

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The John Ingram Partnership  
Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

**17 December 2023**

**Third Sunday of Advent**

**Year B**

*The Parish Secretary, Julie Hindmarsh, will be in the Parish Office at Immaculate Heart Presbytery this week on Tuesday 10am - 4pm and Friday 10am - 2pm. She can also be contacted by email [stmarysphilip@aol.co.uk](mailto:stmarysphilip@aol.co.uk) or by telephone 0191 460 4274 on Tuesday & Wednesday 10am - 4pm and Friday 10am - 2pm.  
Postal Address: St Mary's Presbytery, Malvern Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE11 9LL*

**MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS 16 - 25 December 2023**

Saturday 16 December	5.30pm	St Philip Neri	Daniel Harrison (dec.)
Sunday 17 December	9.00am	St Mary	People of the Parish
<i>Third Sunday of Advent (Year B)</i>	10.30am	Immaculate Heart	John Arkless (dec.)
Monday 18 December			
Tuesday 19 December	<u>9.15am</u>	Immaculate Heart	Requiem Mass - Edith Howstan RIP
Wednesday 20 December	9.30am	St Philip Neri	Frances Douglas (dec.) <i>St Philp Neri School attending</i>
Thursday 21 December	9.30am	St Mary	Joe Welsh (dec.) <i>St Mary's School attending</i>
Friday 22 December			
Saturday 23 December	5.30pm	St Philip Neri	People of the Parish
Sunday 24 December	<u>9.30am</u>	<u>St Mary</u>	People of the Parish
<i>Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year B)</i>	<b>N.B.</b>	<b>No 10.30am Mass today at Immaculate Heart</b>	
Sunday 24 December			
<i>Christmas Eve The Nativity of the Lord</i>	<u>6.30pm</u>	Immaculate Heart	Freddy Bambrough (ann.)
Monday 25 December			
<i>Christmas Day The Nativity of the Lord</i>	<u>9.30am</u>	St Philip Neri	Michael Short (ann.)

**Weekday Readings Advent Week 3**

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**

5.00pm - 5.20pm on Saturday at St Philip Neri

**RECENTLY DECEASED** Please remember in your prayers Edith Howstan who died recently and whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated at 9.15am on Tuesday 19 December at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church followed by cremation at Saltwell Crematorium. May she rest in peace. Amen.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK** Veronica Coleman, Ann Crompton, Raymond Deponio, Barney & Veronica Hayes, Maria Thi Kien Chiene Le, John Leitch, Dickie Lindsley, Cheryl Anne McDonald, Nora Miller, Pauline Mulholland, Margaret Murphy, Astrid Muse (Gower), Mary Reid, Joseph Relph, Simon Turnbull.

*If you or any members of your family are going into hospital and would like to see the Catholic Chaplain, please ask a member of the ward staff to let the Catholic Chaplain know. For the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, you can contact the Chaplaincy Department Office directly, tel. 0191 445 2072 (Catholic Chaplain: Revd Paul Nichol). For the RVI and Freeman Hospitals in Newcastle, tel. 0191 233 6161 (Catholic Chaplain: Fr Mariadass 0191 273 3903).*

**ADVENT ALMS 2023** A message from Nic Gilbert, CEO of St Cuthbert's Care: *This Advent, I wish to appeal for funds to support our community work, focusing on those in need of hot, nutritious food and older isolated people needing a little company. For over 10 years our Alan Shearer Activity Centre has provided free, sensory and therapeutic facilities for children and adults living with disabilities. We recognise that often those living with disabilities experience a higher cost of living due to additional costs for powering vital equipment, such as hoists and ventilators and more frequent laundering of clothes and bedding. To help alleviate some of the financial pressures faced, throughout this winter we will be providing a free delicious meal and a warm drink to our members and their family. This new project will complement our work to provide a subsidised meal for our lunch clubs where older isolated people come together to share a hot meal and much needed company.*

**There is a retiring collection for Advent Alms at all Masses this weekend 16/17 December.**

**CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL CANDLES** If you would like a candle to be lit during the Christmas season in memory of your deceased loved ones, please write their name(s) on one of the envelopes at the back of our three churches and include your donation. **Please complete and return your envelopes by Tuesday 19 December** and don't forget to indicate in which church you would like the candle to be lit. Completed envelopes can be placed in the collection baskets at weekend Masses or posted through the letterbox at Immaculate Heart Presbytery.

**ADVENT REFLECTIONS** The Diocesan Vicariate for Faith and Mission has produced an online booklet of Advent reflections, which can be found here: [Advent Reflections 2023 FINAL \(diocesehn.org.uk\)](https://diocesehn.org.uk).

**DONATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS FLOWERS** It would be greatly appreciated if parishioners from all three churches could donate at least £1 toward Christmas flowers to enhance the decoration of our three churches over the Christmas period. Thank you.

**THE NORTHERN CATHOLIC CALENDAR 2024** is now available and on sale at the back of church this weekend, price £3.00.

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL (PPC)** The agenda and approved minutes of the PPC meeting held in July are now available to read at the back of each church.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PREPARATION 2023/2024** If your child is currently in Year 4 (or above) and they are not attending a Catholic School and you would like them to prepare to celebrate their First Holy Communion in 2024, please contact the Parish Office at Immaculate Heart as soon as possible, e-mail [stmarysphilip@aol.co.uk](mailto:stmarysphilip@aol.co.uk) or tel. 0191 460 4274, providing your name, address, telephone number and email address. Thank you.

#### **FOOD BANK & REFUGEE UPDATE**

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THE VOLUNTEERS WILL NOT BE IN CHURCH FOR THE NEXT TWO THURSDAYS (21 & 28 December) BUT WILL REOPEN FOR DONATIONS ON THURSDAY 4 JANUARY 2024\*\*\***

**We welcome ALL non-perishable produce - even if you can only bring along 1 or 2 tins, please bring them along to church to help out.**

**FOOD ITEMS IN SHORT SUPPLY:** UHT milk, tinned garden pea, carrots, potatoes, sweetcorn, baked beans, soup, tomatoes, fruit, custard, rice pudding, sugar, gravy granules, cooking oil, mayonnaise, tomato ketchup, jam, spray cleaner.

**Other priority items:** dried pasta, long grained rice, tinned meat (mince, corned beef, pek), tuna, meatballs, hot dogs, pasta sauce, biscuits, cereal, crisps, squash, tomato purée, toilet rolls, teabags, coffee, washing up liquid, feminine hygiene (especially tampons), toilet rolls, anti-perspiration, shampoo, toothpaste, laundry powder/liquid, *Other items we put into the monthly food bags for the Refugee Project:* tinned chickpeas & kidney beans.

Every Thursday volunteers are in Immaculate Heart of Mary Church between 9.30am - 10.30am so parishioners can drop donations off then if they wish - please come in to say 'Hello' and see what we're up to. Any queries, please contact Katie Wilkinson, 1 Mayfield, Whickham, via mobile 07837 386760 or email [teachkate1@gmail.com](mailto:teachkate1@gmail.com)

#### **LITURGICAL FORMATION FOR READERS OF THE WORD OF GOD**

This short course supports new and existing Readers of the Liturgy of the Word and on completion will conclude with a commissioning ceremony.

The date of the course are:

**Session 1:** Monday 15 January 2024, 7.00-9.00pm.

**Session 2:** Saturday 20 January 2024, 10.30am-3.00pm (to include a Commissioning Service).

Participants are asked to bring a packed lunch for the day event - tea and coffee will be provided.

**Location:** St Mary's, Dockendale Lane, Whickham, Newcastle upon Tyne. NE16 4EN.

**Cost:** £12.50 per person (this will be met by the parish).

**If you are interested in attending, please let Fr Peter know by Wednesday 10 January.**

**HOLY ISLAND SVP CAMP** Are you interested in your child having a holiday in 2024? Let them join us for a week on Holy Island. They'll stay in our Centre and be looked after by DBS checked and trained helpers who will ensure they have a safe, fun time. We do lots of interesting and enjoyable activities such as rock pooling, longball, football, rounders, walking, craft and art, table tennis, long ball, quizzes and competitions and marathons as well as laser tag, silly sports, sand castle building, swimming and scavenger hunts.

Girls and boys can be aged 9-12 and it is a great way for them to meet new people and make friends from all over the North East. A week's all-inclusive holiday costs a donation of £150 and can be paid in instalments. In some circumstances children may be able to receive partial or full funding to attend. If you're interested, or know of a child who could benefit from such a holiday, please visit our website for further details at <https://www.svp.org.uk/microsite/holy-island> Applications open from 5 December 2023.

**LOVE CHRISTMAS IS OVER AGAIN FOR ANOTHER YEAR - A HUGE THANK YOU!** to all who contributed, in whatever way they could to this year's outreach appeal for donations to the Angel Tree, Christmas Hampers or purchasing cards - sincere heartfelt thank you!

Every year parishioners demonstrate their unbelievable level of support for families who may struggle during this special season by pouring out their Christian love, thinking of others and determining to make a difference.

Your generosity will ensure that there will be smiles and happiness in some homes that otherwise experience little joy throughout the year due to ongoing hardship. They will know that within their community there are people who have made this special effort purely because of love and concern for 'their neighbour'.

**BRILLIANT NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL CHARITY 'LOVE CHRISTMAS'** This year the parish submitted a grant application to the Charity 'Love Christmas' to help support the annual outreach work of supporting our neighbours. Last week, the Charity informed the parish that it had been successful in the application and had been awarded a grant totalling £1800. This money has been a life saver in supplementing the gaps in donations we have experienced this year and it has meant that we have still been able to support this essential annual outreach work.

**ANOTHER THANK YOU!** to Santa's Little Helpers who gathered on Tuesday 12 December at Immaculate Heart Church, both in the morning and evening, to sort & wrap all the wonderful donations handed in over the past few weeks for the Angel Tree, Christmas hampers and gifts for our Food Bank families. Volunteering your time and effort is priceless - the parish could achieve very little without this greatly appreciated generosity of precious time.

Due to the parishioners' great response to Love Christmas, plus the availability of grant money, the 'little helpers' were kept very busy. The work was completed by these incredible helpers with a smile and a wonderful happiness, in the knowledge that they were helping others. 'Thank you' doesn't seem enough but your commitment is very much appreciated and the completed work could not have been achieved without you.

**VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD** "*The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me.*" Like Isaiah in today's first reading, could you be anointed to serve as a priest of God? Speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter, Fr Shaun Purdy: tel. 01207 299012 or email [vocationspromoter@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:vocationspromoter@diocesehn.org.uk)

**VACANCIES - OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK AT THE EMMAUS VILLAGE** The Emmaus Village, home for the Youth Ministry Team, hosts all the residential retreats led by YMT for our Diocesan Primary and Secondary Schools. It also offers catering and hospitality to the biggest gathering of Catholic Schools, the YMT Summer Festivals, students named it "God Camp". With this we are looking for an Assistant Catering Coordinator and Kitchen Technician, who will help our catering team deliver this valuable service to all the groups that come to the Emmaus Village.

If you or someone you know, wants to be part of the YMT team, please contact [admin@ymt.org](mailto:admin@ymt.org) or visit our website at [www.ymt.org/vacancies](http://www.ymt.org/vacancies) for more information with regards to our vacancy.

**YOUTH MINISTRY CONFERENCE 3 FEBRUARY 2023** This Youth Ministry and Practical Theology Conference is YMT's first conference since the COVID-19 pandemic and we look forward to gathering with youth ministers, catechists, clergy, teachers, staff and volunteer co-workers from across the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle and beyond! The theme for the conference is "Investing in the Fearlessness of Youth", inspired by a quote from Pope Francis' letter, *Christus Vivit* (Chapter 7 no. 233). We hope you can join us for this Youth Ministry Conference.

Booking is now open and you can either email [nsalkeld@ymt.org](mailto:nsalkeld@ymt.org) or book online here: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/youthministryteam](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/youthministryteam). Online booking will apply booking fees.

We are looking forward to welcoming keynote speaker, Reverend Professor David Wilkinson, Director of Equipping Christian Leadership in an Age of Science, an international project based at St John's College, Durham, who will explore how we can engage young people in the Gospel when we live in a world of science. We are also pleased to welcome back David Wells, international speaker, best-selling author and friend of YMT, to guide us to reflect on our theme. For more information about the conference visit [www.ymt.org/ymt-conference](http://www.ymt.org/ymt-conference)

**NEWSLETTER ITEMS** Please note next weekend's Newsletter (23/24 December) will be in reduced format and with limited space for items apart from Mass times and the Liturgy of the Word for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. **Please send any other items for inclusion in the Newsletter for the weekend 30/31 December to the Parish Office by Thursday 28 December.**

#### Jen's Weekly Prayer

A winter sun spreads a startling tapestry of colour  
to emblazon the late afternoon sky.

Pink clouds float on a pale turquoise backdrop  
spreading and increasing in their intensity  
to illustrate once again the spectacular light and beauty  
of our universe which we can share and treasure  
even in these shorter winter days.

We can spread our illuminated cloth of light and colour  
by our smiles, our actions, the giving of ourselves,  
our gifts to others in the everyday struggles, difficulties  
and sadness which cloud our lives at different times.

Our gifts freely given like the spectacular sunset  
can brighten and warm those who are  
in pain, hurt or troubled.

As we approach the end of our Advent journey  
help us to be prepared to reach out and share  
our varied precious, individual gifts with others  
and celebrate the great gift of unconditional love  
first seen in a stable yet radiating through time and space  
to be with us in all our moments  
of sadness, pain, happiness and joy.

*Jen Jones © December 2021*

**First Reading***Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11*

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,  
for the Lord has anointed me.  
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,  
to bind up hearts that are broken;  
to proclaim liberty to captives,  
freedom to those in prison;  
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.  
'I exult for joy in the Lord,  
my soul rejoices in my God,  
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,  
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,  
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,  
like a bride adorned in her jewels.  
'For as the earth makes fresh things grow,  
as a garden makes seeds spring up,  
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise  
spring up in the sight of the nations.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.****Responsorial Psalm***Luke 1:46-50. 53-54. R/ Isaiah 61:10***R/ My soul rejoices in my God.**

1. My soul glorifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.  
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;  
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.
2. The Almighty works marvels for me.  
Holy his name!  
His mercy is from age to age,  
on those who fear him.
3. He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.  
He protects Israel, his servant,  
remembering his mercy.

**Second Reading***1 Thessalonians 5:16-24*

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.****Gospel Acclamation***Isaiah 61:1 (Luke) 4:18*

Alleluia, Alleluia!

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me.

He has sent me to bring good news to the poor.

Alleluia!

**Gospel***John 1:6-8. 19-28*

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

A man came, sent by God.

His name was John.

He came as a witness,

as a witness to speak for the light,

so that everyone might believe through him.

He was not the light,

only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:

Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

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Responsorial Psalm from *The Psalms: A New Translation* © 1963 The Grail (England) published by HarperCollins.

CHRISTMAS WEEKEND MASS TIMES AT OUR THREE CHURCHES (N.B. Carols will be sung before the Christmas Eve 6.30pm Mass and the Christmas Day 9.30am Mass)		
Saturday 23 December Fourth Sunday of Advent	5.30pm	Mass at St Philip Neri, Dunston
Sunday 24 December Fourth Sunday of Advent	9.30am	Mass at St Mary's, Whickham
Christmas Eve 24 December The Nativity of the Lord	6.30pm	Mass at Immaculate Heart of Mary, Lobley Hill
Monday 25 December Christmas Day The Nativity of the Lord	9.30am	Mass at St Philip Neri, Dunston