



Jesus said, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see: the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and blessed is the one who is not offended by me.'

Cf. Matthew 11:4-6

THE PARISH OF OUR LADY AND ST PHILIP NERI
Immaculate Heart of Mary • Lobley Hill
St Mary • Whickham
St Philip Neri • Dunston
and
THE PARISH OF SACRED HEART, BYERMOOR

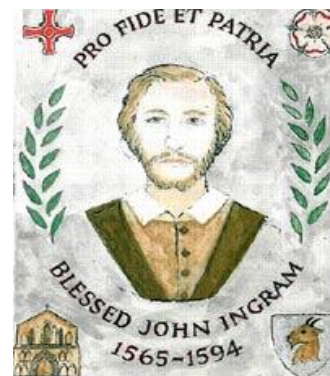
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Parish Website www.theparish.org.uk

Diocesan Website www.diocesehn.org.uk



The John Ingram Partnership
Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

14 December 2025

Third Sunday of Advent

Year A

The Parish Secretary, Theresa Noble, will be available in the Parish Office at Immaculate Heart Presbytery on Tuesday 9.00am - 3.00pm and Friday 9.00am - 1.00pm

She can also be contacted by email olpn.gateshead@diocesehn.org.uk or by telephone 0191 460 4274 on Tuesday and Wednesday 9.00am - 3.00pm and Friday 9.00am - 1.00pm

Postal Address: St Mary's Presbytery, Malvern Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE11 9LL

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS 13 - 21 December 2025

Saturday 13 December

4.30pm	Sacred Heart	Gervase Smith (dec.) [PB]
5.30pm	St Philip Neri	Stokes & Attrill Families (dec.) [SA]
9.00am	St Mary	People of the Parish
10.30am	Immaculate Heart	Sarah Benesch (dec.) [SE]
1.30pm	Sacred Heart	Priest's Intention
9.30am	Immaculate Heart	Frank McCoy (dec.) [DS]
9.30am	St Philip Neri	Priest's Intention (<i>St Philip Neri School attending</i>)
9.30am	St Mary	Prayer Shawl Recipients [PSG]
9.30am	St Mary	Priest's Intention (<i>St Mary's School attending</i>)

Saturday 20 December

4.30pm	Sacred Heart	Victoria Swinburn (dec.) [AS]
5.30pm	St Philip Neri	People of the Parish
9.00am	St Mary	Bernard Hearne (dec.) [CH]
10.30am	Immaculate Heart	John Arkless (dec.) [PA]

Sunday 21 December

Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year A)

Weekday Readings: Advent Week 3

Sacrament of Reconciliation

5.00pm - 5.20pm on Saturday at St Philip Neri, 1.00pm - 1.20pm on Monday at Sacred Heart, 9.00am - 9.20am on Tuesday at Immaculate Heart & Thursday at St Mary's

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

1.00pm - 1.25pm on Monday at Sacred Heart, 9.00am - 9.25am on Tuesday at Immaculate Heart, Wednesday at St Philip Neri & Thursday at St Mary's

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK Kath Airey, Veronica Coleman, Ann Crompton, Teresa Fawcett, Tatiane Lambert, Maria Thi Kien Chiene Le, John Leitch, Bill Martin, Cheryl Anne McDonald, Nora Miller, Margaret Murphy, Astrid Muse (Gower), Joseph Relph.

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 There will be a retiring collection at Masses next weekend 20/21 December to support the work of St Cuthbert's Care (Advent Alms). Here is a message from Nic Gilbert, Chief Executive of St Cuthbert's Care: *As we enter the season of Advent, we pause to reflect and give thanks for the generosity and prayers of our diocesan parishes. For almost 80 years, your support enabled St Cuthbert's Care to offer practical help to those facing the greatest challenges in our communities. As our charity celebrates its 80th anniversary, we are preparing to launch a new initiative - a dedicated service to support women experiencing homelessness, leaving prison or at risk of re-offending. Many of whom have faced trauma, abuse or addiction and some have had few safe spaces in their lives. This new service will provide secure accommodation and trauma-informed support, helping women rebuild their lives, regain independence access employment and move towards their own homes. Funding for this vital work is extremely limited, yet both our research and experience show the need is real. True to our purpose, to enable people to develop to their personal potential, we are stepping in where others may not, offering stability, compassion and practical support to restore hope and make a real difference. We know that not everyone can give financially, but there are other ways to support the launch. The women will need clothing, toiletries and in some cases, the wisdom and encouragement of parishioners willing to share their lived experiences. We also ask that you keep our charity, especially this new service, in your prayers as we prepare to open our doors. If you would like to learn more or get involved, please contact Nicola Milne, Communications and engagement Manager on 0191 242 4809 or email: nicolaj.milne@stcuthbertscare.org.uk. She will be delighted to help. On behalf of everyone at St Cuthbert's Care, I wish you, your family and your parishioners a joyful Christmas and a peaceful New Year.*

MISSION RED BOX THANK YOU AND APPEAL The 2026 Mission Today calendars are now being distributed to all Red Box holders as a thank you for the faithful support of *Missio* and the Mill Hill Missionaries.

Fr Emmanuel Mbeh and Fr Suresh Kocheria wish to thank everyone in the parish for the welcome and generous response to the Red Box appeal last weekend. Twelve parishioners took Red Boxes/Direct Debit as well as £337.11 being received in donations over the weekend. Thank you again to everyone who has given to *Missio*. If you did not get a chance to collect a Red Box or Direct Debit form, please speak to Lilian Gray or contact her on 07717 853685 or liliangray@sky.com. You can also find more information at www.missio.org.uk

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 four churches and include your donation. **Please complete and return your envelopes by Thursday 18 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 or Sacred Heart Presbytery.

THE NORTHERN CROSS December edition is now on sale, price £1.50.

THE NORTHERN CATHOLIC CALENDAR 2026 is now available at the back of each church, price £4.00.

FOOD BANK & REFUGEE PROJECT UPDATE We welcome ALL non perishable produce - even if you can only donate 1 or 2 tins please bring them along to church to help out - monetary donations are also very much appreciated.

IN SHORT SUPPLY: coffee, UHT Milk, dried pasta, tomato purée, tinned custard, fruit, rice pudding, biscuits.

OTHER priority items: pasta sauce, cereal, cooking oil, long grained rice, meat (corned beef, mince beef, pek etc), tinned garden peas, carrots, sweetcorn, potatoes, tuna, meatballs, hot dogs, chopped tomatoes, baked beans, sugar, toilet rolls, washing up liquid, spray cleaner, laundry powder/liquid, toothpaste, antiperspirant, shampoo, feminine hygiene (especially tampons).

Other items we put into the monthly food bags, especially for the refugee project: tinned chickpeas & kidney beans

Every Thursday volunteers are in Immaculate Heart church between 9.30 -10.30 so parishioners can drop donations off here if they wish - please come in to say 'Hello!' and see what we're up to. Any queries contact Katie Wilkinson either via mobile 07837 386760 or email teachkate1@gmail.com

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PREPARATION 2026 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 2026, please contact the Parish Office at Immaculate Heart Presbytery as soon as possible by email or telephone:

e-mail olpn.gateshead@diocesehn.org.uk

tel. 0191 460 4274. Please provide your name, address, telephone number and email address. Thank you.

ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE There will be an Advent Penitential Service with the opportunity for individual Confession at St Peter's Church, Low Fell NE9 5HY on Wednesday 17 December at 7.00pm.

ADVENT COURSE AT ST PETER'S, LOW FELL - ALL WELCOME!

We will meet on the Mondays of Advent (15, 22 December) following 7.00pm Mass (Adoration from 6.15pm) for a period of prayer and discussion on the themes of Sr Gemma Simmond's book 'Donkey Roads and Camel Treks: A Pilgrim's Guide for Advent'. This Bible Reading Fellowship Advent Book for 2025 gives a daily reading from the Lectionary with a meditation and reflection and this will form the basis for our four weekly sessions. If you would like to come along, please buy the book and, for catering purposes, please let St Peter's Parish Office know if you want to attend by Sunday 23 November - Email: south.gateshead@diocesehn.org.uk

A WEEKLY REFLECTION AND DAILY READINGS FOR ADVENT

2025 Advent is a time of preparation and to reflect, and hold onto, the messages of hope, peace, joy and love which God promised to us in the birth of Christ Jesus. Members of our Diocesan Writing Team offer this Advent resource to help guide a daily space for reading of the Scripture, reflection and prayer. In it you will find a reflection based on the theme of each week of Advent and an easy-to-follow reference to the readings for each day. The reflections will be available to view and download on the homepage of the Diocesan website from Friday 28 November www.diocesehn.org.uk

LOVE CHRISTMAS 2025

- **Christmas Hampers** - at the back of each church there will be a food list of special items for the hampers. **Food items must be handed in by the end of this weekend 13/14 December.** Please ensure any perishable food items remain in date post-Christmas. There'll be a box at the back of each church for these donations.
- **Angel Trees** are now up in each of our three churches - each has tags with gender & age of gifts requested by social services, their list included over 600 children, so please take a tag - or maybe two! You don't need to wrap these generous gifts as Santa's little helpers will be busy at work doing this on your behalf during the sessions on Tuesday 16 December (however, your gift donated in a bag with the original tag would be greatly appreciated).
- **Please remember**, if you would prefer someone else to shop on your behalf feel free to donate cash (marking the donation 'Love Christmas').
- All gifts and food donations must be handed in by **Sunday 14 December.**
- Arrangements have been made with Gateshead Social Services department to collect all the donated gift items on the morning of **Wednesday 17 December** from Immaculate Heart Church.

Any queries please contact either Katie Wilkinson via email teachkate1@gmail.com telephone 07837 386760 or Denise Hebron via email denisehebron@yahoo.co.uk telephone 07554 445679.

APPEAL FOR HELPERS TO WRAP PRESENTS Please, please, please come along to the Packing and Wrapping sessions at **Immaculate Heart Church on Tuesday 16 December. There will be two opportunities for you to volunteer - the first session will be after 9.30am Mass at 10.00am then the second session at 6.30pm.**

Everyone really enjoys being involved in this 'nice bit' every year. So don't be shy you will be gladly welcomed with open arms - **you plus your scissors & sellotape if possible!** This year we have a special treat from Mrs Claus - at the morning session all volunteers will begin the session with a cuppa plus some tasty bites - so yet another great reason to sign up! Last year volunteers sorted, wrapped/bagged 310 gifts plus they prepared 20 Christmas Food hampers. Volunteers are essential to the parish being able to achieve this task and your commitment will be greatly appreciated as we have limited time to complete this project. Social Services collection, delivery of presents and hampers have been arranged for Wednesday 17 December! **So please come along and help.**

NEWSLETTER ITEMS Please send any items for next weekend's Newsletter to the Parish Office **by 10.00am on Thursday 18 December.**

GIFT FOR LIFE 100 CLUB DECEMBER DRAW RESULTS

The December draw of the Gift for Life '100 Club' took place last Sunday at St Mary's and the lucky numbers were: First prize £50 - number 37, Second prize £30 - number 14 and Third prize £20 - number 36. Congratulations to the winners. The next draw will take place on Sunday 4 January at Immaculate Heart.

GIFT FOR LIFE FREE 'THANK YOU' RAFFLE - THIS WEEKEND

We are very conscious of the amazing generosity of our parishioners in your ongoing support for our *Gift for Life* causes. So, by way of a little thank you, we are running a free raffle. The 'Gift for Life Thank You Raffle' will take place at each of the 3 churches in our parish this weekend. Make sure you collect your free raffle ticket at the door. The draws will take place at the end of each Mass and prizes will be distributed there and then. Thank you for all your support – and good luck!

SACRED HEART PARISH NEWS

CHRISTMAS WREATHS Starting in Advent this year, Christmas Wreaths will be on display in the church. If you would like one dedicated to your loved ones, please make a donation of £20 or more to the Parish. Please speak to Mary Young for details.

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE Donations for our Christmas Raffle would be greatly appreciated.

Jen's weekly prayer

As we travel through Advent, help us to recall
the many journeys we have taken
which have filled us with awe and wonder.
Not all of these journeys may have taken us far
from home yet many of them will have touched us
by the care, compassion and gentle love of others.
Small gestures, smiles and encouragement
to help us use the many gifts and talents
we have been given or comfort in times of pain.
Just as the shrub plant flowers or tree needs water,
we need sometimes to truly hear what has been said
to us to encourage and accompany us as we struggle
with fear or worry about the path we may take.
Grant that we can accept our gifts and cherish the gifts,
skills and joys of others - they can be our light when we
feel all is darkness, for the smallest of cracks
allow light to glow and new beginnings to take root.

Jen Jones © December 2025

SAFEGUARDING IN THE DIOCESE OF HEXHAM AND

NEWCASTLE The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) and Diocesan policies and procedures at all times. Each of our churches has a Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR) indicated on the Safeguarding posters in each church - Angela Bell (Immaculate Heart), Bernadette Salmon & Joe Wheatley (St Mary's), Denise Hebron (St Philip Neri). Alternatively, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 0191 243 3305 or safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk

First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
 the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;
 it shall blossom abundantly
 and rejoice with joy and singing.
 The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
 the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
 They shall see the glory of the Lord,
 the majesty of our God.
 Strengthen the weak hands,
 and make firm the feeble knees.
 Say to those who have an anxious heart,
 'Be strong; fear not!
 Behold, your God will come with vengeance,
 with the recompense of God.
 He will come and save you.'
 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
 and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
 then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
 and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.
 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
 and come to Sion with singing;
 everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
 they shall obtain gladness and joy,
 and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.**Responsorial Psalm** *146(145):6c-7. 8-9a.9b-10 .R/cf. Isaiah 35:4***R/ Come, Lord, and save us.**

It is the Lord who preserves fidelity for ever,
 who does justice to those who are oppressed.
 It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
 the Lord who sets prisoners free. **R/**

The Lord who opens the eyes of the blind,
 the Lord who raises up those who are bowed down.
 It is the Lord who loves the just,
 the Lord who protects the stranger. **R/**

The Lord upholds the orphan and the widow,
 but thwarts the path of the wicked.
 The Lord will reign for ever,
 your God, O Sion, from age to age. **R/**

Second Reading

James 5:7-10

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord.
 See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth,
 being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late
 rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the
 coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one
 another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged;
 behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of
 suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets
 who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia.
 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
 he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.
 Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 11: 2-11

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'
 And Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.'
 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.
 'What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you."
 'Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture Readings from the *English Standard Version of the Bible, Catholic Edition (ESV-CE)* © 2017 Crossway. Responsorial Psalm from *Abbey Psalms and Canticles* © 2018 USCCB.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES <i>(Carols will be sung 25 - 30 minutes before Masses on Christmas Eve/Day)</i>		
Wednesday 24 December Christmas Eve <i>The Nativity of the Lord</i>	4.30pm 6.00pm	Mass at Sacred Heart, Byermoor Mass at Immaculate Heart of Mary, Lobley Hill
Thursday 25 December Christmas Day <i>The Nativity of the Lord</i>	9.30am	Mass at St Philip Neri, Dunston