

# 1st Sunday of Advent - 30th November 2025

Annfield Plain - St. Teresa, Blackhill - Our Blessed Lady Immaculate, Brooms - Our Blessed Lady & St. Joseph,

Stanley, St. Joseph

# PONTOP

Partnership

Consett - St. Patrick,

Dipton - St. Patrick, Lancheater - All Saints, Moorside - St. Pius X, Shotley Bridge - Our Lady of the Rosary

## The Season of Joyful Hope

As we enter Advent, most people in our society are preparing to celebrate Christmas. Ostensibly at least, this is the anniversary of something truly amazing that happened around two thousand years ago. We Christians believe that God the Son took on human flesh and became man in order to save potentially the whole of mankind from the power of sin and death. But, inasmuch as most people (even non-Christians) know the story of the nativity and are aware of its significance, they're not really looking to the past. What they're mainly going to be celebrating is the love that they share with their families; the gift giving and the feasting; and maybe the hopeful feeling that they get around this time of year. The days will soon start getting longer again. Winter will give way to a new Spring. And, if we can all be joyful, and loving, and generous for at least one day, then maybe we human beings will be able to get our acts together someday and start doing that more regularly.

Practicing Christians will be taking the celebration of the Incarnation more seriously. But even we are not only—or even primarily—looking to the past. Our faith gives us something far greater to look forward to. Yes, Christ came to us two thousand years ago. But, at some point, he has promised to come again. He has already died for our sins, but we are still waiting for the fulness of salvation. His Kingdom of justice, love, and peace is already here in the hearts of true Christians, but it is not yet fully realised in the world at large. The fact that God has already done amazing things for us should give us powerful hope that he can and will keep his promises—that he will open for us a future filled with everlasting joy. Our scripture readings over the next few weekends remind us that what we should really be doing this time of year is preparing ourselves spiritually for the Second Coming. That involves keeping our hearts and minds focussed on God and sharing as much as we can in the divine love that saves us.

***Fr Tom McHale***

*(except Monday)*

01207 - 502320

***Fr John Bagnall***

*(except Wednesday)*

01207 - 502196

***Deacon Chris Callan***

***Deacon Shaun McGee***

***Deacon David Westgarth***

## **General Notices Around the Partnership**

**Partnership - Sacrament of Reconciliation:** St Patrick's, Consett; Saturday after 10am Mass. Our Lady and St Joseph's Brooms on Saturday's before the 5.30pm Vigil Mass 4.45pm-5.15pm.

**Communion Visits:** If anyone is aware of someone who is housebound and who would like to receive communion at home, please contact Fr Tom at St Mary's 01207 502196 or Fr John at St Patrick's 01207 502320 to arrange this.

**Mobile Phones:** Kind Request to please remember to put your mobile phones on silent when you are in church. Ring tones and messaging sounds disturb people who are trying to pray.

**Love Christmas:** This weekend we launch the 2025 Love Christmas campaign. It is across the whole partnership this year and collection envelopes are available in all our churches. With the help of your generosity we aim to make Christmas a little bit better for those across our community who need a helping hand. Last year we distributed "Love Christmas Dinner" bags, Toiletries gift bags for young people living in temporary accommodation, Gift bags for adults with learning needs and lastly, helped the mothers of the children in our local Women's Refuge with something extra for Christmas. Your generosity helped to make a big difference to a lot of people, please be as generous as you can this year.

**Decembeard – for Bowel Cancer UK.** Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> December this year Fr John is going to stop shaving and grow a beard. The reason why? He is asking you to sponsor him to support the charity Bowel Cancer UK. The money raised during Decembeard will help stop people dying of bowel cancer by funding vital services and lifesaving research. Donation envelopes will be available soon in all parishes. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

**Carols by Candlelight at Brooms:** Join us on Sunday, 30th November (the First Sunday of Advent) for a beautiful evening of music and reflection. Carols begin at 3:30 pm (Doors open at 3:00 pm). Everyone is welcome! After the service, enjoy refreshments and browse a selection of handmade Christmas gifts created by St Bede's Youth SVP, with proceeds supporting the Pontop Partnership SVP.

**A festive date for your diary:** The annual Churches Together Carolcade will take place this year on the evening of Wednesday 17th December. Full details in next week's newsletter.

**Partnership Christmas Lunch:** LAST CHANCE Tuesday December 9<sup>th</sup> 12 noon to be held at the Jolly Drovers, Leadgate. £5 deposit per person on booking. 2 Courses £24.95 or 3 Courses £29.95.

**Pilgrimage to Medjugorje:** Flying from Newcastle on Sunday 28th June return Sunday 5th July 2026. Cost £839 sharing, £979 single room. More details on the notice board or ring Margaret on 07944288655.

**Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock:** 25<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> May 2026 Gillingham's Coaches, departing local destinations. 5 days/4 nights (Belfast, Bundoran, Knock and Belfast). DBB. £640 per person sharing a double room. £790 single occupancy. Full day at the Shrine with Mass, guided tour and prayer opportunities. 2 half day visits included: Belfast Titanic Museum and Cong 'Quiet Man' village, Mayo. Optional evening Mass at Clonard Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. Contact: Michael, 07787 726306, Lestrine: 07778 656662.

**St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP):** Is a caring and committed charitable voluntary organisation serving the West Derwentside Partnership area, based at St Mary's, Blackhill. SVP offers both practical and spiritual support to those who may be facing challenges or feeling isolated. If you know of a family or individual who might benefit from a regular visit in their own home, sheltered housing or a care home—whether for a friendly chat, a helping hand, or spiritual companionship. You can email us at: [PresidentC210301@svp.org.uk](mailto:PresidentC210301@svp.org.uk) or leave a message with

your name and contact number on 07377 259724.

St Mary's Convent Ebchester: Christmas Fayre Saturday 6th December at 1pm, Santa, Tombola, Raffle, Festive Food and Treats. St Mary's Convent also has two rooms available for more information telephone 012307 560288

### Around the Diocese

Holy Island Term Time Volunteer Opportunity: Holy Island SVP Vinnie's Camp are looking for volunteers to help in their Kitchen or with caretaking at our centre on Holy Island.

Commitment time would vary from a weekend, to half a week, a full week which includes accommodation. Without more term time volunteers our Summer SVP Vinnies Camps would not be possible and many schools in the North East would not have access to reasonably priced residential holidays for their children. Applications open in December on our website: <https://svp.org.uk/microsite/ozanam-camp> If you are interested or want more information please email [barbart@svp.org.uk](mailto:barbart@svp.org.uk).

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes: Friday 31st July – Friday 7th August 2026 **Celebrating our Centenary Year.** Being the Centenary year since the first Diocesan Pilgrimage led by Bishop Joseph Thorman, we have had increased interest in people wanting to go to Lourdes in 2026. It would help our Tour Operator (Tangney Tours) greatly if you could fill in the pre-registration form on their website if you are contemplating travelling with them. This will assist in helping with travel arrangements and hotels. Please note, this is pre-registration, it does not mean you have booked your place. Please follow the link below.

<https://www.tangney-tours.com/dioces.../diocese-newcastle-2/> or phone 01732 886 666

### St Mary's News

Collections: This Week - Daughters Of Divine Mercy                      Next week – Christmas Flowers

Sanctuary Candle: will burn In Loving Memory of John and Nell McGough and Dms of Smith and McGough Families.

Legion of Mary: will say the Holy Rosary and Legion prayers on Tuesday evenings at 6pm.

300 Club Winners: £20 (56) C Creegan, £10 (88) - F Bell, £10 (171) C Byrne, £10 (95) B Bowman, £10 (220) A Quin. Thank you for your support. New members wanted for 2026.

St Mary's Special Needs Nativity Play: on Friday 12th December at 7.15pm followed by tea/coffee and sweet mince pies in the JFK Centre. All are welcome to come and join us.

Light a Candle on the Christmas Tree: remembering a loved one, cost £2 per name/s. All Names read out on 21st December Sunday Mass. Please see Joan Devanney.

Thursday Welcome Group: on Thursday with lunch and entertainment. Thank you for your support.

Christmas Afternoon Tea: On Monday 1st December in the JFK Centre (St Mary's church hall). Doors open at 12.15pm. Complimentary drink, Bingo/Raffle and entertainment by Brian. Food served 1.15-1.30pm. Tickets £6. Please see Isobel.

Christmas Day: Welcome Thursday will be providing Lunch on Christmas Day, if you know of anyone who might be spending the day on their own please let them know they are welcome to join us. We would be very grateful for any donations towards the cost of the food and providing all guests with a Christmas present. If anyone is interested in helping or would like to book someone in for lunch please contact me on Whatsapp. Brian 07891 511168.

## **St Patrick's News**

Collections: This Week: Catholic Youth

Next week – Christmas Flowers

Children's Liturgy: The Children's Liturgy takes place at St Patrick's on the first Sunday of each month. Please encourage your children to join in as they will enjoy learning and understanding about the Gospel. A special thank you goes to those who support and lead the liturgy.

Knitted Baskets: Knitting patterns and wool are available at the back of St. Patrick's to make Christmas Gift Baskets. Thank you and well done to those who have already made some!

Family Christmas Quiz: December 13th, St Patrick's Hall, 6.00pm start. Come along and show how much you know about Christmas! Mixed teams of all ages. Raffle and prize for the best decorated table, £5 per team

.Sunday Coffee Morning: Sunday 30th November after 9.15am Mass. All welcome in the Church Hall Lounge for Bacon Sandwiches, Tea and Coffee

Christmas Concert Consett Citizens Choir will be holding their annual Christmas Concert in St Patrick's Hall on December 14th at 2.30. It will be followed by mulled wine and festive treats. Entry is free but there will be a retiring collection

## **Brooms - Our Lady and St Joseph's News**

Collections: This week - Catholic Youth

Next week – Christmas Flowers

People's Kitchen: Thank you for your continued donations of coppers and small change which is forwarded to the People's Kitchen in Newcastle. Your donations can be deposited in the named tin at the back of the church.

Sons and Daughters of Leadgate Exhibition. A photographic exhibition of the people of Leadgate will be on show on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November at St. Ives Church, between 10am and 2pm. Come along and see some faces you'll know!

Toddler Group: Brooms School Toddler Group will operate every Wednesday in term time from 9.15am – 10.30am. Refreshments will be provided for a small donation but there will be no charge to attend. All are welcome.

Admissions 2025–2026 at Our Lady and St Joseph Primary School: We are delighted to announce that Our Lady and St Joseph Primary School currently has spaces available across the school, not just in Nursery and Reception. Our school is a lovely, welcoming, and nurturing community, where every child is valued and supported to achieve their best. We are proud of our Good Ofsted rating and our Good and Outstanding Catholic Schools Inspection grading, reflecting our commitment to high standards and strong Catholic ethos. If you are considering a place for your child, we warmly invite you to arrange a visit and experience our school in action. Please contact the school office to book an appointment with Mrs Jarvis, Acting Head of School. Contact: 01207 503979 Email: [info@olsj.bwcet.com](mailto:info@olsj.bwcet.com)

## **St Pius News**

Collections: This Week - Catholic Youth

Next week – Christmas Flowers

Children's Liturgy: Our Children's Liturgy is held every Sunday. If you would like to volunteer to help or lead the Liturgy please see Lisa Hicks.

Exposition on Wednesday: evenings will now commence at 5pm with effect 3rd December.

Date for your diary: Advent Service at St Pius on Sunday 21st December at 3pm.

## **Our Lady of the Rosary News**

Collections: This Week - Daughters Of Divine Mercy

Next week – Christmas Flowers

## **ANNIVERSARIES**

St Mary's: James McGee, Thomas Heslop, Ann Astin, Mary Kavanagh, John (Jacky) Byrne, Patrick Glancy, Eugene McArdle, Agnes Lisle, William Grugan, Michael John Carney, Frantineik (Frank) Zima, John McElhone, Fr. JF Kennedy, Fr. Tony Kenny, Olive McDonald, Michael Kelly, Jacky Batey.

Our Lady of the Rosary: Maureen McDonald, Winnie Williams, Jack McNally, Peter Jopling, Father John, Rose McNally, Jim McKie (jnr), Jim Robinson.

St. Patrick's: Dominic McGurk, Mary Burnage, Mary Theresa Hughes, Joseph Raw, Flora Nimmons, Tommy O'Neill, Mary Donaghy, Alan Foley, Gerard Slavin, Moira Reed, Brian Rogan, James Fail, James Kerr, Ellen Parker, Nancy Collins, John Harpin, Stephen Fenwick, John Haggon, Bill Kennedy, Betty Mitcheson, Jeanne Marie Philips, Frances Ronald Lovett, Margaret McArdle, Maureen Rose, Peter Boyle, Terence Curran.

St Pius: Alfred Bennett, Susan Boyle, Thomas Cooke, Arthur Donaghy, Richard Forbes, Patricia Jarman, Marie Mathews, Gerald McArdle, Ella Willis.

Our Lady & St Joseph's: Mary Wilks, Wilf Herdman, Kathleen Grogan, David R. Fountain, Thomas A. Williamson, Rose Jackson, Kathleen Walker, Maureen Coates, Sr Mary Anthony, Robert Foreman, Jim Dodd, Teresa Tate, Imelda Cullen.

## **THOSE WHO ARE SICK IN OUR PARISHES**

### *We keep in our prayers*

St Mary's: Paul Wass, Ryan McBeath, Kieran Richard Atkinson, Amelia Burns, Ethan White, James Thomas English, Eileen Fannon, Mary Barnes, Arron Armstrong, Maddy Kennedy, Mark Adams, Jack Nugent, Donna Philips, Julianne Kennedy, Eileen Haughey, David Oliver, Jimmy McGuigan, Sarah June Quinn, Thomas Eccles, Philip Robinson, Peter Doherty, Jakob English, Katelyn Howe, Ann Hester, Fiona Bell, Cecelia Moore, David Urwin, Barbara Bennison, Eileen Dunstan, Molly Glancy, Ian Clarke, Simon Quinn, Joseph Parisi, Teresa Easton, John Haney.

Our Lady of the Rosary: James Baker.

St. Patrick's: Eileen Fish, Margaret Heslop, Anna Bradley, Cheryl Reily, Judith Hindmarsh, Andrew Bates, Sienna Jane McNestry, Joan O'Keefe, Joan Wilson, Alan McCullagh, Terry Maguire.

St Pius: Joseph Agnew, Gerry Akers, Marie Atherton, Martin Daly, Rita Daly, Paul Hunt, Danny Morton, Jade Telford, Muriel Steele, Ethan O'Neil.

Our Lady & St Joseph's:

### **Partnership Prayer**

*Risen Christ, from your abundant grace,  
pour out afresh your Holy Spirit upon our Diocese.*

*As we build on the deep foundations of faith  
laid by the countless saints of these Northern lands,  
by Aidan and Cuthbert, Hilda and Bede  
may our Partnerships continue the mission  
of building your Kingdom on the earth:  
to give living witness to your love,  
and to your compassion and hope for our world.*

*We pray in trustful confidence that your power working in us  
can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.*

*Who live and reign forever and ever. Amen'*

### **Prayer for Spiritual Communion**

*My Jesus I believe that you are present in the most Holy Sacrament, I love you  
above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this  
moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I  
embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you, never  
permit me to be separated from you. Amen'*

### **A Prayer for Peace by Pope John Paul II**

*Hear my voice, for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence  
among individuals and nations.*

*Hear my voice, for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer  
when people put their faith in weapons and war.*

*Hear my voice when I beg you to install into the hearts of all human beings  
the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice, and the joy of fellowship.*

*Hear my voice, for I speak for the multitudes in every country  
and in every period of history who do not want war are ready to walk the road  
of peace.*

*Hear my voice and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond  
to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice,  
to need with the sharing of self, to war with peace.*

*O God, hear my voice and grant unto the world Your everlasting peace. Amen'*