

4th Sunday of Advent - 21st December 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, Lanchester - All Saints, Moorside - St. Flus X, Shotley Bridge - Our Lady of the Rosary

Trusting God in the unexpected

As we arrive at the Fourth Sunday of Advent, the season of waiting and preparation draws to a close. The candles on the wreath burn brighter, and our hearts lean forward in anticipation of the birth of Christ. This Sunday, the Gospel shifts our attention to Joseph - a quiet, faithful man whose life is suddenly turned upside down.

Matthew tells us that Joseph, a righteous man, discovers that Mary is with child before they have come to live together. His world must have felt like it was falling apart. Yet even in his confusion and pain, Joseph chooses compassion. He resolves to divorce Mary quietly, sparing her shame. But then, in a dream, an angel speaks: *“Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”*

Joseph’s response is remarkable. He doesn’t argue or delay. He wakes up and does exactly as the angel commands. In doing so, he steps into God’s plan, even though it defies logic and social expectation. His obedience allows the promise of Emmanuel - *God with us* - to be fulfilled.

This Gospel invites us to reflect on our own response to the unexpected. How do we react when life doesn’t go according to plan? When God’s call challenges our assumptions or disrupts our comfort? Joseph shows us that faith is not always about understanding everything - it’s about trusting the One who does.

As Advent draws to a close, we are reminded that God often works through quiet, hidden, and humble ways. The Messiah comes not with fanfare, but through the courage of a young woman and the quiet strength of a just man. In their “yes,” the world is changed.

Let us ask for the grace to be like Joseph - attentive to God’s voice, courageous in the face of uncertainty, and faithful in our response. May we prepare our hearts to welcome Christ not just at Christmas, but in every moment where love, trust, and obedience are needed.

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.

Northern Catholic Calenders: are on sale at the back of church price, ringbinder £4.

Northern Cross Newspapers: are on sale at the back of church Price £1.50.

Love Christmas: The 2025 Love Christmas is coming to an end however, we can still accept donations right up until the 23rd December which will enable us to help out with a little something extra for people who could benefit from kindness. Thank you to everyone who has donated so far this year.

Decembeard – for Bowel Cancer UK. Up to 31st December Fr John is growing 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 are available at the back of the church. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

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: 25thMay 2026-29thMay 2026 5 days/4 nights. DBB. £640 per person sharing double still available. No single vacancies. Information of deposit and payments issued after the New Year. Contact: Michael, 07787726306, Lestrine: 07778656662

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. You can email us at: PresidentC210301@svp.org.uk or leave a message with your name and contact number on 07377 259724.

Friends of the Holy Land: This year more than ever, the small Christian Community in the Holy Land needs the emergency assistance provided by the Friends of the Holy Land (FHL) to survive a period of increasing practical and emotional hardship. This emergency assistance focuses on providing aid and essential medication and help with everyday essentials such as water and energy poverty. A collection will be taken at all Christmas masses and the proceeds sent immediately to FHL for relief as soon as possible.

Friday Fellas Men's Group. The next meeting of the Friday Fellas Men's Group will be on 30th January 2026, 6.30pm in the lounge of St. Patrick's Hall, Consett.

Around the Diocese

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. 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

Administrator - YMT: Supporting the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and our small, dedicated team, we are looking for an Administrator to cover a period of Maternity Leave.

Responsibilities include: Providing efficient administrative and operational support to the YMT team, Managing correspondence, records, and calendar, Coordinating bookings, logistics, projects and event administration, Handling financial tasks including invoicing, payment tracking, and reporting. Please note this role is subject to an Enhanced DBS check and YMT cannot accept CVs. You must complete our Application Form, available as part of the Applicant Pack. If you are interested, please get in touch to request an Applicant Pack by emailing Annie Leaver, Head of Human Resources at annie.leaver@diocesehn.org.uk. The closing date for applications is Sunday 4th January 2026.

St Mary's News

Collections: This Week – Advent Alms

Next Week - Friends of the Holy Land

Sanctuary Candle: will burn 'In Loving Memory of Abigail Devanney'

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

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.

300 Club Big Draw Winners: £200 – D McMahan (271), £100 – B Stobbs (250), £50 – J Healey (59), Thank you for your support.

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.

Thank you: to everyone who attended the 'Afternoon Tea' in the JFK Centre. A total of £75 was raised for 'Delta North'.

St Patrick's News

Collections: This Week: Advent Alms

Next week – Friends of the Holy Land

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.

Poinsettias for Christmas: If you would like to donate a Poinsettia plant in memory of someone you loved, to decorate Our Lady's Altar for Christmas, then please leave your plant near OLA between Saturday 20th and before Mass on Tuesday 23rd December. Thank you.

Knitted Nativity Baskets: The Knitted baskets complete with Baby Jesus are available at the back of church. Please only take what you need as there are limited quantities. Thank you to everyone who has knitted the baskets.

Recycle for Good Causes: There is a box at the back of the church with information on what can be contributed. There was £63.90 raised for Cafod in the last sack sent off.

Brooms - Our Lady and St Joseph's News

Collections: This week - Advent Alms

Next week – Friends of the Holy Land

Collections: The collection for Youth Ministry realised £232, thank you for your generosity.

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 church. A further £150 has been sent to The People's Kitchen, this year a total of £1,500 has been donated, thank you so much for your continued generosity.

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.

St. Ives Mass: The next monthly Mass at St. Ives Church in Leadgate will be 10am on Thursday 22nd January. All are welcome.

St Pius News

Collections: This Week - Advent Alms

Next week – Friends of the Holy Land

Christmas Daily Opening: St Pius Church will be open over Christmas to allow for peace and reflection. Monday 5pm-7pm, (Rosary Hour at 6pm), Tuesday - Saturday 4pm - 5pm. Christmas Eve opens from 3pm for Nine Lessons and Carols BBC Radio 3.

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.

Holy Rosary hour: will be held on Monday 22nd December at 6.00pm

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

Blue Christmas Candles in Memory of a Loved One. Seven-day blue candles will be on sale at St. Pius Church for £5 each. They are to be lit and labelled in memory of your chosen loved one and remain alight throughout Christmas. The candles will be lit at the St. Pius Advent Carol Service on Sunday 21st December at 3pm.

Exposition on Wednesday: Commences at 5pm until further notice.

Our Lady of the Rosary News

Collections: This Week - Advent Alms

Next week – Friends of the Holy Land

CHRISTMAS MASSES

CHRISTMAS EVE – 24TH DECEMBER

ST. PATRICK'S CONSETT – 5.30PM

ST. MARY'S BLACKHILL – 5.30PM

BROOMS LEADGATE – 8.00PM

ST. PIUS MOORSIDE – 8.00PM

ST. MARY'S BLACKHILL – 12 MIDNIGHT

CHRISTMAS DAY – 25TH DECEMBER

ST. PATRICK'S CONSETT – 9.30AM

SHOTLEY BRIDGE OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY – 9.30AM

FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN (BOXING DAY) PARTNERSHIP MASS

ST. PATRICK'S CONSETT – 12 NOON

Please Note: Masses are subject to change

ANNIVERSARIES

St Mary's: Mary McKenzie, John Joseph McGurk, Elizabeth Murphy, Arthur John Finley, Mary Lydon, David Alderson, Maureen Eva Lenihan, Teresa Daly, Ken Gibson, Jim Robinson, Karen Cassidy, (Baby) Joan Grugan, James Anthony Agnew, Ivon Lyon, Francis Quinn, Mary Young, Charles Johnson, Margaret Jane Jordan, Cecilia Campbell, Agnes McCourt, Dennis Morris, Theresa Margaret Ayton, Joan Allison, Teresa Green, Christina Cartmell, Mary Adams, George Thompson, Cecilia Doran, Evelyn Mulholland, Helen Armstrong, Hugh Toner, Mary Cecilia Reddington, Margaret Featherstone, Paul Andrew Brown.

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: Molly Williamson, Catherine Boyle, James Brown, Robbie Vallely, Cathy Lumb, Kathleen Page, John Rogan, David Cameron, Finbarr Taylor, Rose Jackson, Catherine McDonald, Teresa Rogan, Edward Patrick Murray, Doreen Donaghy, Maureen McCrory, Freda McNicholas, Terence O' Rourke, Eric Cheeseman, Laura McCann, Michael Shaw, Peter Crinnion, Michelle Johnson, Veronica Robinson, Sarah (Sadie) Jackson, Veronica Elizabeth Renwick, Edna Halliday, Austin McDonald, Jack McNally

St Pius: Jack Atherton, Martin Carney, Molly Carter, Thomas Creegan, Harry Graham, Pat Hockaday, Joan McGee, Jessie Milner, Michael Mohan, Anne Orr, Jean Wray.

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, Kathleen Bowman, Teresa Kelly, Ronan Lawson (Aged 7).

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.

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'