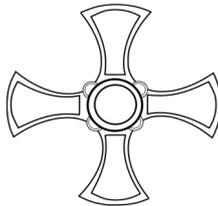


**Saint Bede's
Catholic Church**
Catholic Row
BEDLINGTON
NE22 6HS



**Saint Robert of Newminster
Catholic Church**
Oldgate
MORPETH
NE61 1QF

PARISHES OF THE BRINKBURN PARTNERSHIP, NORTHUMBERLAND

Parish Priest: **Father Peter J Stott**

St Robert's Presbytery, Collingwood House, Oldgate, Morpeth, NE61 1QF
Tel 01670 513410 | Email morpeth.strobertnewminster@rcdhn.org.uk | peterjstott@aol.com

Parish Deacon: **Reverend Stephen Boulter**

St Bede's Presbytery, Catholic Row, Bedlington, NE22 6HS
Tel 01670 823258 | Email bedlington.stbede@rcdhn.org.uk

www.strobertsmorpeth.com | www.stbedesbedlington.co.uk | Northumberland Listening Service 07732 980740

Sunday 20th December 2020 — Fourth Sunday of Advent B

How many of us leap out of bed in the morning fired with the enthusiasm of knowing we have a very special job to do? Or how many of us wake up hitting the 'snooze button' not relishing our day's work one little bit? Some of us will undoubtedly fall into the second category, but the truth is that there is no need to live routinely hum drum and unfulfilled lives. We are told that God has a very particular job for each of us to do; all we have to do is answer the call.

Today we hear how the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and announced her very special calling ... to be the Mother of Jesus. From that moment on, Mary's life would never be the same again. From that moment on the normal life she had planned with Joseph was to be turned upside down. She was about to embark on a life of great excitement, great uncertainty, challenges, joys and sorrows, but above all, great fulfilment. Answering God's call could never be boring.

We might not get angels knocking on the door, but God calls us each as surely as he called Mary. We might not think we have what it takes to step up to the mark, but the only qualifications God asks are a willingness to make ourselves available, commitment and trust. Mary demonstrates these qualifications when she answers very readily, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." How will we respond this week to what the Lord Himself is asking of each one of us?



NEWSLETTERS AND MISALLETTES: If you are holding this Newsletter, or a Mass Sheet, as a paper copy in Church on Sunday, please remember that you **MUST** take it away with you. COVID-19 guidelines state that because you have handled it, you cannot just put it back on the table at the back of Church. Its handy to have a Newsletter at home and good to reflect on today's readings in the Misalette! If you do not wish to keep it, please leave it in your bench and it will be immediately destroyed by those who will tidy and clean the Church after Mass.



During Advent and Christmastime, please pray for: Openness to the Word of God; Migrants and Refugees; and Expectant Mothers. Please pray for family members, parishioners, those we know who are unwell; for those in hospital, recovering from or awaiting surgery and for all suffering from COVID-19. We pray for all who have died recently, including **Mary (Noel) Mitford** (Morpeth) whose Cremation will take place at Blyth Crematorium on Tuesday followed by a Funeral Service at St Robert's Church at 11am; for **Mary Roll** (Bedlington) whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated at St Bede's Church on Wednesday 30th December; for all who have died recently and those whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Advent Alms

The "Advent Alms" collection will be open until Thursday, and all donations will go towards the work of 'St Cuthbert's Care' in the diocese. Envelopes for Advent Alms can be dropped off throughout Advent.



Collections, Standing Orders and BACS Payments

You can drop your Offertory Envelopes through the Presbytery letterbox or you can make an online BACS donation or set up a Standing Order for a regular payment. Also many thanks to those who continue their regular Standing Orders. It is very much appreciated. Recent collections from November - 12th December at St Robert's came to **£1,275.23** If you wish to set up a Standing Order, copies of the Mandates are available on our websites or send an email in to the office and we will send a mandate back to you. Alternatively, it is possible for you to make a donation by BACS, directly from your own bank account; if so please use the bank details underneath. If you have set up a new Standing Order in the last few months, can you please inform the Parish Office so we can identify your payment on the Bank Statement. If you make or have made an online BACS payment, it would be helpful to let the Parish Office know so that we do not confuse it with a Standing Order. If you are setting up a new Standing Order and pay tax, please remember to request from us a copy of the **Gift Aid form** that enable us to reclaim 25% extra from the Inland Revenue from your donation.



Morpeth

Sort Code 40-34-18
Name of Account "DHN Morpeth St Robert of Newminster"
Account Number 32010755



Bedlington

Sort Code 40-34-18
Name of Account "DHN Bedlington St Bede"
Account Number 81163620

Sea Sunday

Sunday 20th December is the transferred celebration of Sea Sunday. If you still have collection envelopes for the Apostleship of the Sea, please return as soon as possible or make a new donation this week toward their work, using envelopes available in Church.



Silent Nights in Bethlehem - Friends of the Holy Land Appeal

Christmas 2020: the hotels are empty. The streets are silent. There are usually over a million pilgrims and tourists in the Holy Land at this time of year. But coronavirus restrictions have completely shut down the Holy Land's tourist industry. No Christmas tourism means no income for 80% of the people in Bethlehem. There is no Furlough Scheme in the West Bank and many people have been left with no job, no income. You can support a Holy Land family through the crisis this Christmas with a gift of £20, £50, £100, or whatever you can afford. Until the pilgrims and tourists return, it may be the only lifeline they get. Thank you so much. For more information about us, please visit: www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/



Coming to Mass - You must book your place

Times of Mass are on the back page. There is a Mass every day either at St Bede's or at St Robert's Churches. While there is still no obligation to attend Mass, if you are able, please consider coming back to Mass; it would be good to see you. It is safe in Church. We have done a great job so far since reopening on making sure that our churches are very safe public spaces and we will continue this.

To book your place at Mass at St Bede's Church

Please call St Bede's Presbytery ☎ 01670 823 258
any evening from 6.30pm—8.30pm

To book your place at Mass at St Robert's Church

Please call St Robert's Presbytery ☎ 01670 513 410
Monday - Friday, 9am - 6pm

If you have already booked a place, but then find that you are unable to attend, please cancel your booking as soon as possible.

Important notes about coming to Mass

- Church will open 15 minutes before Mass begins.
- Wear a face mask; sanitize your hands on entry at the Church; check your name and contact number with the stewards; scan the QR code on the NHS Contact Tracing APP; please wait for one of our stewards to lead you to your seat, please do not go on your own; you must sit in the place shown to you by the stewards; you are unable to choose your own seat, nor should you move to another seat.
- Please remain in the seat you have been shown to ... please don't "shuffle" along the bench, as you could 'contaminate' the whole bench by your action!
- Please do not cross through other benches, so that we can avoid cross contamination. Use the aisles to come forward. Do not touch any benches, or pew ends, other than the one you are sitting in, to avoid any possibility of cross contamination of the virus.
- Holy Communion is distributed at the end of Mass after the final blessing. Stewards will let you know when to move from your bench; Holy Communion is to be received in the Hand only to avoid any possible touching of the tongue and possible cross-contamination; stretch out your hands as far as possible to maintain a social distance with the priest; Holy Communion is distributed in silence; after receiving Holy Communion, you are asked to leave Church; please do not return to your bench.
- Remember to follow the Social Distancing rules inside and outside Church. You should only be in close contact with those you live with or those in your "bubble".
- Do not lean in to one another to talk to fellow parishioners, nor attempt to shake hands or touch others. Keep a safe distance between you and any other person you do not live with.
- You are asked not to congregate immediately outside of the Church doors, so that everyone has the opportunity to walk out of church in a socially distanced manner. Wear your face coverings until such time that you are not in the vicinity of the church buildings.
- Please remember that if you are feeling unwell or have symptoms of coronavirus, you must not to come to Church.
- If you need assistance, you should bring someone from your own household or bubble to assist you.

Masses for Christmas

Our Christmas Mass Times are on the back page of this newsletter. As we know places are very limited because of coronavirus restrictions therefore you will need to book to attend. At the time of writing there limited places available at all Masses, and so we ask you to please ring the Parish telephone number to check availability.

Thank You to all Stewards

Very many thanks to all our parishioners who have acted as stewards and cleaners during the coronavirus pandemic and who have enabled our churches to stay open and to be COVID safe places. Without our volunteer parishioners we are unable to open our churches, so we all owe them a huge message of thanks. Many people have said that they feel safe in our churches and a lot of that is down to our stewards, who also clean the church thoroughly after every Mass or Service. Sadly it looks as if we will need their help for a few more months yet to come.

Message from Bishop Robert Byrne

"As we approach Christmas, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your hard work for your parish and the diocese in this time of pandemic. To those who have helped to keep our churches open for Mass and those who have reached out to the less fortunate I want to say a big thank you. It is by our faith and unity that we can be a sign to the world of the love Christ showed us in becoming one of us in the holy season. I would like to wish you and your family a happy and peaceful Christmas and a blessed New Year".

Bishop Robert Byrne

Feast of the Epiphany



The Feast of the Epiphany will be celebrated on Wednesday 6th January. Although normally a Holyday of Obligation, there is still no obligation attached to these Masses and to all Sunday and Holyday Masses at the moment, but there will be Mass at 10am at St Bede's and 12.30pm Mass at St Robert's under the current restrictions on that day.

Confessions

There are no Confessions this week. We will resume the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the New Year on Saturday 2nd January at the normal Confession times ...



- St Robert's Church: Saturday, 2nd January, 11am - 12 noon
- St Bede's Church: Saturday 2nd January, 5pm- 5.20pm

SVP Donations



The SVP would like to thank all who have very kindly made donations to the SVP. Since March this is the only income we have received. If any other people are able and would like to make a donation, please put it in an envelope marked for SVP, and post it through the Presbytery letter box. Thankyou.

IMPORTANT NOTE ... Volunteers Needed

Fr Peter is seeking help at St Bede's Parish with two things -

1. The Parish Accounts ... someone who can prepare a monthly Report for the Parish Finance Committee and an Annual Report for the Diocesan Finance Office.
2. The Gift Aid Scheme. We need someone who would be willing to take on the preparing of the Parish Collection Envelopes and Boxes; the auditing of all donations that are received through the Gift Aid Scheme and of liaising with the Diocesan Gift Aid Office on these matters and preparing reports.

These roles are needed fairly urgently, so if anyone can help, please let Fr Peter know as soon as possible, or have a word, if vaguely interested to find out what is involved!!

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land 2021

We now have a revised plan for a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, travelling on 12th October 2021 and returning on 22nd October. As the Manchester flights with El Al are no longer available, and rather than coach travel to Heathrow, we will now have flights from Newcastle via Heathrow to Tel Aviv with British Airways; staying in Bethlehem, Tiberias and in Jerusalem. The revised price to account for the flights with BA is now £1827 per person, not including Insurance and not including any Single Supplement. Those who have received information from Tangney Tours are asked to confirm as soon as possible. **There are still places available if anyone is interested in travelling on this pilgrimage**



St Robert's Church Organ Repairs

Repairs to the Church Organ at St Robert's Church are due to begin on 4th January 2021. It will be dismantled and the main parts taken away for cleaning and refurbishment. This work will affect the times of weekday Mass at St Robert's Church. We will announce later the actual changes to Mass. The contractors will be on site for one week, away for one week and then return to rebuild the organ and then put everything together the following week and make sure it plays correctly.

Missio Red Boxes - St Bede's

Many thanks to Red Mission Box holders who have been able to hand in their boxes to Church. Your emptied boxes are now available to collect from the narthex at St Bede's Church. Please continue to bring boxes to Church until we are allowed to resume normal collections! In the meantime, thank you and stay safe.



Newsletter by Email

If you would like to go onto our mailing list for the Newsletter please send your email address to Fr Peter at St Robert's and you will be added and it will be emailed each weekend. A limited number of paper copies are available in both churches, which can be picked up if you come to church.



Mass Intentions



We have a very long delay at St Robert's Parish for Mass Intentions, with dates now only available for March, as January and February are full. We ask for your patience. At St Bede's, please hand in Mass Intentions as normal, but please note that they are being sorted from St Robert's through the Parish Office there, for the time being. This should not make any difference to the way Masses are offered at St Bede's Church.

The Wednesday Word

The Wednesday Word website contains reflections on the forthcoming Sunday readings for both adults and children and can be accessed at wednesdayword.org Using this website can be a good way to prepare for Sunday Mass and reflect on the readings.



Marys Meals - "Double the Love"

Marys Meals is delighted to announce that the UK Government has pledged to double any donation made to Mary's Meals before 31st January 2021, up to £2m. So if you make a donation anytime before the end of January, your donation will be doubled. You can read more about this on Marys Meals' website www.marysmeals.org.uk/ doublethelove #UKAidMatch



An Act of Spiritual Communion

If you are unable to receive Holy Communion at the moment this prayer for an Act of Spiritual Communion may be helpful.

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.
(Saint Alphonsus Liguori)

The Northern Catholic Calendar

Copies of The Northern Catholic Calendar are now available. This is the handbook for our diocese and lists all churches, parishes, priests, religious houses and associations in the diocese. If you wish to buy a copy they are £3 each and can be collected at the Parish Office at St Robert's on Tuesday and Thursday mornings / at St Bede's after Mass [Please try to have the correct payment of £3]

Northumberland Listening Service

The Northumberland Listening Service has been running for several years, set up by the local catholic parishes in Northumberland, and has helped many people during that time. If there is something troubling you, if you feel affected by the difficulties around us with coronavirus, or trying to "get back to normal" or if there is any other issue troubling you that you need to talk to someone about, the number is "Northumberland Listening Service" 07732 980740.

Digital Copies of the Catholic Newspapers

The Universe and The Catholic Herald are offered special deals for those who might want to take out a subscription to their digital online version of these Catholic newspapers. 'The Catholic Herald' can be contacted on subscriptions@catholicherald.co.uk or contact **Rebecca Everitt**, rebecca@catholicherald.co.uk. 'The Universe' is offering a FREE trial subscription between now and the new year. To take up their free offer just go to thecatholicuniverse.com/subscription-trial



Masses and Intentions this week

	St Robert of Newminster Church Morpeth	St Bede's Church Bedlington
Saturday 19th December <i>Weekday of Advent</i>	10.00am Mass: Leil Sheiles 11.00am - 12noon: Confessions	4pm - 5pm: Confessions 5.30pm Vigil: Arkle & McAlroy Families
Sunday 20th December Fourth Sunday Advent B	9.00am Mass: Dorothy Marr 11.00am Mass: People of the Parish	
Monday 21st December <i>Weekday of Advent</i>		10.00am Mass: Francis Reid McAlroy
Tuesday 22nd December <i>Weekday of Advent</i>	10.00am Mass: John MacDonald 11.00am Funeral Service: Noel Mitford	
Wednesday 23rd December <i>Weekday of Advent</i>		10.00am Mass: John Hays
Thursday 24th December <i>Weekday of Advent</i>	10.00am Mass: Jacob Conroy	
★★★★ ★★★★ <b style="color: green;">CHRISTMAS MASSES ★★★★ ★★★★		
Thursday 24th December Nativity of the Lord Vigil	8.00pm Vigil: People of the Parish	4.30pm Vigil: Dcd Boulter & King Fams 6.00pm Vigil: People of the Parish
Friday 25th December Nativity of the Lord	9.30am Mass: Private Intention 11.00am Mass: Private Intention	
Saturday 26th December <i>St Stephen</i>	10.00am Mass: Jerome & Sylvia Thompson	5.30pm Vigil: Tony Robinson
Sunday 27th December The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	9.00am Mass: People of the Parish 11.00am Mass: Molly McKee	



The Holy Father Pope Francis' Intentions for December 2020
For a Life of Prayer: We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.



Diocesan Refugee Project

The Refugee Project which has just been making financial donations to refugees since March, is finally re-opening. It will now be sited at the SVP headquarters at Blackfriars, Newcastle. Donations of food would be gratefully accepted, as well as toiletries. There have been some changes in the food requested. Please donate **fish, tinned tomatoes, sugar, rice, biscuits, tinned chickpeas. Please DO NOT donate tins of meat or baked beans.** As we are unable to store goods in Church at the moment, we have a temporary measure ... delivering the food to the home of Donald Marr, who is the parish representative for the project. Donald's address is 3 Cottingvale in Morpeth (*at the top of Cottingwood Lane*). If you are able to make donations of any of the above items, please phone Donald on ' 01670 505573, before delivery, to arrange a time to drop off items. Thankyou.

Supporting Asylum Seekers in our local community

Asylum Seekers in the Ashington area are supported through the charity 'Northumberland County of Sanctuary'. At this time of year they particularly need shoes for the children but cannot afford to buy them. County of Sanctuary tries to help people in as many ways as possible - be it language learning, bikes to be able to get around cheaply and children's shoes so that they are able to go to school and access good education. Donations can be made to their bank account: Account Name "Northumberland County of Sanctuary", Account No. 77748368, Sort Code: 30-65-22. Their Charity No is 1185663hb. Alternatively cheques can be sent to the treasurer: Peter Edge, 2 Hoberlaw Farm Cottages, Rugley Rd, Alnwick, NE66 2AQ. Please Contact Maura (☎ 01670 516452) or Gerry (☎ 01670 517829) for more information. Thank you for any support you can give.

Help protect babies with cleft lip, cleft palate and club foot

Sadly abortion is currently available in the UK, right up to birth, for babies with cleft lip, cleft palate and club foot. All of these conditions can be corrected. A cross-party group of MPs from the three largest parties in the UK Parliament have come together to bring forward the Abortion (Cleft lip, cleft palate and club foot) Bill. The Bill will change the law to clarify that cleft palate, cleft lip, and club foot are not grounds for abortion in the UK. Can you help with getting your MP to support the Bill? Please visit www.standupandsmile.org.uk to email your MP asking them to support the Bill. It only takes 30 seconds. This Bill will be discussed again at the beginning of March 2021 in Parliament.

Ask your MP to oppose introducing assisted suicide

The assisted suicide lobby have launched a large campaign to put pressure on the Government to reconsider the legalisation of assisted suicide. It is vital that it is clear to the Government that the public want them to continue to hold strong against this pressure from assisted suicide campaigners and reject their demands. Right To Life UK have set up an easy to use tool which will enable you to email your MP asking them to make it clear to the Government that it should not give into demands from the assisted suicide lobby to reconsider the legalisation of assisted suicide. It only takes 30 seconds to email your MP by visiting the link below: <https://righttolife.org.uk/StopAssistedSuicide>

Morpeth Churches Together

The Clergy and Ministers of the church communities in Morpeth have put together a Christmas Message which can be accessed on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/p-Atop6h8UM> or check out the Parish Facebook page where it can also be accessed.