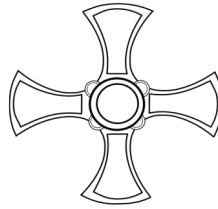


**Saint Bede's
Catholic Church**
Catholic Row
BEDLINGTON
NE22 6HS



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

Parishes of the St Benet Biscop Partnership, Northumberland

Parish Priest: Reverend Father Peter J Stott

St Robert's Presbytery, Collingwood House, Oldgate, Morpeth, NE61 1QF

☎ 01670 513 410 | ✉ strobertynewminster.morpeth@diocesehn.org.uk | ✉ peter.stott@diocesehn.org.uk

St Bede's Church and Presbytery, Catholic Row, Bedlington, NE22 6HS

☎ 01670 823 258 | ✉ stbede.bedlington@diocesehn.org.uk

Deacon: Reverend Stephen Boulter | ✉ stephen.boulter@diocesehn.org.uk

Parish Secretary: Mary Carter

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday at St Robert's, 9.30am—3.30pm | Wednesday at St Bede's, 9am – 5.30pm

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

Fourth Sunday of Advent – Sunday 22nd December 2024

It's easy for us to take promises with a pinch of salt. Whilst growing up, we've learned that promises are easily made and easily forgotten. We make promises of our own with varying degrees of commitment. In short, promises are not always made to be kept, and our faith in a promise is seriously undermined. We don't always believe in a promise.

Does a promise made to us by God carry any more weight? Well yes of course! If we were truly convinced that God was making us a promise then it probably would. There's a saying that goes, "We question all our beliefs, except for the ones we really believe, and those we never think to question." It seems that belief is key in getting excited about a promise. Mary obviously had no doubts; this is illustrated in her promptness to act on his commands. We might not confess to doubts, but why then do we hedge our bets. Why do we squash God into a small corner of our busy lives and get on with other things?

Mary is a perfect role model for us all. She believed in God's promise. She acted on God's commands. She didn't push God into a small corner of her life God was her life. "Blessed is she," writes Luke in today's gospel, "who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled."

Today's gospel is an invitation for us to take God's promises to heart, to make them real in our minds, and act on them.



Please take this Newsletter home with you, so that you know what's happening in your parish this week



We are invited to pray for the following intentions: Openness to the Word of God, Migrants and Refugees and Expectant Mothers. Please pray for those we know who are unwell, as well as the many who have no one to pray for them; for those in hospital and for all undergoing treatment for serious illnesses. We pray for all who have died recently, including **Father Kevin Cummins** whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated at 10am on Friday 3rd January at St Oswald's Church, Wrekenton; for **Leonard Davidson** [Bedlington]; for **Pat Fanning** [Morpeth, (Carmel Copeland's mum)] who died on Monday and whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated at 12noon on Monday 13th January at St Robert of Newminster Church; and for all whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Offertory Collections: 14th / 15th December
St Bede's Church: **£149.22** / St Robert's Church: **£568.26**

Advent Alms for St Cuthbert's Care

Today is the last Sunday for our Advent Alms. All Advent Alms goes towards the work of St Cuthbert's Care and is spent throughout the diocese: they run the Alan Shearer Activity Centre, which has provided over 1600 hot meals to children and adults living with disabilities and their families. These meals have been a small but welcome support for many during these challenging times. In addition, they have also been able to support community projects by distributing sleeping bags and essentials to those without a safe place to call home. All funds raised this Advent will help us expand our community services, reaching even more people who need care, companionship and support. A basket will be available this morning for the work of St Cuthbert's Care.



Tea and Coffee After Mass

Tea and Coffee is available on a Saturday evening after Mass at St Bede's Church Hall and after the 9am Sunday Mass in St Robert's Church Hall.



Mary's Meals Saturday Evening Donations

At the Saturday evening tea and coffee, we are now collecting for the next few months for 'Marys Meals' and the great work they do providing meals for over 2,400,000 children in schools in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, some of the poorest parts of our world. Many thanks to all involved.



Mary's Meals: Christmas Trees of Hope and Double the Love

If you make a donation to Mary's Meals Christmas Trees of Hope, and pay for a decoration on their online tree, your donation will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.1million, meaning that Mary's Meals can reach even more hungry children with life-changing school meals. Some generous supporters have also agreed to increase the donations received. So for every donation that Mary's Meals receive, up to £1.1m it will be doubled by these generous benefactors, so they should raise at least £2.2m. Their website with all details is www.marysmeals.org.uk



Enrolment into the Guild of St Stephen

Next weekend we will celebrate the enrolment of Altar Servers in the Guild of St Stephen. We are very grateful to all our young people who serve at the Vigil Mass and encourage other young people to come forward and to "join the team" of Altar Servers.



Northern Catholic Calendar

The 2025 edition of The Northern Catholic Calendar is available now at the back of Church. **The price is £3.50 per copy.** This book contains all the information about the diocese, churches, schools, times of Mass and Confessions, contact numbers, and societies and associations in the diocese.

Newsletter Via Email

We now have 58 people receiving this Newsletter via email each week. If you too wish to receive the Newsletter via email, please send an email to the Parish Email address and we will add you to the mailing list.

Christmas Masses

Tuesday 24th December at St Bede's Church Bedlington

- 5.30pm Christmas Carols
- 6.00pm Christmas Vigil Mass (Midnight Readings)

Wednesday 25th December at St Robert's Church, Morpeth

- 9.00am Christmas Morning Mass (Dawn Mass)
- 11.00am Christmas Morning Mass (Morning Mass)

Volunteers for Christmas Masses

There is a list at the back of St Robert's Church for volunteers for Reading and for Ministers of Holy Communion for the Christmas Day Masses. Would volunteers available please sign to fill the gaps. At St Bede's Church we will also need a couple of readers and a couple of Ministers of Holy Communion; please sign the list on the notice board.

Christmas Crib Collection for Friends of the Holy Land

The Christmas Crib collection will go to the Friends of the Holy Land once again this Christmas. If you wish to make a donation, please place in the back near the Crib. (For other private donations via BACS transfers, the Charity's bank details are as follows: Name: Friends of the Holy Land Account: 24591211 Sort Code: 60-05-41. Friends of the Holy Land is well-placed as a registered charity in the Holy Land to meet families' urgent needs in the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem and Israel as the present terrible events unfold. They have been able to continue their projects in the West Bank, Jordan and Israel through their office on the ground and working in partnership with other local Christian organisations despite the tight lockdowns now in place. We don't know now how extreme the future challenges for Christians in the Holy Land may be, but we stand ready locally to do whatever we can with your help.



FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND
GIVING HOPE TO VULNERABLE CHRISTIANS

Thanks

Many thanks from Fr Peter to all who have sent him cards, messages for Christmas and the New Year or even gifts, in recent days. Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank You.

"Feed a Friend for a Fiver"

The local community, parents and grandparents, who attended St Bede's School Christmas Service in St Bede's Church on Monday evening, raised a super **£465.00** for the Peoples Kitchen Appeal for Christmas. This was forwarded to them on Wednesday after Mass. Many thanks to everyone who contributed. This will surely make a difference to the work of the Peoples Kitchen over the Christmas period. Thank You.



Many thanks also to those from both St Bede's Parish and St Robert's who handed in a "Fiver" for this appeal. You handed in £250, which should provide 50 meals for those who seek a hot meal over the Christmas period.

Advert for the Role of St Bede's Headteacher

The Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust have released an advert for the vacant post of Headteacher at St Bede's Primary School. Full details of the advert can be found on the VACANCIES section of the Bishop Bewick Trust website: www.bishopbewickcet.org and also on the School website - www.st-bedes.northumberland.sch.uk/about-us/vacancies The Closing Date for Applications is Friday 10th January 2025. Interviews are to be held on Tuesday 28th January 2025 and the post is due to begin in April 2025. If you know someone who may be interested in the post of Headteacher at St Bede's Primary School, please tell them about this vacancy. The post of Deputy Headteacher will be advertised at a later date.



ST BEDES
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Weekday Adoration and Mass

We have Adoration in both St Bede's and St Robert's Churches most days at 9.25am. *Are you free to come along, especially as we celebrate this great event of the Saviour's Birth?* Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament gives us some quiet time in the presence of Our Lord. The Mass is the source and the summit of everything we do. Please, if free, try and come along. The benefits will be worth it.





Baptism

To get your child Baptised, one parent must be a Catholic and you should be living in the parish. If you do not live within our parish you will be asked to speak to your own parish priest. The next Baptism Preparation Meeting will be held on January 16th at 7pm in Morpeth. We ask parents to contact Fr Peter at St Robert's or Deacon Stephen at St Bede's so we can arrange to meet and record parent/baby/godparent details BEFORE the meeting. Please do not just turn up for the meeting, without speaking to us beforehand. Many thanks to our Baptism catechists who have led the Baptism meetings throughout this year. We couldn't do it without your assistance, so many thanks.

St Robert's SVP

The next meeting of St Robert's Conference of the Society of St Vincent de Paul will be held on Wednesday 8th January 2025 at 7.30pm in the Upper Meeting Room of the Church Hall. Anyone who may be interested in joining the SVP is welcome to attend. This month the SVP are particularly looking for: sewing machines, suitcases and household goods such as cushions, table lamps, pans and utensils. Thank you for your continued support for these appeals. If there is anyone who needs or would like a visit or help from the SVP please let us know by phoning Gerry or Eileen Harber on ☎ 517829.



Journey in Faith Group



The next meeting of the Journey in Faith Group will be held on Thursday 9th January 2025 at 7pm in St Robert's Presbytery, looking at "The Sacraments, a general overview" and "The Sacrament of Baptism".

Diocesan Vision Meeting

The next 'Diocesan Vision' meeting will be held on Monday January 13th at 7pm in St Robert's Parish Hall. This will be the last of the Vision Meetings, as suggested by the diocese, but it may not be the end of the discussions that has come up during the last few months meetings, as questions are being raised during these meetings about what we do as two parishes in this part of the diocese.



Accidents in Church or on Parish Property

If any accidents take place in Church, or the Hall, or anywhere on Parish Property, eg Car Park, it is important that these accidents are recorded. We have special Accident Recording Forms in the Parish Office, in the Parish Welfare Manual. Please contact Fr Peter, Deacon Stephen, Mary Carter or Matt Price if you think you need to report an accident.

'All Kinds of Catholic' Podcast

Do you listen to podcasts? "All Kinds of Catholic" is, as it says, a catholic podcast, covering many topics. Be encouraged by a new conversation each week in which the guest shares how they are living their faith. Open up the software in the place where you usually listen to podcasts and type in the search box "All Kinds of Catholic" and you will see the list of episodes available.

Parish Pastoral Council Vacancies

We still have some vacancies on St Robert's Parish Pastoral Council. We're looking for someone to take on the role of "Communications". This is an important role which will work to make sure that as a parish we communicate our message and the message of the gospel to as many people as possible. It includes, as far as possible, reviewing our IT capabilities and see if we use IT and social media to the best of our abilities, (so some experience might be an advantage) but also look at how best we as a parish communicate with one another, so everyone has the same message.

We also want someone to take on the "Social life of the Parish Community" role and wherever possible to organise social events, or try to encourage people to get involved as much as possible as in the life of the parish, to encourage social events and to encourage people throughout the parish to organise events themselves that bring people together. So far no-one seems to want to give a go at either of these roles! Is there a reason?

The Jubilee Year and Opening of Holy Doors

The Holy Father has declared 2025 to be a Jubilee Year with the theme "Pilgrims of Hope." The Holy Father has decreed that the Holy Doors are opened on Sunday 29th December. Bishop Stephen has nominated a Holy Door at The Cathedral in Newcastle and a Holy Door at St Joseph's, Hartlepool. The Bishop is looking for volunteer helpers in both the Cathedral and St Joseph's, Hartlepool, throughout the whole Jubilee Year, to provide a ministry of welcome and presence. Fr Peter has a full list of days when people are needed and contact details if anyone wishes to volunteer at either St Mary's Cathedral in Newcastle or in St Joseph's Church, Hartlepool.



What can we do for the Jubilee Year?

The Diocese has planned a series of events for the Jubilee Year. They hope that parishes will take part in some of the events that they organise. Is there anything else either St Bede's Parish or St Robert's Parish can do for the Jubilee Year? We will include this on the Agenda for the next Parish Council at St Robert's Parish, but perhaps someone might like to organise an event for the jubilee?



More Readers needed for Sunday Mass

We need a few more readers for the rota at Sunday Mass, especially the 11am Mass, but also for the 9am Mass as well. Please note that if you wish to do this, even for weekday Masses, you must also sign the form for all volunteers with names of two referees, as all volunteers now are asked to do.

Volunteer Registration Forms

Please remember that if you are volunteering to help in the Parish, you will have to complete a 'Volunteer Registration Form' and provide the names of two referees who will provide a reference for you. Please ask Fr Peter or Deacon Stephen or Mary our Secretary, about these forms if you need to have one.

African - Caribbean Catholic Community

A message from Fr. Anthony Ohaekwusi: The African-Caribbean Catholic Community is a long-standing, faith-filled, growing community in our diocese with a large number of young families who are passionate about practising their faith. This community would like to thank the clergy of our diocese for the warm welcome and pastoral support given to people of African and Caribbean descent in your parishes. On the last Sunday of each month the men, women and children of this community from across the North East go to St Joseph's Church, Gateshead at 2pm for Mass, prayer meeting and a social gathering. The Chaplaincy appeals to our priests to promote the community in their parishes and refer African and Caribbean parishioners to our community by contacting Fr Anthony C. Ohaekwusi, Chaplain, at 07407486865 or email africancommunitydhn@gmail.com

New to The Parish?

There have been a number of new parishioners to both St Bede's Parish and St Robert's Parish on recent months. You are all very welcome and we hope you feel at home in one of our churches. If you are you new to our Parish or even if you have just moved house recently please scan this QR code with your mobile or tablet, and complete an online form; or type this link into your search engine https://form.jotform.com/Fr_Peter/new-parishioner--updated-info and complete the form. We will then receive your contact details and put you on our parish register.



Introducing Jubilee – online session – 18th January 2025

All are welcome to join CAFOD for "A general introduction to the Jubilee Year" with special guests including Fr Jan Nowotnik, Director of Mission for the Catholic Bishop's Conference, Christine Allen, CAFOD Director, and Kayode Akintola, CAFOD's Head of Africa Programmes. Hear what Jubilee Years are about, how we're celebrating as a global and national Church and how we can be tangible signs of hope and build a better world together throughout this holy year. Also featuring a special song by Catholic Group Ooberfuse and more. Saturday 18th January, 10:30am-midday. Log-on details on the CAFOD Website.



Masses, Intentions and Services This Week



| | St Robert of Newminster Church, Morpeth | St Bede's Church, Bedlington |
|--|--|--|
| Saturday 21st December | 9.40am The Rosary 10am Mass: Harry and Margaret Bell 10.30am - 11am Adoration and Confessions | 5pm - 5.20pm Confessions 5.30pm Vigil Mass: John Mills |
| Sunday 22nd December Fourth Sunday of Advent | 9am Mass: Zygfyrd Buchta 11am Mass: People of the Parish | |
| Monday 23rd December <i>Weekday of Advent</i> | | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass: Marie Davies and Alan Nixon |
| Tuesday 24th December <i>Weekday of Advent</i> | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass: Taylor Walker and Bell families | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion |



Christmas Masses and Services



| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Tuesday 24th December The Nativity of the Lord (Vigil) | | 5.30pm Christmas Carols 6.00pm Vigil Mass: Father Nelius O'Connor |
| Wednesday 25th December The Nativity of the Lord | 9am Mass: George Beattie and Thomas Foster Beattie 11am Mass: People of the Parish | |
| Thursday 26th December <i>St Stephen, First Martyr</i> | *** No Adoration today *** 10.00am Mass: Jerome and Sylvia Thompson | |
| Friday 27th December <i>St John, Apostle and Evangelist</i> | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Service of Word and Communion | 9.25am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass: People of the Parish |
| Saturday 28th December <i>Holy Innocents</i> | 9.40am The Rosary 10am Mass: Paul McCole 10.30am - 11am Adoration and Confessions | 5pm - 5.20pm Confessions 5.30pm Vigil Mass: Arkell and McAlroy Families |
| Sunday 29th December Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph | 9am Mass: Harry and Margaret Bell 11am Mass: People of the Parish | |



The Holy Father Pope Francis' Intentions for December 2024

For pilgrims of hope: We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.



Donation for Foodbanks, Refugees and Asylum Seekers

The Diocesan Justice and Peace Refugee Project is asking for donations. Regular items needed are Toilet Rolls, Individual packet of biscuits, tinned tomatoes, tins of fish and Chickpeas. In addition, they also need Rice (standard size packet), Sugar (standard size packet), Cooking oil, Spices/dried herbs, Pasta, Tinned fruit, Table Salt Flour, Custard / Rice Pudding, Cooking Sauces e.g., pasta sauce, Porridge, cereals, condiments (ketchup/mayo/jam), Tea/Coffee, Washing-up liquid and surface & toilet cleaners. Also needed are the more personal items like Shampoo and / 2-in-1 Conditioner, Male & female deodorants, Toothbrushes, toothpaste and nappies. If you can help, please leave in the boxes that are in the entrances of St Bede's or St Robert's Church.

DONATE FOOD HERE



Foodbank Donations

Foodbanks in both Morpeth and Bedlington are appealing for a variety of foods for their clients who are in need. If you can help in any way bring items of food to church and place in the boxes in the Church porches.

Disaster Emergency Committee

While we in the United Kingdom are shopping for presents and supermarkets and shops are full of people filling their baskets for a lunch on Christmas Day, the people of the Middle East continue to face one of the worst times ever faced. The people of the Holy Land, and of places names we are familiar with because of the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testament, are struggling on a daily basis. We have already sent off £100 to the DEC but if anyone else wishes to make a donation please drop your donation off in a marked envelope, "Disasters Emergency Committee" and drop off at the Sacristy or Presbytery.



Dates for the Diary

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| St Benet Biscop Partnership Council ... | 8 th January |
| Journey in Faith Resumes ... | 9 th January |
| Parish Meeting on Diocesan Vision ... | 13 th January |
| St Robert's Parish Pastoral Council ... | 20 th January |
| St Robert's Parish Finance Committee ... | 22 nd January |

Gift Aid Scheme

If you are a Tax Payer and you give a donation regularly to our Church you can be in the Gift Aid scheme, with an extra 25% of your donation claimed back through HMRC. At no extra cost, just a signature on a form, you can help your parish. Please contact Peter Smith at St Robert's Church, or Mary our Parish Secretary, or Fr Peter. Please note that Gift Aid Forms have been updated, and so if setting up a new Gift Aid Donation, your form must be one of these new forms, available from the Parish Office.

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Standing Orders or Payments by BACS

Many thanks to all who contribute to the weekly collections by Standing Order or by BACS. This is a very easy way to make a contribution towards parish funds. Our bank details for setting up a Standing Order or BACS payment are included below ...

Morpeth

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



Bedlington

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