

St Osmund's Catholic Church, Gainford

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

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Hogarth Partnership

St Anne, St Augustine, St Mary, St Osmund, Holy Family, St Teresa, St Thomas Aquinas, SS William & Francis De Sale

FoodBank: The Well: 46 East Green, West Auckland. DL14 9HJ. Opening times: Wednesday-Friday 9am - 3pm
Items may be left at the Foodbanks during their opening times or placed in St. Osmund's Church porch.

Please Pray for:

The sick of the Parish: Patrick Doherty, Nico Human, Alexandra Jüngst, Kate Konig, Nino Volpe and Susan Hunton

Tea & Coffee after Mass

Tea and coffee are available after Mass in the parish centre— all are most welcome to join this moment of fellowship as a parish.

Offertory

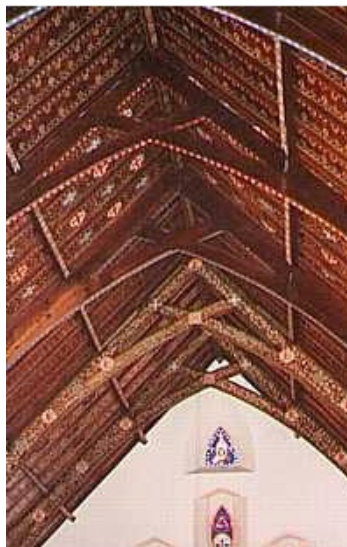
If you wish to make your donations directly to St. Osmund's. Bank account details are:

HSBC: D.H & N Gainford St. Osmund's.

Account No. 41164015.

Sort Code 40-34-18.

Thank you from Significance. The Trustees of Significance thank everyone who supported the Grand Draw and all those who donated prizes. 1,606 tickets were sold which realised £8,030. The funds raised will help Significance to continue to support the Emmaus Village and provide opportunities for young people to recognise their own worth and value. Congratulations to all our winners: Danielle Dowson (St John's Catholic School, Bishop Auckland), Jamie Adams (St Mary's Cathedral), Sr Hilda (Oaklea Convent), Sarah Boyd (Dunston, Gateshead).



**1st Sunday of Advent
3rd December**

Theme: Watch for his coming

**St Osmund's will be open for
Parish Mass on
Sundays at 9.30am and
Tuesdays at 10.00am**

**Additional Mass Monday 4th
November 10.00am
in honour of St. Osmund**

**Children's Liturgy
There will be a Children's Liturgy
this Sunday and each Sunday in
Advent.**

**On Sunday 17th December there will be a Cake Sale to raise
funds for World Gifts**

Peace for the people of Ukraine

We continue to pray earnestly for peace in Ukraine, joining the Holy Father in his consecration of Russia and Ukraine to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart – may her prayers bring a swift end to the conflict, and consolation to the bereaved and to the many thousands of refugees.

Church Sound System

You may have noticed, or not noticed! that the sound system in the church is no longer operating effectively. Although it can have a very nice 'hiss and crackle' at times.

A new sound system is to be installed which will ensure that everyone will be able to hear and participate fully in our Mass and liturgies. It will be especially valuable at times such as Easter, Passion Tide, Christmas and for weddings and funerals when there is a full church and several readers.

The new system is due to be installed in the week beginning 11th December which will mean that the system should be in place for Christmas. There may be some alteration to services that week - Details to follow.

Over the coming months there will be some fund raising to offset the cost where we will all have the opportunity to contribute, ensuring that our beautiful church remains welcoming and accessible not only for our present congregation but for generations to come.

Churches Together Carol Service.

Churches Together in Gainford will hold its annual carol service on Sunday 17 December at 6pm, at S. Mary's. All are most welcome.

Readings and Reflection

1st Sunday of Advent

3rd December

Prayer for Migrants and Refugees

First reading Isaiah 63:16-17,64:1,3-8

O that you would tear the heavens open and come down

You, Lord, yourself are our Father,

'Our Redeemer' is your ancient name.

Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways and harden our hearts against fearing you? Return, for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance.

Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down! – at your Presence the mountains would melt.

No ear has heard, no eye has seen any god but you act like this for those who trust him. You guide those who act with integrity and keep your ways in mind.

You were angry when we were sinners; we had long been rebels against you.

We were all like men unclean, all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing.

We have all withered like leaves and our sins blew us away like the wind.

No one invoked your name or roused himself to catch hold of you. For you hid your face from us and gave us up to the power of our sins.

And yet, Lord, you are our Father; we the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand.

Responsorial Psalm 79(80):2-3,15-16,18-19

God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.

O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.

Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted.

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.

And we shall never forsake you again;
give us life that we may call upon your name.

Second reading 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

We are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace.

I never stop thanking God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank him that you have been enriched in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers; the witness to Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

Gospel Acclamation Ps84:8

Alleluia, alleluia!

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy

and give us your saving help. **Alleluia!**

Gospel Mark 13:33-37

If he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

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Feast Day this week:

Monday 4th December: St John Damascene

Wednesday 6th December: St Nicholas

Thursday 7th December: St Ambrose

Friday 8th December: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Saturday 9th December: St Juan Diego Cuahtlatotzin

The Cycle of Prayer

Migrants and Refugees - especially on 3 December.

Background

On December 3rd the Church commemorates St Francis Xavier. This is the day chosen by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People to mark World Migration Day. Each year there is a message from the Holy Father reflecting on the 'signs of the times'. **Asylum seekers and refugees** — I wish to underline how the tendency is to stop at the question of their arrival while disregarding the reasons for which they left their native land. [Benedict XVI - Message for World Migration day 2005]

Prayer

*Lord, no one is a stranger to you
and no one is ever*

far from your loving care.

In your kindness watch over

refugees and exiles,

those separated from their loved ones,

young people who are lost,

and those who have left

or run away from home.

Bring them back safely

to the place where they long to be

and help us always

to show your kindness

to strangers and those in need.

Roman Missal: For Refugees and Exiles

Reflections on the Readings**1st Sunday of Advent****3rd December**

In the Catholic tradition, a Homily, interprets the readings, shining a light on the present and asking each one of us what we must change in our lives, from today. The challenge is not so much about recounting the history or retelling the story, but living the gospel.

Stay Awake, Be Prepared and Get Ready...

This Sunday we begin a new season in the liturgical calendar of the Church. Today, we begin the great Season of Advent. There are two messages that we will hear over the next four weeks. One message and set of values will come to us from the media and the shops. We will be told that we will have to move faster, stay busy, queue longer in the shops and spend more money on those 'must have' presents so that we will have the 'perfect' Christmas, as if such a thing exists. We will be told and sold the idea that unless we buy more and more and surround ourselves with all the trappings of Christmas, we won't be happy. This most definitely is 'fake news.' However there is a very different message and set of values that will be offered to us through the gospels, the prayers and the liturgy of Advent. We are being asked to prepare a way for the Lord, to stay awake, to make a straight path for the Lord and to get ourselves ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This is most definitely is 'Good News!'

The message of Advent is an invitation and it also a challenge to us. We are called to be looking forward, to be ready, to be prepared and we are asked to wait in joyful hope.

Waiting is not something that we are usually good at these days. Our modern world tells us to move faster in so many ways. We have smart phones, emails and microwave ovens that all 'help' us to get through our busy days. However Advent asks each of us to do very opposite. During these sacred days of preparation, we are being asked to take some time to be still and silent as we prepare ourselves deeply for the Christmas. While we can't simply ignore the shops, the media and the advertisements over the next few weeks, neither can we ignore the words and message of Jesus in today's gospel; 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come... what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

If we get too caught up in the shopping and spending, there is the danger that we will miss what Advent is really about. This is what the call to 'stay awake' means. We are asked not to miss the next four weeks of Advent. We are asked to prepare and get ready as best we can as followers of Jesus. It would be so sad, that if after the shopping and all the other preparations we missed Advent and its joyful and hopeful message.

In what ways can I prepare a way for the Lord this Advent as I get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas?

Michael Moore OMI oblates.ie

Advent Reflections. To assist with your preparation of Christmas there are some Advent reflections available. By the doors there are copies of '**Walk with Me**' booklets which provide a journey of prayer through Advent; with a short reflection for each. There is a standard version, as well as one for children. A donation of £1 would be appreciated for the adult version.

You are welcome to take a copy of the children's version for your family or for others at no cost.

The Diocese has also produced Advent reflections which are available on-line at <https://bit.ly/DHNAdvent>

World Gifts

At the back of church are some catalogues from CaFOD with various world gifts for Christmas. These are a way to show God's love at Christmas in a practical way; providing desperately needed resources in less developed parts of the world, rather than giving people presents which can simply become yet more clutter.

Little Sisters of the Poor - Job Vacancies

Exciting opportunities are now available at St Joseph's Care Home (Little Sisters of the Poor, Newcastle) for care assistants and nurses.

Hours available:

Care Assistant: Shifts are 8am-3pm, 3pm-9pm

Nurse: Shifts are 8am-4pm, 1pm-9pm

Excellent rates of pay

For more information please contact Lee-Marie Thornley on 07856256095 or email lee.marie@lsplondon.co.uk

The term 'advent' means 'coming', but behind this seemingly simple word is a deep and multi-layered season of the Church's year – one which we should really seek to enter into as fully as possible, rather than simply allow our preparations for Christmas be limited to buying presents and food.

The 'coming' which advent refers to is, of course, Christ's – but in reality this means that there are three different comings to which we can turn our minds and our hearts. The first is his coming as an infant all of those years ago; this is why we speak of the Church's year beginning with Advent, we start by journeying towards Christ's coming at Christmas...that moment which was the beginning of the Church, the beginning of our new relationship with God. There is a strong and deep tradition of reading the prophets during this season, so many of God's people were looking forward to the coming of the Messiah, and while they waited he gave them messengers like Isaiah to speak of the new world which the Messiah would bring about. Those prophets made God's people ready, and by reading them, by pondering them we too can make ourselves ready to recall Christ's birth at Christmas.

That new world which the prophets spoke of has been brought about; we are all living in the middle of it. But we cannot fail to notice that the lion is not yet lying down with the lamb (as Isaiah famously almost says). There is another coming towards which we should also look. The final coming of Christ. There is a moment, and we do not know either the day or the hour, when Christ will return; and then his work of redemption will be completed. The final judgment will separate us into the sheep and the goats (as we heard in the Gospel last week).

We are called to look forward to this coming during Advent as well. It will be soon, but soon in God's terms is often different to in our terms – it has been coming soon for the past two thousand years. We are called to be alert and ready, as we are told in the Gospel today. But this shouldn't mean worrying about it – one of my favourite stories from the Saints refers to S. Philip Neri, he was playing bowls with some friends and was asked what he would do if he knew the second coming would happen in an hour's time...he replied quite simply 'finish the game of bowls'. He was ready to meet with Christ at any moment, and therefore had no worry or fear. For the rest of us, perhaps a little more preparation would be sensible; Advent is well established as a time for confession, a help to prepare us spiritually for Christ's coming both at Christmas and his second coming.

As well as looking back to Christ's first coming, as a baby, and looking forward to his second coming as judge of the world, we can also look to his coming in the present. While there is a gap between his return to heaven and his return, he hasn't abandoned his people. He is always with us, above all in the Blessed Sacrament. Every time we come to Mass there is an 'advent'. Just as he came as an infant in order to be close to his people, and to draw us close to God; so too when he comes to us at Mass, it is to be close to his people and to draw us close to God.

Similarly, when we come to Mass, we come close to Christ, we respond to his invitation. We look back to that moment when he first became one of us and was born in Bethlehem, we also look forward to that moment when he will return in glory for judgment.

Memorial Acclamation

We have got used to singing the memorial acclamation using the first option. So that there is some variety today we will sing the second text ('When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again'), the tune is very similar and I'm sure that we will get used to this over the next few weeks.

Invitation from the Sacred Heart Sisters Fenham

The Society of the Sacred Heart has spent the last year giving thanks and celebrating their arrival in England on December 8th, 1842. This year the celebration of our 180 years in this country draws to a close on December 8th, 2023. We, the sisters in Fenham, would like to invite those who have shared our mission of Education in Fenham over the years as students, pupils, staff and friends from the Sacred Heart schools or St Mary's Teacher Training College to join us for Mass in St Robert's Church, Bolbec Rd, Fenham at 6.p.m. on that day. Come along and meet old friends. Bishop Seamus will be the celebrant as he was the College Chaplain for many years. To have some idea of numbers for the Mass leaflets please RSVP to rscfenham@yahoo.com by November 30th or leave a message on 0191 422 3840

Best wishes for a safe, happy and healthy week ahead

