

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 Sales

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, Kate Konig, Patrick Heffernan, Hilary Fletcher, Mike Griffiths, Luca Gallucci, Pat Aveson and Matthias Klein

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.

Safeguarding

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) and Diocese's policies and procedures at all times. Details of our Parish Safeguarding Representative can be found on the notice board in the porch and the Parish Centre, or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on [0191 2433305](tel:01912433305) or at safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk

Jubilee 2025: We celebrate this year of pilgrimage and prayer, celebration and reconciliation, seeking to be Pilgrims of Hope. There's more information about the Jubilee Year on the Diocesan website at <https://www.bit.ly/DHNjubilee2025>.

To aid your journey through this jubilee year, **copies of a companion booklet are available at the back of church.** A donation of £1 is suggested.



2nd Sunday of Ordinary Theme: Lamb of God

I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

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

**Saturday 17th January 6.30pm
Sunday 25th January 9.30am
Saturday 31st January 6.30pm
Sunday 8th February 9.30pm**

Children's Liturgy

There is a Children's Liturgy on Sunday 25th January

Peace for the people of Ukraine

We continue to pray earnestly for peace in Ukraine, joining our prayers 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.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Christian Unity Service. The week of prayer for Christian unity runs from 18-25 January, as part of this Churches Together in Gainford will be holding a service on

Sunday 25th at 3pm, at St Mary's Parish Church.

In those days: Peter opened his mouth and said: 'Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.' Acts 10:34 (Today's 2nd Reading)

'Thanks to the Second Vatican Council, Pope Leo underscored, quoting Pope Saint Paul VI's Encyclical Ecclesiam suam, the Church "has something to say, a message to give, a communication to make," striving to seek the truth by way of ecumenism, interreligious dialogue, and dialogue with people of good will.'

Pope Leo's message beginning new catechesis series on Vatican II following Jubilee Year (Read article from Vatican News on back page)

First reading Isaiah 49:3,5-6

'I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

The Lord said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'

And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him - for I am honoured in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength- he says:

'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel;

I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

Responsorial Psalm 40(39):2, 4, 7-10 R8a,9a

Behold, I have come, Lord, to do your will.

I waited, I waited for the Lord, and he stooped down to me; he heard my cry.

He put a new song into my mouth, praise of our God.

You delight not in sacrifice and offering, but in an open ear.

You do not ask for holocaust and sin offering.

Then I said, 'Behold, I have come.'

In the scroll of the book it stands written of me:

'I delight to do your will, O my God; your instruction lies deep within me.'

Your uprightness I have proclaimed in the great assembly.

My lips I have not sealed; you know it, O Lord.

Second reading 1 Corinthians 1:1-3

'Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Paul, called by the will of God to be an Apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,

To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Acclamation John 1: 14a,12a

Alleluia, alleluia.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us; to all who did receive him, he gave the authority to become children of God.

Alleluia.

Gospel John 1:29-34

'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.'

At that time: John saw Jesus coming towards him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me." I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptising with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.' And John bore witness: 'I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptise with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptises with the Holy Spirit." And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.'

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Feast Days this week

Monday 19th January: St Wulstan

Tuesday 20th January: St Fabian, St Sebastian

Wednesday 21st January: St Agnes

Thursday 22nd January: St Vincent

Saturday 24th January: St Francis de Sales

The Cycle of Prayer

Openness to the Word of God

Prayer

All-wise God,
as you have granted us
to drink with delight
from the Word
that leads us to know you,
in your goodness grant us also
to come at length to you,
source of all wisdom,
and stand for ever before your face.

based on a prayer of the Venerable Bede

Two particular thoughts are prompted by today's readings. The first is John's dramatic declaration, Behold the Lamb of God. the second is an invitation to do a personal stock-taking during this first month of the new year, and make some resolutions to improve the quality of our lives. The Baptist urges us to ask what are we fundamentally about and then seek to reset our lives. And St Paul reminds us that we are "called to be saints together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

An honest stock-taking of ourselves may unveil the selfish motives that often direct our actions. To rise above an ego-centric spirit we need to recognise something outside of and larger than ourselves, the God who cares for us and for the whole human community. Can we listen to John's call to restore what is broken, and Jesus' call, to bring light to the world? Do we see that it is with our cooperation that the Lamb can remove the "sin of the world?"

Facing our deepest personal truths is always difficult; it calls us to not just drift along with this world's evil, always taking the line of least resistance. Discipleship is urgent and costly, but it is also possible and is the way towards the deeper joy and fulfilment that our soul is longing for. If we properly hear the Baptist as he witnesses to Christ, our response will be a stock-taking that goes to the root of our being. It may even reveal to us the truth that sets us free. associationofcatholicpriests.ie

Jubilee of S. Francis

If we think of Saints who are well-known, who are popular among large numbers of the faithful, then very rapidly we will come across S. Francis of Assisi. We have already reflected on him back in 2024, and on the Order of Friars which he founded in the autumn of last year; however, he is worth returning to as Pope Leo has just proclaimed a year celebrating the 800th anniversary of his death. The Holy Father rightly sees his influence in the Church continuing, but also calls us to reflect on the example of S. Francis ever more deeply because that example is one which the world needs...perhaps needs more than ever.

Pope Leo expresses his hope that every Christian "following the example of the Saint of Assisi, may himself become a model of holiness of life and a constant witness of peace.

As is usual for such celebrations, the Pope has authorised special plenary indulgences, these can be obtained by making a pilgrimage to a church owned and run by the Franciscans, or to a church in a place named after him, or otherwise connected with him. These show us the universality of his appeal, with numerous places having been given his name – San Francisco in California being merely the most well-known among very many. The Franciscans operate right across the world, and so have over 4000 communities. In a unique element, S. Francis' body will be on display in Assisi from 22 February to 26 March, allowing pilgrims to come physically close even as they seek to come spiritually close as well.

But it would be easy to become too involved in the mechanics of the celebration. All of these are simply there to help us enter more deeply into the Franciscan spirit. The celebrations would mean nothing were it not for a man who had a particular encounter with Christ, and responded to his grace. S. Francis was a person who drew close to Christ, tried to become as perfectly like

him as possible, encouraged others who were seeking to do the same.

In a message sent to the leaders of the Franciscan family, Pope Leo asks for S. Francis' prayers writing "In this time afflicted by conflict and division, intercede for us so that we may become peacemakers: unarmed and disarming witnesses of the peace that comes from Christ." Earlier in the letter he writes "In this age, marked by so many seemingly interminable wars, by internal and social divisions that create mistrust and fear, he continues to speak. Not because he offers technical solutions, but because his life points to the authentic source of peace." In this he reminds us that by emulating S. Francis, we are simply joining him in drawing on Christ, his teaching, and his presence in the world. But he also shows us how much our world needs this message.

S. Francis is often cited as proclaiming a simple faith, and Pope Leo draws our attention to this. The simplicity of seeking to follow Christ, a simplicity which nonetheless challenges so many of the forces in our world which tread very different paths. He confronted a world torn by division and war, and we do not have to look far to see the same today. This simplicity of message is effective for one reason alone – it comes from Christ, and so it carries with it the message and the power of Christ.

May we all turn more deeply to the example of S. Francis, the example of one who simply tried, through God's grace, to become ever more like Christ. – **Fr. Thomas.**

Copies of the Northern Catholic Calendar, and the Diocesan Ordo (list of feasts for each day of the year) have arrived and are available at the back of church – suggested donation £3

"It is the Magisterium [of the Second Vatican Council] that still constitutes the guiding star of the Church's journey today."

Pope Leo XIV expressed this during his Wednesday General Audience, on January 7, in the Vatican, as he began a new catechesis series, which is dedicated to Vatican Council II and a rereading of its Documents, following the Jubilee Year's focus on the mysteries of the life of Jesus.

The Pope called this "a valuable opportunity to rediscover the beauty and the importance of this ecclesial event," pointing to Pope Saint John Paul II's words at the end of the Jubilee 2000 when he said, "I feel more than ever in duty bound to point to the Council as the great grace bestowed on the Church in the twentieth century."

Pope Leo recalled that, in 2025, along with the anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, the Church recalled the 60th anniversary of Vatican II.

He said that while the time that separates us from this event is not so long, it is true that the generation of Bishops and theologians of Vatican II is no longer with us.

Rereading Council's documents

"Therefore, while we hear the call not to let its prophecy fade, and to continue to seek ways and means to implement its insights, it will be important to get to know it again closely, and to do so not through 'hearsay' or interpretations that have been given, but by rereading its documents and reflecting on their content."

He quoted Pope Benedict XVI's words in 2005 that "as the years have passed, the Conciliar Documents have lost none of their timeliness; indeed, their teachings are proving particularly relevant to the new situation of the Church and the current globalized society."

Pope Leo recalled that when Pope Saint John XXIII opened the Council on October 11, 1962, he spoke of it as the dawn of a day of light for the whole Church, adding that, "The work of the numerous Fathers convened from the Churches of all continents did indeed pave the way for a new ecclesial season."

Rediscovering face of God as Father calling us to be His children

"After a rich biblical, theological, and liturgical reflection spanning the twentieth century," Pope Leo highlighted, "Vatican II rediscovered the face of God as the Father who, in Christ, calls us to be His children; it looked at the Church in the light of Christ, light of nations, as a mystery of communion and sacrament of unity between God and His people; it initiated important liturgical reform, placing at its centre the mystery of salvation and the active and conscious participation of the entire People of God."

At the same time, the Pope reflected, "it helped us to open up to the world and to embrace the changes and challenges of the modern age in dialogue and co-responsibility" as a Church that "wishes to open her arms to humanity, to echo the hopes and anxieties of peoples, and to collaborate in building a more just and fraternal society."

Thanks to the Second Vatican Council, Pope Leo underscored, quoting Pope Saint Paul VI's Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam*, the Church "has something to say, a message to give, a communication to make," striving to seek the truth by way of ecumenism, interreligious dialogue, and dialogue with people of good will.

Guide for Church's spiritual life and pastoral action

"This spirit, this inner disposition," Pope Leo insisted, "must characterize our spiritual life and the pastoral action of the Church, because we have yet to achieve ecclesial reform more fully in a ministerial sense, and, in the face of today's challenges, we are called to continue to be vigilant interpreters of the signs of the times, joyful proclaimers of the Gospel, courageous witnesses of justice and peace."

He recalled then-Bishop Albino Luciani, the future Pope John Paul I, who wrote a note at the beginning of the Council. "As always," wrote Bishop Luciani, "there is a need to achieve not so much organizations or methods or structures, but a deeper and more widespread holiness."

Pope Leo noted that Pope Francis would later say the Council helped the Church "restore primacy to God, to what is essential: to a Church madly in love with its Lord and with all the men and women whom he loves."

Finally, Pope Leo XIV concluded with an invitation to engage in a fresh reading of the Second Vatican Council's documents.

"As we approach the documents of Vatican II and rediscover their prophetic and contemporary relevance, we welcome the rich tradition of the life of the Church, and, at the same time, we question ourselves about the present and renew our joy in running towards the world to bring it the Gospel of the kingdom of God, a kingdom of love, justice, and peace." **Deborah Castellano Lubov - Vatican News**

Best wishes for a safe , happy and healthy week ahead

