

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: Nico Human, Kate Konig, Patrick Heffernan, Hilary Fletcher, Mike Griffiths, Luca Gallucci, Pat Aveson and Matthis 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

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



4th Sunday of Ordinary Theme: Good News for the poor

And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

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

Saturday 31st January 6.30pm

Sunday 8th February 9.30pm

Saturday 14th February 6.30pm

Sunday 22nd February 9.30am

Children's Liturgy

There is a Children's Liturgy on Sunday 8th February

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.

Foodbank – we recently received a card from the foodbank with the following note:

To all at St Osmund's Church, Gainford

Thank you all so very much for your regular and faithful giving over many years to the foodbank at The Well. Your gifts have been amazing throughout the different seasons and we are so grateful for the generosity and care shown by so many towards those who find themselves in difficult circumstances.

Thank you for your compassion and desire to help others. We know the Lord will bless you in your giving.

"The Lord blesses everyone who freely gives food to the poor."
Proverbs 22:9

First reading Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

'I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly.'
Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord.

I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord, those who are left in Israel; they shall do no injustice and speak no lies, nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue. For they shall graze and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

Responsorial Psalm 146(145): 6c-10. R Mat. 5:3

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

It is the Lord who preserves fidelity for ever, who does justice to those who are oppressed. It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord who sets prisoners free.

The Lord who opens the eyes of the blind, the Lord who raises up those who are bowed down. It is the Lord who loves the just, the Lord who protects the stranger.

The Lord upholds the orphan and the widow, but thwarts the path of the wicked.

The Lord will reign for ever, your God, O Sion, from age to age.

Second reading 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

'God chose what is weak in the world.'

Consider your calling, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'

Gospel Acclamation Matthew 5:12a

Alleluia, alleluia.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.

Alleluia.

Gospel Matthew 5: 1-12a

'Blessed are the poor in spirit.'

At that time: Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to

him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

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Feast Days this week

Monday 2nd February: The Presentation of thee Lord

Tuesday 3rd February: St Blaise

Thursday 5th February: St Agatha

Friday 6th February: St Paul Miki and his Companions

Saturday 7th February: Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**The Cycle of Prayer
Migrants and Refugees****Background**

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

A condensed Gospel

The beatitudes offer a summary of Jesus' teaching. They are the condensed gospel and need some teasing out to apply them to life. We are aware of political manifestos, statements of what a party stands for, what they intend to achieve if you elect them. This gospel is Jesus' manifesto. It is a manifesto that he promises will bring us near to God.

People who are detached and show gentleness to others, are blessed. Even if they are rich, their money does not make them boastful or proud. Grief is the price we must eventually pay for having loved. If you are determined never to cry at a funeral, don't ever love anyone. The meek and the gentle are the most resilient of people. Good people deeply respect justice and fair play, and try to win them for others. As you treat others, so you will be treated. If we want to receive mercy and compassion, we must show mercy to others. A pure heart is not devious, deceitful, selfish or cunning. Jesus did not say we should be passive. Rather he urges us to build bridges of peace with others.

Jesus warns those who follow him will be treated as he was. There is a cost in Pentecost, and following him means sharing his cross. Right from the beginning when Simeon saw him in the temple, he said that Jesus would be a sign of contradiction. Everything he said and did was a challenge to this world's values. Those with power, prestige, and control felt undermined by his message. The religious leaders who were the arbiters of right and wrong, were so threatened by him that they planned his death.

Those who lament the fewness of "practising Catholics" may have reduced this notion to attendance at Sunday Mass. There is no mention of that in the beatitudes. Jesus simply listed some qualities needed to enter the kingdom of heaven. These "happy attitudes" are the charter of the kingdom. They are ideals that are well-nigh unattainable. They are values to aim at, meant to help us moderate our lifestyles. History produces some people who incarnate these beatitudes, like a Francis of Assisi or a Mother Teresa, or some specially dedicated individuals that we may be privileged to know. As St Paul says, God has made us members of Christ, "who is our wisdom, our virtue, our holiness and our freedom."

There is a cleansing power in the beatitudes. They are about letting go of things that are not life-giving, and about becoming truly free. They offer guidelines for living, for inner peace and happiness. Formal religion can be too tied to rules, rituals and regulations and be authoritarian. Spirituality is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is about letting go, so as to be free in God's sight. associationcatholicpriests.ie

Delving into the Scriptures - Tobit

We have previously noted that there are seven books of the Old Testament which are not universally recognised as scriptural, Jews and protestants usually excluding them, whereas the Catholic Church and the Orthodox include them; this includes the book of Tobit. It is notable that even among those protestants who do not accept it as scriptural, it has often found a place of favour for the story which it contains. For us Catholics, it has always been accepted as part of the Old Testament, being included in the first listing of the canon by the Council of Rome in 382; there was some debate within the Church, but the matter was definitively settled by the Council of Trent in 1546.

Like the other deuterocanonical books, it comes down to us in Greek; though the pattern of language suggests that it was originally written in a semitic language (probably either Hebrew or Aramaic), and more recent discoveries have included fragments of it within the dead sea scrolls, suggesting that some Jewish groups accepted it as scripture in the past.

The book is set in the diaspora, that is among those Jews who had been deported from Judea after the invasion by the Babylonians, probably around the fourth to second centuries B.C. It has a strong theme of remaining faithful to God and his promises even in the middle of challenges. It doesn't delve deeply into the reasoning behind suffering, but seeks to reassure those who do suffer that it is under God's providence; ultimately 'they all live happily ever after' as the common line puts it.

That should not be taken to imply that it is just a morality story, it does contain some notably theology. At the heart of it, we encounter a spiritual battle between two angels: Raphael (along with Michael and Gabriel one of three named in scripture) and Asmodeus (a fallen angel).

The book opens by setting the scene and establishing the main character, Tobit, a resident of Nineveh. He is recorded as a pious man who fulfils the demands of the law, but also goes beyond acting out of charity to all. In particular it is recorded that he buries the dead even during a time of persecution. Despite this life of virtue his eyes are infected and he becomes blind. During this illness he begins to despair of his life and prays that he might die.

A second narrative begins in Ecbatana (a major city of the neighbouring Medean kingdom), a relative of Tobit's called Sarah is accused of killing a string of husbands. In reality the demon Asmodeus waits and when she marries a man, on their wedding night he kills the new husband. She too despairs and prays for death. Both have their prayer heard, but rather than death, God responds more positively.

Tobit's son, Tobias, is sent to collect a debt from a relative in Medea and as he travels he meets a stranger, the angel Raphael in disguise. The pair catch a fish and Raphael tells Tobias that if burnt, the heart and liver will drive out demons; and that the gall can cure blindness. Tobias meets Sarah, and despite the accusations against her he marries; as promised, the heart and liver from the fish drive out Asmodeus and the two are happily married. Having prospered they return to Nineveh and use the gall to cure Tobit's blindness. Tobit tells his son to pay his companion a generous wage for his assistance, and at this point he reveals his angelic nature.

The story contains a number of parts, the underlying theme is that God allows his people to be tested, but those who remain faithful (as Tobit and Sarah both did) even in the midst of despair will receive a reward. The celebration of Sarah and Tobias's marriage is often used as a reading at weddings. As we read and reflect on this text, we should be reassured of God's presence in our lives, and inspired to remain close to him in lives of virtue and service to others. – **Fr. Thomas.**

Marriage Mass Bishop Stephen will be celebrating the Diocese's annual Mass in celebration of marriage on Saturday 14 February at 12noon at S. Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle. All are most welcome to attend, if any couple are celebrating major anniversaries then there is an opportunity to have that noted during the Mass.

Disabled parking spaces. A gentle reminder that the space at the top of the drive is reserved for those less able to walk.

Make Your Giving Go Further with Gift Aid!

Did you know that if you're a UK taxpayer, your donations to the parish can go even further at no extra cost to you? With Gift Aid, the government adds 25% to your gift, helping us support our church, ministries, and community projects even more!

Sign up today by contacting your local parish Gift Aid Organiser or visit <https://forms.office.com/e/BrxQTPnn3a?origin=lprLink>

Together, we can strengthen our parish and continue our mission to serve God and our community. Thank you for your generosity!

Best wishes for a safe , happy and healthy week ahead

