

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



5th Sunday of Ordinary Theme: Light

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'

St Osmund's will be open for Parish Mass on
Tuesdays at 10.00am.
Sunday 8th February 9.30pm
Saturday 14th February 6.30pm
Sunday 22nd February 9.30am
Saturday 28th February 6.30pm

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.

Getting ready for Lent. Ash Wednesday is almost upon, and it's good for all of us to take some time in advance to think about what we will be doing during Lent. As always, the purpose is to grow closer to the Lord and through that closer to those around us. The traditional three-legged stool of deepening prayer, fasting (of all different kinds), and alms-giving form a solid basis for all sorts of different lenten activities – may we all find it a blessed season leading us to a glorious Easter celebration.

Ash Wednesday – Wednesday 18 February, Mass at St Osmund's at 12noon

First reading Isaiah 58:6-10

'Your light shall break forth like the dawn.'

Thus says the Lord:

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'

If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.

Responsorial Psalm 112(111): 4-9 R4a

A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

A light rises in the darkness for the upright; he is generous, merciful, and righteous. It goes well for the man who deals generously and lends, who conducts his affairs with justice.

He will never be moved; for ever shall the upright be remembered.

He has no fear of evil news; with a firm heart, he trusts in the Lord.

With a steadfast heart he will not fear.

Open-handed, he gives to the poor; his justice stands firm for ever.

His might shall be exalted in glory.

Second reading 1 Corinthians 2: 1-5

'I proclaimed to you the mystery of Christ crucified.'

I, when I came to you, brothers and sisters, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Gospel Acclamation John 8:12

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Alleluia.

Gospel Matthew 5:13-16

'You are the light of the world.'

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

'You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'

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Feast Days this week

Monday 9th February: St Teilo

Tuesday 10th February: St Scholastica

Wednesday 11th February: Our Lady of Lourdes

Saturday 14th February: Sts Cyril and Methodius

**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.

CAFOD Family Fast Day – 27 February 2026

This Lent, CAFOD's Family Fast Day on Friday 27 February invites us to respond through prayer, fasting and almsgiving to the needs of families facing floods and drought in places such as South Sudan, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe. Through support for CAFOD's Lent Appeal, we can help families grow food and care for their communities in the face of the devastating impacts of climate change. Gift-aid envelopes are available at the back of church. Further information is available at cafod.org.uk

Let your love show

Around the same time that Isaiah was reviving a living faith among the people in Jerusalem, his contemporary up in northern Israel, the prophet Amos, was expressing his fierce indignation about the plight of the poor and needy, who were being denied justice in the courts (Amos 5:7, 10, 12, 15) and whose goods were confiscated (5:11). In his turn, Isaiah also makes an impassioned cry for social justice. His sense of fairness and sharing comes from his deep sense that God's creativity and glory fills the whole earth (Isa 6:3). The divine presence fills not only the temple but the whole of creation. Yahweh desires human beings to make justice flourish on the earth. To buttress his appeal, Isaiah warns of a coming day of judgment, because of the inhumanity of the great and the powerful towards the weak, poor and helpless. His people, unfortunately, seemed to prefer formal religion to honesty and justice. Just as Isaiah felt personally cleansed through the burning coal scorching his lips, his people needs cleansing too. They need to change their behaviour, to practice a more honest kind of religion (Isa 1:16-17). Only if they sincerely try to practice justice can their worship mean anything. Isaiah ends with the promise: "if you feed the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, your light shall rise in the darkness.." (58:10.) Sharing and justice are essential, if we are to please our God.

In calling his people to conversion, John the Baptist echoed the teaching of Isaiah when he said, "Whoever has two coats must share with whoever has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Jesus, too, chose words from Isaiah about mercy and compassion, as his own manifesto. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." (Luke 4: 17-19; Isaiah 61:1)

In today's Gospel he says "let your light shine before others.." But how can we reconcile "letting our light shine" with the fact that Jesus spent most of his own life quietly in Nazareth, as the son of the carpenter. What Jesus practised at Nazareth was fidelity to the ordinary, the daily routine, which requires its own kind of courage. What sets him apart was anchoring his whole life in God, to let the Father be the guiding force in his life.

The quiet practice of virtue was the hallmark of the saints, who never published their holiness, but just tried to remain close to God, in a spirit of "loving attentive expectancy," as St John of the Cross put it. This spirit marked the life of saint Thérèse of Lisieux, who died at the age of 24, after living as an enclosed nun from her teenage years. Some of the other nuns thought that Therese had achieved nothing at all in her short life. Yet within a generation, this young nun who had never left her convent was proclaimed Patroness of the Foreign Missions. Even from her cloister she let her light shone out. Reflecting on the three virtues that last, faith, hope and love, Therese saw prayerful love as her special mission in life. "In the heart of the Church," she said, "I shall be love." And from that loving spirit the grace of God was richly channeled out to the missionary world.

Going to the margins

With the images of salt and light, Jesus says what he expects from his followers. They don't need to be always thinking about their own interests, their own prestige, their own power. Even though they are a small group in the huge Roman Empire, they are the «salt» and the «light» that the world needs. "You are the salt of the world." The simple people of Galilee spontaneously knew what he meant. They knew what salt is good for: giving food flavour and conserving it from spoiling. Just so, we need to contribute to helping people find the savour in life. "You are the light of the world." Without sunlight, our world would stay dark and gloomy. Jesus' disciples can shine a light to probe the meaning of life, to walk with hope.

These metaphors have something vital in common. If the salt stays in the shaker, it doesn't do its proper work. Only when it dissolves in the food can it give flavour to what we eat. The same thing happens with light. If it stays closed up and hidden away, it can't enlighten anyone. Only when it shines out in the dark can it illuminate and guide. A church isolated from the world can be neither salt nor light.

Pope Francis called on catholics today to "go out to the margins." He preferred a church that is "bruised and dirty because it has been out on the streets" to one that is "clinging to its own security, caught up in a web of procedures." We can't hunker down in our structures with passive hope. The Gospel invites us to run the risk of meeting face to face with others. It wants to promote culture of encounter, because what our church needs today is to heal wounds and to warm hearts. (José Antonio Pagola)

S. John Henry Newman added to the General Calendar

This week it was announced that S. John Henry Newman has been added to the general calendar, this follows from his designation as a doctor of the Church and is an added recognition of his importance to the Church. However, there is also a sense in which it doesn't make a difference to us in England because we were already celebrating him as a Feast. This suggests that a brief reflection on how we celebrate the Saints in the liturgy and especially at Mass could be useful. Although it's a slightly technical matter, we need to remind ourselves that at the heart of it are people who were called by God, responded to his call, have now ended up in heaven, and are seeking to help us make the same journey as they did.

The starting point is that we have no idea how many Saints there are, God is the one who makes people into Saints and there are many thousands of them up in heaven who are entirely forgotten down here – we may not know their names, but each year at All Saints' Day we gather them together in our thoughts and celebrations. Then there are the canonised Saints, these are the people that the Church has investigated and determined that they are in heaven. Even here there are far too many for us to celebrate them all, there is a book called the Martyrology which is the nearest thing we have to an exhaustive list; for each day of the year it lists the various Saints celebrated then. To give an example of scale, my copy is about two inches thick; each day typically has between 10 and 20 entries.

At the very other end of the scale, there are the top ranking Saints. Our highest rank of celebration (known as a Solemnity) is observed even if it falls on a Sunday of Ordinary Time; along with Our Lady, S. John the Baptist and S. Joseph have their own solemnities, and Ss. Peter and Paul share one. In the middle are the Feasts, these include the other Apostles, S. Mary Magdalene, and the three Archangels (Ss. Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael). Then there are the Memorials, who have a particular significance, this includes founders of major orders, such as S. Francis and S. Dominic, some of the great theologians such as S. Augustine and S. Leo the Great, reformers in the Church such as S. Teresa of Avila and S. Charles Borromeo. Most of the observed Saints are ranked as Optional Memorials, whilst it's good to celebrate them other observances can take precedence – it's in this last group that S. John Henry Newman now sits.

But this has just been looking world-wide. The General Roman Calendar applies across the world, and the Saints in it either have a world-wide reputation, or they help to draw our attention to particular parts of the Church (for example the Ugandan Martyrs). But it's important that we also have our own local celebrations, and so regions and diocese have their own local calendars as well. Here we have the English national calendar; this includes a Solemnity for S. George as our patron, and a higher rank for our neighbours' patrons (S. David and S. Patrick, as an Apostle S. Andrew already ranks highly), and the many holy women and men who have formed and served the Church here, including S. John Henry.

There is also an even more local calendar for the Diocese; this adds in S. Cuthbert as our patron, as well as those great northern Saints like S. Aidan, S. Oswald, S. Hilda, S. Wilfrid. Finally each parish has its own celebrations, S. Osmund's Day and the anniversary of the church's Consecration (27 May).

The Church seeks to combine reaching to every corner of the world, but also being local in every single parish. The many Saints whom God has raised up form a wonderful witness to His work, and they are all part of our family; by learning about them we can be encouraged in our own journeys with the Lord, by celebrating them we invite their prayers to help us grow. May all of the Saints, both world famous, and more local, assist us in that path which they have trod. – **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>

Best wishes for a safe , happy and healthy week ahead

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

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

