

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: 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



7th Sunday of Easter

Theme: Love your enemies

If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.



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

Saturday 16th May 6.30pm

Sunday 24th May 9.30am

Saturday 30th May 6.30pm

Saturday 6th June 6.30pm

Children's Liturgy

There will be a Children's Liturgy on Sunday 24th May

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.

Canon Eileen Harrop As many of you will already know, Eileen is leaving her post as Vicar of Gainford at the end of the month. Throughout her time in Gainford she has been a strong supporter of Churches Together in Gainford, and a very good friend of S. Osmund's. We send best wishes to her and Brian for their futures; if members of the congregation would like to contribute to a leaving gift from S. Osmund, there is an envelope in the sacristy. Eileen's final service will be at S. Mary's, Gainford, 4pm on 31 May – all are invited.

Bishop's Visitation Bishop Stephen will be visiting Gainford and Barnard Castle for the weekend of 30/31 May. Since arriving in the Diocese he has been working his way round the various parishes so that he gets a chance to see each church and meet each community. He will celebrate both parish Masses over that weekend.

Second collection: there will be a second collection for World Communications Day today.

First reading Acts 1:12-14

'All with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer.'

After Jesus was taken up into heaven the Apostles returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers and sisters.

Responsorial Psalm 27(26):1, 4,7-8 R13

I believe I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
whom should I dread?

There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
only this do I seek:
to live in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord,
to enquire at his temple.

O Lord, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer me.
Of you my heart has spoken,
'Seek his face.'

Second reading 1 Peter 4:13-16

'If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed.'

Beloved: Rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.

Gospel Acclamation Cf. John 14:18

Alleluia, alleluia.

I will not leave you as orphans, says the Lord.
I am going away and I will come to you, and your hearts will rejoice.

Alleluia.

Gospel John 17:1-11

'Father, glorify your Son.'

At that time: Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over

all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

'I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you.'

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Feast days this week

Monday 18th May: St John I

Tuesday 19th May: St Dunstan of Canterbury

Wednesday 20th May: St Bernardine of Siena

Thursday 21st May: St Christopher Magallanes and his Companions

Friday 22nd May: St Rita of Cascia

Cycle of Prayer**Right Use of the Media**

Especially on World Communications day — 7th Sunday of Easter

Background

'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation' is the message of the Gospel on the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. The Solemnity offers the starting point for understanding the right use of the media. The day is established by the Pontifical Council for Social Communications and each year there is message from the Holy Father.

There may be a collection on this day.

Prayer

*Father of light,
from whom every good gift comes,
send your Spirit into our lives
with the power of a mighty wind,
and by the flame of your wisdom
open the horizons of our minds.
Loosen our tongues
to sing your praise
in words beyond the power
of speech,
for without your Spirit
men and women could never raise
their voice in words of peace
or announce the truth
that is Jesus the Lord.*

There are many ways we can read today's Gospel. We can focus on the years of reflection that shaped it, rejoicing in the relationship between Father and Son expressed so clearly. We can also read it simply as it is written – as a prayer of Jesus for his followers, for us! Looking at it in this way, as a prayer, is probably the best way for us to enter into it in a liturgical context.

And what a beautiful prayer Jesus gives us.

It is good to read this Gospel knowing that everything Jesus said and did while on earth revealed to us the Father. Jesus came to show us the Father, and to leave us “an example that we should follow in his footsteps.” (1 Peter 2:21) So, what does Jesus tell us in this prayer about the God he is revealing?

It is impossible not to notice the amazing closeness Jesus has with the Father. It leaps out at us, expressed in almost every line. More than that, Jesus expresses this closeness in an informal, confident way without ever losing the reverence with which he holds the Father. He is confident, almost demanding, in the way he addresses his father. “Father, the hour has come: glorify your son....”, “...Now Father, it is time for you to glorify me....” Yet nowhere does he speak in a flippant or dismissive way. He acknowledges in everything he says that “...all you have given me comes indeed from you.” There is no hint of pride or arrogance in what he says or the way he says it.

Confident and informal, yet reverent and without pride or arrogance. All of us, I believe, can learn from this.

Jesus ‘knows’ the Father, and he knows the relationship the Father wishes to have with his people. Here, Jesus is speaking, not to a God on a throne, cold and distant from the world, but to a Father, with whom he has a relationship and who, he knows, loves and cares for him. But nothing is taken for granted in his relationship with his Father. He has been ‘sent’ by the Father and he owes everything he has to the father.

His relationship with his Father is a balanced one: Friendly and familiar, yet respectful and humble. Exactly how any son or daughter would want to relate to their own Father (or Mother). What Jesus shows us is no different.

There is one other thing in this Gospel that I think is well worth reflecting on:

In the Gospel we are told that “...before ever the world was...” Jesus was with the Father. The absolute trust Jesus shows in the Father, his confidence in talking to the Father is based on a relationship he knows and experiences. But... note this too: Jesus expresses the same trust and confidence in us! This may come as a surprise but it is there, clearly stated in the Gospel. Here is what he says, “...I have given them the teaching you gave to me, and they have truly accepted this, that I came from you...”. Jesus is confidently telling the Father that “they” (his followers) “have truly accepted this, that I came from you...”. He goes further and says, “...in them am I glorified.”

What trust God has in us. We may struggle to trust one another or even ourselves at times, but believe it or not, we are trusted – absolutely – by God, to carry on the work begun by Jesus. We talk so much about our faith in God, but how often do we think about God's faith in us? It is both overwhelming and humbling to realise that Jesus feels that, “...in them (in us) am I glorified.” Imagine, people who denied him, abandoned him, doubted him, misunderstood him, fell asleep when he needed their support most....and he can still say that “...in them am I glorified.”

The relationship Jesus has with his Father is the reason why he can speak with such trust and confidence to his Father. The trust he has in us, and the confidence with which he says, “...in them am I glorified.” must also come from his relationship with those he called his friends on this earth. Despite everything, Jesus saw something immeasurably valuable in those who were so obviously weak. He saw more in Peter, Thomas and the others than they saw in themselves. And the wonder is that he still does!

Today, as you listen to the Gospel, let Jesus, God, speak to you...just you. In the Gospel let him whisper, “you have been chosen by my Father to be mine in this world, and I trust you to be my witness. I believe...that in you I am glorified.”

If we feel daunted by this, do not fear, next week the Holy Spirit comes to us in the great Feast of Pentecost.

Delving into the Scriptures - Esther

Last month we looked at the book of Judith, in which a woman's actions saved the people of Israel from a fierce invasion; the next book in the bible has a related theme, with Esther saving the people again, this time from an attempted massacre.

The book of Esther is set during the time when the Israelites were in exile, this would place it chronologically between 2 Kings and Ezra. As it is set during the time of the exile, the story takes place in Susa, the Persian capital. The events take place in and around the royal court with King Ahasuerus – scholars variously identify him as Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I, or Artaxerxes II, giving a potential date between 486 and 358 B.C.

The book opens with Ahasuerus giving a banquet for his leading nobles, when he asks his queen to join him so that he can show her off she refuses to attend, and is then deposed in case other women hear and start to disobey their husbands. A large group of unmarried women is then gathered for him to choose a replacement, among these is Esther, a Jewish orphan of great beauty, she is chosen and becomes the new queen. Her uncle, Mordecai, who raised her overhears a plot against the king, and by reporting it saves the king – his actions are recorded but no reward is given, and his link to Esther is unknown.

A Persian noble, Haman, is appointed Viceroy; however, Mordecai refuses to bow before him. This leads Haman to plan the extermination of all of the Jews within the empire; he convinces the King to allow him to proceed with his plot. Mordecai hears of this and manages to smuggle the information to Queen Esther, telling her to intervene. All of the Jews hold a 3-day fast, at the end of which Esther goes to see the king. Going into the king's presence without being summoned held an automatic punishment of death; however, the king shows favour and instead asks Esther what she wants. She asks to host a dinner for the king and for Haman over the next two nights.

In the meantime, Haman is building a large gallows to hang Mordecai; he sees the invitation to dine with the queen and king as a great honour. During the second dinner, Esther reveals that she is a Jew and that Haman is planning to kill her along with the rest of her people; The king leaves angrily, at which point Haman starts to beg Esther, when the king returns he assumes that Haman is assaulting her. Haman is then hanged from his own gallows, Mordecai is given a great reward for saving the king, and the Jews are saved.

The style of the book is very typical of a semitic story-telling tradition, particularly with the way that various elements come together at the end (e.g., Mordecai being the king's saviour). Notably the book does not directly reference God; however, his presence is constant, especially when the people fast before Esther acts, seeking His assistance in their project.

Esther is the clear star of the book, it is striking that she is shown taking such an active role; especially given the opening and the deposition of her predecessor queen. She places her trust in God, even when called to take the dangerous step of going into the king's company.

The saving of the people is marked annually in the Jewish calendar with the feast of Purim. As well as eating and general merrymaking, this involves reading the story, when Haman's name is mentioned rattles are used to drown it out. We can see in the book a story of God's care and providence over his people, which combines with his inspiration for us all to work for good. – **Fr. Thomas.**

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi

Led by Bishop Stephen
22nd – 29th October 2027
£1725 per person

Places are limited to 50 pilgrims and places are allocated on a first come first served basis with payment of the deposit securing your place. The itinerary and booking details can be found on the diocesan website (www.diocesehn.org.uk) or alternatively via the parish office.

Diocesan Pastoral Strategy Thank you to everybody who attended the recent meeting or provided comments, these are being used to produce the parish return to the Diocese. The next step is for reflection at the partnership level, more information will be available shortly.

SVP Camp – Holy Island

Calling all young adults 18+. Do you have a week to spare to spend on Lindisfarne this Summer helping out at the Holy Island SVP Camp? Volunteers are needed to work alongside the children who stay in the SVP purpose-built centre on the island. Weeks, 3, 5 and 6 of the Summer have 60 children ready to have a great time rock pooling, walking, arts and crafting and enjoying outdoor activities but we need more helpers to ensure they have the best time!

- Week 3 Sat 1st August - 8th August
- Week 5 Sat 15th August - 22nd August
- Week 6 Sat 22nd - 29th August

If you are interested have a look at the website <https://svp.org.uk/microsite/ozanam-camp> or email Barbara Taws barbarat@svp.org.uk



Best wishes for a happy and healthy week ahead