

St Osmund's Catholic Church, Gainford

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Parish Priest: Fr. Thomas Mason e-mail: gainford.stosmund@rcdhn.org.uk**Tel: 01833 631457** **Mobile: : 07876 308657****Website: www.stosmunds.co.uk****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 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.

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/Brx2TPm3a?origin=lprLink>

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

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 or at safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk

**16th Sunday of Ordinary Time****Theme: The lenient judge**

You are sovereign in strength but you judge with mildness, and with great forbearance you govern us;

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

Saturday 18th July 6.30pm**Sunday 26th July 9.30am****Saturday 1st August 6.30pm****Sunday 9th August 9.30am****Children's Liturgy**

The Children's Liturgy will have a few weeks of during the summer break

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.

Diocesan Pastoral Strategy

Thank you to everybody who contributed to the Diocesan Pastoral Strategy. The next steps for reflection at the partnership level, have begun to take place. The parish response to the strategy can be found on the parish website

Second Collection – today there will be a collection for the work of *Stella Maris* (the Church's work with seafarers).

Giving Us Time to Grow

There were people in Our Lord's time who wanted him to separate the bad from the good as well. Among them were people who claimed the moral high ground, the Pharisees whose name means "the separated ones." Even John the Baptist expected Jesus to separate the cream from the skim, to have only holy people around him. John foretold that Our Lord would separate the chaff from the wheat. He said (Mt 3:12) "He will gather his wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out." That's precisely what Our Lord didn't do. He had all sorts of people around him, a rainbow coalition of people, the learned, the ignorant, the good-living, the bad living, tax-collectors, prostitutes, the lot. What in God's name is he doing, they said. Why doesn't he get down to business? Why doesn't he weed them out?

As any gardener knows, weeding can be the greatest threat of all to the life of the young seedling. At first, the problem is one of identifying which is which. The weeds must be left until the seedling can be clearly recognised. Even then, removing the weeds may pose an even greater threat. It might sever the seedling's root system. Often the weed brings the seedling away with it.

In the case of human beings it is an even more risky business. "Weeding-out" has no history of success which doesn't seem to curb people's passion for it. Seventy years after Hitler's final solution, the horrendous weeding out of six million Jews in concentration camps, the Bosnian Serbs are attempting the brutal policy of "ethnic cleansing." Race, religion, colour, sex, politics are still considered ready-reckoners for identifying society's weeds. Increasing power over nature provides new and sinister instruments for weeding out. The unborn child, the seed of life is threatened with abortion. At the other end of life, euthanasia is proposed as the final solution for the new Jews, the old, the maimed, the incurables and the burdensome. Right through life, the weeding-out continues remorselessly. The handicapped are institutionalised, the delinquent are penalised, the deviant are ostracised and the poor are patronised.

Weeding out is not confined to faceless bureaucracy. We're all tempted to try our hand at it. We are sharp at spotting the undesirables, the troublemakers, the misfits. One shudders to think of the people who might have been weeded out if God had not chosen to intervene. Probably most of the saints in the calendar. Peter, after his triple denial in the crucifixion crisis should have been weeded out for failing the leadership test. Strange isn't it, that Christ never weeded out Judas? The church did not always show her master's tolerance. Galileo could testify to that. The spirit of the Inquisition lives on. Excommunications and anathemas may be out of fashion but old habits die hard.

The parable of the weeds is starkly simple and yet widely ignored. To the question "Do you want us to go and weed it out?" the answer of Jesus is a categorical "No." And the reason is self-evident. Only God has eyes sufficiently discerning and fingers sufficiently gentle for this job. Weeding out is God's prerogative. Life would be so much better for everybody, if only we would leave it to him. associationofcatholicpriests.ie

The Cycle of Prayer**Europe****Background**

Pope John Paul II dedicated 6 patron saints to Europe:

- St Cyril and St Methodius (14 February)
- St Catherine of Siena (29 April)
- St Benedict (11 July)
- St Bridget of Sweden
- St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross

They reflect the rich spiritual history of the Continent from East to West and across the centuries. In the Cycle of Prayer Europe is remembered in the Summer when a number of the Feasts days occur.

Europe day is marked on 9 May

Prayer

O God, who gave one origin to all peoples
and willed to gather from them one family for yourself,
fill all hearts, we pray, with the fire of your love
and kindle in them a desire
for the just advancement of their neighbour,
that, through the good things
which you richly bestow upon all,
each human person
may be brought to perfection,
every division may be removed,
and equity and justice may be established in human
society.

S. Bridget of Sweden

For some time, the Church has recognised S. Benedict as the patron of Europe; however, and without any slight to S. Benedict, Pope S. John Paul II was also keenly aware of the large diversity of the continent and so decided to add a series of co-patrons. In 1999 S. Bridget of Sweden, S. Catherine of Siena, and S. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross were given that status. This Thursday is S. Bridget's feast.

Born in 1304 into a noble Swedish family; her father was wealthiest landowners in the country, and her mother was related to the ruling family of the time. As would be expected, she was married at a young age (by modern standards) to a man from another noble family. They had eight children, of whom six survived infancy (one of whom is also recognised as a Saint). During this time her sense of charity was already being recognised, in particular her care for unwed mothers and their children.

This life could easily have continued for many years; however, shortly Bridget and her husband returned from a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, he died. Bridget was 44 at the time, but decided to devote her widowhood to care for others. She joined the Third Order of the Franciscans, seeing this as a way to live a life caring for the poor and sick.

She was not to remain a Franciscan, however. She established a new religious community, now known as the Order of the Most Holy Saviour, or the Bridgettines. The foundation was well-endowed by the King and Queen of the time; however, their rule required that any surplus income be given to the poor, and so there was certainly no hording of wealth.

In 1350 Bridget travelled to Rome. This was to gain formal papal recognition for her new order; as well as part of a mission to raise the moral tone of the world at the time. This was during the time when there were rival papal claimants living in Rome and Avignon, and so it took until 1370 to gain the recognition which was the main purpose of the visit. She had not wasted the time, and had already gained a strong reputation for the Bridgettines through their good works in the city. She remained in Rome until her death in 1373 continuing to work with the poor; and increasingly speaking out against abuses and corruptions in the Church.

Throughout her life, she had a number of visionary experiences; several of these involved encounters with Christ on the Cross, as a result of which she placed the Passion of Christ at the centre of her devotions. She was also the origin of some of the familiar elements of the nativity scene; having had a vision in which Our Lady knelt to worship the new-born Christ.

She is associated with the devotion known as the 'Fifteen O's' which involves praying 15 Our Fathers, 15 Hail Marys, and a set of prayers each beginning with 'O (e.g., O Jesus Christ, Eternal Sweetness...).

I mentioned at the beginning how S. John Paul II was looking to embrace the diversity of Europe by including additional patrons. S. Bridget 'represents' northern Europe; however, as he included her, he noted her double-life, including beginning as a wife and mother. He was conscious of including among our European patrons somebody to include what he called "ordinary occupations of the life of the laity in the world, and especially to the high and demanding vocation of forming a Christian family". May S. Bridget pray for all of Europe, but especially those who carry out that 'high and demanding vocation'. – **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.

C.C.T.V. Following the break-in last year, we have reviewed security arrangements, and for your information, there are now C.C.T.V. cameras at a few external locations on site.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy week ahead

