

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 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](tel:01912433305) or at safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk



18th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Theme: God's pity

The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in mercy.

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

Saturday 1st August 6.30pm

Sunday 9th August 9.30am

Saturday 15th August 6.30pm

Sunday 23rd August

Church Restoration – as the next step in ensuring that our beautiful church is well maintained for future generations, there are some repairs to the plastering needed. This will involve the church being out of action for a few weeks while there is scaffolding inside; as such Mass will be celebrated in the parish rooms - this will begin with Mass next weekend (Sunday 9 August).

Children's Liturgy

The Children's Liturgy will have a few weeks off 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.

First reading Isaiah 55:1-3

‘Come and eat.’

Thus says the Lord:

‘Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;

and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy?

Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.’

Responsorial Psalm 145(144): 8-9, 15-18. R cf.16

You open your hand and fulfil us, O Lord.

The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in mercy.

How good is the Lord to all,

compassionate to all his creatures.

The eyes of all look to you,

and you give them their food in due season.

You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

The Lord is just in all his ways,

and holy in all his deeds.

The Lord is close to all who call him,

who call on him in truth.

Second reading Romans 8:35, 37-39

‘Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ.’

Brothers and Sisters: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel Acclamation Matthew 4:4b

Alleluia, alleluia.

One does not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

Alleluia.

Gospel Matthew 14: 13-21

‘They all ate and were satisfied.’

At that time: When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, ‘This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.’ But Jesus said, ‘They need not go away; you give them something to eat.’ They said to him, ‘We have only five loaves here and two fish.’ And he said, ‘Bring them here to me.’ Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

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Feast days this week

Tuesday 4th August: St John Mary Vianney

Wednesday 5th August: Dedication of the Basilica of St Mary Major

Thursday 6th August: The Transfiguration of the Lord

Friday 7th August: St Sixtus and his Companions

Saturday 8th August: St Dominic

The Cycle of Prayer

A Deeper Understanding between Christians and Jews

Prayer

*Let us pray also for the Jewish people,
to who the Lord our God spoke first,
that he may grant them to advance in love of his name
and in faithfulness to his covenant.
Almighty ever-living God,
who bestowed your promises on Abraham and his descendants,
graciously hear the prayers of your Church,
that the people you first made your own
may attain the fullness of redemption.*

Hungers of body and spirit

The crowds in today's gospel had nothing to eat, but our Lord knew they had another hunger apart from that of the stomach. They followed Jesus, listening to every word he spoke, and in none of the stories does it say that they were bothered about food for the body. In today's episode, it is the apostles who expressed this concern, on behalf of the people. In another place it says that Jesus "looked at the crowd, and felt sorry for them, because they had been with him for several days, and had nothing to eat." Yet the twin hungers in today's world are for meaning as well as for food.

Jesus sets the apostles a seemingly impossible challenge. When they point out the lack of food he tells them to feed the people themselves. This, of course, cannot be done, and they tell him so. He then taught them, and us, a basic lesson: "Whatever you have is enough. Just let me have it, and I will do the rest." At Cana, all they had was water, and it was all he needed; He would do the rest. In another version of this story, where one of the apostles says "We only have a few loaves and some fish, but what is that among so many?" The temptation was to put the loaves and fish back in the bag.

There is power in the actions of Jesus as he says a prayer and begins distributing the bread. Before he called Lazarus forth from the tomb, he raised his eyes to heaven, and said "I thank you, Father, that you have heard me." It was his constant contact with the Father that inspired his actions. At his baptism in the Jordan he had heard the Father's voice saying "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." He lived constantly with the Father's approval, even when everyone else rejected him. What a lesson this is for all of us! In commissioning his apostles, later on, he would tell them to feed the hungry. Because he came "to do and to teach," that is why he fed the hungry before sending his disciples to do the same.

It is a scandal that so large a part of today's world is made up of hungry people. Most of us have more than we need of money, clothes, food, etc. We may not have as much as we want, but we have more than we need. There is a struggle here, and there is a tension from which we cannot escape. "Whatever you do for the least of these, I will take as being done for me." The decision to walk in the Christian Way removes many of my options and choices. Christianity is much more than just saying prayers. It is also a call to action. It is a call to do as Jesus would do. I cannot read today's gospel and remain indifferent or detached. "It is in giving that we receive." When we give, we discover that we are not at a loss. It is an extraordinary paradox, but it is literally me. I will never know this until I try it. How do you consider yourself in the whole area of responsibility for the welfare of others? We are all familiar with the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, Concern, Goal, etc., and we may admire what they do. But we must go beyond admiration and become willing to imitate, and follow their example. Christianity is about witnessing, and in the witnessing is the invitation to "go and do likewise." The opposite to love is not hatred, but indifference. If God is love, and I am indifferent, then I must seriously examine where God is in my life. This is a fundamental and basic question that must be asked, and it must be answered.

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Third Œcumenical Council – the Council of Ephesus

Last month we began to look at the various Œcumenical councils by reflecting on the Council of Constantinople which followed on from the Council of Nicaea. Both of these had the great Christological struggle in their heart – the way that the Church needed time and much effort to come to a clearer understanding of how it is that Christ can be both God and man.

In the early fifth century a new ‘solution’ to this problem began to be advocated, especially in the theological schools associated with Antioch (a major Christian centre since the first century). This became particularly associated with Nestorius, a monk and theologian in Antioch. Nestorius became famous for his preaching, and in 428 was appointed as Patriarch of Constantinople. This elevated position meant that his proposal gained much more prominence, and with that scrutiny. Nestorianism, roughly speaking, accepted that Christ is both God and man, but stresses the distinct elements within him. This became particularly focused on the titles given to Our Lady; Nestorians opposed the now widespread use of θεοτοκος (*theotokos* – God bearer/mother of God), preferring to refer to her as χριστοκος (*christokos* – Christ bearer/mother of Christ).

Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, in particular opposed this, stressing the unity of Christ both God and man. As the dispute continued, Cyril referred the matter to Pope Celestine I; the Pope agreed with Cyril and ordered that Nestorius recant his position, accept the unity of Christ, or face excommunication. In order to consider the matter more fully and deeply, the Emperor Theodosius II called a council to meet at Ephesus in June 431. Ephesus was chosen in part because it had always been a centre of Marian devotion, Our Lady lived there for a number of years in the house of S. John.

As with the Council of Constantinople, Pope Celestine did not travel to attend in person, but sent legates on his behalf. Cyril took the position of president of the council. Before the formal sessions could open, there were many informal discussions among the bishops as they arrived (inevitably given the transportation of the time, this took some while). Sadly these discussions did not tend towards mutual understanding or better relations, but mutual antagonism.

The Council formally opened on 22 June 431, despite the fact that some delegations of bishops were still *en route*. The deliberations of the Council involved very robust debate, as well as procedural wrangling. When the delegation from Antioch arrived, rather than join the main council, they formed a separate council which proceeded to condemn Cyril. Despite all of these troubles, the council was able to consider both the position of Nestorius, as well as of the teachings of Nestorianism. Nestorius was declared to be removed from his position as Patriarch of Constantinople, and his teaching was condemned (in both cases, mirroring the previous declarations of Pope Celestine).

In particular the Council declared that Christ is a single person, who had both a human and divine nature. These two could not be separated out (as Nestorianism implies). This leads to the acceptance of the title of *theotokos* for Our Lady, as the child she bore in her womb was God from the very moment of his conception. The Council also confirmed the creed from the Council of Nicaea as the firm basis of the faith.

The effects of the Council have been long-lived. For example, we use the title ‘Mother of God’ with great frequency, especially in the ‘Hail Mary’; and our Eastern brethren always refer to Our Lady as *theotokos*. However, it was not universally accepted, with the Assyrian Church (which we looked at back in March) breaking away over the Council – fortunately, a common Christological declaration showed a great unity of faith with it more recently.

As we rejoice in Our Lord’s incarnation, in his unity as both God and man; we also turn to Our Lady, and ask for the prayers of the great God-bearer. – 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 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

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.

Second Collection – there is to be a second collection for the support of sick and retired clergy. According to the agreement between the Diocese and Ordinariate, this collection is sent to the Clergy Relief Fund of the Ordinariate. This remains open next week.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy week ahead

