

The Parish of the Durham Martyrs
Incorporating the churches of Our Lady of Mercy
& St. Godric, St. Joseph and St. Bede

Parish Priest: Fr. Colm Hayden



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Parish Secretary: Mrs. M. D. Towers

Parish Newsletter - Sunday 5th April



Priest: Fr. Colm Hayden

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Office hours Tuesday-Friday,
8.30am- 4.00pm

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(Please telephone the Chaplain if you have someone in hospital who would like a visit)
SVP Confidential number 07596 821 089

The first thing I'd like to mention is my hope that you are all coping well in lockdown. It does affect us in different ways, depending on our own particular personalities. Some whom I thought might struggle with it are actually doing okay. Others are finding it a struggle. And as one might expect, there are no shortage of gurus telling us how to cope. I'm definitely not going to try and be one here. From one round the world navigator to a Benedictine monk, all have advice to give. However, most of these individuals have chosen isolation as their way of life. We haven't! Perhaps the most helpful advice is that we try to develop a discipline. Keep busy, don't slouch around. As a wise Hebridean islander said, "it's easy to fritter away your time, and that is very soul destroying." So do try not to.

One area of challenge for all of us in the Durham Martyrs' Parish is just how we adapt to social media. Marjorie is working on the bulletin and answering emails etc., and Leanne and Katie are developing our website on a daily basis. Thank you to them. But for us to have access to as many as possible, it is important to educate so many of our older parishioners on its use. So perhaps younger family members, or friends, might see this time as an opportunity to do just that. If I can adjust, anyone can.

We are trying to re-connect with as many parishioners as possible in these trying times, especially the more isolated. We need everyone's support here. Do let us know via the parish website or through Marjorie, or me. Thanks. Do continue to look after yourselves, and continue to pray for all of us.

I am sending out a copy of the Bishop's Easter Pastoral Letter at the end of this bulletin.

Parish Buildings

The Parish Office, Presbyteries and all church buildings are **officially closed to all visitors** and the **parish secretary** can be contacted by email and mobile on all parish matters. The new number is **07391 529 827**.

If you would like to join the **Parish Contact Team** as a volunteer, or if you know of - or you are - a vulnerable person who needs assistance, please ring **Katie** on **07483 369 561**.

Durham Martyrs Parish - Light a candle Sunday 5 April at 9pm

We invite you to join in spirit with the Parish of the Durham Martyrs in saying the two prayers below for all affected by the Coronavirus Covid-19 disease.



We suggest you light a candle at 9pm on the evening of Palm (Passion) Sunday and join with us for 15 minutes, sending up our prayers and uniting us at a time when we cannot be together.

Parish Prayer during Coronavirus Covid-19

For all who have contracted coronavirus, we pray for care and healing.

For those who are particularly vulnerable, we pray for safety and protection.

For those who have died from coronavirus we pray they rest peacefully with You.

For those who have lost loved ones we pray for comfort in their grief.

For all who experience fear or anxiety, we pray for peace of mind and spirit.

For affected families who are facing difficult decisions between food on the table or public safety, we pray for policies that recognise their plight.

For our brothers and sisters around the world, we pray for shared solidarity.

For public officials and decision-makers, we pray for wisdom and guidance.

Father, during this time may your Church be a sign of hope and love to all.

Grant peace. Grant comfort. Grant healing. Be with us, Lord. Amen.

A prayer for all NHS Workers and especially those in our parish:

Lord Jesus, who healed the sick and gave them new life,
be with doctors, nurses and carers, as they act as agents of your healing touch.
In desperate times, keep them strong yet loving;
and when their work is done,
be with them in their weariness and in their tears. Amen.

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

An application to the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme was made recently on behalf of St. Godric's for recovery of VAT invoices paid to RNJ and Stone Technical Services Group Ltd in respect of roof repairs and replacement of ridge tiles. The application was successful and I can confirm that the sum of £6,502.47 has been received and credited to the parish Deposit Account.

St. Godric's Steering Group wish to express their thanks to our Parish Treasurer Fred Haywood for this success!

Appeal from the Northern Cross – Note from the Editor

We welcome you to read Northern Cross, free of charge, at northerncross.org.uk, this April by clicking on the PDF on our home page. The trouble we have, like thousands of others at this time - is that our income comes from sales and advertising and we've just lost all of the sales and advertising revenue. (Although they'll still appear, the places are closed and can't pay, of course. They're facing a terrible time.) We're a not-for-profit company and charity and many people think we are funded by the diocese, but we've always been self-funded.

If you would like to support us this year by taking out an annual online subscription - 15 months for £14.40 and access to our online archive - you can do so by making a bank transfer to: Northern Cross. HSBC. Account number: 81602292. Sort code: 40-43-11. Please use your name and postcode as a reference when you make the transfer, and email norcross@btconnect.com with your name and a contact number, so that we can call you to confirm that your payment has been received.

The editor also suggests that "it will be good for people to send in their stories on how they're worshiping and keeping in touch/ helping each other throughout this too - so if there's anything you'd like to send, please do".

Updated information on Holy Week from the Bishop to Clergy

Palm Sunday

The Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem is to be celebrated within sacred buildings; in Cathedral churches the second form given in the Roman Missal is to be adopted; in parish churches and in other places the third form is to be used. (CDWDS Decree II).

At the Masses celebrated by priests in their parish churches, all of the palms should be blessed. The blessed palms can then be made available to the faithful in your parish to take home at a time when the current restrictions on public and social gatherings has been lifted.

Chrism Mass

The Holy Father has deferred the celebration of the Chrism Mass in Rome until it is possible to do so with a gathering of the clergy and people. The Archbishops of England and Wales have decided to act in solidarity with Pope Francis and asked other Ordinaries to do the same. After taking counsel, I have decided that our Chrism Mass will be postponed.

Mass of the Lord's Supper

The washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted. At the end of the Mass of the Lord's Supper the procession is also omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle. On this day the faculty to celebrate Mass in a suitable place, without the presence of the people, is exceptionally granted to all priests. (CDWDS Decree II).

Good Friday

In the Universal Prayer, Bishops will arrange to have a special intention prepared for those who find themselves in distress, the sick, the dead, (cf. Missale Romanum). The

adoration of the Cross by kissing it shall be limited solely to the celebrant. (CDWDS Decree II).

Special intentions for use in the Universal Prayer of Good Friday are being drafted; I will send these to you once completed.

Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil is to be celebrated only in Cathedral and parish churches. At 'The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium' the preparation and lighting of the fire is omitted, the Paschal Candle is lit, the procession is omitted and the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet) follows. The 'Liturgy of the Word' then takes place. For the 'Baptismal Liturgy' only the 'Renewal of Baptismal Promises' is maintained (cf. Missale Romanum). The Liturgy of the Eucharist then follows." (CDWDS Decree I & II).

Easter Day

There are no specific directives for the celebration of the Easter Mass.

Prayer Resources for Holy Week for Families and Personal prayer. The Magnificat booklet for Holy Week is recommended as an excellent resource both in printed form for those who already subscribe to it. The United States version has kindly made online access to its publication free for the time being. This provides a form of Morning, Evening and Night Prayer, the daily Mass Readings, a daily mediation and Saint of the Day: <https://us.magnificat.net/free>. Other resources to support family and personal prayer can be found on the diocesan website.

Mass and prayer available online

<http://walsingham.org.uk/live-stream> - Live Mass at 12 noon every day

<https://mass-online.org/daily-holy-mass-live-online/> - Live Masses throughout the day from around the world

<https://www.churchservices.tv> - Mass, Rosary and prayer throughout the day

There will also be the following available on our social media and YouTube channel:

Live Rosary every Weekday - 10:30am

Live Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament every weekday

Stations of the Cross will be available to view this Friday evening, 3rd April, and on Good Friday morning.

Fr. Colm will be saying Mass privately at 10.00am on Sunday mornings, so please join him in prayer.

An update from the Diocesan E-Newsletter

Live streaming of Masses within our Diocese

Streaming is taking place, and if you'd like access to where, please contact the parish secretary and she will let you know.

The Vicariate for Faith & Mission:

Pope Francis - Prayer to Mary for Protection during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith. You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need. We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us: Amen

He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas - we who are put to the test - and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen



Papal Blessing, "God turns everything to our good":

On Friday 27 March 2020, 11 million people tuned in to be joined in universal communion with Pope Francis. In this unique act Pope Francis performed the extra-ordinary papal blessing "*Urbi et orbi*" granting a plenary indulgence to the faithful and reminding us all that Christ is our anchor and hope.

Watch the video of this beautiful, sacred and solemn moment in the midst of the pandemic (courtesy of Vatican News Facebook Page).

You can read the full transcript of the blessing through Vatican News Website.

Cardinal on 'Easter Duties', Confession and the Forgiveness of Sins:

As we approach our most important week of the year - Holy Week - the way we follow Christ - from his triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, to the foot of the Cross, to an empty tomb - will be completely different this year.

Our Catholic churches would have been packed on Easter Sunday but in 2020 we won't be able to take communion and celebrate the resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour under the church roof. This year we will follow Holy Week at home.

In preparation, many would have availed themselves of the Sacrament of Reconciliation - Confession - to prepare for a fresh start at Easter.

But what does it mean for our spiritual well-being and salvation if we can't fulfil our "Easter Duties"? Many have asked, and Cardinal Vincent Nichols answers in his video which can be accessed on the E-Newsletter.



DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**

Rt Rev Robert Byrne CO
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Pastoral Letter of Bishop Robert Byrne CO
for distribution in Holy Week 2020

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

I especially wanted to write to you as we begin Holy Week facing the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic. I want to assure you that all the clergy and faithful are uppermost in my thoughts and prayers. Without doubt we are living in challenging times but we should see this as an opportunity to have an ever-deeper faith and trust in the Lord. In these days of Holy Week, we unite ourselves more earnestly to the sufferings of the Lord on the Cross and wait with him for the glorious day of the Resurrection and new life.

At this time, we normally look forward to participating in the events of our Lord's death and resurrection through the liturgies of the Sacred Triduum. Sadly, this year we are unable to do so. Instead we unite ourselves spiritually with the whole Church in our homes. We can do this in several ways. I would encourage all those who are able to read the texts of the Holy Week liturgies and to pray the Liturgy of the Hours or the Holy Rosary. We can also make a Spiritual Communion which prayerfully expresses our faith in Christ's presence in the Blessed Sacrament. There are a number of spiritual resources on our diocesan website to help you do this. Thanks to modern technology we can also join with our Cathedral and other churches in the diocese and elsewhere which are live-streaming the ceremonies. In these ways we are able to deepen our unity with our brothers and sisters throughout the world who are suffering with us and sometimes in a worse situation.

A number of people have asked about the Sunday Mass obligation and the requirement to make our Easter duties of receiving Holy Communion and confessing our sins. By decree of the President of the Bishops' Conference of 18th March 2020, the Bishops of England and Wales have dispensed with the Sunday obligation to attend Mass for the time being and also, for this year, the requirement to receive Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Reconciliation at Easter or thereabouts. The Bishops have asked that all should make a Perfect Act of Contrition at this time. This requires us to be contrite of heart for what we have done, know and be overwhelmed by the love and mercy of God for his children, and to approach this grace with humility and resolution not to sin again.

Many of us are bewildered by the situation in which we find ourselves. Normal life has ceased by the unprecedented measures which all of us have a duty to undertake in order to contain and stop this threat to life. Nonetheless our Catholic faith remains a vital comfort and support to us now and as we face the future. We can sustain our life of prayer by the reading of the Scriptures, praying the Rosary, novenas and litanies and using the social media to keep ourselves connected in the communion of faith.

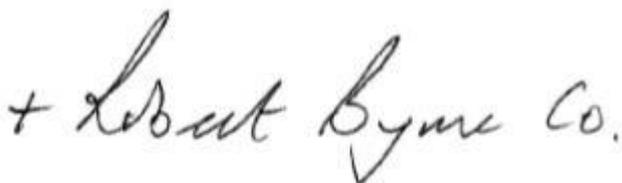
I want to say a special word to those who are preparing to be baptized or received into full communion with the Church at the Easter Vigil. I had the pleasure of meeting many of you at the Rite of Election on the 1st Sunday of Lent. I witnessed then the excitement and enthusiasm that you had at taking this great step in your journey of faith. I am sorry that you are unable to continue this journey as you planned. I assure you that your baptism or reception will take place as soon as possible. In the meantime, please see the delay as an opportunity to deepen your love and trust in the Lord. His grace continues to work in our lives whatever the circumstances.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all those who are doing so much to support our local communities and parishes. I want to thank especially our NHS staff and all those who have care of the sick. You are doing a splendid job and we are all deeply grateful to you. Thanks also to our headteachers and staff of the numerous schools that have remained open - your work is an invaluable support to parents working in the NHS and others who are at the forefront of the battle against the Covid-19 virus.

I ask you all to remember the injunction of the Lord to love our neighbour, which has not been suspended! Please have a special care for those who are elderly or vulnerable and be ready to give them a helping hand. Please keep in your prayers those who suffer with the virus and those who care for them and for those who have died.

Although we are more physically separated at this time yet we are united through our faith and in the prayers of our Lady and the saints. Let us find our hope in Christ who is with us in all the trials of our life.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "+ Robert Byrne CO." The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

✠ Rt Rev Robert Byrne CO
Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle