

Finchale Partnership  
Celebrating the Year of St Joseph 2021



First Edition – prepared by The Parish of the Durham Martyrs

## Year of St Joseph

To mark the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, the Holy Father has proclaimed a “Year of Saint Joseph” from 8 December 2020, to 8 December 2021.

In his Apostolic Letter “ Patris corde (“With a Father’s Heart”), Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.

The Holy Father wrote *Patris corde* in this time of the Covid-19 pandemic, which, he says, has helped us see more clearly the importance of “ordinary” people who, away from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble Saint Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence,” who nonetheless played “an incomparable role in the history of salvation.”

He was a **beloved, tender, obedient father** to the child Jesus as he grew up in his home. Because he stands at the crossroads between the Old and the New Testaments St. Joseph is also venerated as a father by all Christian people. The Pope emphasises that, through the love of this father, we see the love and mercy of God revealed.

St. Joseph, as an obedient and accepting father, welcomed the will of God, setting aside his own ideas to accept unconditionally into his life Mary and events he did not understand. Pope Francis calls Joseph, “**courageously and firmly proactive,**” full of hope and faith, able to deal with whatever life brings. By his example, “he encourages us to accept and welcome others as they are, without exception, and to show special concern for the weak.” ( *Patris corde*)

His “creative courage” can influence the way we deal with difficulties.” “The carpenter of Nazareth,” explains the Pope, was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting in divine providence.” He had to deal with “the concrete problems” his Family faced, problems faced by families throughout the world, especially migrants.

In this sense, St. Joseph is the special patron of all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty. From St Joseph, writes Pope Francis, “we must learn to love the Church and the poor. Every needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirm person is ‘the child’ whom Joseph as guardian of the church continues to protect.”

As a **carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family**, St Joseph also teaches us “the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one’s own labour. Pope Francis uses this aspect of St. Joseph’s character to speak about work, which has become “a burning social issue” and the need to appreciate the importance of dignified work, of which Saint Joseph is an exemplary patron. Work, he says, is an opportunity to develop our talents and abilities, and to put them at the service of others. Those who work, Francis explains, “are cooperating with God himself, and in some way become creators of the world around us.” In light of rising unemployment due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Pope

calls everyone to “review our priorities” and to express our firm conviction that no young person, no person at all, no family should be without work!” (6).

Pope Francis calls St. Joseph **a father “in the shadows,”** centred on Mary and Jesus.

Pope Francis describes Joseph’s fatherhood of Jesus as “the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father.”

“Fathers are not born, but made,” says Pope Francis, “taking up the responsibility to care for their child, raising the child to be capable of deciding for themselves, enjoying freedom and exploring new possibilities.”

Joseph, says Pope Francis, knew how to love with extraordinary freedom. He never made himself the centre of things. He did not think of himself, but focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus.

Happiness for Joseph involved a true gift of self: “In him, we never see frustration, but only trust,” writes Pope Francis. “His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust.” Joseph stands out, therefore, as an exemplary figure for our time, in a world that needs “fathers,” and not “tyrants”; a society that “rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction.”

A true father realises that “he is most a father and an educator at the point when he becomes ‘useless,’ when he sees that his child has become independent and can walk the paths of life unaccompanied.” Being a father, the Pope emphasises, “has nothing to do with possession, but is rather a ‘sign’ pointing to a greater fatherhood”: that of the “heavenly Father.”

### **A daily prayer to St Joseph... and a challenge**

At the conclusion of his Letter, the Pope adds a prayer to St Joseph, which he encourages all of us to pray together:

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.  
Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,  
and defend us from every evil. Amen.

## **A Shipwreck, and a New Devotion**

The origin of the practice of meditating on **St. Joseph's Seven Joys and Sorrows** comes from a **miraculous event involving two Franciscan Fathers**:

"Two Fathers of the Franciscan order were sailing along the coast of Flanders, when a terrible tempest arose, which sank the vessel, with its three hundred passengers. The two Fathers had sufficient presence of mind to seize hold of a plank, upon which they were tossed to and fro upon the waves, for three days and nights. In their danger and affliction, their whole recourse was to St. Joseph, begging his assistance in their sad condition.

The Saint appeared dressed as a young man of beautiful features, encouraged them to believe in his assistance, and, as their pilot, conducted them into a safe harbour. They, wishing to know who their benefactor was asked his name, that they might gratefully acknowledge so great a blessing and favour. He told them he was St. Joseph, and advised them daily to recite the Our Father and Hail Mary seven times, in memory of his seven dolours or griefs, and of his seven joys, and then disappeared."

### **The First Sorrow and Joy:**

The perplexity of deciding whether or not to divorce Mary, who is with Child, and the angelic revelation to Joseph of the Incarnation.

St. Joseph, Chaste Spouse of the Holy Mother of God, by the Sorrow with which your heart was pierced at the thought of a cruel separation from Mary, and by the deep Joy that you felt when the angel revealed to you the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation, obtain for us from Jesus and Mary, the grace of surmounting all anxiety. Win for us from the Adorable Heart of Jesus the unspeakable peace of which He is the Eternal Source.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)

### **The Second Sorrow and Joy:**

The anxiety of seeing Jesus born into abject poverty, and the awe of beholding the Shepherds and the Magi as they adored the Christ Child.

St. Joseph, Foster-Father of Jesus, by the bitter Sorrow which your heart experienced in seeing the Child Jesus lying in a manger, and by the Joy which you felt in seeing the Wise men recognise and adore Him as their God, pray that our hearts, purified by thy protection, may become a living crib, where the Saviour of the world may receive and bless our homage.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)

### **The Third Sorrow and Joy:**

The pain of seeing Jesus's blood spilt during His circumcision, and the privilege of bestowing the name "Jesus" on his child.

St. Joseph, by the Sorrow with which your heart was pierced at the sight of the Blood which flowed from the Infant Jesus in the Circumcision, and by the Joy that flooded your soul at the privilege of imposing the sacred and mysterious Name of Jesus,

obtain for us that the merits of this Precious Blood may be applied to our souls, and that the Divine Name of Jesus may be engraved forever in our hearts.  
(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)

#### **The Fourth Sorrow and Joy:**

The agony of Joseph's own soul on hearing Simeon's prophesy of Mary's pierced heart, and the sweet knowledge that Jesus will bring salvation.

St. Joseph, by the Sorrow when the Lord declared that the soul of Mary would be pierced with a sword of sorrow, and by your Joy when holy Simeon added that the Divine Infant was to be the resurrection of many, obtain for us the grace to have compassion on the sorrows of Mary, and share in the salvation which Jesus brought to the earth.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)

#### **The Fifth Sorrow and Joy:**

The burden of being told to flee to Egypt to escape Herod's massacre of the Bethlehem infants, and the honour of bringing the Living God to crush the Egyptian idols.

St. Joseph, by your Sorrow when told to fly into Egypt, and by your Joy in seeing the idols overthrown at the arrival of the living God, grant that no idol of earthly affection may any longer occupy our hearts, but being like you, entirely devoted to the service of Jesus and Mary, we may live and happily die for them alone.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)

#### **The Sixth Sorrow and Joy:**

The fear of Archelaus in Judea when returning from Egypt, and the wonder of seeing Moses's prophesy fulfilled when the angel directs the Holy Family to Nazareth.

St. Joseph, by the Sorrow of your heart caused by the fear of the tyrant Archelaus and by the Joy in sharing the company of Jesus and Mary at Nazareth, obtain for us, that with all fear removed, we may enjoy the peace of a good conscience and may live in security, in union with Jesus and Mary, experiencing the effect of your salutary assistance at the hour of our death.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)

#### **The Seventh Sorrow and Joy:**

The terror of losing Jesus in Jerusalem for three days, and the relief of finding Him in the Temple.

St. Joseph, by the bitter Sorrow with which the loss of the Child Jesus crushed your heart, and by the holy Joy which flooded your soul in recovering thy Treasure on entering the Temple, we beg you not to permit us to lose our Saviour Jesus by sin. Yet, should this misfortune befall us, grant that we may share your eagerness in seeking Him, and obtain for us the grace to find Him again, ready to show us His great mercy, especially at the hour of death; so that we may pass from this life to enjoy His presence in heaven, there to sing with you His divine mercies forever.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)

**Closing Prayer:**

O God, Who in your wonderful providence vouchsafed to choose Blessed Joseph to be the Spouse of Your most holy Mother; grant, we beseech you, that we may deserve to have for our intercessor in heaven he whom on earth we venerate as our holy protector: Who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

**THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH PRAYER**



***To you, O blessed Joseph***

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our afflictions, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also.

Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness.

As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.



Dear St. Joseph,

Loving Father,

Everyone around the world is having trouble now in their lives with Covid 19.

May you send all of our prayers up to God, Mary and all of the angels.

This prayer we make to you, St. Joseph,  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen

Written by Raffa

Year 4

# Mass Readings for St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

19<sup>th</sup> March 2021



Grant we pray, almighty God,  
that by Saint Joseph's intercession  
your Church may constantly watch over  
the unfolding of the mysteries of human salvation,  
whose beginnings you entrusted to his faithful care.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever and ever.

**Amen**

**First Reading** – A reading from the second book of Samuel 7:4-5,12-14,16

The word of the Lord came to Nathan:

‘Go and tell my servant David, Thus the Lord speaks: “When your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. (It is he who shall build a house for my name, and I will make his royal throne secure for ever.) I will be a father to him and he a son to me; if he does evil, I will punish him with the rod such as men use, with strokes such as mankind gives. Yet I will not withdraw my favour from him, as I withdrew it from your predecessor. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever.”

The word of the Lord.

**Responsorial Psalm** – Psalm 88(89):2- 5,27,29

*His dynasty shall last for ever.*

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;  
through all the ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.  
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,  
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.

*His dynasty shall last for ever.*

‘I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn to David my servant:  
I will establish your dynasty for ever  
and set up your throne through all ages.

*His dynasty shall last for ever.*

‘He will say to me: “You are my father,  
My God, the rock who saves me.”  
I will keep my love for him always;  
with him my covenant shall last.’

*His dynasty shall last for ever.*

## **Second Reading –**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 4:13,16-18,22.

The promise of inheriting the world was not made by Abraham and his descendants on account of the righteousness which consists in faith. That is why what fulfils the promise depends on faith, so that it may be a free gift and be available to all of Abraham's descendants, not only those who belong to the Law but also those who belong to the faith of Abraham who is father of all of us. As scripture says; *I have made you the ancestor of many nations* – Abraham is our father in the eyes of God, in whom he put his faith, and in who brings the dead to life and calls into being what does not exist.

Though it seemed Abraham's hope could not be fulfilled, he hoped and he believed, and through doing so he did become the *father of many nations* exactly as he had been promised: *Your descendants will be as many as the stars*. This is the faith that was 'considered as justifying him'.

The word of the Lord.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

Glory and praise to you, O Christ.  
They are happy who dwell in your house, O Lord,  
for ever singing your praise.  
Glory and praise to you, O Christ.

## **Gospel**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

2:41-51

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.'

'Why were you looking for me?' he replied. 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' but they did not understand what he meant.

He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority.

The Gospel of the Lord.

### **Intercessions**

*In this Year of St. Joseph, Patron of the universal church, we ask him today, as we celebrate his feast, to take our prayers and petitions to Jesus, the child he loved and nurtured.*

St. Joseph, loving, caring father, working always for the good of your family and courageous in times of peril, we ask you to help our Holy Father, Pope Francis and all priests and religious as they work to share the Good News of your Son Jesus through their words and actions.

*St. Joseph, help us in our prayers....AMEN*

St. Joseph knew poverty, homelessness and the plight of being a refugee. Let us pray today, that those suffering in such situations may be helped by the generosity and loving care of those more fortunate and that in post-pandemic times, greater efforts may be made to create a just world for all.

*St. Joseph, help us in our prayers....AMEN*

During his life with Mary and Jesus, St. Joseph knew all about family worries and problems. We remember today all families living in difficulties of any sort. May they be granted patience, understanding and acceptance like St. Joseph.

*St. Joseph, help us in our prayers....AMEN*

In his letter, Pope Francis points out the dignity of honest work shown in the life of St. Joseph the Worker. Covid is causing much unemployment. We pray for all those without work, who worry about their needs and those of their families that their situation will soon be improved.

*St. Joseph, help us in our prayers....AMEN*

St. Joseph is revered as the patron of a happy death so we remember our family and friends and all who have died and pray they are safely in Heaven. We pray too for all who are ill at this time, for their speedy recovery and we thank God for the love and skills of those who minister to them.

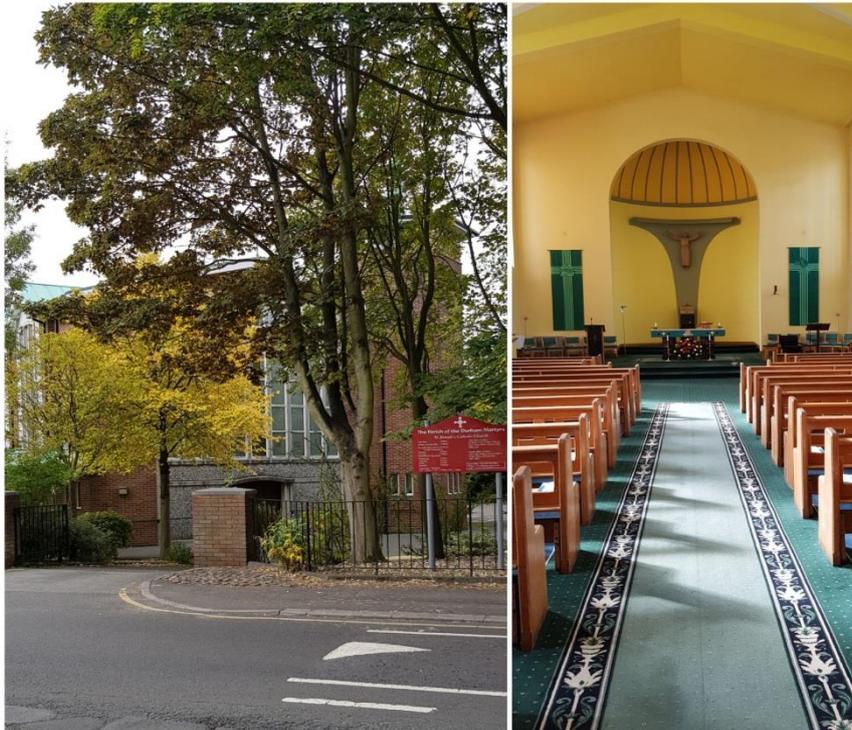
*St. Joseph, help us in our prayers....AMEN*

For ourselves, we ask that we may be like St. Joseph, people in the shadows, quietly offering what contribution we can as we live our daily lives.

*St. Joseph, help us in our prayers....AMEN*

We ask Mary, Mother of us all, to join with Joseph her husband in offering these prayers on our behalf to her Son Jesus;  
*Hail Mary.....*

### **The Parish of the Durham Martyrs - St. Joseph's Church, Gilesgate, Durham**



St Joseph's Church was built in the 1960s to serve the growing population at Gilesgate and is part of the Parish of the Durham Martyrs which was formed in 2013.

Due to the reduced number of clergy in our diocese and in order to function more effectively in our ministry, it was decided to merge the Parish of Our Lady of Mercy, St. Godric and St. Bede with the Parish of St. Joseph, under the continued guidance of the Fr. Colm Hayden, who had previously been the parish priest of both parishes.

We decided that our new parish would be named in honour of the many Catholics martyred for their faith in Durham during the Protestant Reformation. Since then we have continued to flourish as one community living out the Gospel not only in our three churches but as one Church across the city joined with our brethren throughout the world in The Holy Catholic Church.

## **A brief history of St Joseph's Church**

From the mid 1800's until the early 1900's the local population grew very rapidly due to the influx of Irish workers. During this period the people of Gilesgate attended Mass at St. Cuthbert's Church in the city centre and their children attended the parish school.

In the 1930's the Sherburn Road and Sunderland Road estates were built to accommodate the occupants of the old condemned houses on the Durham riverbanks, which were demolished. The point was reached where St. Cuthbert's could no longer accommodate the larger population in the church or the school.

St. Joseph's Parish was founded in 1937 and, to begin with, arrangements were made by Fr. W. I. Meagher the parish priest of St. Cuthbert's for Mass to be held in the old Crescent Cinema on Marshall Terrace. The same building was used for fundraising activities for a proposed dual purpose hall in Mill Lane. Fr Meagher carried responsibility for this development and the hall was duly built in 1939 (the existing St. Joseph's school hall). It had a raised platform at one end for the altar, with a room either side, one for the priest and one for the altar servers.

This was a remarkable achievement and great improvement for the adults but the children would continue to walk to school in Old Elvet for many years to come. No school buses then!

For Fr. Meagher and his succession of curates, Fr. J O'Brien, Fr. J Vokes and Fr. Jennings it was considerable additional work, walking up from Old Elvet to Gilesgate Moor for the services each week during those difficult wartime years, but towards the end of the war the pressure eased with the purchase by Fr. Meagher of a parish car to help serve St. Joseph's. By this time the Parish was growing rapidly and had reached its 1000mark.

In 1948 the parish was separated. Fr. Jennings left Old Elvet to found a new parish at Chilton and Fr. James Kenny was appointed the first parish priest, moving into Fr. Meagher's most recent acquisition, no 4 North View, Sunderland Road, as his presbytery.

Fr. Kenny inherited a considerable parish debt and faced an uphill struggle to develop the parish. In 1952 he built a new presbytery on the Mill Lane site, allowing space for a church to eventually succeed the church hall. He began to enjoy to benefits of living close to his church hall but moreover was able to accommodate a curate. In 1953 Fr. Joseph Lavery was appointed as the first parish curate and was to serve for 10 years, greatly assisting Fr. Kenny, who had administered single handed, a widespread parish, including Sherburn Hill, Sherburn Village, Littletown

and Shadforth as well as Sherburn House Hospital and Gilesgate Fever Hospital. In all 1300 parishioners.

Sadly, Fr. Kenny's health was not strong enough to cope with the anxieties of building a new school and church. In 1961 the Bishop transferred him to an established parish, St. Joseph's at Benwell, where he died on the feast of the Assumption in 1964.

His successor was Fr Henry Olsen of Ushaw College who continued to enjoy Fr. Lavery's support which allowed him to represent the Bishop on all matters educational, which responsibility occupied him considerably away from the parish. Nevertheless, he inherited the building of St. Joseph's infant and junior school on the site incorporating the church hall. The Hall was in use for quite some time before the school was added in 1962. There were many children in the school in the early 1960's with an annual intake of about 60 children. A temporary hut was erected in the school grounds and the altar platform was also used as a classroom. In 1972 St. Thomas More School was built at Belmont to relieve the congestion.

It also fell to Fr. Olsen to initiate the building of the new church and St Joseph's Church was eventually built, being completed in 1966: a lovely modern building, giving the maximum of light. It was built to seat 500. The architect was David Brown of Newcastle and the contractor was George Stephenson. The tender, exclusive of fees and expenses was £51,660. The church was connected to the existing presbytery by a sacristy block.

The church was opened in by Bishop James Cunningham on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1966.

An interesting feature of the opening ceremony was that the Mass was one of the first to be con-celebrated by eight priests, following the changes authorised by the recent 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council. One Hundred Priests from the diocese attended along with the Mayor and Mayoress of Durham, Councillors and other local clergy.

Over the years many changes have taken place. To begin with, a wooden hut was erected in the car park and was used for many functions, including tea and biscuits after Sunday Mass.

Later plans were realised for the reordering of the church and provision of more social space, so we now have the Jubilee Room and Don Bosco rooms. By this time the old hut had become rat infested and was demolished. The car park was later extended and the grounds landscaped. These are now maintained with the help of an enthusiastic parish gardening team.

Fr. Olsen was elected to the Chapter of Canons in 1973 and transferred to St. Joseph's, Birtley, when the Benedictines vacated that Parish. He was then much nearer to the Bishop's House and his special duties.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> January 1978 Fr. Olsen was succeeded by Fr. John Condon, previously curate at Ryhope. Despite the parish population now being over 2,000 Fr. Condon lost his entitlement to a curate when Fr. Brendan Kelly was moved to Longbenton. However in 1985 Fr. Michael McGovern SDB was appointed to assist, although at that time, he resided at St. Cuthbert's presbytery.

Tragically, Fr. Condon died suddenly in hospital on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1991, aged only 57 years and was buried in his native Ireland. To Fr. Condon is attributed much credit for the close affiliation our parish enjoys with its fellow Christian churches and his memory is firmly established in all who knew him. Truly a parish priest who was a man of the people.

In August 1991, Fr. Adrian McLeish was appointed to succeed Fr. Condon.

In February 1996 Fr. McLeish was replaced by Fr Michael Corbett. Fr Corbett was a much loved priest and worked hard to carry on the work begun by Fr. Condon and his predecessors.

Fr. Corbett was transferred to St Andrew's in Newcastle in April 2005 and Fr. Colm Hayden, who had served there, joined our Parish.

We celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016

Although stark and modern by contrast with our sister church of St Godric's and the other historic churches in our partnership, there are a number of notable features.

The large window above the main church entrance was sponsored by Durham Light Infantry and includes their emblems.

The smaller windows around the church are dedicated by parishioners in memory of deceased members of their families / parish groups.

The Risen Christ statue above the Altar was carved by the late Michael Doyle, a retired miner from Houghton-le-Spring who was a pitmen's leader for over 30 years and was Chairman of the Lambton Lodge for many years. He had a long political career and served on the old Durham County Council from 1938 until 1974.

Amongst his other works, Michael carved the crib figures for Durham Cathedral when he was in his 70's. Having discovered he had a natural gift for wood-carving, he was inspired to attempt such figures after a visit to Rome where as a Roman Catholic, he was particularly impressed by many of the statues he saw there.

St. Joseph's is surrounded by beautiful gardens, maintained with the help of our dedicated gardening group, Many of the roses and shrubs provide a memorial to deceased parishioners and priests including Fr. Condon, Fr. McGovern and Fr. Corbett.

The church hosts a monthly Memory Café for people and their carers living with dementia: regular lunch and film clubs and our youth ministry events.

### Virtual St Joseph's Altar

The instructions for making a 3D Altar are courtesy of [www.virtualstjosephaltar.com](http://www.virtualstjosephaltar.com)

In the tradition of the Sicilian St. Joseph Altars of New Orleans, the Virtual St. Joseph Altar made its online debut in February of 1999. For more information please visit the website where you will find instructions for making your altar.

