

**St. Mary's Catholic Church**  
Birch Road, Barnard Castle, DL12 8NR  
**Clergy Fr. Thomas Mason (Parish Priest)**

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Website: <https://www.stmarys-rc-barnardcastle.org>

## Corpus Christi

*Congratulations to our children who receive first Holy Communion*

### Services this week

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Celebration</b>
Saturday 6	4pm	Middleton	Corpus Christi
Saturday 6	6.30pm	Gainford	Corpus Christi
Sunday 7	9.30am	Barnard Castle	Corpus Christi
Sunday 7	11.30am	Gainford (Ord.)	Corpus Christi
Monday 8	6.15pm	Barnard Castle (Lat.)	<i>S. William of York</i>
Tuesday 9	10am	Gainford	<i>S. Columba</i>
Thursday 11	10am	Barnard Castle	S. Barnabas
Friday 12	12noon	Gainford (Ord.)	<b>MOST SACRED HEART</b>
Friday 12	6-7pm	Barnard Castle	Holy Hour
Saturday 13	6.30pm	Barnard Castle	Eleventh Sunday of the Year
Sunday 14	9.30am	Gainford	Eleventh Sunday of the Year
Sunday 14	11.30am	Gainford (Ord.)	Second Sunday after Trinity

**Confessions:** after Mass, by appointment, or Monday 5.30-6pm, Thursday 5.30-6pm, or Saturday 10-11am

**Second collection** the second collection for the Lay Training Fund remains open until 14 June.

### Mass Readings – Parish Mass Book, page 83

First Reading	<i>Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a</i>
Responsorial Psalm	<b>O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord!</b> ( <i>Ps. 147</i> )
Second Reading	<i>1 Corinthians 10:16-17</i>
Gospel Acclamation	<b>Alleluia, alleluia. I am the living bread that came down from heaven, says the Lord. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live for ever. Alleluia.</b>
Gospel	<i>John 6:51-58</i>

## Rota

This week: Welcome –; Reader – Andrew

Next week: Welcome –; Reader – Andrew; Bidding Prayers – Jane

**Note from Bishop Stephen.** The Bishop has written thanking the parish for the welcome and hospitality last week.

### **S. Barnabas, son of encouragement**

When we hear about the various Saints they cover a vast area of space and of time as well; this week we celebrate one Saint who goes back to the very beginnings of Christianity – S. Barnabas. We first encounter him in Acts 4, this is right at the beginning of the Church's life. He is mentioned as a member of the Church already, who sells some of his property giving the proceeds to the Apostles. He is called Joseph, and the Apostles gave him the surname of Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), he is mostly then known by that name. He was from a Hellenised Jewish family (i.e., Greek speaking Jews) being both a Levite and from Cyprus.

Once S. Paul converted, he and Barnabas rapidly became close companions. It is widely suggested that Barnabas may have been a student of the Jewish scholar Gamaliel, who was also Saul's teacher, and they knew each other through his school. It was Barnabas who introduced the newly converted Paul to the Apostles, other members of the Church still being fearful of the man who had been persecuting them until moments before. He was sent to provide oversight to the rapid evangelisation which was happening at Antioch, and S. Paul joined him in that work – the two continue to work together in a number of different mission fields. In one of the more dramatic moments, on arriving at the city of Lystra, they healed a crippled man; the locals interpreted this as a sign that they were the gods, and thought that Barnabas was Zeus, and that Paul was Hermes – the two rapidly sought to correct them.

At the end of Acts 15 there is a disagreement between them, so significant that they part ways; this is the last time that Barnabas is spoken of in Acts (which thereafter is largely an account of S. Paul's work). There is a further direct reference to him in the New Testament, in 1 Corinthians 9 he is spoken of as working alongside S. Paul. Then in Colossians 4, S. Paul notes that S. Mark is with him and identifies him as Barnabas' cousin, this implies that Barnabas was dead by this point (as Mark had been working with him, and so would only have joined Paul once Barnabas was no longer alive).

There is a strong and ancient tradition that he was martyred at Salamis, back in his homeland of Cyprus. This suggests that the success of his preaching aroused great opposition, and that he was dragged out of the Synagogue and stoned to death. Around 400 years later, the Archbishop had a vision in which the burial place was revealed to him allowing him to recover S. Barnabas' relics and enshrine them in a local church.

He almost had an ongoing impact on the life of the Church in that there is an early Christian text attributed to him, the Epistle of Barnabas. This circulated widely in the early Church, and as early Bibles were put together (as a single volume rather than a set of scrolls) it was sometimes included. There was disagreement over whether it should be accepted as part of the New Testament or not, before the Church reached a judgment that while it is not rejected as harmful, it is not inspired Scripture. It has two parts, the former interpreting the Old Testament in the light of Christ; the latter being Christian teaching very typical of the time.

Barnabas is first encountered as he gives of his property to the Church, this is seen as providing encouragement; he then works as an evangelist, before giving even his life for the Church, in all of this he continues to provide that encouragement. Even today, we can take encouragement from his life, his death, and the ongoing prayers which he offers for us. – Fr. Thomas.

**Prayer List:** Among the sick of the parish, please keep John Burgess, Anthony Cole, Norah Mackay, Izzy Herbert, Alice Musto, Diedre and Pat Estall in your prayers. We pray particularly for the recently departed, including Kay Green, and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time. If you know of others who would like to be added to the parish prayer list, please let Fr. Thomas know.

You may find the following prayer useful as a way of drawing our parish ever closer together round Our Lord. It is through his grace that we are turned from a gathering of people in the same place, into a parish, into a genuine community.

Loving Father, we the people of St Mary's Parish offer ourselves to you, to be your people in this place, to be your Church in our community, and to be instruments of peace, forgiveness and love. Help us grow in gratitude so that we can recognise and thank you for all our blessings.

Instil in us a deep sense of generosity so that we are willing to share our gifts, our talents, our time and our resources. Help us face whatever the future holds and to make new beginnings in your name.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. Amen.

**Solemnity of the Sacred Heart.** As this Friday is the solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the usual Friday abstinence from meat does not apply. There will be a light burning in front of the statue of the Sacred Heart throughout this month.

**Monthly giving** As part of making financial matters clear and transparent, from now on we will publish the giving to the parish on a monthly basis (as this allows standing orders to be included).

April 2026: Loose plate (giving at the offertory during Mass) - £536.15

Weekly envelopes and monthly standing orders - £909.67

Total: £1445.82

Many thanks for your generosity.

### **Message from Bishop Stephen – Pastoral Strategy**

Thank you to all parishes who have completed and returned their reflections as part of our diocesan pastoral strategy. I, together with others, look forward to reading and praying through your discernments in the Spirit.

We next move to a second phase as we invite local parishes to discern together in their partnerships, or with others in their neighbouring area. Information and updates will be shared on our website.

Please keep this discernment in your prayers as we seek to respond to the Lord's call to worship Him and serve our communities in a flourishing and sustainable manner.

**Knit and natter – following Mass on Thursday** a group to spend some time in fellowship together, whilst engaging in knitting, crochet, embroidery...or indeed any other similar craft.

## **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](http://www.diocesehn.org.uk)).

**Sister Act at Carmel College.** Students will be performing Sister Act: The Musical at Carmel College, Darlington, from Wednesday 8th July to Friday 10th July at 6:30pm each evening. This is a joyful, uplifting show centred around community, faith, and music, and we would love to welcome members of the wider community to support our students. Tickets are available: <https://www.ticketsource.com/whats-on?q=carmel+college>

## **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](mailto:barbarat@svp.org.uk)

All helpers receive training and will need to be DBS checked.

**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. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Fiona Bissell or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 0191 2433305 or at [safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk)

## **Prayer for England**

As the jubilee year has finished, we return to offering the prayer for the conversion of England at the end of Mass.

O Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother, look down in mercy upon England, thy Dowry, and upon us all who greatly hope and trust in thee. By thee it was that Jesus, our Saviour and our hope was given unto the world; and He has given thee to us that we might hope still more. Plead for us thy children whom thou didst receive and accept at the foot of the Cross O sorrowful Mother. Intercede for our separated brethren, that with us in the one true fold they may be united to the chief shepherd, the vicar of thy Son. Pray for us all, dear mother, that by faith and fruitful in good works we may all deserve to see and praise God together with thee, in our heavenly home. Amen.