

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

Tel: 01833 631457 | Mobile: 07876 308657

Email: stmary.barnardcastle@diocesehn.org.uk thomas.mason@diocesehn.org.uk

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

Fourteenth Sunday of the Year

Services this week

Day	Time	Location	Celebration
Saturday 4	4pm	Middleton	Fourteenth Sunday of the Year
Saturday 4	6.30pm	Gainford	Fourteenth Sunday of the Year
Sunday 5	9.30am	Barnard Castle	Fourteenth Sunday of the Year
Sunday 5	11.30am	Gainford (Ord.)	Fifth Sunday after Trinity
Monday 6	6.15pm	Barnard Castle (Lat.)	<i>S. Maria Goretti</i>
Tuesday 7	10am	Gainford	<i>Votive</i>
Thursday 9	10am	Barnard Castle	<i>S. Augustine Zhao Rong</i>
Friday 10	12noon	Gainford (Ord.)	<i>Votive</i>
Friday 10	6-7pm	Barnard Castle	Holy Hour
Saturday 11	6.30pm	Barnard Castle	Fifteenth Sunday of the Year
Sunday 12	9.30am	Gainford	Fifteenth Sunday of the Year
Sunday 12	11.30am	Gainford (Ord.)	Sixth 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 Peter's Pence remains
Next week is Sea Sunday there will be a second collection for *Stella Maris*

Mass Readings – Parish Mass Book, page 99

First Reading	<i>Zechariah 9:9-10</i>
Responsorial Psalm	I will bless your name for ever, my God and king. (Ps. 144)
Second Reading	<i>Romans 8:9, 11-13</i>
Gospel Acclamation	Alleluia, alleluia. I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, you have revealed the secrets of the kingdom to little children. Alleluia.
Gospel	<i>Matthew 11:25-30</i>

Rota

This week: Welcome –; Reader – Andrew

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

Work and Prayer – the Benedictines

This Saturday sees the feast of S. Benedict, a great Saint and one we reflected on a couple of years ago, but as so often with these great Saints it isn't just their own life but the continuation of what they founded which is why they are remembered. Seen this way, S. Benedict isn't just a man from a few hundred years ago, but is a living presence in the Church today through the thousands of sons and daughters who seek to live that he organised.

The idea of monasticism doesn't begin with S. Benedict, what he contributed was a rule of life which became a defining feature of those monasteries which adopted it, which rapidly became the large majority in the West. The idea of a monk or nun is, in one sense, quite simple – they seek to leave the world behind in order to focus more clearly on God. This simple idea rapidly becomes more complex as the realities of life join in (e.g., sourcing appropriate food, having access to the Sacraments) and when groups seek to live in community together even more so. The Rule of S. Benedict establishes a basic framework for how the community can live together, especially can pray together, but also how the practicalities of life can be arranged.

One of the key aspects of the Benedictine life has been the balance between prayer and work (*ora et labora* in Latin). Monks and nuns spend part of each day joining together for prayer, especially singing the daily office and Mass; but then also have particular work. The original plan was for a monastery to be self-sufficient as far as possible, and so that work would often include working in the fields, as well as keeping the monastery organised. The need for educated monks rapidly meant that teaching younger members was a work, this started to include others who were not pursuing a monastic vocation – running schools has been a major benedictine work.

The original vows in the Rule are stability, conversion of life, and obedience to the superior. Stability reflects the idea of a distinct community, monks and nuns do not usually move from community to community, but seek to grow together as a family. Conversion of life includes the whole of the life of the community, and so includes the idea of personal poverty and chastity; but also presents as these as a life-time journey of growing virtue. The vow of obedience reflects the importance of structure within the community, the Abbot or Abbess is the key figure – not supposed to be remote, but having a fatherly/motherly care for the whole of the family.

Even though many monasteries had already been founded, Benedictines came to dominate monastic life in the West, many of those already in existence adopted the Rule and joined the benedictine family. This included England as much as elsewhere, Westminster Abbey being the most famous historically Benedictine church in the country; as well as many individuals including S. Augustine of Canterbury, S. Bede, and S. Cuthbert. For many years English Benedictines continued through living on the continent, but were able to return as conditions improved. Today several communities exist here, both of monks and nuns.

Each Abbey is autonomous, but there is now a Benedictine Confederation which seeks to foster cooperation and good relations between these communities. Across the world there are around 6500 Benedictine monks and nuns, still seeking to live that life which S. Benedict

outlined; as well as many others who while not living in a community still seek to be inspired by it as they serve God throughout their lives. – 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, Angela Williams, and Elizabeth Walsh 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.

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).

May 2026: Loose plate (giving at the offertory during Mass) - £1037.99

Weekly envelopes and monthly standing orders - £844.67

Total: £1882.66

Many thanks for your generosity.

Church Open Day. We are holding an open day on Saturday 8 August, 1.30-4pm. During this, the church will be open to visitors with shorts tours available; as well as refreshments in the Garden Room (and garden, depending on weather). Please add this date to your diary, and spread the word to friends and neighbours.

Day for Life. On Sunday 21 June, we mark the Day for Life under the theme "The Wonder of the Child in the Womb." The theme also recognises the loss of children who died before birth and the grief of their parents. The bishops' message and prayers can be found on the Day for Life website: www.dayforlife.org The second collection will go towards the Day for Life Fund, which distributes grants to organisations that promote respect for life from conception until natural death. You can also donate online via the Day for Life website."

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).

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.

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

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

Religious Pendants At the back of church are some religious pendants which Katey and Pip Bolland have made, these are available for a donation (which will go to church funds). Thank you to Katey and Pip for such lovely work and an excellent idea.

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

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.