

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

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**Nineteenth Sunday of the Year**

**Services this week**

| Day         | Time    | Location              | Celebration                         |
|-------------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Saturday 8  | 6.30pm  | Barnard Castle        | Nineteenth Sunday of the Year       |
| Sunday 9    | 9.30am  | Gainford              | Nineteenth Sunday of the Year       |
| Sunday 9    | 11.30am | Barnard Castle (Ord.) | Tenth Sunday after Trinity          |
| Monday 10   | 6.15pm  | Barnard Castle (Lat.) | <b>S. Lawrence</b>                  |
| Tuesday 11  | 10am    | Gainford              | S. Clare                            |
| Thursday 13 | 10am    | Barnard Castle        | <i>Ss. Pontian &amp; Hippolytus</i> |
| Friday 14   | 12noon  | Barnard Castle (Ord.) | S. Maximilian Kolbe                 |
| Friday 14   | 6-7pm   | Barnard Castle        | Holy Hour                           |
| Saturday 15 | 6.30pm  | Gainford              | <b>ASSUMPTION</b>                   |
| Sunday 16   | 9.30am  | Barnard Castle        | <b>ASSUMPTION</b>                   |
| Sunday 16   | 11.30am | Barnard Castle (Ord.) | <b>ASSUMPTION</b>                   |

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

The Second Collection for Sick & Retired Priests remains open this weekend.

**Mass Readings – Parish Mass Book, page 114**

|                    |                                                                                          |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First Reading      | <i>1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a</i>                                                             |
| Responsorial Psalm | <b>Show us, O LORD, your mercy, and grant us your salvation. (Ps. 84)</b>                |
| Second Reading     | <i>Romans 9:1-5</i>                                                                      |
| Gospel Acclamation | <b>Alleluia, alleluia. I long for you, O LORD, my soul longs for his word. Alleluia.</b> |
| Gospel             | <i>Matthew 14:22-33</i>                                                                  |

## **Rota**

This week: Welcome – Jane; Reader – Andrew

Next week: Welcome – Wynn; Reader – Nuala; Bidding Prayers – John

### **The Divine Office – the daily prayer of the Church**

Last Wednesday, in his regular weekly audience, Pope Leo spoke specifically about the Divine Office (also called the Daily Office, or the Liturgy of the Hours). As Catholics we are rightly used to placing the celebration of Mass at the centre of our lives; however, the Holy Father also rightly reminds us of this element of the Church's formal public prayer. I know that some members of the parish already pray the daily office, and I strongly encourage you in this work.

The origins of the Divine Office stretch far back, indeed it's possible to see a certain analogy between the Synagogue and the Office as sitting alongside the Temple and the Mass; a series and pattern of prayers to complement the sacrificial liturgy. In the Christian context, it is really with the rise of monasticism that it takes off; those early monks and nuns sought to make prayer their entire life, spending many hours every day in prayer. This was matched by various prayer services in churches which larger congregations would attend (in addition to going to Mass in the morning) which marked parts of the day.

This marking of the passing of the day is a central aspect of the Office – the sanctification of time. Offering particular prayers at certain times recognises the role of God in all parts of the day – as the sun rises, dedicating the new day to Him; as the sun sets giving thanks for his presence during the day; and so forth. It also helps to keep the mind on God by turning to him each day at particular moments. Over time the Office also developed in line with the Church calendar, so particular seasons (e.g., Lent, Easter, Advent) were reflected in it, and the meaning of the season was brought to mind; also the cycle of feasts celebrating different Saints and events in the history of salvation.

At the heart of the Divine Office is the book of the Psalms. I once heard an Orthodox Priest refer to the Psalms as the 'hymnbook of the Church' and that is a fitting title. Singing the Psalms is a particular offering of worship to God and has always been seen as one of the highest forms of worship by the Church. Different parts of the Church followed different patterns for these, but historically most would have sung all 150 Psalms each week – this allows these wonderful, Biblical, texts to become so familiar. Singing them can then become a meditation in itself, allowing the heart to rise to God ever more fully.

Over the years, other elements developed within the Office; certain hymns are sung, readings from Scripture as well as later Christian writings. All of these come together try and perform that 'sanctification of time' that through offering these offices of prayer each day is made holy.

This sanctification of time would by itself make the Divine Office into something worthwhile; however, it is also something which is 'of the Church'. By praying the Office, people are joined with other Catholics across the world. When a man is ordained Deacon and promises to pray the Office he does so 'for the Church and the world' – this is more than just a private prayer. When individuals join in the Office, they join in with what Pope Leo called 'the breath of the life of the Church, which makes the Holy Spirit circulate

through her Body.' May we all sanctify each day, and pause to reflect on whether praying part of the Office might be a fitting way for you to do so. – Fr. Thomas.

**Tom Ball – R.I.P.** Last weekend, whilst on holiday with his family, Tom was taken ill. Fortified by the Sacraments of the Church, and surrounded with the love and prayers of his family, he died peacefully. We pray that he be given the rest and peace of Christ.

**Second Collection – Sick & Retired Priests** the second collection for the support of sick and retired priests remains open this weekend. Under the agreement between the Diocese and the Ordinariate, this goes to the Ordinariate's Clergy Relief Fund (which will be pay for Fr. Thomas' retirement in due course).

**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 Tom Ball and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time, including Douglas Ingledew. 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).

July 2026:      Loose plate (giving at the offertory during Mass) - £744.46

Weekly envelopes and monthly standing orders - £799.67

Total: £1544.13

Many thanks for your generosity.

**New Rota** There is a new rota for welcomers, readers, bidding prayer writers, and refreshment organisers. Please do be generous in signing up for these different ways of helping with Sunday Mass. If you have any questions about what it involves, please speak to Fr. Thomas or to Jane Roberts.

**Children's Space.** It is a great joy to see an increasing number of children join us at Mass. Sometimes our younger parishioners do get restless during Mass, to try and help you may have noticed that there's a space at the back of church with some soft furnishings, books, and toys – feel free to take children there during services if you think it would help. "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

**Children's Liturgy** In September we will be beginning to offer children's liturgy during Sunday morning Masses. This will be during the first part of Mass, and offer teaching to them at a level more appropriate for their age; then they will come and join the rest of us for the second half of Mass. It will be for children in primary school. Further details will be provided closer to the time.

**Ordinariate Masses** some restoration work will be taking place at Gainford, and scaffolding will mean that the church is temporarily out of action. During this time the Ordinariate Masses (Sunday 11.30 and Friday 12) will be celebrated here at Barnard Castle.

**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)).

**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.

**Organ Recital** Thursday 20 August, 7pm at Barnard Castle Methodist Church. Norwegian organist, Victoria Ulriksen, free entry (donations welcome, to be shared between the organist and the church restoration appeal). Doors open at 6.30pm followed by refreshments.

**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.