

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon
My eyes are always on the Lord,
for he rescues my feet from the snare.
Turn to me and have mercy on me,
for I am alone and poor.

Cf. Ps 24: 15-16

Collect
 O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness, who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving have shown us a remedy for sin, look graciously on this confession of our lowliness, that we, who are bowed down by our conscience, may always be lifted up by your mercy. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading
 A reading from the Book of Exodus. Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15

In those days: Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, 'I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.' When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' And he said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the LORD said, 'I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey.'

Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you", and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: "I AM has sent me to you."' God also said to Moses, 'Say this to the people of Israel: "The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is my name for ever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm Psalm 103(102):1-2. 3-4. 6-7. 8, 11. R.8a
R. The LORD is compassionate and gracious.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
 and all within me, his holy name.
 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
 and never forget all his benefits.

R.

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins,
 who heals every one of your ills,
 who redeems your life from the grave,
 who crowns you with mercy and compassion.

R.

The LORD does deeds of justice,
 gives full justice to all who are oppressed.
 He made known his ways to Moses,
 and his deeds to the children of Israel.

R.

The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
 slow to anger and rich in mercy.
 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
 so strong his mercy for those who fear him.

R.

Second Reading
 A reading from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but

they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Acclamation before the Gospel Matthew 4:17
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.
Repent, says the Lord,
for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.

Gospel Luke 13:1-9
 The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
 A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

There were some present at that very time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.'

And he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vine dresser, "Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?" And he answered him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig round it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

The Nicene Creed or The Apostles' Creed

Prayer over the Offerings
 Be pleased, O Lord, with these sacrificial offerings, and grant that we who beseech pardon for our own sins, may take care to forgive our neighbour.
 Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Communion Antiphon Cf. Ps 83: 4-5
The sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for her young:
by your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
Blessed are they who dwell in your house,
for ever singing your praise.

Prayer after Communion
 As we receive the pledge of things yet hidden in heaven and are nourished while still on earth with the Bread that comes from on high, we humbly entreat you, O Lord, that what is being brought about in us in mystery may come to true completion.
 Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Prayer over the People
The Deacon, or the Priest, says:
 Bow down for the Blessing.

The Priest continues:
 Direct, O Lord, we pray, the hearts of your faithful, and in your kindness grant your servants this grace: that, abiding in the love of you and your neighbour, they may fulfil the whole of your commands.
 Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
Amen.

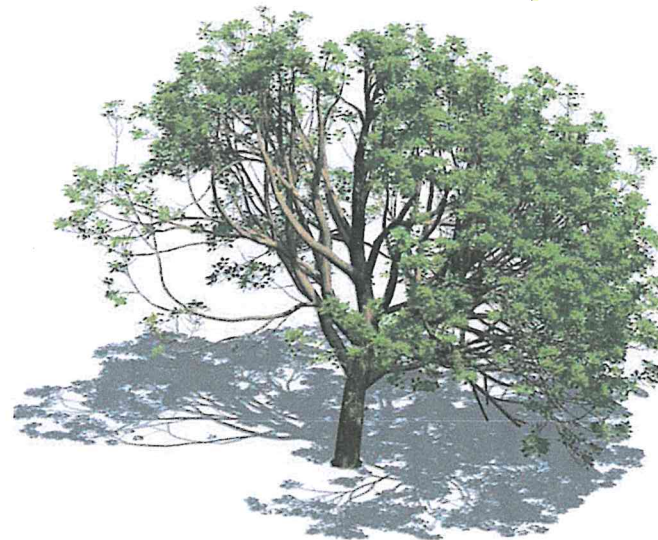
Then the Deacon, or the Priest, says:
 Go forth, the Mass is ended.
 Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.
 Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
 Go in peace.

Or:
 Or:
 Or:

Thanks be to God.

Our Faith on Sunday

GOSPEL REFLECTION



Recently I saw a fig tree in the South of England which, to my surprise, had figs on its branches. Most of the fig trees here never produce any fruit, and any amount of waiting will not change that. Sometimes we may feel like the

is necessary to get us there. So why do we often feel we face an impossible task? We think we can do it with our own willpower and determination, despite the fact that we know from experience that this doesn't work. In John's Gospel,

barren fig trees and that we will always be the same and that no amount of praying or masses or confessions will help us change. But God never sets us a task that is impossible to achieve. We are made for heaven, for life with him and he will do whatever

Jesus says, "Without me you can do nothing." He doesn't say "you can't do much," he says 'nothing'. So the key is in doing things with him. When it comes to difficulties and temptations we find almost impossible to deal with, we must hand them over to him. If we could have managed to succeed under our own steam, then his dying in agony on the cross would have been futile. But his suffering and death enabled us to enter into a relationship with God and gave us the possibility of rising with him.



POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL
FRATELLI TUTTI
 BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL

RECOVERING KINDNESS

224. Kindness frees us from the cruelty that at times infects human relationships, from the anxiety that prevents us from thinking of others, from the frantic flurry of activity that forgets that others also have a right to be happy. Often nowadays we find neither the time nor the energy to stop and be kind to others, to say "excuse me", "pardon me", "thank you". Yet every now and then, miraculously, a kind person appears and is willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference. If we make a daily effort to do exactly this, we can create a healthy social atmosphere in which misunderstandings can be overcome and conflict forestalled. Kindness ought to be cultivated; it is no superficial bourgeois virtue. Precisely because it entails esteem and respect for others, once kindness becomes a culture within society it transforms lifestyles, relationships and the ways ideas are discussed and compared. Kindness facilitates the quest for consensus; it opens new paths where hostility and conflict would burn all bridges.

LOVE IN THE FAMILY

Drug use was also mentioned as one of the scourges of our time, causing immense suffering and even breakup for many families. The same is true of alcoholism, gambling and other addictions. The family could be the place where these are prevented and overcome, but society and politics fail to see that families at risk "lose the ability to act to help their members..."



Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle Hilda Partnership		
Parish of St Thomas of Canterbury		
Parish Priest: Father Adrian Dixon. Telephone: 01642 553 118 Holy Rosary Presbytery, 2 Grosmont Drive, Billingham. TS23 2EP		
Week beginning: 23rd March, 2025		

Website	www.rcdhnbillingham.co.uk	Facebook	www.facebook.com/rcdhnbillingham
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Day	Holy Mass and Services	Intention
Sunday 23 rd March The 3 rd Sunday of Lent	Holy Mass at Holy Rosary - 10.00 AM Live Streamed	Owen Duffy
	Stations of the Cross followed by Exposition and Evening Prayer at Holy Rosary Church - 4.00 PM	
Monday 24 th March	Holy Mass at Holy Rosary - 10.00 AM Live Streamed	George Knox
Tuesday 25 th March	Holy Mass at Saint Joseph's School - 10.00 AM	Monica and Thomas Ashton
Wednesday 26 th March	Exposition and Evening Prayer at Holy Rosary - 6.15 PM	
	Holy Mass at Holy Rosary - 7.00 PM	Corcoran and McMahon Families
Thursday 27 th March	Holy Mass at Holy Rosary - 10.00 AM	Mark Tominey
Friday 28 th March	Holy Mass at Saint John's - 10.00 AM	Peter Fulton
Saturday 29 th March Vigil 4 th Sunday of Lent	Confessions at Saint John's 10.00 AM to 10.30 AM	
	Vigil - Holy Mass at Saint John's - 5.30 PM	David Armstrong
Sunday 30 th March 4 th Sunday of Lent	Sunday Holy Mass at Holy Rosary - 10.00 AM Live Streamed	Parishioners

Please pray for those who have died recently: 6:00
 Molly Quigley, Chris Allison (who will be received into Holy Rosary at 5:00pm on Wednesday 9th April followed by Requiem Mass on Thursday 10th April at 10.00am), Stephen Allison, Denis Murphy, Avril Wordsworth, Audrey Upton, Terry Grogan, and Coleen Webster (whose Funeral will be at Stockton Crematorium at 1.30pm on Tue 25th March), Margaret Loy (whose Funeral Service will be held at 1.30pm on Friday 11th April in Holy Rosary).

Please pray for the sick:			
Sheila Allen	Canon Stephen Dye	Rev. Dan Mckie	Judith Sowerby
Maureen Braithwaite	Pauline Hewitt	Grace Ollie	Lily Ward-Thurlbeck
Carol Brownlee	Sheila Holmes	Christine Rooney	Helen Webb
Ann Christeson	Judy Houchen	Max Simpson	Kate Williams
Robert Dalton	Brian Kane	Father John Skivington	
Bill Devine	Sarah McAllister	Peter Smith	

Hexham and Newcastle Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2025 - Helpers needed for the 25th July-1st August pilgrimage. Register by 31st March via our **website notices, quick links**. Young people who would like to go, contact Father Adrian for fundraising help to cover the costs of going to Lourdes.

Fr Adrian's 40th Jubilee of Ordination.
 Fr Adrian celebrates this anniversary on Easter Sunday. Parishioners are invited to join Fr Adrian on the evening of April 25th at Billingham Synthonia to celebrate this special occasion. **Tickets will be available after Mass.**

Old Postage Stamps, Jewellery, Medals - David & Theresa O'Neill have been raising funds to assist the nuns of Little Sisters of the Poor carry on their wonderful work caring for elderly people including retired clergy & religious. They are not asking for financial help but rather by your donations of used postage stamps (any country or period), foreign currency (notes & coins from any country), broken or unwanted pieces of gold/silver jewellery & military medals from any conflict. If you have any old stamp albums or other items & let David & Theresa know. Their contact details are: David & Theresa O'Neill, Tel: 0191 264 5771 Email: david-oneill3@sky.com.

Youth2000 Holy Hour with Carlo Acutis. Young people are welcome to join a Holy Hour during the tour of the Carlo Acutis relics. This will be held on Friday 28th March from 6-7pm as part of the vigil at St Michael's Church, Houghton le Spring. Praise and worship music provided by Set a Fire from Durham University and Sunderland University chaplaincy.

Confirmation - This weekend those young people looking forward to being confirmed in May will be enrolled on the Programme at the Sunday Masses.

Holy Island SVP Vinnies Camp: Volunteering is a Work of the Heart - Holy Island Children's Camp seeks young adult volunteers for Summer 2025 holiday weeks, supporting 9-12 year olds. Full training provided. Volunteers also needed for kitchen/caretaking roles and term-time meal support (vital for summer camp sustainability). Info on **website notices, quick links** or email BarbaraT@svp.org.uk

Job Vacancy at The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle: Safeguarding Coordinator, based at the Diocesan Offices in Newcastle – full-time, permanent contract. Closing date: 25 March at 12.00pm. For full details please contact 0191 243 3301 or access Job Vacancy details on the **website notices, quick links**.

St. Michael's pupils and staff would like to warmly invite parishioners to an Easter craft afternoon on Thursday 3rd April from 1:45-2:45 pm. We will be creating easter bookmarks, selling candles, decorating easter cakes and flower arranging. There will also be a raffle and lots of creative ideas for you to take away. If you would like to attend, please contact the school office on 01642 870003 to book your place and numbers. All proceeds from the raffle will go to CAFOD.

The St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD
 The SVP and CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 22nd to 27th June in London. Candidates must have completed their first or second year at university and have a passion for social justice. Applications close on the 20th April, 2025. For any queries, please contact KeziaH@svp.org.uk

All our Yesterdays - Another submission
 More photos supplied by Vince Corcoran from around the church in the past. If you would like to help keep our history alive, please contact Father Adrian with your memories.

Churches Together in Billingham
 Lenten Lunch at 12.00 noon on the following dates: Friday 28th March in North Billingham Methodists', Friday 4th April Saint Columba's and Friday 11th April Saint Cuthbert's. Donations go to Christian Aid and CAFOD. All are welcome.

Diocesan Youth Council Relaunch - The YMT and Diocese are restarting the Youth Council, giving young people a voice in the Hexham and Newcastle Diocese. The first meeting is Tuesday 18th May 2025, 2:30 - 4pm at Newcastle Cathedral. Year 9+ students are invited to join. Details & nominations are on our **website notices, quick links**.

Answer the Call: Teach in a Catholic School - Full details on our web notices.

National Catholic Leadership Programme - Full details on our web notices.