

**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@diocesohn.org.uk](mailto:stmary.barnardcastle@diocesohn.org.uk) [thomas.mason@diocesohn.org.uk](mailto:thomas.mason@diocesohn.org.uk)

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

## **Palm Sunday**

**Principal services this week – see separate flyer for all services**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Celebration</b>
Saturday 28	4pm	Middleton	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
Saturday 28	6.30pm	Gainford	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
Sunday 29	9.30am	Barnard Castle	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
Sunday 29	11.30am	Gainford (Ord.)	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
Thursday 2	7pm	Barnard Castle	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>
Friday 3	3pm	Barnard Castle	<b>Good Friday</b>
Saturday 4	8.30pm	Barnard Castle	<b>Easter Vigil</b>
Sunday 5	9.30am	Gainford	<b>Easter Day</b>
Sunday 5	11.30am	Gainford (Ord.)	<b>Easter Day</b>

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

**Liturgy of the Palms – Parish Mass Book, page 176**

**Please gather outside the West door for the blessing of Palms – take a hymn book ready to sing 19 as we process into church.**

Palm Gospel *Matthew 21:1-11*

**Mass Readings – Parish Mass Book, page 182**

First Reading *Isaiah 50:4-7*

Responsorial Psalm **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?** (*Ps. 21*)

Second Reading *Philippians 2:6-11*

Gospel Acclamation **Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory. Christ became for us obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

Gospel *Matthew 26:14-27:66*

## Rota

This week: Welcome – Wynn; Reader – Michael; Bidding Prayers – Owls Class

Next week: Easter Vigil

### **Holy Week ceremonies**

As we enter into Holy Week, we are stepping into a week-long journey with Christ. The purpose of this week is to help us to walk with Christ to the hill of Golgotha, and then through the tomb to the glory of Easter Day. To help to make that journey, the Church has particular and unique services which take place only at this time of year.

On Thursday we recall the Last Supper, and with it the institution of the Eucharist as well as the Priesthood. We then take the time to watch with Christ (present in the Eucharist), as the disciples waited in the Garden of Gethsemane. On Good Friday, the Church keeps the one and only day when Mass is never celebrated; rather we focus entirely on the Cross, solemnly unveiling it and then kissing the feet of Christ on the Cross. On Saturday we journey into Easter itself, lighting the new Paschal Candle to symbolise the light of the risen Christ among us.

There is also a ceremony particular to this time of year which we do not celebrate here – that is the consecration of holy oils. This is because these oils can only be consecrated by a Bishop, and so it takes place at the diocesan level rather than the parish. Historically the diocesan Bishop would consecrate these oils as part of the Maundy Thursday Mass, these oils would then be distributed to priests across the Diocese over the following days. More recently, a separate Mass has been organised, the Chrism Mass.

Easier travel has made this separate Mass into the chance for the Bishop to be surrounded by his Priests, his Deacons, and many of his faithful. The Mass was originally celebrated on the morning of Maundy Thursday; however, the busy-ness of the day has led most dioceses to move it to an earlier point (in the case of the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle to Wednesday in Holy Week). The Chrism Mass is centred around the Bishop, as the father of the Diocese; this means that the various ceremonies (baptisms, anointing of the sick, &c.) which are carried out with the oil consecrated here have a link to him and his ministry.

As well as the Bishop, it includes as many of his priests as possible, and during the Mass all priests renew the promises which they made at their Ordinations. These priests join with the Bishop in celebrating the Mass, they also join in the consecration of the oil of Chrism.

There are three oils which are consecrated as part of the Chrism Mass. First, the oil of catechumens, this is used as part of the baptism rite, anciently people would go through a long preparation for baptism (known as the catechumenate) during which they would be anointed a few times with this oil. The oil of sick is used to anoint the sick and dying as part of the sacrament of unction (cf. James 5:14). The oil of Chrism gives the whole ceremony its name, is used to signify closeness to Christ – it is used in baptism, confirmation, and the ordination of priests – this has fragrance added to the oil as well as a blessing, to signify the sweetness scent of the faith.

Through this week, the more we enter into the journey to the Cross, the tomb, and the Resurrection, the more we will be open to receiving God's blessings. Each of the ceremonies contributes to this in its own way, the Chrism Mass is perhaps the least familiar, but well worth experiencing as the gathering of a wider Christian family. – 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 David Brown, 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.

**Easter Services** – a sheet with the times of Easter services is at the back of church, please feel free to take a copy. As usual, the main services of the Sacred Triduum (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil) will be joint with S. Osmund's and the Ordinariate; this year they take place here at Barnard Castle.

**Diocesan Pastoral Strategy** Following Bishop Stephen's recent pastoral letter (printed copies at the back of church if you haven't got one), we are in a period of discernment as a parish regarding our mission and how best to fulfil it. If you weren't here last week, please take a copy of the handout, this is also available on the website, and take the time to reflect on our shared future. Written feedback is invited through the post-in board at the back of church (including reading and reflecting on others' comments); or through the dedicated e-mail address [stmarysfuture@gmail.com](mailto:stmarysfuture@gmail.com)

**Two meetings to reflect on the parish's response to the strategy take place this week:**

**Monday, 7pm, in the social space**

**Tuesday, 3pm, at S. Mary's School**

The diocese also has material to assist with discernment on its web-site, including a webinar which took place recently and is open to all. <https://diocesehn.org.uk/pastoral-strategy/>

**Social Group** – Tuesday at 10.30 in the social space. All welcome, bringing knitting, sewing, or other crafts most welcome. A chance to spend some time in relaxed fellowship together.

**Children's Liturgy.** As noted recently, we are preparing to offer a children's liturgy during Sunday Mass. Volunteers are most welcome to help with, if you are interested please speak to Fiona Bissell. Those who have already expressed a willingness will be contacted regarding D.B.S. checks.

**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.