St. Mary's Catholic Church

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Thirty-Third Sunday of the Year – Remembrance Day

Services this week

Day	Time	Location	Celebration
Saturday 7	4pm	Middleton	**Thirty-Second Sunday of the Year**
Saturday 7	6.30pm	Barnard Caste	**Thirty-Second Sunday of the Year**
Sunday 8	9.30am	Gainford	**Thirty-Second Sunday of the Year**
Sunday 8	11.30am	Barnard Castle (Ord.)	**Twenty-Third Sunday after Trinity**
Monday 9	6.15pm	Barnard Castle (Lat.)	**Dedication of the Lateran**
Tuesday 10	10am	Gainford	S. Leo the Great
Thursday 12	10am	Barnard Castle	S. Josaphat
Friday 13	12noon	Barnard Castle (Ord.)	*Requiem*
Friday 13	6-7pm	Barnard Castle	Holy Hour
Saturday 14	6.30pm	Gainford	**Thirty-Third Sunday of the Year**
Sunday 15	9.30am	Barnard Castle	**Thirty-Third Sunday of the Year**
Sunday 15	11.30am	Barnard Castle (Ord.)	**Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Trinity**

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

Second Collection – clergy training. The annual second collection for clergy training takes place today and will remain open next week. As Fr. Thomas' training was funded by the Ordinariate, according to the agreement between the Diocese and Ordinariate, this collection will go to the Ordinariate's clergy training fund.

Mass Readings – Parish Mass Book, page 152

First Reading	*Wisdom 6:12-16*
Responsorial Psalm	**For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.** *(Ps. 62)*
Second Reading	*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*
Gospel Acclamation	**Alleluia, alleluia. Stay awake and be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Alleluia.**
Gospel	*Matthew 25:1-13*

Rota

This week: Welcomer – Jane; Reader – Jane

Next week: Welcomer – Wynn; Reader – Andrew; Bidding Prayers – Nuala

Remembrance Day

The first Remembrance Day wasn't something which needed to be advertised, it simply happened quite spontaneously. The nation was profound affected by the war which had just taken place, and recognised the deep human need to pause. Recently on social media I saw some old footage, it would probably have been from the early 1920s, a group a friends going to a football match. They were all excited, singing and cheering as their bus travelled along; but then suddenly as they passed the cenotaph they went silent, removed their hats, and paused – each one of them would have known people who died in the war, some of them probably fought in it themselves, they couldn't do anything other than show great respect for what had taken place and was marked by that new memorial.

By contrast, I remember as an undergraduate reading International Relations, I would often seek out older books to see how thought had changed on a subject over time. There were many books, entirely respectable books, quite mainstream ones when they were written which talked about the 'glory of war'. They actually suggested that it was a good thing for young men to spend some time experiencing it. Such ideas were always wrong, but after that war of 1914-1919 they were unthinkable. The First World War was brought right into the heart of the whole country simply because of its scope. A new term was invented (thankful villages) for those places which hadn't lost any residents in the war, there were 52 parishes out of over 10,000.

But yet, just a few years later the country had to go to war again. This time it was brought even closer to home, with major cities and ports being bombed. Human loss on this scale needs to make us pause and reflect. For us today, war is remote again. This makes remembrance more, not less important. War is still a reality, but it isn't happening here. We can, we should, be thankful that it isn't here…but we shouldn't ignore that it is happening elsewhere, and that should be a cause of great sadness for us.

This isn't to adopt a position of pacifism, the Church has never been pacifist (though many individual Catholics quite legitimately are); but we do see war as a failure. As Christians our eyes are lifted up to heaven, and there there can be no war only the realms of the Prince of Peace. So when we see war here on earth, we should be thinking of how it can be made more heavenly, how peace can be brought there. Not just peace in the sense of a lack of active killing, but the positive peace of Christ's love.

But, of course, there is comparatively little which we can do when faced with international conflicts which often have long, complex, and heavily disputed origins. But, we can pause and lament the failure; we can lament the great loss and suffering which war always produces. We can keep that vision of heavenly peace in our minds and in our prayers; we can try to build it in our own lives as well.

But as we lament wars, we can also recall with great reverence those who were willing to enter into that world of pain and suffering for those they loved. The peace which we currently enjoy was bought at a high price, we do not live in one of those 'thankful villages'.

So we remember those who fought, placing the good of others above their own comfort and safety, and we honour them by seeking to build true peace today. – 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, Thomas Savage, and William Evans in your prayers. We pray particularly for the recently departed including Harry Holmes, 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).

September 2026: Loose plate (giving at the offertory during Mass) - £665.75
Weekly envelopes and monthly standing orders - £995.67
Total: £1661.42 Many thanks for your generosity.

November – month of the Holy Souls As usual, during November we will intensify our prayers for the Holy Souls. All available Masses will be Requiem Masses. There are forms for names to be included in our prayers, these names will rest on the altar during Masses in November; and for lamps to burn for particular individuals/groups during the weeks of November.

School Classes at Mass As a class from school is coming to Mass each Thursday during term, it would be helpful if volunteers were willing to help to walk the children down from school and back again after. Anybody who is willing to help should speak to Leanne Porter.

First Holy Communion 2027 Application forms are now available for those who would like to be part of the First Holy Communion preparation this year. Preparation will begin later in the autumn, with first reconciliation during Lent, and first Communion around *Corpus Christi*. If you know of any children in Year 4, please do take a form.

Parish ceilidh 28th November We will be hosting a Parish Ceilidh on Saturday 28th November at St. Mary's Parish hall, Newgate, Barnard Castle. Doors open 6:15pm, music & dancing from 6:30pm. There will be a shared table, please bring along food to share, with ingredient list re allergies. Bring your own drink and if you wish, cash for the raffle. Family ticket £25, £8 adults, child £5, under 5's free. Tickets will be for sale before and after Masses.

Contactless Payments The parish is now able to accept donations by card/contactless. There is a card reader close to the West door, with the option to select donation amount. As always, your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Men's Group the first meeting of the men's group is being planned as a ramble around Low and High Force on Saturday 14 November, meeting at church at 11 to share rides up the dale.

Advent Lunches 2026 Christian Aid Advent Lunches are again taking place at the Parish Hall, Newgate Barnard Castle DL12 8NQ on three consecutive Fridays commencing 27th November, 4th December and 11th December served between 12:00 - 1:30 pm, with arrival by 1.00pm.
This year St Mary's Catholic Church team will be preparing the lunch on Friday 4th December. We have a few volunteers already, but it is always good to welcome new faces and/or familiar faces. The more the merrier to lighten the load. We will need a number of people to make soup but there are also many other jobs you can help with: setting up tables and chairs; serving soup, cheese and biscuits, mince pies and tea and coffee; washing and drying up and, tidying away table and chairs at the end. Please do sign up on the list at the back of church. Thank you. For further information please contact Fiona Cooper: ftcooper@hotmail.co.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.

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.