

Sunday 29 September: World Day of prayer for **Migrants and Refugees**

Monday 30 September (for 7 weeks), 7pm at St Mary's: Life in the Spirit seminars. Please book your place using the QR code on the poster in the porch, or contact by email: charis@diocesehn.org.uk or 07375 934713. Although it is not necessary to book a place to attend, it would be helpful in managing the numbers. Refreshments will be served from 6.30 - 7pm.

Monday 18 November (for 3 weeks), 7-9pm at St Augustine's Darlington: Induction course for new **Eucharistic Ministers.**

People of the Gospel

We all need people who read the small print. We often don't! But the details lodged there by way of sub-clauses and disclaimers may make life much more complicated. But the religious casuists and hair-splitters, the nit-pickers who live in their heads and rejoice in pointing out the failures of others, scoring points rather than helping, are the unhealthy individuals whose views Jesus opposed. He doesn't mince words. He calls them hypocrites.

We might find him looking for us to change too. We can stand on the side-lines and delight in two-faced individuals being given a taste of their own medicine, but each of us needs to examine our own track record.

Living in Jesus' Kingdom is not easy. When little things become big things, think again. Our own Catholic story is full of wonderful teaching but mixed in with it are mannerisms and devotional add-ons from preachers and teachers, well intentioned but off the point if the direct message of Jesus is less than clear. Part of the problem may be that Jesus comes to us covered in the fingerprints and words of everyone who has passed him on to us.

Love and compassion, forgiveness and mercy must be the benchmarks of all who aspire to follow him. If these are not self-evident in my mindset and behaviour it may help to reflect on how I rely on these very qualities in the Lord. Others also should be able to rely on finding them in someone acting in the Lord's name - that's us. Are we people of the institution or people of the Gospel? There should be no difference but clearly there is. The Church must consistently mirror the mind of Jesus. The journey never ends. Who has loved and been understanding and compassionate to you? What did it feel like? We learn like this. Jesus lives in each of us.

Escomb Partnership Note

Please pray for all the sick

Mark Hugill, Lynda Whelbourn, Phyllis Musgrave, Doris Irwin, Terry Cheesmond, Savannah Philips, Christine Bainbridge Benjamin, Rita Neasham, Raymond Lowey, Rose Hankey, Julie Kirkbride, Vilna Woolhead, Nadine O'Sullivan, Claire, John Regan, Alaine McCartney, John Garnham, Mary Horton, Frank Morrell, Coulson family, Coleen Ogden, Janet Holmes, Alfie Pennington, Suzanne Winship, Hannibal Gonsalves, Eleanor Goundry, Jamie Spence, Lola Rose, Anne Nicholson, Bernard Molyneux, Heather Belcher, Stephen Russ, Doreen Hennessey, Marie Nichol, Frances Bainbridge, Frank & Joan Billingham, Matthew Pape, Sharon Pape.

Saint Mary, Aycliffe
 Saint Thomas, Shildon
 All Saints, Ferryhill
 Sacred Heart, Chilton
 Saint Joseph, Coundon



*All are welcome
 in all of our
 churches —
 no exceptions!*

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31 August 1 September 2024: Sunday 22b



St James

The Letter of James

Jesus' vision transcended the political and religious divisions of the time. His message was one of mercy, unlimited love, and inclusion, the Kingdom of

God defined by compassion and forgiveness, which challenged both Roman oppression and the exclusivity of groups like the Pharisees. This message speaks powerfully to our contemporary world, where issues of exclusion and marginalisation continue to plague our communities. His challenge is to re-evaluate our understanding, moving beyond external signs to focus on the ways in which we extend love, grace, and hospitality to others. It means advocating for social justice, building communities that reflect the radical love of God, where people are valued and welcomed, whatever background or status. Jesus' call for inclusion is not just an ideal but a practical mandate for how to engage with and transform our world today.

The Epistle of James is as relevant today as it was for the early Church - to embrace God's word, to act on it, and care for those in need, embodying God's mercy and justice for cre-

Sat	12.00	Aycliffe	Isaac Carlin (B)
31	16.00	Shildon	Our parish family
Aug	18.00	Chilton	Dunlavey family (deceased)
Sun	09.00	Coundon	Nora, Al and Ian Moore
1	10.00	Aycliffe	Stephen McKenna (sick)
Sep	10.30	Ferryhill	Joan Bulmer
	11.00	Aycliffe	Baptism Imogen Georgia Prior
	13.00	Aycliffe	Polish language mass
	18.00	Aycliffe	Kevin McGowan

ation and not conforming to apathy and injustice.

Put your heart in it

To live life, one is often inundated with myriads of instructions and guides. We have instructional manuals for every product or gadget we acquire and use. We have guidelines and rules for various things we participate in. To build a house, you need a blueprint, to drive you need the Highway Code, to play games you need a playbook, even our daily lives and works have guides and instructions to keep us right. The Covid 19 experience makes the case that we need to follow many protocols to get on with life. But what exactly would make our freedom fulfilling if we have to follow instructions in almost everything we do? Does this not make life mechanical?

The readings of this Sunday show how God in His love provides us with instructional guides for a good happy life. These instructions manifest the gift of God's wisdom to us which empowers us to rule our world and actualise ourselves. He said: *Keep them, observe them, and they will demonstrate your wisdom and understanding.* Hence our freedom is actualised in our ability to know these instructions, understand them and seek our good through them. This is because God, from whom all good things come, has planted this code of goodness in our hearts so that our wills will seek and manifest this goodness. Being good is not something mechanical. The command to do good is not a limitation of our free will, but a perfection of it. That is why the heart is the centre of affective response in us towards goodness. Hence, a written instruction would make no sense if the heart is not in it as we follow.

Reading the Highway Code can be boring. It contains numerous instructions for road users. But it's a depressing feeling to have to mechanically follow all these instructions. That's why one of my instructors said: *learn the rules for the test, but follow your heart when driving.* Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and the Scribes for not putting their heart in the codes they follow, *Because their hearts are far from my laws.* It is the heart that gives us good reasons for our decisions. The big question is: *Where is your heart?* Do you follow your heart when you make life-changing decisions? God has made our hearts the centre of our response to goodness and where our heart is, there we find our fulfilment. *Fr Anthony O'Haekwusi*

Planning to visit **Westminster Abbey**? We have a **free pass** for up to 4 people. Available from St Mary's.

Wednesdays 2.15pm, Leeholme Welfare Hall, DL14 8HN:
Falls Prevention Exercise Class (Seated Exercise Class).
£4.50 Tea and Coffee. Bernadette Rogers 07030944810

Wednesday 4 September, 6.30 pm at St Mary's Bishop Auckland: Durham CC waste department will host a talk and Q&A for anyone interested in learning more about recycling.

21/22 September (for 4 weeks): Annual diocesan mass count.
Sunday 22 September, 5pm at St Mary's: Benediction (in support of the National Eucharistic Congress Adoremus that is taking place at Oscott College on 14 September).

Saturday 28 September, 12 noon at St Mary's: SVP mass for **all those who are sick**, followed by buffet lunch in the hall. Please sign list at back of church.

Masses this week

Mon	09.30	Coundon	Our schools
2	09.40	Aycliffe	Rosary
Sep	10.00	Aycliffe	Julie along with her children and grandchildren
Tue	09.15	Ferryhill	Jane, Owen and Thomas O'Brien
3	09.50	Aycliffe	Divine Mercy
Sep	10.00	Aycliffe	Anthony (Tony) Lee (RIP)
	11.00	Aycliffe	Funeral service Alan Garner
	13.00	Coundon	Exposition (also 7pm)
	19.00	Aycliffe	<u>Prayer Group</u>
Wed	09.15	Ferryhill	A sick person
4	09.30	Shildon	<u>Exposition</u>
Sep	10.00	Shildon	Our parish family
Thu	09.30	Coundon	Our priests
5	10.00	Aycliffe	John Edward, Angela & Helen Lloyd
Sep	19.00	Aycliffe	<u>Exposition</u>
Fri	09.15	Chilton	No intention requested
6	09.30	Aycliffe	Exposition
Sep	10.00	Aycliffe	For estranged family members
Sat	09.30	Coundon	Michael Atkinson
7	10.00	Coundon	Exposition and Confession
Sep	12.00	Aycliffe	James, Margaret and Ann Dodds
	16.00	Shildon	Children in Zambia
	18.00	Chilton	No intention requested
Sun	09.00	Coundon	Private Intention
8	10.00	Aycliffe	Ann Dryden (RIP)
Sep	10.30	Ferryhill	Walter and Freda Wood
	12.00	Aycliffe	Polish language mass
	18.00	Aycliffe	Our parish family

This week-end: Helping by Baking. The Polish community is raising funds to support a family of three going through a challenging time due to serious illness of the father. Should you wish to support them too please come and help by buying cakes after our masses at St Mary's.

Next week-end: collection of biscuits, chick peas and tomatoes for **refugees**.

Sunday 1 September - 4 October: The Season of Creation. We are encouraged to deepen our relationship with God, our neighbour and the earth we share, being more attentive to the cry of the earth and the **cry of the poor**.

Sunday 8 September: Education Sunday. *God enables the deaf to hear and gives speech to the silent.*

Coundon: raffle tickets have all been sold.