

The Newsletter of the parishes of



St. Alban at Pelaw



St. Patrick at Felling



Our School

www.stalbangateshead.org

In Gateshead in the week 16th to 22nd Nov there were 878 recorded cases, which was an increase of 172 from the previous week. This equates to 435 cases per 100,000 people. The average area in England had 449 cases over the same period.

The First Sunday of Advent
28th November, 2021

**We need everyone to
keep Gateshead safe**

**Covid-19 protection measures remain
in place in our Church for your safety**

Dear Parishioners

Catholics are very good at looking back to the past, even living in the past, and in doing so miss many opportunities that the present moment has to offer.

Take Advent as an example. It is the time to prepare for the greatest moment ever when our God chose to come among us, to share our joys and sorrows, our successes and failures, our pain and suffering, even our death, for only one reason; to show us how much he loves us. It is mind blowing, too good to be true..... and yet.....it is true!

The question to ask ourselves is - over all the years of celebrating Advent, how has it changed my understanding of Christmas? If you still look into the crib with the understanding of a child, then perhaps you have missed out on many opportunities to grow as an adult Christian.

Is Christmas morning a little bit 'new' every year or do you find yourself reminiscing over a "wonderful story" of what happened over two thousand years ago?

The wonder of our God is that it is never too late to start again. That is what Advent is after all. So why not look into the crib this Christmas and see that tiny child lying in the manger in a 'new' way, understanding just a little more clearly how incredible, how overwhelming, the love of God really is.

Why not begin by taking to heart Jesus' teaching in this week's Gospel: "Watch yourself, stay awake," so that the "cares of this life" (of this Christmas, the preparations we must make – presents, food, planning, etc.) don't enclose you "like a trap," preventing you from entering into the wonderful "liberation" that is God's love for us.

Remember,

"Christmas isn't Christmas until it happens in your heart.
It is somewhere deep inside you where Christmas really starts."

Bishop Robert's Review of the Covid Protection measures

Bishop Robert reviewed the Covid protection measures for the churches in our Diocese last week and has asked us to keep them in place due to the high rate of transmission of the coronavirus in our region. He will review the situation in February. It is important to realise that he has not taken this decision lightly, but out of consideration for all the people who attend our churches and for the clergy, many of whom are still deemed to be clinically vulnerable despite the vaccination programme.

Following a meeting of our volunteer stewards last night (Friday), we will continue to do all we can to ensure St. Patrick's Church is both welcoming and as Covid safe as we can make it for you. Sanitising your hands, social distancing, the wearing of face coverings and cleaning the church after each celebration are still in place.

I renew my thanks to our volunteer stewards who are prepared to continue in their roles enabling us to celebrate Mass on Tuesdays at 10.00 and on Sundays at 10.30. There is no longer a need for you to book a place in advance. We are, however, encouraged by the Government to restore collecting track and trace details - your name and a contact telephone number - so please bring them along in an envelope and place it in the box at the front of the church or use the QR code if you have a smartphone.

As we must continue to clean the church after each celebration, the rear of the church will remain closed to reduce the demands on our stewards who sanitise the benches after you leave. Limited toilet facilities are available in case of necessity. The steward at the rear of the church will assist you.

Please do all you can to be cautious in your everyday life choices which not only affect you, but impact on others too, including the NHS on which we all rely at times and pray for one another. May God bless you and your families.

Fv. Patterson

Mass to view on line

Mass is live streamed from our Cathedral on Sunday at 11.30 and may be viewed on the [Cathedral website](#).

Alternatively, you may like to follow Mass from the [Holy Name, Jesmond](#) celebrated live at 10.00 on Sunday, most weekdays and Saturday (at 16.00). These Masses may also be viewed later from the same website.

Mass Intentions

With the exception of Sunday and Tuesday, Fr. Patterson will celebrate Mass privately during the week remembering the following Intentions. *Bishop Robert asks that face coverings should be worn when attending Church.*

Monday: Norah Lagan

Tuesday 10.00 in St. Patrick's Church: Brian McDonough (ML)

Wednesday: Special Intention (KC)

Thursday: The sick, their families, NHS staff & Care Workers

Friday: Brenda Donald

Saturday: Fr. Patterson's intentions

Sunday, 10.30 in St. Patrick's Church: For the intentions of all our parishioners

When you are unable to celebrate Mass in Church, you may wish to make this act of spiritual communion:-

Lord Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Please keep in your prayers:

- all our parishioners who are sick, housebound or in hospital and Fr. Kevin Daly who is very poorly.
- and all those near and dear to us whose memories we cherish at this time especially Norah Lagan.



As of Friday 26th Nov
144,593 people have
died of the coronavirus
in our country

May they
rest in Peace

Let us pray

Gracious God, as we remember before you the thousands who have died from the coronavirus, surround us and all who mourn with your compassion. Be gentle with us in our grief, protect us from despair and give us grace to persevere and face the future with hope. We make this prayer in Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen.



A Prayer for Carers, Nurses and Doctors

Lord Jesus, who healed the sick and gave them new life, be with doctors, nurses and carers, as they act as agents of your healing touch. In desperate times, keep them strong yet loving; and when their work is done, be with them in their weariness and in their tears. Amen.

A prayer for those who are afraid

God of all hope we call on you today.
We pray for those who are living in fear:
fear of Covid-19, fear for loved ones,
fear of what the future holds.
May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace. Amen.



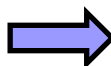
A prayer for Refugees

Father, your Son had no place to call his own; protect those who today are fleeing from danger. Bless those who work to bring them relief; inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts; and guide the nations of the world towards that day when we will all rejoice in your Kingdom. Amen.

Your ongoing financial support is welcomed and needed

Fr. Patterson continues to be grateful for your offerings during these difficult times and is especially grateful to those parishioners who regularly contribute to parish funds by standing order helping us meet the regular financial commitments of our churches.

The details for standing orders and cheques are



You may bring your envelopes to Mass on Tuesdays or Sundays or drop them through the presbytery letterbox. **For security reason, envelopes should not be put through the letterbox of St. Alban's Presbytery.**

For St. Patrick's HSBC Bank
Account name: DHN Felling St Patrick
Sort code: 40-34-18
Account No: 52010453

For St. Alban's HSBC Bank
Account name: DHN Pelaw St Alban
Sort code: 40-34-18
Account No: 92010984

Resources to help you make the most of Advent

Bishop Robert Barron

Bishop Barron invites Catholics everywhere to join in 25 days of prayer this December to prepare, with Mary as our guide, for Christ's birth



Each day there is a custom, 5-10 minute guided meditation or peaceful music selection to reflect on the Advent themes of faith, hope, and joy through the eyes of Mary. Each meditation will be led by Jonathan Roumie from *The Chosen*, or your choice of three other guides.

If you are interested you will need to download the "Hallow app," which is completely free to download offering a great deal of permanently free content, but just for Advent, they are giving all those who join a completely free 3-month trial to unlock all the site has to offer. You would need to cancel your free trial at the end of 3 months so that you do not incur an on going membership fee. To learn more, please click [here](#)

Diocesan Resources

The Vicariate for Faith and Mission has produced a set of Seasonal reflections, one for each week of Advent. They may be found [here](#)

For those who do not have internet access you may find the following reflection of value:-

That day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap (Luke 21:25-28,34-36)

Jesus said to his disciples: *'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.'*

Pause for thought:-

There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars.

How do I experience God's presence and majesty in the natural world? How can I become more aware of God's gift of creation?

Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When have I been most aware of God's power acting in my life? How do my actions give glory to God?

Stand erect and raise your heads because your liberation is near at hand. How can I grow in my longing for salvation? In this Advent, how can I prepare my heart for Christ's coming?

Honouring Sundays

In July of this year, the Bishops of England and Wales issued a statement in which they hoped it would be possible to restore Sunday Obligation by the First Sunday of Advent, 28th November, 2021.

In a Statement issued on Thursday, 18th November, 2021 they wrote the following:- "The Sunday Eucharist is a gift; as God's holy people we are called to praise and thank God in the most sublime way possible. When the Church speaks of the Sunday obligation, it reminds us that attending Mass is a *personal response* to the selfless offering of Christ's love.

At this time, we recognise that for some people there may be certain factors which hinder attendance at Sunday Mass. The pandemic is clearly not over. The risk of infection is still present. For some, there is legitimate fear in gathering together. As your bishops, we recognise that these prevailing circumstances suggest that not everyone is yet in the position to fulfil the absolute duty to freely attend Sunday Mass.

We now encourage all Catholics to look again at the patterns which they have formed in recent months with regard to going to Mass on Sundays. This would include consideration and reflection about what we might already be doing on Sundays, such as sports or shopping, or other leisure and social activities. This review of our lives and the decisions which arise from it, fall to every Catholic and we trust this will be done with honesty, motivated by a real love for the Lord whom we encounter in the Mass.

The full text of the statement can be found here: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/bishops-statement-honouring-sunday/>

So, whilst Sunday obligation is not being restored for the time being, if you are engaging in café culture, visiting restaurants, pubs and clubs, going to "the match," or flying off to foreign lands and have not returned to Mass, is it time for a rethink as the Bishops are encouraging us to do? On the other hand, if you are still anxious about coming to Church, or you are unwell, then you are under no obligation to do so.

An Ongoing Appeal from our Diocesan Justice and Peace Refugee Project

Father Patterson continues to be most grateful to the generous response we are receiving to this appeal. The project supports on average 300 clients each week, who all receive a bag of food. 102 of them are destitute and also receive a supermarket voucher.

If you are able to bring donations of rice, sugar, biscuits and toiletries as well as tinned fish in oil and tins of tomatoes and chick peas to St. Patrick's Church before Mass on Tuesdays or Sundays, they may be left on the table to your right as you enter the Church. *Please note: baked beans and tinned meat are not required.*

St. Patrick's Boundary Wall.

The work of rebuilding the southern boundary wall of St. Patrick's Church with Caxton House using the original stone, at a cost of £25,000, should be completed on Monday. Some "rubbing down" still needs to be done. Fr. Patterson is extremely grateful for donations received towards the cost of this project.

During the course of the work, the Diocese carried out an inspection of the entire boundary wall with the stonemasons and further work has been identified as needing attention, particularly on St. John's Place. Stone walls built in 1895 do not last for ever!! Estimates are in the process of being obtained!

We are still in need of more volunteers

If we are going to be able to reopen St. Alban's Church and fully reopen St. Patrick's Church and parish centre once all the Covid protection measures have been removed, Fr. Patterson needs your help to fulfil the roles outlined in our shared parish Roadmap which was circulated at the beginning of May. If you do not have a copy, please email felling.stpatrick@rcdhn.org.uk or telephone 0191 495 2277 and one will be sent to you.

Currently we do not have sufficient offers of help and support to be able to reopen St. Alban's Church and will be struggling to fully reopen St. Patrick's Church and parish centre when the Covid restrictions are lifted.

Parish News by Email

If you are aware of parishioners who would like to receive the Newsletter and other news from the parish by email, please ask them to email Fr. Patterson at felling.stpatrick@rcdhn.org.uk and they will be added to our contact list. The Newsletter may also be found on [our parish website](#)

ZOE Covid weekly update - What we might do to ensure a "low risk Christmas."

Professor Tim Spector in this week's update looks at the abrupt rise in UK COVID cases after weeks of falling. He discusses the reasons behind the increase and what he thinks is the only option left for a low-risk Christmas. He also discusses the COVID situation in Europe, which is seeing sharp increase, but why we shouldn't be cocky with our comparatively lower rates. To view the weekly update click [here](#).

In a separate blog (click [here](#)), Tim shares some information on why it is important to get your booster jab.

He continues to remind us, in this blog, "Do I have Covid or a cold?" that as well as the "classic symptoms" of Covid, (a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of taste or smell), there are more symptoms emerging, namely a headache accompanied by a runny nose, sore throat, sneezing and a cough. It may just be a summer cold, but check it out by taking a Lateral Flow Test. These kits are available from the local chemist, are free of charge and simple to use. Click [here](#) for the Zoe blog [Do I have Covid or a cold?](#)

Regional update

You may find this data from our region of interest. Figures are as of 26th November, 2021. ○ = no change

	New cases in the last 7 days		People who have died in the last 7 days		People with Covid in NHS Trust Hospitals on 23rd November		Percentage of those aged 12 and over having had 1st jab		Percentage of those aged 12 and over having had 2nd jab	
Gateshead	909	↑	1	↓	28 (QE Hospital)	↓	83%	○	76%	○
Newcastle	1224	↑	3	↓	49 (Newcastle)	↓	73%	↑	65%	○
South Tyneside	435	↓	9	↑	85 (+ Sunderland)	↓	81%	↑	75%	↑
North Tyneside	1037	↑	5	↓	53 (Northumbria)	↑	86%	○	80%	↑