

The Newsletter of the parishes of



St. Alban at Pelaw



St. Patrick at Felling



Our School

www.stalbangateshead.org

In Gateshead in the week 23rd to 29th Nov there were 834 recorded cases, which was a decrease of 43 from the previous week. This equates to 413 cases per 100,000 people. The average area in England had 458 cases over the same period.

Second Sunday of Advent
5th December, 2021

**We need everyone to
keep Gateshead safe**

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

Dear Parishioners

As the years pass by, we might be tempted to think that while we hear the call to "Prepare a Way for the Lord" every Advent, nothing much seems to change either in our own lives, within the family of the Church or in the world at large and of course much of what we do at present is determined by precautions we are all encouraged to take to look after one another and ourselves because of the coronavirus.

But things are constantly changing around us. They always have and they always will as we were reminded by the recent COP 26 climate change conference in Glasgow. It is often us who are reluctant to accept the need for change.

The first coming of Jesus radically changed the course of human history. John the Baptist's proclamation of a baptism of repentance paved the way for Jesus to minister to people, opening for them the way to experience his Father's compassion in a way which is still far beyond our imagination.

With this in mind, whether we have taken it on board or not, means that nothing can ever be the same again - for everything is moving towards the fulfilment of God's plan - that in due time, the Lord will return in glory.

This is very much part of the Advent message. Yes, we look back and celebrate the coming of Jesus as a babe in Bethlehem, but at the same time we should try to look forward to his coming again in glory.

So there is a great deal to prepare for!

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 recently reviewed the Covid protection measures for the churches in our Diocese 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, 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. 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.

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.

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 in this season of Advent.

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: Brian Quigley

Tuesday 10.00 in St. Patrick's Church: Billy Knowles

Wednesday: In Thanksgiving (BH)

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

Friday: Connie Stout

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.
- all those near and dear to us whose memories we cherish at this time, especially Billy Knowles.
- and Fr. Peter Smith, one of our retired priests, who has died. "Receive Lord into tranquillity and peace the soul of your servant whom you have called from this life. May he be taken up into glory with your Son in whose great mystery of love we are all united.



As of Friday 3rd Dec
145,424 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.



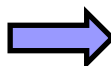
A prayer for Refugees

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:-

A voice cries out in the desert: Prepare the way of the Lord (Luke 3: 1-6)

"John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah:- A voice of one crying out in the desert: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Pause for thought:-

John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan. Where is God calling me to go? To what regions of my neighbourhood, parish, workplace can I bring compassion and loving service?

A voice of one crying out in the desert. When have I felt like a voice crying out in the desert? When have I failed to use my voice when I should have?

All flesh shall see the salvation of God. How can I be more open to encountering Jesus? Whom can I help to encounter Jesus?



The celebration of Christmas

These two images remind us of Christmas past when we were able to celebrate Mass together in both of our churches. Sadly it is still not possible to celebrate Mass in St. Alban's Church at present as we are unable to make it Covid secure and we do not have the necessary level of help required.



Mass will be celebrated in St. Patrick's Church, in keeping with Bishop Robert's protection guidelines, to which everyone is invited. There is no need to book a place in advance.

Mass on Christmas Eve will be at 17.30 and on Christmas morning at 9.45.

On both occasions the Church will open 20 minutes before Mass is due to begin. Access is by the entrance off Church Street only. You are welcome to use the main Church car park, accessing the Church via the external stone steps at the side of the Church .

You will be invited to sanitise your hands as you enter and leave the Church and to wear a face covering. To prevent you having to book a place, social distancing will be one metre between households and bubbles, in keeping with Bishop Robert's update and you will be guided to your place by one of our stewards. We are encouraged to collect 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.

A Christmas Appeal from our Diocesan Justice and Peace Refugee Project

When doing your own shopping for Christmas, please spare a thought for the above project. It 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.*

Honouring Sundays

In a Statement issued on Thursday, 18th November, 2021, the Bishops of England and Wales issued a statement to the effect that while the obligation to attend Mass on a Sunday would remain suspended, we should think about how we honour Sunday as a special day in our week. It reminds us that attending Mass is a *personal response* to the selfless offering of Christ's love.

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

Respect for one another - **Be aware of personal space and personal choice.**

We have lived through a lot since the pandemic started so let us be kind and respect one another. Be aware of personal space and personal choice. Some people might not be ready to hug, kiss, shake hands or reduce social distance. Don't assume what people are comfortable with. Instead, ask them and respect their personal choices.

Please respect the Government's mandated guidelines to wear a face covering in retail outlets and on public transport. It is not a lot to ask to help keep each other safe so that we might all have a peaceful and happy Christmas.

The Government also urges us to be vaccinated, so it is important for us to respond in a positive way and to do all we can to encourage people we know to consider being vaccinated if they haven't already done so. Pope Francis urges us to do so [in this video message](#). Please accept your invitation for a "Booster jab" when you receive it and do consider having a flu jab too.


ZOE Covid weekly update and some interesting information on the new variant.

Professor Tim Spector provides another weekly update video in which he speaks about the rises and falls in the number of cases in the UK and Europe and how we can more safely socialise at Christmas. The weekly update may be accessed [here](#). There is a second video, in which he talks about the new variant Omicron which may be viewed [here](#). They are both worth a watch if you have the time.

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 3rd December, 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 30th November		Percentage of those aged 12 and over having had 1st jab		Percentage of those aged 12 and over having had 2nd jab	
Gateshead	820	↓	1	○	30 (QE Hospital)	↑	83%	○	76%	○
Newcastle	1168	↓	2	↓	35 (Newcastle)	↓	73%	↑	66%	↑
South Tyneside	451	↑	4	↓	77 (+ Sunderland)	↓	81%	↑	75%	↑
North Tyneside	972	↓	5	○	34 (Northumbria)	↓	87%	↑	80%	↑