



**St John Boste Parish, West Durham**  
**Esh, Esh Winning, Langley Park and Ushaw Moor**

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*Please telephone the Chaplain if you have someone in hospital who would like a visit.*



**Sixth Sunday of Easter : 17 May 2020**

**A Vigil of Prayer:** The Church has a long tradition of holding to be sacred the period of time between the feast of the Ascension of the Lord and the feast of Pentecost. The feast of the Ascension will be this coming Thursday and Pentecost will be 31 May. In between those feasts lie nine days, and 'nine days of prayer' is what we mean by a 'novena'. (The Latin word for the number '9' is 'novem'). So, what are these nine days of prayer all about? At Pentecost we will celebrate the outpouring of the Spirit, not only on those disciples gathered in that upper room, but upon the entire Church today. See this, if you wish, as the flooding of the lives of ordinary people with the love and the presence of God. This is so that each of us, using our God-given gifts and talents to the full might, like different pieces of a jigsaw, contribute to a fuller picture of God's presence in our world. The nine days of novena from this Thursday will give each of us an opportunity to take a closer look at our attitudes and priorities to see how best we might open up our hearts and our lives to receive and to welcome the Spirit that God offers. Today's gospel invites us to get into the mood, to prepare the way, to 'let God in'. Take a time of quietness first, asking God to open your ears and your heart to hear whatever message God wants to say to you. This is 'the God who Speaks'. As always, read this passage carefully and attentively, noting which words or phrases God may be wanting to speak to you ....



*'Jesus said to his disciples: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. I shall ask the Father, and he will send you another Advocate to be with you for ever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him. But you know him, because he is with you, he is in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come back to you. In a short time, the world will no longer see me; but you will see me, because I live, and you will live. On that day you will understand that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them, will be the one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him, and show myself to him." (John 14: 15-21)*

- In a court of law, your 'advocate' is the one who puts your case and pleads for you. This is the image Jesus uses to describe the activity of the Spirit in our lives. The Spirit of God continually sees the best in us, and pleads our case. God knows that we are imperfect, and mess things up, but always looks for the good in us.
- 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments...' An interesting phrase. It is only if we are wanting, in our hearts, to love God that we are then able to keep his commandment to love others.
- The Spirit of God is not only with you each day; God's Spirit is in you. The Spirit is an active ingredient in making you who you are. Jesus goes on to say 'I will not leave you orphans.' Do you have any thoughts??

**Recently deceased:** Patrick Howarth's funeral was on Saturday. He lived in Esh Winning. Grieson Ward's funeral will be at the crematorium this Tuesday. Grieve was from Bearpark. Joyce Etherington (Brandon). Her funeral will be on Wednesday evening. Betty Barrigan (Esh Winning) died on Tuesday. Her funeral will be at Newhouse on Friday. Erica Wilson (Ushaw Moor). Erica died in hospital on Wednesday. Her funeral will be next Saturday at the crematorium.  
*May they rest in peace.*

**Anniversaries: Our Lady Queen of Martyrs:** Thomas Morris, Rachel Suddes, Catherine Thompson, Annie Brady, Marie-Therese Zadziuk, Mariola Doyle, Ellen Condron, Madge Doherty, James Sedgewick, Agnes Wright, James Brown, Roger Shaw, John Newton, John McElwee, Alma Daughtery, John Brennan.  
**St Joseph's:** Harry Coates, James Killian, Irene Connolly, John Kirkup, Joseph Kant.  
**St Michael's:** Hugh Finley, Lily Palmer, Margaret Rutter, John Caygill, Mary Smith, Elizabeth Mullaney, Joseph Hayden, James Bygroves, Ella Callan, Mary Ellen Hennessy, Elizabeth Armstrong, Peggy Thompson, James Sedgewick, Augustine Tomaney, Margaret Finley, Thomas Seymour, Monica Quinn, John Coulson.



## **Masses for the sick and for carers:**

The Bishops of England and Wales have agreed that every Thursday evening at 7pm a bishop in turn, will celebrate a live streamed Mass in his Cathedral for all those frontline workers in the NHS and care homes, for the sick and their families and for

the repose of the souls of the deceased. Our own Bishop Robert Byrne celebrated the mass last week. Bishop Mark Davies shall be celebrating Mass this Ascension Thursday from Shrewsbury Cathedral then, on 28th May, Bishop Terence Drainey from Middlesbrough Cathedral. By visiting the Bishops' Conference Webpage ([cbcew.org.uk](http://cbcew.org.uk)) links for the live-streaming of these Masses can be found.

## **EUROPEAN UNION CITIZENS – SETTLED STATUS**

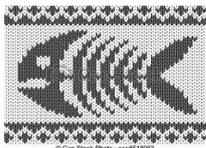
**European Union Citizens:** All EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in the UK are required by the government to apply through its Settlement Scheme to continue living, working and accessing services here. The deadline for applications is 30 June 2021. Details and links to the application process can be found at: [gov.uk/eusetledstatus](http://gov.uk/eusetledstatus). Please bring this to the attention of friends, relatives and fellow parishioners who may need to apply. Assistance for those who may have difficulty applying is available at: [gov.uk/help-eusetlement-scheme](http://gov.uk/help-eusetlement-scheme). The Catholic Church in England and Wales stands in solidarity with all European citizens who have made their homes here. They are a valued part of our parishes, schools and communities.

## **Daily readings and Morning and Evening Prayer:**

<https://us.magnificat.net/free>

**Mass and prayer available online:**

<https://mass-online.org/daily-holy-mass-live-online/>



## **Looking for a project to be working on during this time?**

A Care Home in Sunderland is no longer allowed to have a real fish tank, as the water is a safety hazard. So, the plan is to create a knitted aquarium! If

anyone would be willing to join in, there are a number of patterns available. Please let Karen Thompson know (or the Parish Office) and we'll get the patterns to you.

## **Thoughts...**

I have said that I'd be very happy to hear peoples' thoughts about the Scripture readings each week....! Is there anything you have discovered to be new, helpful, interesting? A few people have responded to my invitation and have sent me their reflections. Thank you to those people who sent me their thoughts. Might anyone have any thoughts or reflections about today's gospel reading?

## **Weekly collection:**

Obviously, since we don't have masses at present, then we don't have the opportunity to contribute to the collection by putting envelopes or cash on to the baskets. A number of people transfer money from their bank account straight into the parish account. Thank you for that. Other people are holding on to their envelopes each week until they can bring them all together. Thanks for thinking of this in these difficult times. Yet others are dropping their donations through the letter box of the Parish Office. Thank you for this too!

**Contact:** Some parishioners have said they are very happy to keep in touch with others by phone or email, or shop for you. If you would like someone from church to phone you, or email, please let me know at the Parish Office.

**Patients in hospital:** Fr Paul Tully is doing a fantastic job in our hospitals at present. He cannot simply 'wander around wards' as he normally does, but he is in there every day offering support to staff, and he very willing to visit any patient who would like to see him. Contact Fr Paul on 01388- 818544, or email [frpaultully@outlook.com](mailto:frpaultully@outlook.com)

**News from the diocese:** Remember, you can keep up with all sorts of news about support and resources in our diocese by looking at the diocesan website: [redhn.org](http://redhn.org)

**Technology:** There was a woman who was telling her priest how she follows mass on-line and how, if she doesn't like the sermon, she switches to another mass somewhere else...

## **Ascension Thursday:**

Under normal conditions we would have been celebrating the feast this coming Thursday, 21 May. However, you know why we aren't....! On Thursday, the beginning of the novena leading up to Pentecost, you may wish to read the very first paragraphs of the Acts of the Apostles (**Acts 1: 1-11**). This book is thought to have been written



by Luke, the author of 'the gospel of Luke'. In his opening words, to the man called Theophilus, Luke refers to his first book, his gospel. He then goes on to write : ‘... *you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses, not only in Jerusalem, but throughout Judaea and Samaria and, indeed, to the ends of the earth.*” *As he said this, he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said: “Why are you men from Galilee standing there looking into the sky? Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.”* ‘

It is always very important, when reading the bible, not to take everything *literally*. Things can be true, of course, without being 'literally' true. (eg. *'I was blown away by the experience'*). So, in this passage, 'the cloud' represents 'the mystery of God' and, because people then, as now, felt that God was so much above the likes of us, they portrayed God and heaven to be 'up there', above us. In reality, of course, God is not geographically *above* us, yet that is the imagery used here. Perhaps the most significant message is that Jesus has now entrusted his work to us; we are now to be his witnesses in the world - in the 21<sup>st</sup> century no less than in the first. [NB *A Pentecost Novena will soon be on our parish Facebook page*]