



## St John Boste Parish, West Durham

Esh, Esh Winning, Langley Park and Ushaw Moor

St John Boste Pastoral Office, Durham Road, Ushaw Moor, Durham. DH7 7LF

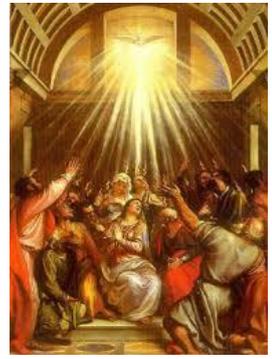
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R C Chaplain Father Paul Tully Tel. (01388) 818544

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



### Pentecost : 31 May 2020

**Pentecost:** The first reading in today's mass is taken from the 'Acts of the Apostles'. This book was written about 65AD and tells the story of the growth of the very early Church. Throughout the Acts of the Apostles there is a strong sense of the Church's growth and activity being prompted and led by the Spirit of God that now resides *in the people*, the people of the faith community. The coming of that Spirit upon the disciples is spoken about today:



*'When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room when , suddenly, they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting. And something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech. Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven and, at this sound, they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They*

*were amazed and astonished. "Surely," they said, "all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? We hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.'*

*(Acts of the Apostles 2: 1-11)*

As always, we should not just read this story in a literal way. The writer, often thought to be St Luke, twice used the word 'like': '*they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven*' and then '*something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire*'. Luke's message is profound. He is trying to share with us, today, something of an experience they had, something that happened to them which moved them deeply. Luke is trying to put that experience into words so that we might feel something of how it affected them. So, the 'powerful wind'? The disciples felt 'blown away', overwhelmed by the presence and the power of the Spirit. The 'tongues of fire'? The disciples felt fired up, enlightened, ready to set the world on fire with their message of Jesus. They couldn't wait to get out there and share their experience of who Jesus really is! Today is Pentecost, one of the great feasts of our Christian community, right up there with Easter and Christmas in terms of its importance. We celebrate the fact that this same Spirit of God has been given to you and to me and to each of us so that, together, we might be blown away by the presence of God within us, fired up to take the message to each person that we meet in our lives. And not in a way that is preachy or bible-thumping, but in a way that helps others to stop and think, and to think of how God within them can make some sort of sense of life and all that happens. Important too that we don't speak about God and Jesus in religious jargon! That is always a real turn-off for people! The excitement of those people in Jerusalem was that 'we hear them speaking in *our own language* about the marvels of God'. At the very end of mass is something that can easily be overlooked in its importance. What is this? At the end of mass, we are blessed as a community, standing together, and then we are *sent out* to make the message of Jesus real and tangible for others. We are sent out into another week to bring our own awareness of God into the experience of others. "*Go out and announce the gospel of the Lord!*" This is the core of the message of Pentecost. Because of the Spirit which is within us, we are the ones now sent out to make the message of the Lord known to others. '*Thanks be to God!*'



- Red vestments are worn at Pentecost to represent fire and the activity of the Spirit. Wear something red today!
- Write a personal prayer asking the Spirit of God to come into your life afresh, to enable your faith to come alive.
- What do *you* think is the essential message of Jesus, the core of his teaching?
- How might *you* feel 'sent out' to take God to others?

#### **Anniversaries:**

**St Michael's:** Michael Carey, Joe Hennessy, John Carey, May Seymour, Wallace Tyrie, Tom Quinn, Darren Jones, Jackie Cummings, Agnes Hennessy, Cis Lucock, John Towns, Mary Rowntree.

**Our Lady Queen of Martyrs:** Sarah Ann McElwee, Hilda Nicholson, Gloria Peart, Joseph Shaw, Darren Jones, Patricia Doyle, Mary McDermott, Leo Garr, Nancy Shoulder, Patrick Murphy, Norah Johnson, John Augustine, Patrick Moran.

**St Josephs:** Malcolm Kemp, Betty McLoughlin, Bobby Hendry, Louise Tindle, Frances Grady, Francis Brown, James Keelty, Fred Duggan, Mary Marsh, Mona brown, Jimmy Connolly (jnr).

**Lockdown Regulations:** Next weekend we hope to say something about the re-opening of our churches. I do need to ask, though, that you do not build up your hopes to expect a sudden flooding back to church for mass. Social distancing and the necessity to disinfect buildings after each opening will seriously restrict things. There will be more detail next week. We all need to continue to be patient.

## **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/>

**Patients in hospital:** Fr Paul Tully is doing a brilliant job in our hospitals at present. He cannot wander around freely as he normally does, but he is in there every day offering support to staff, and he is 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)



Can you help?

**Newsletters:** Each week our parish newsletter is available on our website ([wdrcp.org](http://wdrcp.org)). Perhaps some people might like to print off a few copies to distribute to parishioners in their area

who don't have access to the internet. I can provide names for you. Other people might be willing to deliver an ordinary paper copy of the newsletter to parishioners who live close to you. Again, I can give you names, and bring a bundle of newsletters to you. At present we seem to have most of Esh Winning and Ushaw Moor covered. Anyone happy to help with distribution in Bearpark, Langley Park and a few in Esh?? If you do happen to have email and access to our parish website then perhaps you could let me know, otherwise we will try to send out occasional newsletters by post or by delivery.

**Food bank:** Next weekend, the first weekend in June, should be our time for collecting items for the Food bank. However, this is not possible - but the need is still there. How can we continue to help? We are asking people who normally donate food to donate money instead using our website [durham.foodbank.org.uk](http://durham.foodbank.org.uk) and clicking on the Donate Now button. Alternatively, you can send a cheque made out to **Durham Foodbank** and sending to our head office at: Mile House, Bridge End, Chester le Street, Durham, DH3 3RA. Thank you.



**Prayer at 12:** Quite a few people are taking time to pause for prayer at 12 noon each day. Even though we are in different places this is chance for togetherness and solidarity in prayer. In addition, some people are praying together at their usual mass time. I mentioned this to Bishop Robert when he phoned recently, and also the palms that Lisa suggested be posted out to people for Palm Sunday. He was 'well impressed'!

## **Prayer for schools:**

The staff in our schools are doing an amazing job just now. The schools were open over the Easter holidays and most of this last week (half term). Throughout



lock-down, our staff have been in school looking after children of key workers, providing school work for children at home and also trying to deal with everyday concerns within their own families. Recently, they have been rearranging furniture in classrooms so that schools can begin to re-open on 15 June. Let's support them with our prayer.

**Scripture readings:** Each week I am trying to offer a bit more background to our Scripture readings and to invite everyone to interact with the word of God. This is what we mean by listening to 'the God who Speaks'. If you should have any thoughts about the readings, I would be very happy to hear them!

**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)

**Pastoral Council:** On 12 May we had a Pastoral Council meeting on a conference phone call. This was partly a catch-up for members but, during the course of our phone call, we thought about our parish Facebook page and also different ways of praying we had experimented with during the lock-down. It was mentioned that someone had had very positive feedback about Facebook and that, at that point, there were 68 members. It is updated regularly and includes daily meditations and links to scripture readings, prayers and information from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, as well as the Vatican. There are links too to prayer resources, including our novena for Pentecost. In terms of our spirituality, it's probably true that we tend to focus largely upon the mass and, without public masses recently, we are all looking for other ways to draw close to God. So, how do we encourage this activity to continue - for people to have a regular life of prayer? What are the things we have been forced to do during lockdown that have led to it being a time of renewal? There was discussion around the use of remote technology: people can still pray together - and this can work across generational groups - consider 'livestreaming' different types of worship? We hope to have a further Pastoral Council meeting by phone this Tuesday.

**Last week:** I know that we didn't have the opportunity to be at mass together last weekend, but there was a beautiful prayer for that mass: '*Eternal Father, reaching from end to end of the universe, and ordering all things with your mighty arm, for you, 'time' is the unfolding of truth that already is, the unveiling of beauty that is yet to be. Your Son has saved us in history by rising from the dead so that, transcending time, he might free us from death. May his presence among us lead us to the vision of unlimited truth and unfold the beauty of your love.*'