

# St Osmund's Catholic Church, Gainford

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

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## Hogarth Partnership

St Anne, St Augustine, St Mary, St Osmund, Holy Family, St Teresa, St Thomas Aquinas, SS William & Francis De Sale

### FoodBank: The Well:

46 East Green, West Auckland. DL14 9HJ. Opening times: Wednesday-Friday 9am - 3pm  
Items may be left at the Foodbanks during their opening times or placed in St. Osmund's Church porch.

### Please Pray for:

**The sick of the Parish:** Patrick Doherty, Nico Human, Alexandra Jüngst, Kate Konig, Patrick Heffernan, Hilary Fletcher, Mike Griffiths, Luca Gallucci, Pat Aveson and Susan Hunton

### Offertory

If you wish to make your donations directly to St. Osmund's. Bank account details are:

HSBC: D.H & N Gainford St. Osmund's.

Account No. 41164015.

Sort Code 40-34-18.

### Safeguarding

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) and Diocese's policies and procedures at all times. Details of our Parish Safeguarding Representative can be found on the notice board in the porch and the Parish Centre, or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on [0191 2433305](tel:01912433305) or at [safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk)

### St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD

The St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 22nd to 27th June in London. Candidates must be aged 18-25, have completed their first or second year at university and have a passion for social justice. Applications close on the 20th April. For any queries, please contact [KeziaH@svp.org.uk](mailto:KeziaH@svp.org.uk)

### The 4th Sunday of Lent

#### Theme: The prodigal Father

*"The Prodigal Father." To be prodigal is to be wasteful or lavish in your use of things. Well, the father threw his forgiveness around. Not in any grudging or reproving way, but in an explosion of sheer generosity and joy: [associationofcatholicpriests.ie](http://associationofcatholicpriests.ie)*

**St Osmund's will be open for Parish Mass on Tuesdays at 10.00am.**

**Saturday 28th March 6.30pm**

**Saturday 5th April 6.30pm**

**Sunday 13th April 9.30am**

**Saturday 19th April 6.30pm**

### Children's Liturgy:

**(Sunday 13th April-Palm Sunday- to be decided)**

### Holy Week Service Times

The main services of Holy Week will be held jointly with Barnard Castle and the Ordinariate (as in previous years), this year they take place here at S. Osmund:

Maundy Thursday (17 April) – Solemn Mass of the Lord's Supper – 7pm (followed by watch until midnight)

Good Friday (18 April) – Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion – 3pm

Holy Saturday (19 April) – Easter Vigil – 8.30pm

### Peace for the people of Ukraine

*We continue to pray earnestly for peace in Ukraine, joining the Holy Father in his consecration of Russia and Ukraine to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart – may her prayers bring a swift end to the conflict, and consolation to the bereaved and to the many thousands of refugees.*

**Jubilee 2025:** as we celebrate this year of pilgrimage and prayer, celebration and reconciliation, seeking to be Pilgrims of Hope; in our Diocese the celebrations are focused on our 2 Jubilee Hub Churches: St. Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle and St. Joseph's Hartlepool. Everyone is welcome. There's more information about the Jubilee Year on the Diocesan website at <https://www.bit.ly/DHNjubilee2025>.

To aid your journey through this jubilee year, **copies of a companion booklet are available at the back of church.** This gives information, reflections, and prayers to help you enter into the holy year more deeply. A donation of £1 is suggested.

**Churches Together in Gainford's Lenten activities** continue with a showing of part of *The Chosen*, a film about the life of Christ, with discussion. **Monday 31 March, 2.30-4.30pm** in the parish rooms here at S. Osmund. It is being organised by Claire Mead, who is in training for the Anglican ministry – all welcome.

**First reading Joshua 5:9a,10-12****The people of God entered the promised land and there kept the Passover.**

In those days: The Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.' While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho. And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

**Responsorial Psalm 34(33):2-7 R cf 18b****Taste and see that the Lord is good.**

I will bless the Lord at all times,  
praise of him is always in my mouth.  
In the Lord my soul shall make its boast;  
the humble shall hear and be glad.

Glorify the Lord with me;  
together let us praise his name.  
I sought the Lord, and he answered me;  
from all my terrors he set me free.

Look towards him and be radiant;  
let your faces not be abashed.  
This lowly one called; the Lord heard,  
and rescued him from all his distress.

**Second reading 2 Corinthians 5:17-21****'God who through Christ reconciled us to himself.'**

Brothers and Sisters: If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**Gospel Acclamation Luke 15:18****Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus.**

I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him,  
'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.'

**Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus.****Gospel Luke 15:1-3,11-32****'Your brother was dead, and is alive.'**

At that time: The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'

So he told them this parable: 'There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father,

"Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me." And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

'But when he came to himself, he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants." "

'And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." And they began to celebrate.

'Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound." But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, "Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!" And he said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found." '

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**Feast Days this Week**

**Wednesday 2nd April:** St Francis of Paola

**Friday 4th April:** St Isidore

**Saturday 3rd April:** St Vincent Ferrer

**Reflection on the Readings****The ideal short story**

*Luke 15 is a masterly story. Some of its phrases are so powerful that they have become proverbial. Prodigal Son, fatted calf. . . lost and found. A story that has enriched the vocabulary of the world. And not just the world's vocabulary " the world's mentality as well. Its way of looking at things. No story tells us more about God or makes us feel better about ourselves. It's a short story with enormous scope, with the widest possible diameter, in that it embraces our sinfulness at one end and God's forgiveness at the other. The best part of it, of course, is that it brings both extremities to the centre. What provoked it? What led Our Lord to tell it? The fact that the Pharisees objected to the company he kept, to his eating with sinners. So he tells the story to give an insight into his own mind and the mind of God.*

*It plays out in three vivid character sketches. First there is the younger son, an impatient lad who wanted his inheritance now. Couldn't wait for the father to die. Greedy fingers, itchy feet, a sensual nature; wanting to live it up, and to hell with the commandments. A life based on doing whatever he feel like doing " not an unfamiliar story, really. We make excuses: "Sure you might as well, while you're young. As long as you're enjoying yourself, and stay safe." But the happiness ran out, and he came to his senses. And that's the big point about him. He came to his senses. He really was repentant. Repentance is to be sorry to be in one place, to want to be in another, and to have the will and determination to get there. To be sorry for our sins, to want a different kind of life, and to have the motivation and determination to change. Well, he had that. He was graced with that. "I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired men" (Lk 17:19). As I say, the big thing about him is that he acknowledged his sins and wanted to be rid of them. He was really repentant.*

*The second character is the father, who was on the lookout for the son's return. "While he was still a long way off, his father saw him" (Lk 15-20). Still a long way off, a dot on the horizon. Doesn't that mean he was on the look.out for him, from the day he left, watching and waiting and praying, like many a father or mother? Doesn't it illustrate how God the Father feels about each of us, how much every one of us matters to him, how anxious he is that we'd come back? And he didn't just wait for the son; he ran out to meet him " met him half-way. Some people feel we should call this story "the Prodigal Father." To be prodigal is to be wasteful or lavish in your use of things. Well, the father threw his forgiveness around. Not in any grudging or reproving way, but in an explosion of sheer generosity and joy: Kill the calf, we're having a feast, the son is alive again. The father is noted for the prodigality of his forgiveness and the intensity of his joy: "There will be more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine upright people who have no need of repentance" (Lk 15:7).*

*The third character is the elder son, so angry that he couldn't enter into the mood of the party to celebrate his brother's return. He's indignant at his father's easy pardon of the returned prodigal, and refuses even to go in. Of course his anger is quite understandable and he's treated with some sympathy by his father, but the elder son's attitude helps to illustrate how much more forgiving God is than we are, and how inclusive, all-embracing, is the Father's embrace. It includes the two of them " the rock and the rover. "My son you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right that we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found." What a lesson for the Year of Mercy in which pope Francis has invited us to join.*

*The story of the Prodigal Son really needs no elaboration. The most respectful response to it is personal reflection. Just think about it; savour it and let it sink in. We'll all be touched by different pieces of it, because that's the way with everything we hear. I doubt if any of us can ignore its central message, that there is no limit to God's forgiveness and that our repentance brings joy to the Father's heart. You imagine that God doesn't want us to turn away from sin? You think God doesn't love you? Then you haven't been listening to the story of the Prodigal Son. [associationofcatholicpriests.ie](http://associationofcatholicpriests.ie)*

**Youth Helper for the Lourdes Pilgrimage 2025!**

Are you interested in joining our Lourdes Pilgrimage in 2025 as a youth helper? Now is the time to register and secure your spot! By registering, you will receive all necessary forms that need to be completed as soon as possible. Don't miss this incredible opportunity to serve and experience a unique spiritual journey. Registration Deadline: End of March 2025  
Sign up today at [www.ymt.org](http://www.ymt.org) and be a part of this unforgettable experience. Hurry, spaces are filling fast!

**Holy Island SVP Vinnies Camp- Volunteering is a Work of Heart**

Holy Island Children's Camp is looking for new volunteers to help in their Holiday Centre on Holy

Island. They are in need of young adults to help the children have a great week's holiday on the island in Summer 2025. Full training and support will be given and would suit someone wanting to give back to the Community by helping 9-12-year-olds have fun for a week

They are also keen to attract people who would like to help by volunteering in the Kitchen/Dining room and with caretaking. Term Time Camps need lots of volunteers if they are to survive. If you could find a few days in term time to help out with serving meals, prepping salads and washing dishes they would be truly grateful. By running term time camps, Summer Vinnies Holidays for children can be sustained.

One of the titles for this Sunday, Lætare Sunday, comes from the entrance antiphon, this reads 'Rejoice Jerusalem' (in Latin Lætare Jerusalem). There has long been a link between the Church (our heavenly mother) and Jerusalem (the holy city here on earth); so when the liturgy calls on Jerusalem to rejoice, it is speaking of the whole Church. But why would a city in the Levant come to have such deep connections?

Clearly, to tell the whole history of Jerusalem here would be impossible, it seems to have been founded over 5000 years ago and for much of its history has been of central importance to the major powers in the region, at least 44 times it has been captured by an enemy force, and it still draws attention from across the world. But some reflections on how it came to be regarded as so central to Christianity can help us.

The first time that we encounter this area is in Genesis; Abraham is called to sacrifice his son Isaac on Mount Moriah. At the time, this is not part of any city; however, later it is the location where Solomon will build the Temple (*cf.* 2 *Chronicles* 3:1). In the centuries following Abraham's sacrifice, a settlement grows up. The name seems to mean 'City of Peace'. King David conquers this city and makes it into the capital of his Israelite kingdom – from that point onwards it becomes a central focus. The construction of the Temple by Solomon solidified this position in the minds of God's people – the Temple was the dwelling place of God on earth, and the place where true worship could be offered to him. Just to the south of Mount Moriah is another hill, called Mount Zion, and from this we get an alternative name applied both to Jerusalem and to the whole of the God's people.

When the Kingdom of Israel gets divided, Jerusalem ends up in the Kingdom of Judah (as its capital); but remains the focus of worship for all of the Israelites. Israel and Judah are both captured by the Babylonians, and the fall of Jerusalem is seen as a particular cause of sorrow. With the fall of Jerusalem, the Temple is destroyed and the people carried into captivity. Here we get passages like Psalm 137 where the people weep

Later God's people were allowed to return and rebuild the Temple, and so Jerusalem can again become the focus of life and worship, as it was in the time of Christ. Our Lord himself emphasises the position of Jerusalem, as he prepares to go to the city he says "it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem." (Luke 13:33) and then continues with a lament for Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" (Luke 13:34) – clearly speaking of both the city and the people of God. The reference to Jerusalem as the place where the prophets die is clearly looking forward to his own death there – and indeed he is killed, buried, and raised at Jerusalem.

The early Christian of Jerusalem is unclear due to the persecution of the time; however, as soon as the peace of the Church was reached it becomes a focus for devotion and pilgrimage. S. Helena (mother of the Emperor Constantine) journeys there and is shown the various sites which Christians have covertly remembered and honoured. The history of Jerusalem will reach its final peak at the end of time: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth...and he showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God" (Revelation 21)

It is sad that such a significant city should continue to be the place of such conflict; but we still rejoice, looking forward to the time when that new and perfected Jerusalem comes down from heaven. Jerusalem is the holy city as it is where God dwells with his people, and so in the meantime we rejoice that we can all be the dwelling of God, and so have Jerusalem in our hearts. – **Fr. Thomas.**

### **The Cycle of Prayer** **Candidates for the Sacraments** **Background**

For those preparing to be initiated into the Church at Easter, Lent marks the final stage of preparation, the period of Purification and Enlightenment. It begins with the Rite of Election on the First Sunday of Lent. During the season of Lent the Scrutinies are celebrated on the 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays in preparation for Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. "The celebration of other Sacraments, such as Confirmation and First Holy Communion, will often take place within

the Easter season so that candidates for these Sacraments will also be preparing in Lent. These candidates should also be remembered in the prayers of the community.

#### **Prayer**

*Father of love and power, it is your will to establish everything in Christ and to draw us into his all-embracing love.*

*Guide the elect of your Church: strengthen them in their vocation, build them into the kingdom of your Son, and seal them with the Spirit of your promise.*

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults**

**Best wishes for a safe happy and healthy week ahead**

