

Finchale Partnership

Newsletter No. 8, February 2021



It's a year now since the coronavirus pandemic began to have its impact on us. Some of us have lost loved ones, or suffered serious illness. We have all had our lives disrupted; shielding, working from home, homeschooling, trying to keep in touch with the people we love. Social life and holidays have gone by the board. Everyone seems weary.

The life of the Church has been disrupted, too. For several months, our churches were closed. At present, we can celebrate Mass publicly, thanks to the work of volunteer stewards and cleaners. The people of our partnership parishes have made tremendous efforts over the past year, to sustain the life of our communities, and to support the vulnerable among us. But many are still unable to be present for our worship. As we begin the season of Lent, we may feel that the past year has been one long Lent. Even if we are fortunate enough to have stayed well, we have had to fast from many of the things that we enjoy.

Fasting, though, can help us to appreciate God's gifts. In his message for Lent this year, Pope Francis speaks of hope, saying, 'In these times of trouble, when everything seems fragile and uncertain, it may appear challenging to speak of hope. Yet Lent is precisely the season of hope, when we turn back to God who patiently continues to care for his creation which we have often mistreated.' He adds: 'This Lenten journey, like the entire pilgrimage of the Christian life, is even now illumined by the light of the resurrection, which inspires the thoughts, attitudes and decisions of the followers of Christ.' This Lent can be a time of hope and renewal for us, as we journey together towards Easter.

Fr. Andrew Downie, Partnership Dean

Spirituality series

Our series on the spirituality of the religious orders is taking place on Zoom. Since October we have heard about the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Benedictines and the Jesuits. In our next session we will be hearing about the Oratorians from our Bishop.

Bishop Robert Byrne CO will be talking to us on **Thursday 25th February** at 7.00pm, and the Zoom dial-in details are available in all the parish Facebook groups or by contacting margaretdoyle1066@sky.com



News from the Parishes

Despite the restrictions in place, all of our parishes had a range of activities and services over the Christmas period.



At St. Patrick's, Langley Moor a prayer group met (socially distanced!) in church between the lockdowns. And newsletters and prayer packs are delivered by hand in many parishes.

Our parishes distributed copies of the Advent reflections produced by the Diocese (and many people from our Partnership contributed reflections).

Durham Martyrs, St. John Boste and St. Cuthbert's all produced online services of readings and carols, with CDs available for those not on-line.

St. Cuthbert's have installed a camera so we are now able to live stream Masses on YouTube. There are many keeping in touch events and prayer groups on-line – you'll find a list overleaf. Please join us if you are on-line.

If you are on-line, here are some of the things you can join across the Partnership. You are very welcome to join in with the activity in any of our parishes, not just the parish where you live.

<i>Event</i>	<i>Platform</i>	<i>Host Parish</i>	<i>How to join</i>
Mass			
Mass is live streamed on Sunday at 10.00am and every day except Monday (check website for times)	YouTube	St. Cuthbert's	St. Cuthbert's YouTube channel Subscribe to the YouTube channel or check the parish website for details of times.
Gospel Reflection			
Discussion on the Sunday readings led by Fr. Andrew Sundays at 11.00pm	Zoom	St. Cuthbert's	See St. Cuthbert's Facebook Group or contact margaretdoyle1066@sky.com
Recorded reflections from Fr. Colm	Facebook	Durham Martyrs	See Durham Martyrs Facebook Page
Keeping in touch			
Join one of our Facebook groups to keep in touch.	Facebook	St. Cuthbert's	St Cuthbert's Parish Community
	Facebook	Durham Martyrs	Durham Martyrs Parish group
	Facebook	St. John Boste	St. John Boste Parish Community
	Facebook	Bl. Edmund Duke	Edmund Duke Parishioners
Virtual Coffee Morning Saturdays at 10.30am	Zoom	St. Cuthbert's	See St. Cuthbert's Facebook Group or contact margaretdoyle1066@sky.com
Virtual Coffee Morning	Zoom	St. John Boste	See St. John Boste's Facebook Group or contact christine.brennan61@gmail.com
Prayer			
Morning Prayer (Lauds) 8.00am, Monday to Friday	Zoom	St. Cuthbert's	See St. Cuthbert's Facebook Group or contact margaretdoyle1066@sky.com
Evening Prayer (Vespers) Monday & Wednesday at 7.00pm	Facebook	Bl. Edmund Duke	See Bl. Edmund Duke's Facebook group
Prayer Pack (also distributed to those who are not on line)	Website	Durham Martyrs	Durham Martyrs website
<i>Parishes may also have additional online events, e.g during Lent. Please see your parish newsletter, website or Facebook Group for details</i>			