



The Catholic Parishes of

St. Mary Magdalen's

Harbour Walk, Seaham, SR7 7DS

St. Cuthbert's

Mill Road, Seaham, SR7 0HW

St. Joseph's

Church Lane, Murton, SR7 9BT

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT | GAUDETE SUNDAY
14TH DECEMBER 2025



"GO AND TELL JOHN WHAT YOU HEAR AND SEE: THE BLIND RECEIVE THEIR SIGHT AND THE LAME WALK, LEPERS ARE CLEANSED AND THE DEAF HEAR"

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SUNDAY MESSAGE

John the Baptist was expecting a Messiah of judgment, who would cut down the rotten tree and burn the useless chaff. When, in prison, he hears that Jesus is not doing this, he is puzzled and sends messengers to ask if Jesus is really the Messiah. Jesus sends back the message that he is fulfilling the prophet Isaiah – the passage which we hear about in today's first reading. Jesus' understanding was that healing, not punishment, was the task of the Messiah. He goes and seeks out those who need healing, both physically and spiritually. He does not wait for sinners to repent before gathering them into the kingdom; he makes the first advance. Then he turns to praising the Baptist. It is a fascinating point of speculation as to whether Jesus was himself once a disciple of John the Baptist. After all, John says he did not recognise Jesus until he saw the Spirit coming down on him. But he also says that Jesus, who came after him, has passed before him. This is a typical position of a rabbi, leading his disciples, and suggests that John had been Jesus' rabbi, then became his disciple. Jesus was fully man, and even he needed to learn as all human beings do. John the Baptist did all he could to lead others to God. How, through our actions and attitudes, can we point others to God?

How do our lives show that we are preparing for Christ's second coming?



GAUDETE SUNDAY | THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Today, we celebrate the third Sunday in Advent, known as Gaudete Sunday. This is not just peculiar to the Roman Catholic Church, it is common to the liturgical calendar of Western Christianity, including the Anglican Church. It can fall on any date from 11 December to 17 December. The word "Gaudete" is derived from the Latin words "Gaudium," joy, and "Gaudeo," to rejoice or be glad. It is a time of rejoicing and reflection on the imminent arrival of Christ. Traditionally, rose-coloured vestments may be worn by clergy during this Sunday's Mass. The liturgical shift to rose signifies a brief break from the more sombre purple vestments used throughout the rest of Advent. Rose-coloured or pink candles are lit on the Advent wreath, symbolising the joy of the season. It's a vibrant moment in the liturgical calendar that heightens the anticipation and excitement for the Christmas season. Gaudete Sunday's counterpart in Lent is Laetare Sunday, another break in penance to rejoice in hope as we approach Easter.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Please ensure all items for the bulletin are with the parish office by 5pm on a Wednesday. Please email to bulletin@seaham-catholics.org.uk



POPE LEO XIV'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER



For Christians in areas of conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

SANCTUARY CANDLE



THE CANDLE THAT BURNS AT THE SANCTUARY IS FOR

TBC
at St. Mary Magdalen's

The McCourt Family
at St. Cuthbert's

David Bramley
at St. Joseph's

BONUS BALL WINNER

at St Joseph's

6th December
Mary Beth Muncaster

40

✠ THE NEWS FOR THE PEWS ✠

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Please find our Mass schedule from the Fourth Sunday of Advent up to Sunday 28th December (Feast of the Holy Family):

Sat	20th Dec	St. Cuthbert's	4:30pm	Vigil The Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sun	21st Dec	St Mary Magdalen's	9:30am	The Fourth Sunday of Advent
		St Joseph's	11:00am	The Fourth Sunday of Advent
Tues	23rd Dec	St Mary Magdalen's	10:00am	Weekday in Advent
Weds	24th Dec	St Joseph's	4:00pm	Vigil The Nativity of the Lord
		St Cuthbert's	5:30pm	Vigil The Nativity of the Lord
		St Mary Magdalen's	7:00pm	Vigil The Nativity of the Lord
Thurs	25th Dec	St Cuthbert's	8:00am	The Nativity of the Lord
		St Mary Magdalen's	9:30am	The Nativity of the Lord
Fri	26th Dec	St Joseph's	10:00am	Boxing Day The Feast of St. Stephen
Sat	27th Dec	St Cuthbert's	4:30pm	Vigil The Holy Family
Sun	28th Dec	St Mary Magdalen's	9:30am	The Holy Family
		St Joseph's	11:00am	The Holy Family

PICK UP A CHRISTMAS CARD

We have a Christmas Card for every family. It has all the masses of the Christmas season. The clergy in the parishes wish all our parishioners a lovely Christmas. Please pick a copy as you leave the Church after Mass.

FINANCE GROUP

The finance group have had their first meeting with the Health and safety group together. Most of their meetings will be held together for the growth of our parishes. By the end of the 'finance year', a member of the group will speak to us in Church.

CHRISTMAS CHARITY

We have discussed in the finance group to have a retiring collection on the Christmas Vigil Mass, which will be used by the parishes through the SVP and Minnie Vinnies to reach out to families struggling this Christmas and beyond. We are encouraged to put a smile on somebody's face this Christmas.

A THANK YOU FROM THE SISTERS OF THE NEEDY

The Holy Family Sisters of the Needy send their heartfelt thanks to our parish for the warm welcome during their recent mission appeal. They express deep gratitude for the hospitality shown, especially over what was a busy weekend. The Sisters were particularly moved by the kindness and generosity of our parishioners, and they extend special thanks to Teresa for her thoughtful assistance with travel. They assure us of their prayers and ask that God bless our parish abundantly for our generosity of heart.

THE AVE MARIA CLUB - WITH THANKS & CHRISTMAS BREAK

Many thanks to the Ave Maria coffee club for their generous donation £250.00 for church funds. Please note: the Ave Maria Club will be CLOSED on* 22nd December & will re-open on Monday January 5th 2026. Our last day is 15th December. Please note the Ave Maria club newsletter is now available on the parish website at seaham-catholics.org.uk/AveMaria, this is the last newsletter for 2025.

CHURCHES TOGETHER EVENT

St Joseph's Church, Murton, will host a Churches Together gathering featuring St Joseph's School Choir on Monday 15 December at 1:30pm. All parishioners are warmly invited to attend.

PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Pat Harman who has died. Her Requiem Mass will be celebrated on Wednesday 17th December at 11:30am at St. Cuthbert's. **REQUIESCAT IN PACE.** Following her mother's death, Pat's daughter Kelly has set up the 'Pat Harman warm coat appeal'. Pat loved helping others and supporting charities and making a difference to people's lives. She had a passion for coats and was forever buying new ones. To honour her memory and her desire to help others this appeal has been set up. If you have any spare warm coats that you can donate to the appeal leave at the back of church. Fr. Charles will ensure the family receive the coats. They will subsequently be donated to charities such as women's refuge, homeless charities etc.

FOOD BANK AT THE BACK OF CHURCH

At this time of the year, many people are having to make the choice between eating and heating. Food banks are struggling to cope with the demand. If, as we come to weekend Mass, could we please bring one item for those struggling.

LAST CHANCE TO PURCHASE A MEMORIAL SANCTUARY LAMP

This is the final weekend to buy 2026 Sanctuary Candles in all three parishes. Candles cost £10 and will be used on Christmas Eve, then throughout the year. Pick up a "Sanctuary Candle Intention" envelope at the back of the church, include £10, complete the details, and return it via the collection plate or to a Priest or Deacon. The candle is placed in the parish where the intention is submitted.

ST JOSEPH'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Ticket's are available for the annual over 60's Christmas part in St. Joseph's parish hall on Tuesday 30th December. Parishioner's from all parish are invited to attend. Tickets are £3 and are on sale from the back of Church at St. Joseph's, in the coffee morning or alternatively email the parish office (email address on the front of the newsletter).

FUNDRAISING AT ST CUTHBERT'S

There will be Christmas raffles to raise money for the Parish. Tickets are on sale at St. Cuthbert's church.

ST JOSEPH'S SPIRIT DRAW

There is a list available at the back of church at St. Joseph's for the Christmas spirit draw and a box for hamper donations.

✠ THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISHES ✠

A = Anniversary | **(LD)** = Lately Deceased | **(DFM)** = Deceased Family Members

	St Mary Magdalen's SEAHAM HARBOUR	St Cuthbert's NEW SEAHAM	St. Joseph's MURTON
Saturday 13th Dec <i>St Lucy, Virgin</i> THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	10:00am <i>Adoration & Benediction</i> 10:30am MASS Friends of the Sunderland Seamans Mission <i>Confessions after Mass</i>	4:00 - 4:20pm - <i>Confessions</i> 4:30pm VIGIL MASS Dr. Zakariya Wagar-Uddin	
Sunday 14th Dec THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 	9:30am MASS Mary & Youngy Hudson <i>Coffee in the Hall after Mass</i>		10:30am - Confessions 11:00am MASS Charles and Ann Carmichael & DFM <i>Coffee in the Hall after Mass</i>
Mon 15th Dec <i>Weekday in Advent</i>		8:45am <i>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament</i> 9:30am <i>Service of the Word & Holy Communion</i>	
Tues 16th Dec <i>Weekday in Advent</i>	9:40am <i>Holy Rosary</i> 10:00am MASS Intention of the Priest		
Wed 17th Dec <i>Weekday in Advent</i>		9:30am MASS Mary Coxon 11:30 REQUIEM MASS Pat Harman	10:00am MASS Alice Groves (LD)
Thurs 18th Dec <i>Weekday in Advent</i>	9:40am <i>Holy Rosary</i> 10:00am MASS John Foreman		
Friday 19th Dec <i>Weekday in Advent</i>			10:00am MASS George and Edith Dobson
Saturday 20th Dec <i>St Lucy, Virgin</i> THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	10:00am <i>Adoration & Benediction</i> 10:30am MASS Intentions of Nola Robson <i>Confessions after Mass</i>	4:00 - 4:20pm - <i>Confessions</i> 4:30pm VIGIL MASS The Kay Family	
Sunday 21st Dec THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 	9:30am MASS The Foreman & Gallagher Families <i>Coffee in the Hall after Mass</i>		10:30am - Confessions 11:00am MASS George & Peter Dobson (A) <i>Coffee in the Hall after Mass</i>

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