

## The week ahead...

<b>Saturday 22nd February</b> Vigil Mass for The 7th Sunday in Ordi-	<b>5:00pm</b>	Mass: <b>Jack and Shelia Wilkinson</b> and <b>pro populo</b>
<b>Sunday 23rd February</b> 7th Sunday in Ordinary time	<b>NO MASS</b>	
<b>Monday 24th February</b> Monday of Week 7	<b>NO MASS</b>	
<b>Tuesday 25th February</b> Tuesday of Week 7 (Shrove Tuesday)	<b>6:30pm</b>	Mass: <b>Francis Harland</b>
<b>Wednesday 26th February</b> <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	<b>9:30am 7:00pm</b>	Mass: <b>Patrick Boyle</b>
<b>Thursday 27th February</b> <i>Thursday after Ash Wednesday</i>	<b>9:30am</b>	Mass: <b>Francis Harland</b>
<b>Friday 28th February</b> Friday after Ash Wednesday	<b>12 noon</b>	Mass: <b>Private intention</b>
<b>Saturday 29th February</b> Vigil Mass for 1st Sunday in Lent	<b>5:00pm</b>	Mass: <b>John Kennedy</b> and <b>pro populo</b>



### St Patrick's R.C. Church

*A Parish of the Finchale Partnership*

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## 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## 23rd February 2020

### “Even the tax collectors do as much, do they not?”

A MODERN HYMN, composed by Peter Scholtes, titled “They’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love” is sung from time to time in various Christian liturgical settings. Regardless of one’s opinion of the hymn, the sentiment it expresses is profound. It highlights the fact that Christians are distinct from other people, and the mark of this distinction is the nature of our love. As we continue to hear from Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount this weekend, our final weekend before the beginning of Lent, Jesus once again challenges us to love in a radical manner; the only manner, in fact, which can change the world for the better, to give it some semblance of the kingdom of God.

Last weekend we heard Jesus call for a deeper living of the law, inviting us to a conversion of the heart which will mean that our lives are directed towards serving others in love. Living in this manner, we will not feel a need to make reference to laws or regulations, wondering ‘how far we can go’ before we step over the threshold from venial to mortal sin. Nor will we be unduly focused on avoiding sin. We will simply enjoy serving others as Jesus did, and so experience the fullness of life for which Jesus said he came into the world. (John 10:10)

The two adjustments of the Law we hear from Jesus this weekend are more demanding for most of us than those of last weekend, principally because they call on us to refrain from exacting vengeance on those who have hurt us. Our natural instinct, or at least our most immediate thought, when another harms us in some way, is to strike back, at least in equal measure to what has been dealt to us. Jesus references this when speaking of the “eye for an eye” precept under the Law, a sensible way of ensuring limits were placed on revenge in ancient times. A more profound and loving response is asked of us by Jesus once again: to seek no vengeance at all but rather the conversion of the other by refraining from retaliation and showing love, just as God loves us who have done nothing to deserve it. This is the meaning of the final sentence of this weekend’s gospel: “You must therefore be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Loving only those who we feel “deserve” our love and rejecting others is the antithesis of Christian discipleship; indeed, it is the antithesis of love itself. We don’t work to earn another’s love, but Jesus does ask us to work to love others. Showing love in response to those who have hurt us, or to whom we simply are not attracted, requires strength beyond what we possess as human beings: it requires divine assistance, something we receive principally through the Eucharist and prayer. If we are not striving to be distinct in the way we love, we have nothing substantial to differentiate ourselves from others, except the label “Christian”.

At the final judgement, we won’t each be asked if we called ourselves a Christian but rather, “Did you live as a Christian?” Let us hope we can answer with a resounding yes, evidenced by our manner of loving.

Wishing you a blessed week ahead. Fr Robert

### Confessions available after all Masses or by appointment

#### MINISTRIES

##### Saturday 22nd February

#### Eucharistic Ministers

Ambrose and Pauline Burnside  
Harry Curran

#### Readers

Stella Foody  
Marie Paily

#### Children’s Liturgy

Maria Griffiths  
Joanne Lidster

#### Welcomers

Angela Harmiston  
Christine Tracey

#### Music

Bill Wilkinson & Choir

#### MINISTRIES

##### Saturday 29th February

#### Eucharistic Ministers

Gordon and Angela Tosley  
Wilf Lavery

#### Readers

Nargaret Purdom  
Ann Canavan

#### Children’s Liturgy

Maria Griffiths  
Helen Riddles

#### Welcomers

Pat Middleton  
Mary kitching

#### Music

Bill Wilkinson & Choir

## The Seventh Sunday

Should you have any items for the bulletin or wish to have it emailed to you, please contact the parish via phone or email. Please contact Doreen Jackson on: djay5966@gmail.com . Items for publication need to be submitted by **12:00noon on Thursday**.

#### We pray for our beloved deceased, including....

Jack and Shelia Wilkinson

Ann Patricia BURLETON(Rec. Dec.)

Frances HARLAND (Rec. Dec.)



Norah Pinkney

Terence Mordue

Please remember in your prayers those who are sick and housebound in our parish....

Doreen Carroll, John Pepper,  
Tom Taylorson, John Byrne,  
Jack Tobin, Margaret Pouton,  
Mary Spears, Sylvia Kelly,  
Rose Crick, David Middleton  
and Frank Moran.



#### LAST WEEKEND’S COLLECTION

Gift Aid: £200 Loose Plate: £187

**TOTAL: £387**

**Mass Attendance: 116**

DIOCESE OF HEXHAM AND NEWCASTLE  
CHARITY NUMBER 1143450





