

## 22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 First Sunday of LENT – NEWSLETTER

*'Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan!'' (Matthew 4:10a)*

**Dear friends,**

We were invited to: 'Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return. Repent and turn with all your heart to Christ' as the cross of ash was signed on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday. **What are you repenting of this Lent, when you turn with all your heart to Christ?** Turning to Jesus, I begin with Jesus: '*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*' Matthew 4:1. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. His response to enter the wilderness provided divine opportunities to exercise his total confidence in God the Father. And he was not alone; the Spirit went ahead where the devil was ready to take Jesus down. Choosing to follow Christ means living with compassion, acting justly, and loving mercy, which may mean being the tempter's target. So, **I repent of believing the devil's lies**, such as, I had, in my foolishness and inadequacy, walked into the devil's trap. The devil is the one who traps, and when tempted, as Jesus had been, we follow Jesus in defeating his temptations: '*Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan!''*

It's been an eventful week for the Diocese of Durham. Our prayers and congratulations to both Bishop Sarah and Bishop-designate Rick.



First, we had been informed that **Bishop Sarah Clark, our Bishop of Jarrow, is to be the next Bishop of Ely.** Bishop Sarah had been the Acting Bishop of Durham for an extended vacancy in see for 18 months. We are invited to **offer our thanks and say farewell at the Sung Eucharist in Durham Cathedral on 'Cuthbert Saturday', Saturday 21 March, 4pm.**

Today, as I write this, we have also received the news that our current **Archdeacon of Auckland, The Venerable Rick Simpson is to be the next Bishop of Durham.** After an extended period of discernment and interviews, this appointment from our own diocese has come as a surprise.

**The Venerable Rick Simpson to be the next Bishop of Durham**

Thursday, 19 February 2026



*A message from the Diocese of Durham*

Downing Street has announced that His Majesty the King has approved the appointment of the Venerable Rick Simpson, currently Archdeacon of Auckland, as the next Bishop of Durham.

**Churches Together in Gainford's AGM** is always an opportunity to shine a light on local charities. **Come along on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 7pm at St Osmund's Church Centre** for an evening with volunteers of **Darlington Assistance for Refugees.** Refugees often in the news, labelled as immigrants and, until they are processed to receive official refugee status lumped together with 'illegals' and blamed for our national troubles.

**CHURCHES TOGETHER IN GAINFORD INVITE YOU TO**

**A Talk by Darlington Assistance for Refugees**

**On Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> of February**

**At 7pm at St Osmund's Centre**

**All Welcome**

**Followed by a short AGM**

**Coffee tea and biscuits**



*Situation in Gainford: You may be aware of a criminal investigation involving the Village Shop. If you are concerned about anyone being affected, please get in touch with me or our churchwardens. Thank you.*

### **SERVICES ON SUNDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent**

9.15am	Staindrop St Mary	Holy Communion	Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop with Sarah Fells preaching
9.30am	Winston St Andrew	Holy Communion	Rev'd David Spokes
10.45am	Gainford St Mary	Holy Communion	Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop with Sarah Fells preaching
11am	Ingleton St John	Holy Communion	Rev'd David Spokes

*Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop*

**The Vicarage telephone landline 01325 733154 has been restored! You may continue to use my mobile number 07976676098 if you wish rather than leaving a voice message on the landline. Thank you.**

## NOTICES:

Please pray for the families of the recently departed in our parishes, of:

- † **SAM COUTTS**, whose funeral took place on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February in St Mary's, Gainford. Sam was a pupil of Gainford Primary School. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.
- † **TOM ALDERSON**, husband of the late Rev'd Maureen Alderson, formerly Parish Priest of Gainford and Winston, whose funeral will be on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 11.45 in St Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 41 Thirsk Rd, Northallerton, DL6 1PJ, and afterwards at Northallerton Bowling Club.
- † **DORIS RAPER** formerly a faithful member of St John the Evangelist Church, Ingleton. Details to come.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP OUR CHURCHES

- ☺ **GAINFORD ST MARY'S BAND** welcomes musicians and instrumentalists to join them. A relaxed and happy group meets to play for our 10.45am Sunday service one Sunday a month. Presently 5 musicians rehearse about once a month on Monday evenings. Peter Dransfield, their band leader, would be delighted to hear from you: [pd@pdmail.co.uk](mailto:pd@pdmail.co.uk) 01325 730450
- **PCCs: We have vacancies.** Our PCCs meet about 6 times a year. Being a member of a PCC is an important and valued role that does not require much time nor involve many tasks. PCC officers are invaluable to the running and life of our churches. **Please consider joining a PCC. For Staindrop St Mary's PCC** get in touch with churchwarden Linda: [linda.hausmanis@gmail.com](mailto:linda.hausmanis@gmail.com) **For Ingleton St John's PCC** get in touch with churchwarden Judith [pressley.j@hotmail.com](mailto:pressley.j@hotmail.com) or Treasurer Joyce [treasurer.ingletonpcc@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.ingletonpcc@gmail.com)

## LENTEN events:

- **LENT BIBLE STUDY: TUESDAYS** 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th March 7-8pm  
2 Olivers Gardens, Staindrop
- **LENT LUNCHES:**
  - **Gainford:** 12 noon Tuesdays 10<sup>th</sup> (St Osmund's) & 25<sup>th</sup> March (St Mary's)
  - **Staindrop,** 11.30am Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> at Scarth Hall
  - **Ingleton:** 12 noon Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March at Ingleton Village Hall
  - **Winston:** Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March – funds being raised for MIND – at Winston Village Hall

## CHARITY LUNCH

donations in aid of



Saturday 21st March 2026

11.30am - 1.00pm

Winston Village Hall

Please join us for  
good food  
good company  
and making a difference

No booking required.



St. Andrew's Fundraising Committee  
in the Season of Lent

## FUNDRAISERS for your support!



**Gainford Village Hall**  
**On Saturday 7th of March**

## Mor-Ukes

play with guitars, trumpet  
singers and lots more  
Pie and Pea supper pudding bar  
tickets £15 from Sue  
on 01325 730379

Doors open at 7pm.

£100 for Charity Other proceeds for  
St Mary's Church, Gainford

## **COLLECT for First Sunday of LENT**

Almighty God,  
whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness,  
and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:  
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit;  
and, as you know our weakness,  
so may we know your power to save;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen

## **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Lord God,  
you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven;  
by it you nourish our faith,  
increase our hope,  
and strengthen our love:  
teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread,  
and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## **First Reading: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7**

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden"?' The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die."' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

## **The Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."'

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."'

Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."'

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; and he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! for it is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."'

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.