



# NEWCASTLE CITY CENTRE PARTNERSHIP



THE DIOCESE OF HEXHAM AND NEWCASTLE

*In the pastoral of care of Bishop Stephen Wright*



## CITY CENTRE SUNDAY MASS TIMES

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### NEW WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE

As of 8th/9th March – the First Sunday of Lent

#### SATURDAY VIGIL

<b>St. Michael's</b>	<b>4pm</b>
St. Andrew's	5pm
St. Dominic's	5:30pm*

(\*until the Jesuits leave St. Dominic's, September 2026)

#### SUNDAY

<b>Cathedral</b>	<b>9:30am</b>		
St. Dominic's	10am	St. Andrew's	6pm
<b>St. Joseph's</b>	<b>11am</b>	Cathedral	6:30pm
Cathedral	11:30am		

Total Masses = 9

(\*8 when the Jesuits leave St. Dominic's, September 2026)

#### CITY CENTRE CLERGY

V. Rev. Canon Simon Lerche (*Cathedral Dean and Parish Priest St. Dominic's*)

Rev. Fr William Nicol (*Cathedral Assistant Priest, Parish Priest St Michael's & Parochial Administrator St Andrew's*)

Rev. Fr. Dermot Preston SJ, Rev. Fr Peter Randall SJ & Rev. Fr Gero McLoughlin SJ, (*Resident at St. Dominic's* | [www.jesuitsnewcastle.org](http://www.jesuitsnewcastle.org))

Newcastle Hospitals Chaplain: Rev. Fr. Mariadass (0191) 273 3903 or Rev. Deacon Paddy Jackson (0191) 233 6161

## New Mass Schedule Rationale

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We currently enjoy 11 Masses across the City Centre every weekend. To facilitate this, the City Centre requires a minimum of 4 priests every weekend. Looking to the immediate and long-term future, this provision is no longer sustainable - our clergy are getting older, we rely on the efforts of a religious community, the Jesuits, to commit to this provision at the cost to their mission beyond our parishes, and this is before we take into account, holidays, sickness, or retreats for clergy etc.

Reducing the Mass provision to 8 Masses across the City Centre over the weekend period would be a more manageable schedule for clergy. It will also be necessary to alter some of the Mass times, so that we have no more than 2 Masses taking place at any one time. This will allow clergy travel time and to cover multiple areas due to the aforementioned reasons (sickness, holiday, retreats for clergy etc). These factors also require us to act sooner rather than later to establish a more manageable schedule.

We are grateful to all those who attended our discussion meetings and for written contributions people have made. Over the last few months, the clergy have been discerning what the new Mass schedule will look like. We felt it was important for people to understand the principles that have been put in place that have shaped our decisions. These principles have been shared with Bishop Stephen.

In reducing the number of Masses and/or altering any times, several factors have been taken into consideration:

- Wherever possible, each worshipping community should share in the reduction in the number of Masses. (*Some communities contributed heavily to a reduction of Masses in the recent past and this should be taken into account.*)
- Some communities only have a single Mass and therefore this should not be reduced further.
- Many in the St Joseph's community are unable to travel to an alternative Mass.
- There should be a dedicated Chaplaincy Mass for the Newcastle student community.
- Wherever possible, a Mass should only be changed/cancelled when an alternative is within an easy commutable distance or amalgamated to a time as close as possible to the original.
- Where multiple Masses are celebrated on a weekend in a church, the number of people attending each Mass needs to be considered.

To avoid too many Masses being celebrated at the same time, we have taken the decision of moving St. Michael's Mass to 4pm on a Saturday evening. This is a significant sacrifice that needs to be acknowledged.

### The New Schedule will begin 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> March – the First Sunday of Lent

We are sorry for any inconvenience caused and we appreciate the sorrow and loss that our parish communities will experience/feel with the coming changes. We continue to be committed to serving our parish communities. We thank you in advance for your support and accommodation.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

*Canon Simon*

*Father William*

*Father Dermot*

*Father Peter*

*Father Gero*