

MINSTERACRES

Retreat Centre



RETREAT PROGRAMME 2026

WWW.MINSTERACRES.ORG



Your Guide to Minsteracres

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Welcome to Minsteracles Retreat Centre



Minsteracles Retreat Centre provides a space where people can feel welcome, can be themselves and are enabled to find healing and wholeness in their relationship with God, with themselves, with others and with creation.



Finding Inspiration at Minsteracres.

Minsteracres is a beautiful historic estate on the Northumberland-Durham border in the land of the Northern Saints. Within 110 acres of gardens, parkland and woodland, step away from everyday cares and find peace in this wonderful landscape.

Whether visiting for a day or a week, Minsteracres offers a welcoming space to relax, reflect and reconnect. Enjoy home-cooked meals from organic and locally sourced produce in our spacious refectory. Explore gardens and arboretum with walks for all abilities. Admire our 64 Giant Sequoias, and stars visible from our Dark Skies. Relax in the cosy visitors lounge and library.

At our heart are two chapels and the prayerful life of our community. The peace garden, labyrinth and grounds offer spaces for reflection, meditation, yoga or quiet contemplation.

The Northern Saints Trail passes within five miles, with other beautiful walks on the doorstep. Retrace the footsteps of those who shaped Anglo-Saxon Christian culture. This landscape also inspired Capability Brown, Turner and Bewick, whose work can be explored at nearby gardens and galleries. We accommodate up to 72 guests in single, double and twin rooms, welcoming people from all faiths and none who support our ethos. We host in-house retreats and welcome groups seeking a venue, plus individuals wanting space for personal reflection.

For bookings and information, visit our website or contact the retreat centre administrator.

2026 Programme



We are excited to bring you a varied programme of retreats and events to inspire, nurture, uplift and delight. Whether seeking connection, quiet reflection or spiritual growth, we have something to fulfil your desire. Join us and make 2026 a year of discovery, renewal and peace.

Our programme includes quiet days of reflection, walking retreats, explorations of the land of the Northern Saints and its cultural gems, and retreats for Holy Week and Pentecost.

Minsteracres is a charity supporting charitable work on its estate. Our event programme ensures the site's financial viability while offering visitors the chance to experience this peaceful place.

Our prices reflect that need, but we don't want cost to be a barrier—bursaries are available. Please enquire when booking.

www.minsteracres.org

February 2026 Programme



Quiet Day of Reflection during Lent

Take a step back from the busyness of daily life and immerse yourself in a space of quiet reflection. At Minsteracres, you'll have the chance to pause, breathe deeply and open your heart to God's presence. Through engaging with scripture, you can listen for His voice and allow His guidance to speak to you.

Surrounded by the peace and beauty of our grounds, this retreat provides a serene environment to refresh your spirit, find stillness and deepen your faith. Lunch and refreshments are included.

Chris Smith

Tuesday 24th February from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45

March 2026 Programme

Quiet Day of Reflection during Lent

Take a step back from the busyness of daily life and immerse yourself in a space of quiet reflection. At Minsteracres, you'll have the chance to pause, breathe deeply and open your heart to God's presence. Through engaging with scripture, you can listen for His voice and allow His guidance to speak to you.

Surrounded by the peace and beauty of our grounds, this retreat provides a serene environment to refresh your spirit, find stillness and deepen your faith. Lunch and refreshments are included.

Minsteracres Team

Wednesday 11th March from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45

Lent Quiet Day – Sr Sheila McNamara

This Lent, take a step back from the busyness of life and come to the quiet at Minsteracres where you can immerse yourself in stillness, the beauty of creation and a space to breathe deeply.

This Quiet Day will offer the opportunity to reflect on the Passion of Jesus through, Scripture, music, poetry, silence and images. Come and let the environment of Minsteracres speak to your soul this Lent. Lunch and refreshments are included.

Sr. Sheila McNamara RSCJ

Tuesday 24th March from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45

April 2026 Programme



Holy Week Retreat

With the Easter Triduum the Minsteracres community journeys from the beauty of the celebration of the Last Supper, through the agony of the Crucifixion and then to the joy of the Resurrection.

Join us as we accompany Jesus on the way of the cross and to His Resurrection.

Minsteracres Team

Thursday 2nd April from 6.30pm to Sunday 5th April at 2pm

Suggested Donation £305



Holistic Wellbeing Retreat

The Day Retreat will incorporate easy to learn holistic practices drawn both from ancient wisdom and current scientific research.

From Acupressure Massage to Tai Chi, Pilates to Mindfulness and Yoga, Terry and Lana will share their expertise to create a safe space to learn how to let go and relax more deeply and to learn ways of self-care for more sustained emotional and physical health and resilience.

Terry Doyle & Lana Kennedy
Saturday 18th April from 10am to 4pm
Suggested Donation £45.00



Walking Retreat - Landscape Liturgies

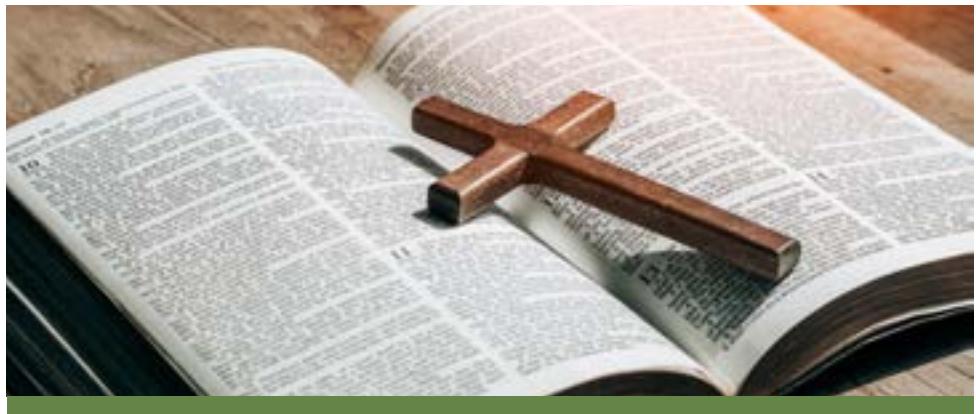
Step away from the rush of the world and join us for a guided walk, spanning between seven and ten miles.

Along the path, there will be intentional moments of stillness to listen to the whispers of creation and shared opportunities to connect in fellowship. (Ack: Nick Mayhew-Smith).

Please wear sturdy footwear and bring weatherproof layers for the changing northern elements. Remember to pack a lunch for our midday pause. Leave the noise behind and find your pace in the beauty of the wild.

Rev. Diana Johnson
Saturday 25th April from 10am to 5pm
Suggested Donation £15

May 2026 Programme



Fire to the Earth! - Fr Eamonn Mulcahy

Rediscovering the Surprising Freshness of Jesus through his Parables.

Jesus' parables were never meant to be comfortable; they were startling stories designed to unsettle and transform. In this retreat, we prayerfully explore these "life-changing questions" hidden within the Gospels. By engaging with Jesus' original language and imagery, we invite a fresh encounter with God's Love—uncovering insights that challenge our modern perspectives.

The retreat is led by Fr Eamonn Mulcahy CSSp, a Spiritan priest with over 40 years of missionary and academic experience. Having served across Africa and the UK, Fr Eamonn has spent decades lecturing in Systematic Theology and leading international retreats.

Join us for a powerful journey into the heart of our faith through the prism of these timeless stories.

Fr Eamonn Mulcahy

Friday 1st May from 6.30pm to Sunday 3rd May at 2pm

Suggested Donation £220



A Circle of Prayer / Circle Dance

Dancing in a circle is a deep tradition across many cultures, an expressive medium to mark important occasions, to celebrate, strengthen and draw communities together. Circle dance can be both gentle and reflective and energetic and lively. The dances are based on repeated patterns giving them a meditative quality.

This is an inviting programme which explores the beauty of music and movement which echoes both feelings, and mood, touching both the soul and the imagination. Throughout this retreat you will have an opportunity to experience both traditional and contemporary dances.

All levels of experience are catered for as the dances are always taught first. The dances will follow a meditative and contemplative theme and will be punctuated with reflective readings.

Lunch and refreshments are included.

Joyce McAndrew

Saturday 9th May from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45



Day of Consolation

An opportunity to join us on this poignant retreat day for people who have experienced bereavement, grief, loss or significant change.

This day will offer them an opportunity to share a safe space, to be heard, to share with others who have had similar experiences and hopefully to find courage, hope and consolation.

Lunch and refreshments are included.

Chris Smith

Wednesday 20th May from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45



Pentecost Retreat

In this Pentecost retreat, we will reflect on the role of the Holy Spirit in the Gospels and pray for the gifts of the Spirit to flourish in our lives, that we may learn how to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

There will be times of input, times of silence and times of prayer and praise to help us open ourselves more fully to God.

Fr Chris Thomas

Friday 22nd May from 6.30pm to Sunday 24th May at 2pm

Suggested Donation £230

June 2026 Programme



3 Day Walking Retreat

Spend three days exploring the beautiful countryside around Minsteracres with daily walks of 7 to 10 miles. Each morning begins with a short reflection, offering time for prayer and a chance to connect with the beauty of creation.

These walks provide a blend of physical activity, spiritual renewal and peaceful immersion in nature.

Be sure to bring sturdy footwear and weatherproof clothing to stay comfortable. This retreat is ideal for those looking to refresh their spirit and enjoy the tranquility of the outdoors.

Minsteracres Team

Tuesday 2nd June from 10am to Thursday 4th June at 5pm

Suggested Donation £250



Soul Nurturing - Northumbrian Gardens

If the 'earth laughs in flowers', our retreat is the chance to hear her joy. Enjoy inspirational gardens, stunning landscapes, and stimulating company with a warm Minsteracres welcome.

This 'soul reset' offers peace through morning meditation, time in nature, and community engagement.

Northumbrian Itinerary

Explore the region's finest horticultural and spiritual sites:

Kirkharle & Wallington: The legacy of Capability Brown.

Alnwick Garden & Castle: The iconic 'Versailles of the North'.

Howick Hall: Home of Earl Grey, including afternoon tea.

Raby Castle & Thornton Manor: Reimagined, acclaimed gardens.

Durham Cathedral: A visit to this world-renowned landmark.

Daily Rhythm

Start with optional mass or meditation and breakfast. Evenings feature dinner and insights from Jan Loughran, an enthusiastic gardener and florist and passionate Northumbrian guide.

Jan Loughran

Tuesday 2nd June from 9.30am to Friday 5th June at 10am

Suggested Donation £575



Quiet Day

Take a step back from the busyness of life and join us for a day dedicated to spiritual reflection and renewal. This is an opportunity to pause, listen to God's word in scripture and embrace the peace and stillness of the beautiful countryside.

Throughout the day, you'll have space for quiet contemplation, personal prayer and time to connect with God in a meaningful way. The serene environment provides the perfect backdrop for rest and renewal, allowing you to leave feeling refreshed and spiritually uplifted.

Lunch and refreshments are included.

Minsteracles Team
Thursday 11th June from 10am to 4pm
Suggested Donation £45

July 2026 Programme



Northern Saints Retreat

Based at Minsteracres Retreat house near the Durham Dales, this pilgrimage explores the sacred heart of the North. Our community gathers daily for Mass, evening prayer, and shared meals, fostering deep spiritual fellowship.

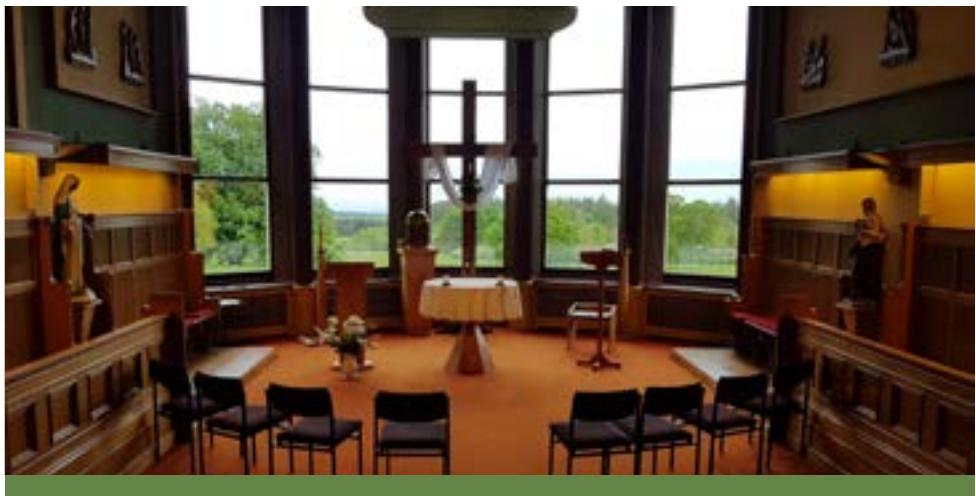
By coach, we visit iconic sites including Lindisfarne, Durham Cathedral, Jarrow, and Hexham Abbey. Expertly guided by Rev'd John and Gina McManners, the journey is enriched by John's nightly talks on the "Northern Saints"—including Cuthbert, Aidan, and Bede.

With over 30 years of experience, our leaders provide historical context and companionship throughout the week. Whether enjoying optional guided walks or coastal scenery, you are invited to retrace the footsteps of these extraordinary saints in a prayerful, welcoming environment.

Rev John McManners

Monday 6th July from 6.30pm to Friday 10th July at 2pm

Suggested Donation £500



Eucharistic Retreat

The Eucharist is the heart of our faith, far more than a weekly obligation. This retreat invites you to deepen your prayer life and understanding of the Real Presence of Christ through the lenses of theology and art.

Led by an experienced Theology graduate and long-time educator, the weekend explores the significance of the Mass as sacrifice and historical Eucharistic miracles, including the work of St. Carlo Acutis. Participants will engage in:

Theological Insight: Exploring Adoration and the crucifixion through art.

Prayer in Action: Daily Mass and dedicated periods of Adoration.

Expert Guidance: Facilitated by a leader with a rich history of leading acclaimed retreats across the UK.

Past attendees describe the sessions as “thought-provoking” and “inspirational,” offering profound help even for those struggling with faith.

Join us to rediscover the universal beauty of the Blessed Sacrament.

Mary Robinson

Friday 17th July from 6.30pm to Sunday 19th July at 2pm

Suggested Donation £220



Soul Nurturing - The Cultural Gems of Northumbria

Picasso observed that “art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.” This retreat invites you to renew your spirit by exploring the cultural and architectural treasures of the Northumbrian landscape.

From our base at Minsteracres, we will visit a curated selection of masterpieces, including:

Architecture & Art: The Pugin masterpiece at Ushaw Historic House, the Spanish Gallery at Auckland Palace, and the majestic Durham Cathedral.

Landscapes: The birthplace of Capability Brown at Kirkharle and his gardens at Wallington Hall.

History: Raby Castle, the Bowes Museum, and the ruins of Egglestone Abbey that once inspired Turner.

Your guide, Jan Loughran, a passionate local expert, provides native insights into the region’s art and gardens. Each day begins with optional meditation or Mass and concludes with dinner and an after-dinner talk.

Jan Loughran

Tuesday 21st July from 9.30am to Friday 24th July at 10am
Suggested Donation £575.00



Quiet Day

In the quiet embrace of the morning, we invite you to lay down the burdens of a busy world and enter a space of holy rest. This day is a gentle invitation to breathe deeply, to listen for the “still, small voice” within the sacred words of Scripture, and to surrender to the profound silence of the living landscape.

As you wander through the stillness, you will find a sanctuary for the soul where personal prayer and quiet contemplation flow naturally. Here, time slows down, allowing you to reconnect with the Divine in a meaningful, unhurried way.

Enfolded by the peace of the countryside, this retreat is a path toward inner renewal, leaving you refreshed, centered, and spiritually restored. To support your journey of reflection, nourishing lunch and refreshments are provided throughout the day.

Minsteracres Team
Monday 27th July from 10am to 4pm
Suggested Donation £45

August 2026 Programme



Rosary Rally

A wonderful opportunity to gather in honour of Mary, Mother of God in this very prayerful and sociable day, which also provides the opportunity to take in the peace and ambience of Minsteracres.

Please bring a packed lunch. The day will commence with the celebration of Mass at 12 noon followed by the Rosary rally and Benediction from 2pm.

Minsteracres Team
Saturday 15th August from 12 noon to 3pm

September 2026 Programme



Quiet Day

Join us for a day of spiritual reflection and renewal in the peaceful countryside. This retreat offers time for personal prayer, contemplation and connection with God.

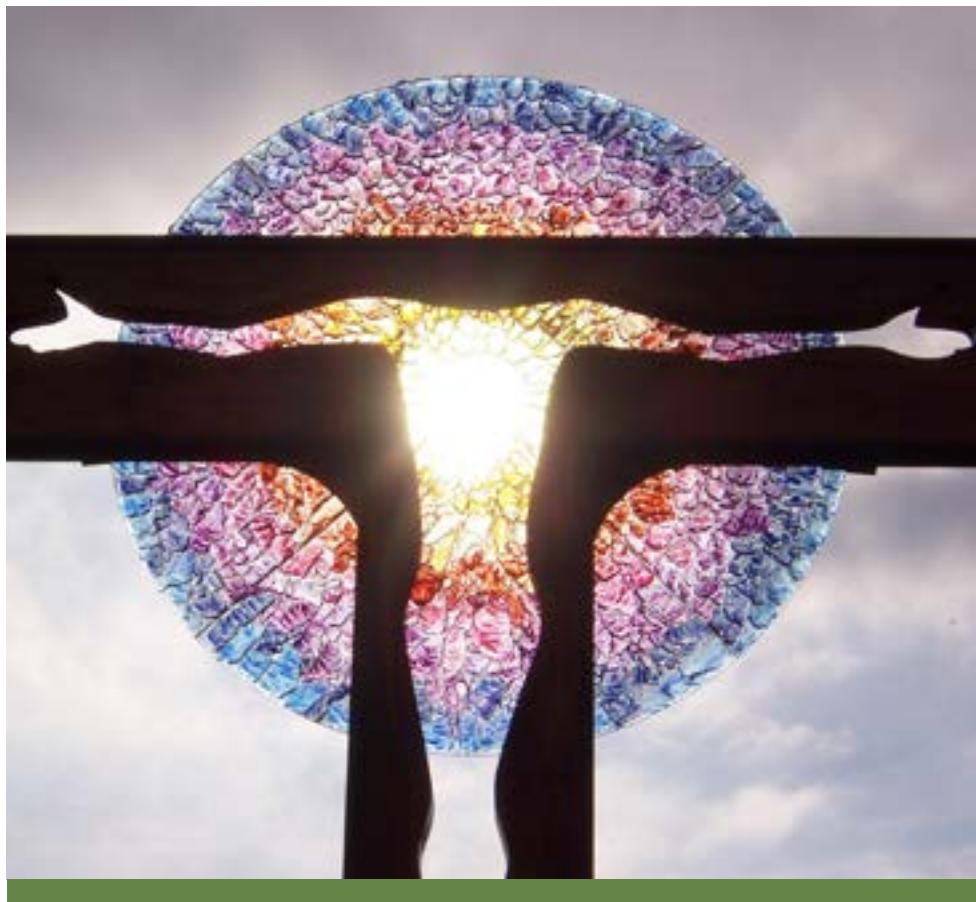
Enjoy the serene environment, with lunch, tea and coffee provided, ensuring a relaxing experience. Whether seeking clarity, peace or a faith reconnection, this day offers gentle nourishment for the soul.

Lunch and refreshments are included.

Minsteracles Team

Wednesday 2nd September from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45



6 Day Individually Guided Retreat

This silent retreat offers a unique opportunity for personal reflection and spiritual growth.

Guided by members of the Ignatian Spirituality Centre in Glasgow, in partnership with the Minsteracres team, you'll receive individual support to deepen your connection with God in a peaceful and contemplative environment.

ISC Glasgow at Minsteracres

Friday 4th Sept from 6.30pm to Friday 11th Sept at 10am
Suggested Donation £735



Walking Retreat

Step away from the rush of the world and join us for a soulful journey through the rolling landscapes that cradle Minsteracres. This guided walk, spanning between seven and ten miles, is more than just a physical journey; it is a moving meditation designed to align your stride with the rhythms of the natural world.

As we traverse the stunning trails of the Northern Saints' land, we invite you to embrace the "cathedral of the outdoors," where the rustle of ancient trees and the open sky become a backdrop for prayer and quiet reflection.

Along the path, there will be intentional moments of stillness to listen to the whispers of creation and shared opportunities to connect with fellow walkers in a spirit of fellowship.

To ensure your comfort throughout this pilgrimage, please wear sturdy, suitable footwear and bring warm, weatherproof layers to adapt to the changing northern elements. Remember to pack a lunch to enjoy during our midday pause in the heart of the countryside. Leave the noise behind and find your pace in the beauty of the wild.

Minsteracres Team

Wednesday 16th September from 10am to 5pm

Suggested Donation £15



Embodied Contemplative

Using gentle Tai Chi movement and breath work alongside periods of silent Meditation, this retreat will explore how we might find inner stillness and peace through the practice of Presence and Mindful Movement.

It is suitable for all ages and abilities.
Come with a beginner's mind and enjoy learning!

Terry Doyle

Friday 18th September to Sunday 20th of September
Suggested Donation £230

October 2026 Programme



Quiet Day

In the quiet embrace of the morning, we invite you to lay down the burdens of a busy world and enter a space of holy rest. This day is a gentle invitation to breathe deeply, to listen for the “still, small voice” within the sacred words of Scripture, and to surrender to the profound silence of the living landscape.

As you wander through the stillness, you will find a sanctuary for the soul where personal prayer and quiet contemplation flow naturally. Here, time slows down, allowing you to reconnect with the Divine in a meaningful, unhurried way.

Enfolded by the peace of the countryside, this retreat is a path toward inner renewal, leaving you refreshed, centered, and spiritually restored. To support your journey of reflection, nourishing lunch and refreshments are provided throughout the day.

Minsteracles Team

Thursday 29th October from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45



A Circle of Prayer / Circle Dance

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This is an inviting programme which explores the beauty of music and movement which echoes both feelings, and mood, touching both the soul and the imagination. Throughout this retreat you will have an opportunity to experience both traditional and contemporary dances.

All levels of experience are catered for as the dances are always taught first. The dances will follow a meditative and contemplative theme and will be punctuated with reflective readings.

Lunch and refreshments are included.

Joyce McAndrew

Saturday 31st October from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45

November 2026 Programme



Day of Consolation

An opportunity to join us on this poignant retreat day for people who have experienced bereavement, grief, loss or significant change.

This day will offer them an opportunity to share a safe space, to be heard, to share with others who have had similar experiences and hopefully to find courage, hope and consolation.

Lunch and refreshments are included.

Chris Smith

Tuesday 10th November from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45



My Vocation is Love.

A retreat with Saint Therese of Lisieux who discovered in the cloistered walls of Carmel her true vocation, to 'be love.'

Indeed, she declared, 'in the heart of the church I will be love.'

Through a series of talks, times of prayer and silence, we will follow her 'Little Way' of trust and absolute surrender to Jesus.

Through the eyes of Saint Therese, we will discover the beauty and riches of Carmelite Spirituality.

Gillian Coxhead

Friday 13th November to Sunday 15th November

Suggested Donation £220



For the Beauty of the Earth - Taizé Retreat

Taize music reflects simplicity, ecumenism and love. It is easy and accessible to all comers, whether used to singing or not.

This day we will celebrate all aspects of creation in prayer, meditation and song and look at our role in sustaining this precious gift.

Choral groups will find an opportunity to bond and develop, surrounded by the peace and beauty of Minsteracres.

Lunch and refreshments included.

Camille Mazarello & Minnie Fraser

Wednesday 25th November from 10am to 4pm

Suggested Donation £45



Soul Nurturing – Preparing for Christmas

Advent is a time of waiting, expectation and preparation. Our weekend offers space to focus on Advent's hope with twinkling Christmas trees, Durham Cathedral's awe-inspiring Advent Processional Service, joyful carolling, Christmas crafting and the warmth of a Minsteracles welcome. We'll visit Ushaw Historic House in their Christmas finery, attend Corbridge Christmas Tree Festival, hear local choirs and experience the Advent Processional Service at Durham Cathedral. We'll make wreaths and natural decorations while enjoying space from the season's busyness.

Days include optional mass or meditation, breakfast and dinner. Friday and Saturday we'll explore Northumbria. Sunday brings Christmas creativity before lunch and departure.

Led by Jan Loughran—conductor of St Peters Choir, passionate Northumbrian and lover of Advent music and floristry—she'll share the simple joys of this special season.

Jan Loughran

Thursday 26th November from 9.30am to Sunday 29th November at 2pm

Suggested Donation £375

At a Glance

2026 Programme

February

24th Quiet Day

March

11th Quiet Day
24th Lent Quiet Day – Sr McNamara

April

2nd Holy Week Retreat
18th Holistic Wellbeing Retreat
25th Walking Retreat

May

1st Fire to the Earth! - Fr Mulcahy
9th A Circle of Prayer / Circle Dance
20th Day of Consolation
22nd Pentecost Retreat

June

2nd 3 Day Walking Retreat
2nd Northumbrian Gardens
11th Quiet Day

July

6th Northern Saints Retreat
17th Eucharistic Retreat
21st The Cultural Gems of Northumbria
27th Quiet Day

August

15th Rosary Rally

September

2nd Quiet Day
4th 6 Day Individually Guided Retreat
16th Walking Retreat
18th Embodied Contemplative

October

29th Quiet Day
31st A Circle of Prayer / Circle Dance

November

10th Day of Consolation
13th Carmelite Spirituality
25th Taizé
26th Preparing for Christmas



Are you searching for the perfect venue for your event?

We warmly welcome groups that align with our ethos to use Minsteracres as a venue for events or workshops. Our team is proud to offer heartfelt hospitality and delicious home-cooked meals, using organic and locally sourced ingredients wherever possible.

Groups have the option to book the entire retreat centre, which includes up to 55 bedrooms accommodating up to 72 people, depending on the room combinations, for any available weekend or midweek period.

Most groups manage their own programmes, but our community and staff are happy to provide input or support if needed. To ensure we can accommodate your requirements, we encourage discussing these details as early as possible when planning your booking.

If you would like to make a group booking or you are organising your own event please call us on 01434 673 248 and we will be happy to discuss your arrangements with you.



Join Our Team: Make a Difference in Your Community

Volunteers are the cornerstone of Minsteracres Retreat Centre, essential to our daily operations and warm hospitality. They assist in various capacities, from supporting dining services—often being the first to greet guests—to maintaining our expansive 110-acre grounds.

Conservation volunteers engage in activities such as planting trees, building paths and clearing woodlands so preserving our environment's natural beauty. We welcome individuals with diverse skills and interests, offering numerous meaningful opportunities. By joining our team, you become part of a vibrant community, receive comprehensive support and training and experience the tranquility of Minsteracres for which it is renowned.

We value our volunteers and reimburse mileage and other expenses. However, due to limited public transportation, personal transport is necessary. We prioritise volunteer well-being by providing proper insurance, health and safety training and conducting necessary background checks.

If you're interested in making a positive impact and joining our dedicated team, please contact us or complete the volunteer application form available on our website.



Contact Us

We'd love to hear from you! Whether you have a question, need more information or want to plan your visit, our team is here to help.

Please use the contact details below, and we'll get back to you as soon as possible. We look forward to connecting with you!



Call: 01434 673248

Email: info@minsteracres.org

Web: www.minsteracres.org

"I would like to say that every time I visit Minsteracres, I always feel a sense of coming home. Thank you for all you do. I am so very grateful and feel blessed."

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