



SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER 2022

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

**The Parishes of:** Bishop Auckland || Newton Aycliffe & Shildon || Willington  
Crook, Tow Law & Wolsingham || Tudhoe || Coundon, Ferryhill & Windlestone

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## ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

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### 28th Sunday of the Year (C) : Luke 18: 1-8

It was a late night discussion after a good days catch-up between mates. The wine and meal had helped. Between times remembered and some cracking stories, the nuggets of experience and faith came out for free.

Honesty is precious. Not the surface stuff, but the doubts and hesitations alongside the time-tested and received wisdom we've grown up with, these flow freely with great friends. We drop the masks and the vocabulary of our work lives and voice our humanity, our vulnerable, competent, faulted and unsophisticated selves. It's gold.

Knowledge is a moving target. But there are many ways of knowing. The distilled experience of who we are, who we've met, lived with, lost, grieved, suffered, loved and been loved—these are the ingredients of prayer, of the air we breathe and share with God.

Jesus talks to us about the need to pray continually and never lose heart. Prayer is not a handy way of getting things, however well-intentioned. The slow, persevering traffic of what we give to the Lord is outlined graphically in today's Gospel story. The widow is passionate about justice. Her persistence eventually elicits justice in a heartless judge who daren't risk being known as a professed justice-giver who doesn't deliver.

We need to be passionate about justice. To challenge the occasional and the continual exploiting of people, those using muscle to gain whatever they can get away with, whether it's the corporate direction of governments, business or the big egos of the world. Not to give in requires a consistent prayer-life that never stops learning of the faithfulness of God even if he appears to have not heard.

But how do you pray continually? I more than suspect Jesus' praying to his Father wasn't about endless wordy prayers, but about a consistent and developed sense of being accompanied, sharing thought, life and direction. To know you're together whenever apart, to be joined at the hip, to have conversations yes, but to know God's Spirit breathes and dances within and is at home with us all the time. Jesus asks—will there be that level of consistent, praying mindset found when he comes? Friends, the fight for justice requires it in us, in you and me. Set your sights, give thanks. Today's a new day.



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## **Pope Francis on Dialogue**

Approaching, speaking, listening, looking at, coming to know and understand one another, and to find common ground, all these things are summed up in one word 'dialogue'. If we want to encounter and help one another, we have to dialogue. There is no need for me to stress the benefits of dialogue. I have only to think of what our world would be like without the patient dialogue of the many generous persons who keep families and communities together. Unlike disagreement and conflict, persistent and courageous dialogue does not make headlines, but quietly helps the world to live much better than we imagine.

Some people attempt to flee from reality, taking refuge in their own little world, others react to it with destructive violence. Yet between selfish indifference and violent protest there is always another possible option: that of dialogue. Dialogue between generations, dialogue among our people, for we are that people; readiness to give and receive, while remaining open to the truth. A country flourishes when constructive dialogue occurs between its many rich cultural components, popular culture, university culture, youth culture, artistic culture, technological culture, economic culture, family culture and media culture.

Dialogue is often confused with something quite different: the feverish exchange of opinions on social networks, frequently based on media information that is not always reliable. These exchanges are merely parallel monologues. They may attract some attention by their sharp and aggressive tone. But monologues engage no one, and their content is frequently self-serving and contradictory.

**- Fratelli tutti paras 198-200**