



SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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

ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

25th Sunday of the Year (C) : Luke 16: 1-13

“Have more lives been ruined by money than saved by it?” It was an honest question from a mate recently. We can’t check it out in any reliable way but might well side with one camp or another. What do you think?

Jesus wasn’t against money but was very particular about how we use it. In his time, as in ours, there was a distinct gap between rich and poor. It could be accompanied by a marked disregard for others and a self-serving exploitation of any excusing loopholes unavailable to those without means. Jesus’ comment about it being easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for someone rich to enter the Kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:24) is a graphic warning about the dangers of riches.

Money and/or possessions can turn our heads. They may not denote greed or an inability to understand another’s destitution, but, if honest, may carry a reluctance to let go of an agreeable and comfortable lifestyle to reach out in help to others less well off. If we find resistance within us to listen to the voice of God in the cries of the poor, to not want to know about their embarrassed requests for help when they come to our door, this may be a prompt from the Lord to take a new step into the Gospel and risk the possibility of experiencing Jesus all over again.

We are all brothers and sisters in a shared humanity, shared also by the Son of God. Jesus got involved. He came to bring God’s vision to our self-preoccupied outlook. God gave his own Son. What do I give? You? What do you give? Can we bring ourselves to use our limited funds and our clear talents and abilities for others’ benefit? As societies appear to grow in affluence, commitment and volunteering seem to diminish. If there’s truth in this, does our ability to manage distance us from our neighbours?

Over the centuries the Church, the Body of Christ, the Community of his followers, has provided education, healthcare and welfare through personal initiative and with God’s leading Spirit. It is committed to third world development. It also offers me and you to the world. We’re the current and next chapter of the story. We’re the stewards, gifted with much and entrusted with much. From us much will be demanded (Luke 12:48).

Our generosity or otherwise, is measured in spiritual coin; ‘in so far as you did it to the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me (Matthew 25:40) when the doorbell goes, it’s Jesus standing there. Meet his gaze and hear his story. Thanks.



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Pope Francis on ordinary life

Let us not forget that Jesus asked his disciples to pay attention to details. The little detail that wine was running out at a party. The little detail that one sheep was missing. The little detail of noticing the widow who offered her two small coins. The little detail of having spare oil for the lamps, should the bridegroom delay. The little detail of asking the disciples how many loaves of bread they had. The little detail of having a fire burning and a fish cooking as he waited for the disciples at daybreak.

A community that cherishes the little details of love, whose members care for one another and create an open and evangelizing environment, is a place where the risen Lord is present, sanctifying it in accordance with the Father's plan.

There are times when, by a gift of the Lord's love, we are granted, amid these little details, consoling experiences of God.

- Rejoice and Be Glad—paras 144-145