



# SUNDAY 23 APRIL 2023

## DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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

### ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

#### 3rd Sunday of Easter (A): Luke 24: 13-35

Chris is not unlike many people we know. If he gets a new gadget or piece of kit he'll instinctively try to make it work and if he can't, he'll turn with some reluctance to the instructions. On top of that, he believes he's no good with technology and is fearful about getting involved. So he gets others to install things, leaving him free to get the benefits without his having valuable background insight. He's not alone.

When Chris sits down to listen, he knows deep down that he can pick up lots that can interest and excite him. He's capable of learning new stuff if he'll give the time to the individuals who can teach him to make his own what's there and available to access. Having the conversation is the gateway to new understanding. It can be a real breakthrough.

Conversations have power and potential, even in unlikely settings. Many significant relationships have come out of unexpected meetings and the talking that led to further contact and discovery.

Today's brilliant Gospel story is about a conversation. There's already a discussion going on between the two disciples on the seven mile hike to Emmaus - and then the unrecognized risen Jesus joins them and wants to be included. How often have we been slow to let people in on our grumbles and personal conversations? And yet they may help us to see things differently. This 'stranger', ironically described as not knowing what's been happening when it's all been happening to him, is about to interpret their news for them - and tell them the clues have been there all along.

Jesus calls them foolish. Remember that. They become intrigued and fascinated as he discloses the telltale messages they'd failed to understand. Basically we need the Lord to teach us how to read. Like my friend Chris who doesn't look at the instructions and chooses ignorance unnecessarily, we fail to read the Scriptures well. Remember we too can be foolish. We can ask Jesus if he'll read the Scriptures to us, open our ears and minds to see what's really there. What more does the Lord have to do for us to make this story sing within us? What more have we to do?

There's work to be done. The two disciples walked fourteen miles that day, bursting to share their experience with their mates. When they took the trouble to do that, they found their mates had a story to share too. Needing and wanting to know more leaves us maybe asking where we go from here. And the Gospel tells us. We'll recognize him in the breaking of bread - the Mass, the Eucharist, our Communion that wraps us in Jesus' presence. So don't bombard him with prayers. Enjoy his company. Don't be foolish. Embrace the story like you've never known it before. The risen Lord is alive in you. Amazing things happen from conversations.



DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**

ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP

**Pope Francis talking of**  
**The Kingdom and its challenge**

Reading the Scriptures makes it clear that the Gospel is not merely about our personal relationship with God. Nor should our loving response to God be seen simply as an accumulation of small personal gestures to individuals in need, a kind of “charity a la carte”, or a series of acts aimed solely at easing our conscience. The Gospel is about the kingdom of God (*cf. Luke 4:43*); it is about loving God who reigns in our world. To the extent that he reigns within us, the life of society will be a setting for universal fraternity, justice, peace and dignity. Both Christian preaching and life, then, are meant to have an impact on society. We are seeking God’s kingdom: “Seek first God’s kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (*Matthew 6:33*). Jesus’s mission is to inaugurate the kingdom of his Father; he commands his disciples to proclaim the good news that “the kingdom of heaven is as hand” (*Matthew 10:7*).

The kingdom, already present and growing in our midst, engages us at every level of our being and reminds us of the principle of discernment which Pope Paul VI applied to true development; it must be directed to all people and the whole person. We know that evangelization would not be complete if it did not take account of the unceasing interplay of the Gospel and of man’s concrete life, both personal and social. This is intrinsic to the Gospel, for the Father desires the salvation of every man and woman, and his saving plan consists in “gathering up all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth” (*Ephesians 1:10*). Our mandate is to “go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (*Mark 16:15*), for “the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God” (*Romans 8:19*). Here, “the creation” refers to every aspect of human life. Its mandate of charity encompasses all dimensions of existence, all individuals, all areas of community life, and all peoples. Nothing human can be alien to it. True Christian hope always generates history.

- *The Joy of the Gospel paras 180-181*