



SUNDAY 23 JUNE 2024

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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

ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

12th Sunday of the Year (B): Mark 4: 35-41

Crowds gathered to hear Jesus. It's a fair bet they had multiple needs, brought many requests, made demands. They all wanted a piece of him. Here, it was the end of the day. He's tired. He needs to be away.

Being pulled in different directions, bombarded with problems, receiving people with attention and compassion is emotionally and physically draining. No wonder he falls asleep on the way home. Crossing the lake could take some time.

It wasn't a smooth trip. Whatever the size or condition of the boat, taking in water is serious. Gales and rough seas kept boats from setting out. Caught on open waters by high winds and invasive waves, you're tossed about dangerously and so is your stomach. The skill and experience of the crew are under severe test, the seaworthiness of the craft likewise. Put yourself in there with them. It's scary - you might never arrive. But he's still fast asleep

We've all been through stormy times. Stuff can crop up without warning. Our competence is finite. On desperate days we may feel very inadequate. Our mates might share our feelings but maybe also our limitations. Calling for help is a strength, though it may feel like weakness.

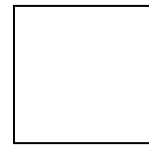
This is a popular story. We can read it as an event, a parable, or both. The heartening message is super-attractive - Jesus calms the wind and the water. The danger is over, the relief wonderful. Problem solved. Except that's not the whole story.

The episode is full of questions and they're asked of us. The lads start - Does Jesus care? Does he sleep though our storms? And Jesus asks why we are so frightened. How is it we have no faith? Mind searching, probing questions. Pat answers probably dodge the issues. Best replies are lived rather than spoken. God is not an insurance policy. Fishermen are familiar with weather and bad conditions.

You might be too. Calm and safety are rarely immediate. But Jesus travels with us and never leaves. Storms of whatever kind may feel like crises that expose weak faith. They challenge and invite us into a deeper and different trust.

Today's Gospel is a great story. It wasn't great being there and this storm at sea felt life-threatening. We're not onlookers here - we're in the boat, in danger, wet and in need. Options are severely limited. One is that you might come to a completely new understanding of Jesus - and a new understanding of yourself at the same time.

Danger and opportunity ride together. Quiz yourself about Jesus. We're meant to. Often. Just don't wait until the next storm.



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ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

Pope Francis on working together

Mutual assistance between countries proves enriching for each. A country that moves forward while remaining solidly grounded in its original cultural substratum is a treasure for the whole of humanity. We need to develop the awareness that nowadays we are either all saved together or no one is saved. Poverty, decadence and suffering in one part of the earth are a silent breeding ground for problems that will end up affecting the entire planet. If we are troubled by the extinction of certain species, we should be all the more troubled that in some parts of our world individuals or peoples are prevented from developing their potential and beauty by poverty or other structural limitations. In the end, this will impoverish us all.

Although this has always been true, never has it been more evident than in our own day, when the world is interconnected by globalisation. We need to attain a global juridical, political and economic order which can increase and give direction to international cooperation for the development of all peoples in solidarity. Ultimately, this will benefit the entire world, since development aid for poor countries implies creating wealth for all. From the standpoint of integral development, this presupposes giving poorer nations an effective voice in shared decision-making and the capacity to facilitate access to the international market on the part of countries suffering from poverty and underdevelopment.

- Fratelli tutti paras 137-138