



SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY 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

2nd Sunday of Lent (B) : Mark 9: 2-10

I used to see Bob at a regular full meeting and appreciated his occasional input. It was always practical and smacked of varied experience. One day I learnt who he was - a top flight managing director in a multinational Company. It was and wasn't a surprise and continues to be a privilege.

I was diffident about saying something to him about my newly discovered knowledge. He'd have assumed I'd known all along. What I might say could come across as more than a touch naïve or as simple ignorance.

The episode came to mind when thinking about today's Gospel account of The Transfiguration. Jesus' identity, if not clear to Peter, James and John, shook them into a greater appreciation that raised more questions than delights. Though cautioned not to talk to others about what they had seen and heard, they must have discussed it among themselves to try and get a better handle on it. A new world had opened up on that mountain and they were a part of it.

They were told to listen. It was a command. Say nothing, but listen. Want to understand. Take this seriously. Don't think you know best or know it all. You've been pitched into a new learning curve and it's steep.

These three disciples at that time knew less than we know now. And there's our danger. We've lost the immediacy and the awesome power of the Father's words. In effect, he's saying 'Understand all over again who this is - my own beloved Son. So attend to every word he says because he speaks for me - don't miss a syllable. Listen, take it all in. Think before you act. You've got a lot to learn.'

Friends, we're in the process of being formed. Where we are now is temporary. God still has more to say. We're on the way. If we learn from listening, others will notice - because we're all watching one another all the time.

Our own identity - the mystery of who we are in God's hands - is evolving. To be christened is to be brought into sharing Christ's life. Most of us were christened some time ago. Whether we're aware of it, or not, God's activity in us is ongoing. Listen to Jesus' words, "If you remain in my word, you are truly my disciples; you will come to know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8: 31-32) What an offer! Don't miss it. You don't know how important you really are.



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Pope Francis' words prior to COP28

If there is sincere interest in making COP28 a historic event that honours and ennobles us as human beings, then one can only hope for binding forms of energy transition that meet three conditions: that they be efficient, obligatory and readily monitored. This, in order to achieve the beginning of a new process marked by three requirements: that it be drastic, intense and count on the commitment of all. That is not what has happened so far, and only a process of this sort can enable international politics to recover its credibility, since only in this concrete manner will it be possible to reduce significantly carbon dioxide levels and to prevent even greater evils over time.

May those taking part in the Conference be strategists capable of considering the common good and the future of their children, more than the short-term interests of certain countries or businesses. In this way, may they demonstrate the nobility of politics and not its shame. To the powerful, I can only repeat this question, "What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold on to power, only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so?"

- Laudate Deum paras 59 and 60