



SUNDAY 3 JULY 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

14th Sunday of the Year (C) : Luke 10: 1-12, 17-20

'How many of you pack far too much stuff when you go on holiday?' I was asking the congregation at Mass. Most hands went up. Grins all round.

The comedian's quip about some people who can't go anywhere without a hot water bottle and a parachute does give us an opportunity to laugh at ourselves. But I wouldn't be too optimistic about us then changing our behaviour. We're creatures of habit and our habits catch us out.

If we attend to today's Gospel reading, Jesus is sending six dozen individuals to suss out the territory he intends to visit and to prepare the people in advance. Sounds a big project. The labourers are few. These may have more on their plate than they'd like. Hard graft lies ahead. Their own preparations can be crucial in making sure they're geared up for the task. Look after your own needs as well as those of others or you'll be overwhelmed.

But the Lord travels light and expects his followers to copy. Being like lambs among wolves hardly fills people with confidence. Jesus is known to spend time among dodgy people. He intends to explore some unknown towns and villages - they're all God's people. His advice to his advance party lacks much of what they'd expect - no money, no clothes, no spare pair of shoes. Don't spend time chatting on the way, get straight down to it. Go with the clothes you're standing up in and rely on God and good neighbours.

Trusting in the Lord is a challenge when there's no second string to your bow, no plan B. You're learning on your feet and this is live ammunition. Without trust, much of ordinary life is not possible and we grow trust by trusting.

Discovering that the world doesn't turn because I'm pushing it sounds a bit fatuous, but we tend to believe that if we don't do things then no one else can or will fill the void. Doing God's work is God's work. When we think it's ours and run on our own steam without him, it's presumption written large. Checking in with the Lord is a daily requirement. Genuinely seeking his guidance and being open to change means we never stop learning and we're not in control. Will we chance it? Will you? Today?

The six dozen came back rejoicing. They discovered that trusting in the Lord, freed from baggage and not able to get in his way, took them into experiences of the power of God. They shouldn't have been surprised, but they were. Jesus told them their joy was too small. Dare to believe that the Father trusted them when they trusted him. There's no better partnership. De-clutter if you want to learn about trust. The Lord says don't be afraid. Really? That's your starter for ten.



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Pope Francis on Work

We were created with a vocation to work. The goal should not be that technological progress increasingly replaces human work, for this would be detrimental to humanity. Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment. Helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work. Yet the orientation of the economy has favoured a kind of technological progress in which the costs of production are reduced by laying off workers and replacing them with machines. This is yet another way in which we can end up working against ourselves. The loss of jobs also has a negative impact on the economy through the progressive erosion of social capital; the network of relationships of trust, dependability, and respect for rules, all of which are indispensable for any form of civil coexistence. In other words, human costs always include economic costs, and economic dysfunctions always involve human costs. To stop investing in people, in order to gain greater short-term financial gain, is bad business for society.

- *Laudato Si para 128*