



SUNDAY 3 OCTOBER 2021

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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

## ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

### Twenty Seventh Sunday of the Year (B) : Mark 10: 2-16

Mandy married young. Things were going well, but a few years in and the tensions and difficulties increased as her husband's bachelor lifestyle never adapted enough to the give and take necessary for an enduring marriage relationship. It ended acrimoniously. There were no winners.

Sadly, it's not an unfamiliar story and many bear the scars and hurts. Guilt and blame feature frequently in the histories we know and hear about. Divorce is common, but even marriages and relationships that end amicably leave unspoken feelings that don't go away. Human relationships are messy and require work.

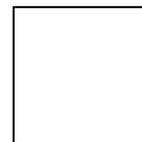
Jesus was no stranger to the grim realities of people's lives. Indeed, our God came to live among us, sharing the life of communities shaped by the strengths and hazards of traditions, laws and customs. He attracted the sick and the damaged, the victims of so many of the hard-nosed realities affecting families and individuals. The staggering fact of God living our human life can occupy many a mind if we take the time to think enough through its implications. It's a big sign.

Pharisees and legal eagles tried to trap him. Divorce is always a difficult issue and Jesus would alienate some people no matter what he replied to their questions. He sees woman as men's equals and must have listened to heart-breaking stories from women with no rights in a very male world.

He wants to remind us of the blueprint of who we are - made in the image and likeness of God. His mission, codenamed 'Kingdom' is to teach and take us into the mind and life of our Creator. 'Be compassionate as your heavenly Father is compassionate' (Luke 60:36), 'Love one another as I have loved you' (John 13:34).

God's fidelity is the benchmark of it all. Our relationships should echo God's. For us, in a secular world, this is a steep climb, but he doesn't shrink from the wonder of what we must try to emulate.

The demands of love, tolerance, kindness and understanding are constantly tested and re-made in the sacrifices and costly selflessness of any close relationship. God's deep mercy and forgiveness are likewise the hallmarks of his care for us and our task in showing the same to others. Be of good heart - you are loved beyond measure, thank God.



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Pope Francis

### Personal encounter with the saving love of Jesus

The primary reason for evangelizing is the love of Jesus which we have received, the experience of salvation which urges us to ever greater love of him. What kind of love would not feel the need to speak of the beloved, to point him out, to make him known? If we do not feel an intense desire to share this love, we need to pray insistently that he will once more touch our hearts. We need to implore his grace daily, asking him to open our cold hearts and shake up our lukewarm and superficial existence. Standing before him with open hearts, letting him look at us, we see that gaze of love which Nathaniel glimpsed on the day when Jesus said to him; "I saw you under the fig tree" (*John 1:48*). How good is it to stand before a crucifix, or on our knees before the Blessed Sacrament, and simply to be in his presence!

How much good it does us when he once more touches our lives and impels us to share his new life! What then happens is that "we speak of what we have seen and heard" (*1 John 1:3*). The best incentive for sharing the Gospel comes from contemplating it with love, lingering over its pages and reading it with the heart. If we approach it in this way, its beauty will amaze and constantly excite us. But if this is to come about, we need to recover a contemplative spirit which can help us to realise ever anew that we have been entrusted with a treasure which makes us more human and helps us to lead a new life. There is nothing more precious which we can give to others.

**- The Joy of the Gospel - para 264**