



SUNDAY 30 AUGUST 2020

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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

ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

22nd Sunday of the Year (A): Matthew 16: 21-27

"God knows I've done my best". Harry told me. He was talking about a work problem where his decisions hadn't gone down well with a couple of his colleagues. Harry's a caring and practical guy and lives his faith. His words were heartfelt and he's prayed through the decisions he'd made. God knew that.

It set me off thinking about our understanding of what God knows. Since he knows everything, why do we feel we have to explain things to him or is it more like our telling him what we think he ought to do? When we pray for help or petition the Lord for many a cause, we have a preferred outcome in mind and hope to find agreement from the God who knows.

Today's Gospel has Simon Peter telling Jesus that suffering death and resurrection in Jerusalem must not happen. God knows different. Peter's hopes and visions about the future don't go with what God knows. Jesus puts him pretty sternly in his place - words from a Messiah giving totally of himself for others and facing down what may be kindness but from a man unaware of the enormity of what God knows.

Time and again the Gospels present Jesus saying he has not come to do his own will but the will of the one who sent him. Love gives everything. The message to those who really and wholeheartedly strive to follow Jesus require joining him in carrying a cross. To think like God thinks, to give everything out of love, means we have to learn new ways of loving because that's the stamp and the will of our Father - the one to whom we so often say 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'. Simon Peter thinks in man's way, not God's. He's still on a steep learning curve - and so are we.

Many crosses are accepted because we have no choice or credible alternative, despite our rehearsing prayers that tell God what we'd like. We live with the paradoxical invitations to ask, seek and knock but with the proviso that response is according to God's will. We'll always keep asking - it's part of a loving relationship that we seek help - and it's the heart of a God who is love to come to our aid.

Letting go of our lives as Jesus asks, building God's Kingdom rather than our own, is our present journey and Jesus speaks of reward for our efforts. We have many clues in the Scriptures about the mind of God expressed through his Son, Jesus. Following is not easy when we'd prefer to lead or to get him to follow us. We never stop learning. Talk to St Peter. He's good to talk to - and very human.



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ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

World Day of Prayer for Creation: 1 September 2020



SEASON OF CREATION

Pope Francis has designated September 1 as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. Join Pope Francis and Christians around the globe in praying for and taking action for our common home on September 1, and the Season of Creation, September 1- to October 4 by visiting www.SeasonofCreation.org. *St Charles Tudhoe* is seeking to join the Season of Creation this year by hosting an event within the Season. *If Environment and Social Justice/the present Climate Crisis* is something that already interests you, please join our ZOOM introductory chat **THURSDAY 3rd September 7pm to discuss what we as Church might do for our community.** We would love to hear for you.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/79352194526?pwd=ZlFOVVowcFhpREc5cGtZZndzY0d2Zz09>

For more details or queries please contact **Karin Weetman**
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