



SUNDAY 9 JULY 2023

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 (A): Matthew 11: 25-30

Stan was a man of the people. So many folks said so. He had the easy knack of giving the impression that you'd known each other for years - and that on a first meeting. Was it his smile? The warmth in his eyes that lit his face? He read you without sitting in judgement, listened without interruption. People loved him. They felt accepted just as they stood, no need to prove anything.

Some folks seem to have that disposition as a gift. Most of us have to work at it. We may well know and say that all people are created equal, but our behaviour may indicate we still have miles to go in living it out. I think we know the real thing when we see it. In Jesus, people saw the real thing. He showed the face of his Father, letting you know you are included in a welcoming love. We're asked to be like Jesus. For me, Stan was an example.

Jesus was a man of the people. Today's Gospel reminds us how he cherished ordinary folk who did know the real thing. They had no status in the eyes of the movers and shakers of the world. They coped daily with the complexities of survival and maintenance. They were open to change. They carried no torch for the status quo. They're the salt of the earth and he told them so.

The Lord welcomed and continues to welcome all who bear burdens too heavy to carry alone. "Come to me", he invites. The image he gives is powerful. Oxen and strong farm animals were yoked together to pull ploughs, carts and much else. He invites us to be yoked with him so that we don't have to do the work on our own. He takes the lead, like an experienced animal linked with a younger one. "Learn from me", he says, watch what I do. You're not on your own. "And be gentle, be humble".

Can we be gentle with ourselves and one another? Can we be humble, accepting our neediness as well as our strengths? We still have a lot to learn. It's his main request - learn from me, follow me, you're a disciple, a learner, a student. Imagine following Jesus. He doesn't walk too fast for us. Try and stay with him.

Sit with the Gospel. Hear Jesus talking to you, personally. See what he's like. Feel the gentle and humble man of the people, the Son of God. Stay with the Gospel text, and if it doesn't sound odd, immerse yourself in the message! Live with his words and apply them to you. Let him teach us. There's nothing like it. And the invitation comes from him.



DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**

ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP

**Pope Francis on people's rights**

Indigenous peoples are not opposed to progress, yet theirs is a different notion of progress, often more humanistic than the modern culture of developed peoples. Theirs is not a culture meant to benefit the powerful, those driven to create for themselves a kind of earthly paradise. Intolerance and lack of respect for indigenous popular cultures is a form of violence grounded in the cold and judgemental way of viewing them. No authentic, profound and enduring change is possible unless it starts from the different cultures, particularly those of the poor. A cultural covenant eschews a monolithic understanding of the identity of a particular place; it entails respect for diversity by offering opportunities for advancement and social integration to all.

Such a covenant also demands the realisation that some things may have to be renounced for the common good. No one can possess the whole truth or satisfy his or her every desire, since that pretention would lead to nullifying others by denying their rights. A false notion of tolerance has to give way to a real dialogue on the part of men and women who remain faithful to their own principles while recognising that others also have the right to do likewise. This is the genuine acknowledgment of the other that is made possible by love alone. We have to stand in the place of others, if we are to discover what is genuine, or at least understandable, in their motivations and concerns.

- ***Fratelli tutti* paras 220-221**