



SUNDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2025

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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

## ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

### Feast of The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica: John 2: 13-22

“We need to do a lot to our parish church”, my pal Harry was saying or lamenting recently. Mick, who’s not a Catholic, quizzed him about the building. Not only did Harry’s grandad help to build the church, but his family have also been seasoned attenders for generations now. We had an engaging conversation about church buildings. We’d all seen churches closed and now gone on to a change of use.

This Sunday our Church calendars choose to sit us down to ponder about our churches by focussing on the Basilica of St John Lateran in Rome, the mother church of the Archdiocese of Rome and regarded as the mother church of the world. The building was completed in the year 324, popes lived next door until early in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This church represents all our churches, yours and mine.

But we constantly assert that it’s we, the people, who are The Church. The word ‘church’ simply means the gathering, the assembly. The buildings in which we gather are here to house the people, to provide space for our coming together for prayer, worship and building communities to serve need and work for the common good. They stand as symbols of our God living among us. We celebrate receiving the gift of God’s Spirit when we’re baptised. We don’t only find God in our churches. Cathedrals and churches, places where Christians come together, help us to contemplate that the God who is everywhere is deep within each of us.

The Gospel passage read in our churches today is the wonderful, dramatic scene of Jesus driving out the traders from the temple – and declaring that he is the living temple of God. Our buildings direct us to - and remind us - that the God of the cosmos and all history also resides in us. It’s helpful to remember that we’re made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27) and St Paul is clear in writing to the people of Corinth, ‘Brothers and sisters, you are God’s building...Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?’ (1 Corinthians 3: 9, 16). Today’s feast, like our recent celebration of All saints and All Souls, is about us – about how clearly and frequently we internalise the endearing message that we are the house of God.

My mate Harry was quick to defend his parish church, and more importantly, the people and causes that the building promotes and serves. He told me later that it helped him think through what his family’s beloved church is for. He saw how the time and the funds given were for living the Gospel, before but alongside keeping the building welcoming, sound and up to scratch. Maybe today’s celebration will initiate similar thinking in others who love our parish churches.

If you go to the Lateran Basilica, you’ll see a large ancient baptism bath in which in earlier times baptisms were performed by total immersion in water. Your baptism was and is so important. Incidentally, given its significance, do you know the date you were baptised and received God’s Spirit? You might want to find out. Just a thought!



DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP

**"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth"**

These are strong words in a world that from the beginning has been a place of conflict, disputes and enmity on all sides, where we constantly pigeonhole others on the basis of their ideas, their customs and even their way of speaking or dressing. Ultimately, it is the reign of pride and vanity, where each person thinks he or she has the right to dominate others. Nonetheless, impossible as it may seem, Jesus proposes a different way of doing things: the way of meekness. This is what we see him doing with his disciples. It is what we contemplate on his entrance to Jerusalem: "Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey" (*Matthew 21:5; Zech 9:9*).

Christ says: "Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (*Matthew 11:29*). If we are constantly upset and impatient with others, we will end up drained and weary. But if we regard the faults and limitations of others with tenderness and meekness, without an air of superiority, we can actually help them and stop wasting our energy on useless complaining. Saint Therese of Lisieux tells us that "perfect charity consists in putting up with others' mistakes, and not being scandalised by their faults".

**- Rejoice and Be Glad—paras 71 and 72**