



SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2026

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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

ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

3rd Sunday of Easter (A): Luke 24: 13-35

Chris is not unlike many people we know. If he gets a new gadget or piece of kit he'll instinctively try to make it work and if he can't, he'll turn with some reluctance to the instructions. On top of that, he believes he's no good with technology and is fearful about getting involved. So he gets others to install things, leaving him free to get the benefits without his having valuable background insight. He's not alone.

When Chris sits down to listen, he knows deep down that he can pick up lots that can interest and excite him. He's capable of learning new stuff if he'll give the time to the individuals who can teach him to make his own what's there and available to access. Having the conversation is the gateway to new understanding. It can be a real breakthrough.

Conversations have power and potential, even in unlikely settings. Many significant relationships have come out of unexpected meetings and the talking that led to further contact and discovery.

Today's brilliant Gospel story is about a conversation. There's already a discussion going on between the two disciples on the seven mile hike to Emmaus - and then the unrecognized risen Jesus joins them and wants to be included. How often have we been slow to let people in on our grumbles and personal conversations? And yet they may help us to see things differently. This 'stranger', ironically described as not knowing what's been happening when it's all been happening to him, is about to interpret their news for them - and tell them the clues have been there all along.

Jesus calls them foolish. Remember that. They become intrigued and fascinated as he discloses the telltale messages they'd failed to understand. Basically we need the Lord to teach us how to read. Like my friend Chris who doesn't look at the instructions and chooses ignorance unnecessarily, we fail to read the Scriptures well. Remember we too can be foolish. We can ask Jesus if he'll read the Scriptures to us, open our ears and minds to see what's really there. What more does the Lord have to do for us to make this story sing within us? What more have we to do?

There's work to be done. The two disciples walked fourteen miles that day, bursting to share their experience with their mates. When they took the trouble to do that, they found their mates had a story to share too. Needing and wanting to know more leaves us maybe asking where we go from here. And the Gospel tells us. We'll recognize him in the breaking of bread - the Mass, the Eucharist, our Communion that wraps us in Jesus' presence. So don't bombard him with prayers. Enjoy his company. Don't be foolish. Embrace the story like you've never known it before. The risen Lord is alive in you. Amazing things happen from conversations.



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Pope Leo on the poverty of Jesus

The Old Testament history of God's preferential love for the poor and his readiness to hear their cry - to which I have briefly alluded - comes to fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth. By his Incarnation, he "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness" (Philippians 2:7), and in that form he brought us salvation. His was a radical poverty, grounded in his mission to reveal fully God's love for us (cf John 1:18 and ! John 4:9). As St Paul puts it in his customarily brief but striking manner; "You know well the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

The Gospel shows us that poverty marked every aspect of Jesus' life. From the moment he entered the world, Jesus knew the bitter experience of rejection. The Evangelist Luke tells how Joseph and Mary, who was about to give birth, arrived in Bethlehem, and then adds, poignantly, that "there was no place for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). Jesus was born in humble surroundings and laid in a manger, then, to save him from being killed, they fled to Egypt (cf Matthew 2:13-15). At the dawn of his public ministry, after announcing in the synagogue at Nazareth that the year of grace which would bring joy to the poor was fulfilled in him, he was driven out of town (cf Luke 4: 14-30). He died as an outcast, led out of Jerusalem to be crucified (cf Mark 15: 22). Indeed, that is how Jesus' poverty is best described; he experienced the same exclusion that is the lot of the poor.. the outcast of society. He presented himself to the world not only as a poor Messiah, but also as the Messiah of and for the poor.

Dilexi Te paras 18 and 19