



SUNDAY 14 JUNE 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

11th Sunday of the Year (A) - Matthew 9: 36 – 10: 8

In Jesus' time people walked. No transport, no clocks, direction worked out from the sun and the stars, weather from reading the skies, nature and animal behaviour. No gas or electricity. Water collected from springs, rivers or a well. They believed the Earth was flat and the centre of the universe. Our fast moving world of today would be frightening.

In Matthew's Gospel reading, we're reminded that the Father sent his Son to join our human frailty in a world very different from ours. Yet we carry and display similar and greater problems and limitations. In this reading, Jesus is organising his small community to share in his work of alleviating suffering, bringing help to those with no hope and no means of finding relief. In the world of our time, we are their followers, interpreting and applying the mission of Jesus to the lost and the seekers of today.

Statistics tumble over one another in describing the sicknesses, the inequalities and injustices of our time – what Jesus describes as the harvest, needing labourers because there's so much to do in the world that God still loves so much. We can be doing our best, even bemoaning the shortage of willing hands, and may need reminding that part of our task is to pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send what's needed. 'If the Lord does not build the house, the builders labour in vane' (Psalm 127: 1).

Rather than thinking this work is for people other than ourselves, we can add our names to the list of Jesus' apostles given here by Matthew. We can seek their help, take initiatives, grow and learn from the very people we're sent to serve – the sick and the poor, the dejected and depressed, refugees, abused victims of all kinds – they have a pronounced capacity to teach if we are prepared to learn. Watching compassionate Jesus can lead us into spending time with individuals carrying labels we'd rather not have - addicts of many kinds, the lost, the homeless the unemployed and the unemployable, mentally ill neighbours and others easier to avoid rather than embrace.

To get alongside, to live with being unable to mend what's not working but to affirm others' dignity, to plant seeds for long-term change without the likelihood of immediate improvement, to be labourers with others, networking to advance understanding and refine what helps, gives clear signals that we care and that everyone matters. We are what and who we are, often because others put themselves out for us.

Begin by beginning. Work with mates, old or new. We may not be able to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers or cast out demons. We're doing the Lord's work and the journey teaches us more and more about the many faces of love.



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Pope Leo on the effects of AI and Church teaching

In his Encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis denounced the growing dominance of a technocratic paradigm in our globalised world: the tendency to let the logic of efficiency, control and profit alone shape personal, social and economic decisions. This makes it clear that technology is not simply a tool. When it becomes the standard by which everything is judged, it begins to dictate what matters and what can be discarded, reducing creation to an object of exploitation and human beings to mere cogs in a system driven toward ever greater efficiency.

This paradigm has spread rapidly in recent years, fuelled in part by the expansion of artificial intelligence, cognitive science, nanotechnology, robotics and biotechnology. In themselves, these innovations can greatly serve integral human development and the care of our common home. Yet precisely because of their power, they can also hasten the expansion of the technocratic paradigm and there fore require a new spiritual, ethical and political framework. More power does not necessarily imply something better. In this respect, the words of Romano Guardini remain relevant "Contemporary man has not been trained to use power well".

Magnifica Humanitas paras 92 and 93