

Discipleship: We are Free People, not Robots

One of the main features of modern technology is the consent clause. Before closing a document on the computer, the consent clause says: *Do you want to save changes to this document?* and gives three options. To delete a photo from the device, the user is asked: *Are you sure you want to delete this?* To send money through mobile banking, the user would have to go through several consent processes, even to the point of having to answer the question, *Are you sure you're the one doing this?* To buy a ticket online, the user is often expected to check the consent box after a very long terms and conditions clause. Sometimes you may have to prove that you are not a robot. These steps are taken to make sure that what we are doing is our choice and that our freedom is not taken away in doing so. However, we often check these boxes without carefully reading the terms and conditions.

It is worth noting that most of our engagements do not carry the full imprint of our commitment. Sometimes we may carry with us the baggage of our past experiences, like a hangover. But can we buy a ticket to one event and use it for another? I once saw a young man who regretted missing his train after getting off several times to give his lover one last kiss before departing. When he tried to get back on the train, the doors were already closing and the train was leaving the platform. To make matters worse, his luggage was on that train.

Our option for God should always be free and total. Because, God does not take away our choices, even if we use them against Him. When He calls us, He gives us free choice so that we will not regret or blame ourselves when we choose to follow Him. Therefore, He makes clear His demands, because He might not offer us comforts, riches, pleasures or fun, but happiness and fulfilment, which is ultimate. God sets His conditions for us that may require giving up some old, familiar ways and falling out of favour with the people we love. He doesn't want us to check a box without knowing the details. He wants us to love in a free and true way. For if you want to follow God, you must be willing to change.

Fr Anthony Oheakwusi

Mass Intentions: If you would like mass to be offered for your intention, there are forms available at the back of church.

Statement from the bishops: Asylum seekers are not commodities for profit, nor problems to be rejected and deported. We should: welcome, protect, promote and integrate.

9 / 10 July: **Bishop Robert Byrne** will be visiting St Mary's and St Thomas' churches.

9-11 September: **YouCAN On Fire**. Conference exploring evangelisation. Search on the internet: **Young Catholic Adult Network**.

Supporting our parish

Many thanks to all who make offerings towards the upkeep of our church community. If you pay tax, then please consider **Gift Aid** - it costs you no more but gives the Church an extra 25% on what you give.

Saint Mary,
Saint Thomas,
All Saints,
Sacred Heart,
Saint Joseph,

Aycliffe
Shildon
Ferryhill
Chilton
Coundon



*All are welcome
in all of our
churches —
no exceptions!*

Fr Anthony Cornforth, 01325 313611, 07923683046

Fr Deni Mary, 01740 651343

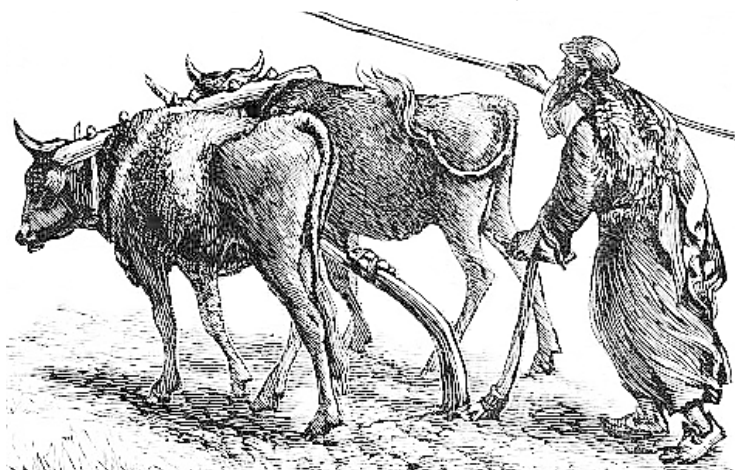
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25 / 26 June 2022: Sunday 13C



Once the hand is laid on the plough, no one who looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.

When you plough, you must watch carefully in front of you to keep the furrows straight. Look backwards and you will swerve one way or another. Little did the disciples know that day that they would soon become nomads on this earth, travelling all over, with no fixed home, living in often frightening and hostile circumstances, as followers of their Lord. Their final destination: the eternal Kingdom with God.

The journey to Jerusalem is a Gospel code for commitment to the mission of Jesus, a mission of healing and compassion, of unlimited mercy, a mission ultimately of giving one's life that others might live. Jesus leaves no room for compromise! He invites us to be missionary disciples, sometimes having to leave behind the comforts of the familiar to offer compassion and mercy to those beyond our home circle.

Sat	12.00	Aycliffe	Moultrie Family (deceased)
25	16.00	Shildon	Our Parish Family
June	18.00	Chilton	Private Intention
Sun	09.00	Coundon	Nora, Ian and Al Moore
26	10.00	Aycliffe	Veronica Birchall (B)
June	10.30	Ferryhill	James and Mary Ann McLaughlin and family
	<u>11.00</u>	<u>Aycliffe</u>	<u>Baptism</u> Julia Lidia Henschke Joanna Henschke Oliwia Henschke
	<u>12.00</u>	<u>Aycliffe</u>	Polish Community mass
	18.00	Aycliffe	The Cutmore Family

We are all disciples

Whatever plane you're on, it's off course for much of the flight! Apparently, as well as travelling in the accepted air corridors and in the general direction of your destination, the plane's onboard computers are constantly making adjustments to get you safely to where you're going. Life skills are about making adjustments. We hold general aspirations and operate well-worn habits to get us through the day. But life throws up unexpected calls on our abilities to find appropriate responses. Often this involves other individuals. We'll not know our capabilities unless challenged. The quote attributed to Bob Marley runs, *You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have.*

In today's Gospel, Jesus challenges well-meaning individuals who want to follow him - we can include ourselves here. Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem and is not coming back. He's not disposed to collude with good intentions that carry conditions. To follow him is not about going anywhere except inside ourselves. He reminds us that our duty is to spread the news of the Kingdom of God. We have to establish and keep refreshing this mindset. So how do we do that? How do we understand what it is?

He rebukes James and John, who want to call down fire on a Samaritan village: this is not God's way. We need a firm understanding about how good, loving and forgiving our God, otherwise Kingdom values may be jargon we haven't translated for ourselves. Our task and duty is to love one another as he loves us. Full stop. We have a thousand ways to do this. It involves treating others as we'd like to be treated. It includes going the extra mile, turning the other cheek, biting our tongue, smiling, feeding, welcoming and serving. It's not optional and it's 24/7 for life. We need to work on ourselves first. Back to the plane journey. In the safety routine given before take off, we're all required to put our own lifejacket on first before helping others. Sort ourselves out so we can help others to get sorted according to their need. Their needs define our ministry. The world may be in a mess, but God so loves this world that he sent his only Son to us. We're now his disciples, needing to embrace our aspirations, walk the talk and steer our course daily. Jesus relies on us and believes in us. Our lives must redeem these times. It's good to remind ourselves of our brief. Connect it to when doing our teeth, putting shoes on. When looking in the mirror you're looking at a disciple. Remind yourself, so that when others see us they know they're looking at one too. Follow close - you see more than.

(Escomb Partnership Note)

Please pray for all the sick

Mary Eales, Eileen Walsh, Mark Hugill, Lynda Whelbourn, Phyllis Musgrave, Terry Cheesmond, Savannah Philips, Claire, Eileen Brownbridge, Paul Lamb, Paula Cruddace, Raymond Lowey, Julie Kirkbride, Helen Hall, Vilna Woolhead, Doris Irwin, John Regan, Elaine McCartney, John Garnham, Frank Morrell, Coulson family, Coleen Ogden, Janet Holmes, Alfie Pennington, Suzanne Winship, Stephen Russ, Jamie Spence, Hannibal Gonsalves, Anne Nicholson, Mary Horton, Bernard Molyneux, John Osborn, Lola Rose.

This week

Mon	09.30	Coundon	Mary Eales
27	09.40	Aycliffe	Rosary
June	10.00	Aycliffe	Joan Thorne (RIP)
Tue	09.15	Ferryhill	Private Intention
28	09.50	Aycliffe	Divine Mercy
June	10.00	Aycliffe	Pat Hill
	13.30	Coundon	Exposition, Rosary (<u>also 7pm</u>)
	19.00	Aycliffe	Prayer Group

Feast of Ss Peter and Paul

Wed	09.00	Coundon	Our parish family
29	09.40	Shildon	Rosary
June	10.00	Shildon	Michael Weddell (B)
	10.30	Ferryhill	A sick person (CF)
	11.00	Aycliffe	Pat Dolphin (A)
	12.00	Chilton	Our parish family
	19.00	Aycliffe	All refugees

Thu	09.30	Coundon	Bishop Ambrose Griffiths
30	10.00	Aycliffe	Fr Michael Keoghan
June	19.00	Aycliffe	Exposition

Fri	<u>09.30</u>	<u>Coundon</u>	Alnwick sisters (deceased)
1	09.30	Aycliffe	Exposition
July	10.00	Aycliffe	Christine Bainbridge (sick)

Sat	09.30	Coundon	Amanda Verrecchia
2	10.00	Coundon	Exposition and confession
July	12.00	Aycliffe	Wisdom Antwi (RIP)
	<u>14.00</u>	<u>Ferryhill</u>	<u>Baptism</u> Kyomi Sugawara
	16.00	Shildon	Our parish family
	18.00	Chilton	Derek Emmerson

Sun	09.00	Coundon	Nora, Ian and Al Moore
3	10.00	Aycliffe	Ann Pooley (RIP)
July	10.30	Ferryhill	Margaret Etherington
	<u>11.45</u>	<u>Ferryhill</u>	Baptism Millie Rose Skeen
	<u>12.00</u>	<u>Aycliffe</u>	Polish Community mass
	18.00	Aycliffe	Our parish family

Wednesday, 1pm at Carmel School: Mass. All welcome. admin@carmel.bhcet.org.uk or 01325 254525 (for catering).

Wednesday, 7pm at St Mary's: Special prayers during mass for **all refugees**.

Friday, 9.30pm at Coundon (not at Chilton): **School mass**

Saturday, 11am St Joseph's Church, Hartlepool: Diaconate **Ordination** - Rhodie Nidea, Gareth Rowe, Carl Watson.