



SUNDAY 7 OCTOBER 2018

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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

## ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

### 27th Sunday of the Year

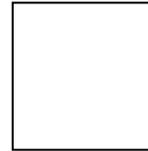
"I'm not bothering to get married," the man told me. First it was the expense and then all the business of planning that put him off, and his partner too. "Anyway," he said, there's no need. A piece of paper doesn't make any difference." I assumed commitment between them. They were genuine.

In the lifetime of many of us, marriage customs and other unions have changed a great deal. But it's always been a well-discussed subject. It was in the time of Jesus also.

Divorce was easy at that time and husbands held the power. Jesus wants to teach that the bond of marriage creates a union with God as well as between husband and wife. The married couple's relationship in the Church's eyes, mirrors the love God has for his people. A tall order. God never gives up on us. Marriage, like our faith story, is an arduous journey that expands and tests what we mean by love, forgiveness, change and adjustment.

Human beings hit all manner of difficulties in relationships. Many cannot contemplate permanence in marriage when problems cause seeming incompatibility. Moses had made allowances because the people seemed unteachable. Are we any better today? Do we see lifelong commitment as an ideal or far more than that? We believe the real thing is more than an ideal. We need to give marriages a lot of support and a lot of understanding - for healthy and also for damaging relationships. The complexities of life do not admit of simple solutions.

Married life is a vocation. To see and understand marriage in this way requires thought and prayer before and during marriage. Our married people speak ably and long about what living this sacrament involves. Their witness is invaluable because, sadly, the secular world fields little support.



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### Food for thought

"A happy marriage is the union of two forgivers." - Robert Quillen

"Love does not consist in gazing at each other, but in looking together in the same direction." - Antoine de Saint-Exupery

"Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married - and she didn't have to hear about the way his mother cooked". - Bob Orben

"A faith in God that is identified only with masculine traits is incompatible with Christian revelation and with the God of love". - Maria Clara Bingemer

"A good vocation is simply a firm and constant will in which the called person has to serve God in the way and in places to which Almighty God has called them." - St. Francis de Sales

"Nothing surpasses the greatness or dignity of a human person." - Pope St John Paul II

"Marriage is our last, best chance to grow up." - Joseph Barth

"The desire to be instantly understood and accurately responded to remains with us through life, and is one of the clearest expressions of closeness and love between people." - Jack Dominian

"Growth begins when we start to accept our own weakness." - Jean Vanier

### Date for your diary

Wednesday 24 October at 7pm in St Thomas' Church, Shildon - Peter Barron, former editor of The Northern Echo, children's author & journalist will be giving a talk about his life & family, entitled "Cloudy, Rain Later". Peter has a weekly column in the paper entitled "Grandad At Large". His talks are light hearted & humorous. He will sign and sell his children's books, donating £2 per sale to our nominated charity. Start your Christmas shopping early! Entry is £3 per person payable at the door & the price includes light refreshments. The event is to raise money for the South Cleveland Heart Fund based at James Cook Hospital. Everyone is welcome, if you've never been to St Thomas' yet, why not use this as the occasion to visit us.