



YEAR OF FAITH 2012

# THE WEAVINGS

Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle Department for Spirituality

April 2013

## A Universal Call to Holiness (3)

In this month's Weavings, we continue to reflect on the ways in which the Word of God, and particularly the Gospels, speak to us on the theme of the Universal Call to Holiness.

On **Holy Thursday**, we see Jesus calling his disciples to a way of holiness that they have hitherto not imagined. It is so new that Peter cannot believe that his Lord loves him enough to wash his feet and recoils. This is often how we react when we think about God's love for us—we don't quite believe it. And yet, at the Last Supper, Jesus shows in a very simple way what it means to be holy and loving—and calls on the disciples to do the same.

The Mass of the Lord's Supper ends with an invitation to spend time with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, simply watching and praying. This is a reminder that, alongside all the things we can do

to answer the call to holiness, one of the greatest is just to be with Christ—to be in his presence—resting in the silence where heart can speak to heart.

On **Good Friday**, we are taken to the darkest part of Jesus' story—his Passion and Death. As we listen to the readings, we might think about all the people Jesus encounters and of how they were being called to something new—to something holy. Most did not respond but a few did... Simon of Cyrene— Mary Magdalene—John—Joseph— Nicodemus—the centurion... and others. As they placed Jesus' body in the tomb, they must have wondered just what Jesus was calling them to. We know how the story unfolds but, perhaps, as we come to venerate the cross at the Solemn Liturgy, we might reflect on what Jesus' call to holiness cost him—and the willingness he showed in giving everything so that we might come to share his eternal life.

But we are not there yet. The liturgy of the Triduum—the Three Days—gives us a breathing space during **Holy Saturday**. For some of us, this is a day to get the shopping in for the weekend but, if you can, it is worth keeping the day as quiet as you can.. trying to tune into the emptiness and loss of this day for those who watched Jesus die. If you can, take a look at the ancient homily in which the writer sees this as the day when Jesus goes into the shadows—into hell—and draws forth all who have died in hope... (Google holy Saturday ancient homily!) It reminds us of the love of Christ which calls everyone to holiness—and who gives his

all so that they can respond to that call—even from the grave.

And then at the Easter Vigil, we hear some of the long history of salvation when God constantly called his people to holiness—and was frequently disappointed! But, in the end, his Son came into the world to bring a light that cannot be put out—the Light of the Risen Christ.

As **Easter time** unfolds, we will hear the stories of Jesus' appearances and the renewed call, now founded on the glory of the Resurrection. To Thomas—who is called to go beyond his doubts. To Peter, John and other disciples who have gone fishing—even after two appearances of their Risen Lord! To those in need of the Good Shepherd who will call and call again so that none may be lost. And, on the last Sunday of April, Jesus will give us again the definitive commandment—that holiness looks like in practice: love.

I give you a new commandment:

love one another;

just as I have loved you,

you also must love one another.

By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples.' (*John 13*)



### Diocesan Festival 2013

## Opening the Doors of Faith!

29-30 June 2013

Youth Village.

Posters, flyers and booking forms are being sent out to parishes—so do watch out for them.

They are also available on the diocesan website.

### Contact Details

To sign up for **Weavings** or the daily e-mail, contact Kathryn Turner, Head of the Department for Spirituality via the Department for Education

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# Pope Francis—a man at ease with silence

I was at Ushaw Moor Catholic Club with members of the Evangelisation Team for one of our **Rehallowing the Land** evenings when someone came in and said that there had been “white smoke”. Sr Michael and I agreed that I should keep an eye on updates while she spoke to the group about the legacy of our Northern Saints. As Sr Michael reached the Council of Whitby when the Celtic and Roman churches came together, the news came through that it was to be Archbishop Bergoglio to be known as Pope Francis!

We are obviously in very early days of the papacy but it might be interesting to reflect on what Pope Francis might offer the world of spirituality. As a Jesuit, he would have made at least one 30-day silent retreat. Few of us manage



Pope Francis asks for prayer as he begins his ministry

to do this—but for those who do, it is a life-transforming time as they grow closer to the God who loves them and commit their lives more deeply to following Christ. The fact that one of his first acts was to engage a huge crowd in St Peter’s Square in silent prayer speaks of his awareness of the importance of this kind of prayer as preparation to embark on anything—let alone a papacy!

Pope Francis will also have used the Examen on a daily basis. We have explored this in an earlier Weavings but basically, it means spending some time each day in

- + giving thanks for the good things that have happened throughout the day as gifts from God
- + acknowledging our failings and sin
- + praying for the grace to put things right and do better the next day

- + giving thanks again for all that we have received.

This is something any of us can do even if a 30 day retreat is a bit beyond us at the moment!

Later in the year, we will come back to some of the kinds of prayer that will have been part of Pope Francis’ life and explore how we might use or adapt them for our own lives.



## Prayer Station of the Month

On the Third Sunday of Easter, we hear of the “beach barbecue” where Jesus has prepared a breakfast of bread and fish for the disciples. They have been fishing all night and caught nothing until the Lord advises them to cast their nets to starboard—at which point, the nets are filled to breaking point.

The early Christians used a fish as a secret sign to identify each other in times of persecution. As someone cleverly worked out, the letters of the Greek word for fish are the initial letters of other Greek words which speak of Christ. So, we have:

**I** is the first letter of *īēsous*, the Greek version of Jesus’ name.

**Ch** is the first letter (in Greek it is just one!) of *Christos*, “anointed”.

**Th** (theta) is the first letter of *Theou* which is Greek for “of God” or “God’s”

**Y** the first letter of *yios*, Greek for “Son”

**S** is the first letter of *sōtēr*, the Greek word for “Saviour”.

On the Third Sunday of Easter, we are reminded that several of the disciples were fishermen.

Jesus called them to become fishers of people and a simple fish became a symbol that early Christians used to identify themselves.



Choose one of the fish.

Use the materials here to personalise it.

You can choose whether to add your name or not!

Place the fish in the net

and think about what it means

to have been “caught for Christ”

in Peter’s Net!



Carrying on the idea of secret codes then, the word *Ichthys* could also stand for Jesus Christ (the Anointed), Son of God, Saviour.

One image of the Church is that of being in the Fisherman’s (Peter’s) Net. Our prayer station reminds us that, through our baptism, we are drawn into that net—in all our different shapes and sizes.

Have a basket of paper (or better, card) fish—as wide a variety as time permits and a net (or something that represents one). Have a few felt tips and perhaps some glue and crafty bits and invite people to make their own fish and put it in the net. And yes, it will seem childish—until people do it and reflect on what it means to be one of the abundant catch that Peter and those who came after him have made for the Lord... and will continue to do by grace of God.



# To be Pilgrims... Waterhouses



**Pilgrims braving snow and wind in Waterhouses**

**A**t first glance, you might be forgiven for thinking we have mistakenly included another photograph from the mini-pilgrimage to Morpeth and Newminster in January! In fact, this is the pilgrimage to Esh Winning/Newhouse and Waterhouses held on 23 March! As you can see, the bitterly cold weather did not deter the tough pilgrims of the diocese.

This third pilgrimage for the Year of Faith was in honour of St John Boste, an Elizabethan martyr who ministered in the Deerness Valley for ten years before being captured, tortured, tried and then hanged, drawn and quartered in Durham in 1594.

After a moving Mass in Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, Esh Winning, the walking group braved the biting cold to walk to Waterhouses where John Boste was betrayed and arrested. They were accompanied by a large cross carried by pupils from St Leonard's School. Others

took the "softer option" of a virtual pilgrimage using photographs and psalms to reflect on along the way. Those still eager for more later moved on to Durham to the site of the gallows in St Leonard's School.

These mini-local pilgrimages, arranged by the Diocesan Evangelisation Team, have captured the imagination and as one pilgrim said, "Each one is better than the last; the Spirit is really working in our diocese and through our saints is renewing our faith".

The next pilgrimage is on **Saturday 6 April** in honour of St Wilfrid and St Oswald. It begins at **St Mary's church, Hexham at 10am**. Bishop Séamus will lead pilgrims to the Abbey where he will celebrate the first public Mass since the Reformation over the original church built by St Wilfrid. Why not make this pilgrimage part of your Easter celebrations? The snow cannot possibly be working on a hat trick... ☹

## ...and Cuddy's Course

**D**espite the bad weather, eight people from Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penshaw joined around 70 pilgrims following "Cuddy's Course" from Chester-le-Street to Durham on the Feast of St Cuthbert.



**Pilgrims on Cuddy's Course**

Pilgrim, Maria Ashburner, continues, "It was a cold day but stayed dry, our main problem was the VERY muddy footpaths which caused some slipping and sliding. We had a welcome stop at Finchale Priory for soup, bread and tea.

On arriving at Durham we regrouped in the Market Square and were led up Silver Street to Durham Cathedral by a troupe of medieval musicians and a couple of "monks" with St Cuthbert's banner at the front. The Dean met us at the cathedral door and we processed to St Cuthbert's tomb for a short prayer service

It was a wonderful way to celebrate the feast day ☹ and I even think we

## Upcoming Events

**30 April, 10:15am-3:30pm**

### **Day workshop on the Spiritual Needs of those with Dementia**

Clinical Skills Centre, Coach Lane Campus, Benton, Newcastle

An opportunity to learn more and to hear about (and share) good practice.

*For more information contact: Isabel.Quinn@northumbria.ac.uk*

**Saturday 11 May**

### **In the Footsteps of the Northern Saints**

Minsteracres Retreat Centre

A day with Kathryn Turner exploring the heritage of some of the holy people of the north who kindled lights that continue to burn today.

*For more information, contact Kathryn Turner or Minsteracres.*

**Saturday 22 June**

### **Day on Hidden Houses of Prayer**

St Martin-in-the-Fields, London

A day to share information about this important ministry with originator of the movement, Philip Roderick.

*More information from Kathryn Turner or Valerie North, hiddenhousesofprayer@hotmail.co.uk*

Contact details for information about events at local retreat centres:

#### **Minsteracres**

info@minsteracres.org  
01434 673 248

#### **Centre for Prayer & Mission, Seaham**

marymichael.lee7@googlemail.com  
0191 581 3249

#### **St Antony's Priory, Durham**

bookings@stantonypriory.co.uk  
0191 384 3747

### **St Antony's Passion Walk**

**Good Friday 29 and Saturday 30 March**

Collect an audio guides from St Antony's Priory between 10am and 12noon and take a two hour walk through Durham reflecting on the Passion The walk ends at St Antony's where you will find warming drinks and hot cross buns!

More information from St Antony's.

### **Rehallowing the Land**

**24 April—St Bede's Jarrow**

**1 May – Washington/ Penshaw deanery—venue to be confirmed**

**8 May—St Joseph's, Hartlepool**

**All 7pm start**