



# The Catholic Parish of Saint Gregory the Great Northampton



PART OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON, REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 234091

OUR  
VISION

**“A truly thriving Catholic community  
confidently and humbly proclaiming the  
Good News of Jesus Christ.”**

OUR  
VISION

## Filed the hungry with good things

Were it not for the celebration of the Assumption of Our Lady today, this would be the fourth Sunday of our readings from the sixth chapter of St John's Gospel; the discourse on the Bread of Life. Next Sunday we will have the fifth and final reading from that chapter.

The Gospel for the Assumption of Our Lady is the Magnificat, the song of Our Lady when she went to visit her cousin Elizabeth. After a great introduction of praise, it is a hymn which echoes the voice of many Old Testament prophets, but one sentence looks forward to the Beatitudes: “The hungry he has filled with good things”. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right”, said Jesus. (*Matthew 5:6*)

Of course we must understand Our Lady's words as having first of all a literal meaning. Our support for the Hope Centre and the Cathedral foodstore is one way in which we respond to this part of her song. That does not prevent us seeing a further depth in her words. The Beatitude in Matthew's version is normally interpreted as referring not to physical hunger for material food but a spiritual hunger for virtue. St Luke gives a different emphasis: “Blessed are you who hunger now; you shall be filled” (*Luke 6:21*). We are right to see both a spiritual and physical meaning to the Magnificat.

Last week we heard Jesus telling us that the bread of which he was speaking is his flesh, given for the life of the world. (*John 6:51*) In Jesus we see the Word of God in human flesh, perfect goodness; perfect righteousness. What better than for us to be filled with Jesus?

Over the past seventeen months many have been shielding and restricted to making a spiritual communion and participating in Mass on line or on television. There is a real hunger to receive the life of Jesus in a physical form, and it is important that we continue to make the church as safe as possible, and at the time of writing this, the local number of cases is still going up.

This is not the time to be relaxing our vigilance, but we do hope to see people coming back to Mass when numbers start to fall.

In today's first reading (for the Assumption) we are shown the sign in heaven of the woman, clothed with the sun and the moon at her feet with a crown of twelve stars. We understand her to be Our Lady, and she is giving birth to the Word made flesh. She is bringing what we know as the ‘Bread of Life’ into the world.

The dragon in the reading seeks to consume the child — the dragon is Satan; the evil one. St Paul speaks of what he is trying to do: “Anyone who eats the bread or drinks the cup in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord”. (*1 Corinthians 11:27*)

But God beat Satan, and the child was one with God, and now we are invited to “taste and see” (*Psalms 33:9*)

The first sentence of the first reading for the Assumption speaks of the sanctuary of God in heaven being thrown open, and the ark of the covenant being seen. Immediately Our Lady appears; she who is sometimes called the ‘Ark of the New Covenant’. The old covenant ark contained the tablets of stone, Our Lady has within her womb the Word of God with a heart of flesh.

In Our Lady the prophesy of Ezekiel is fulfilled: “A new heart I will give you and a new spirit I will put within you; I will remove the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” (*Ezekiel 36:26*). The prophesy of Jeremiah is fulfilled: “I will make a new covenant . . . I will put my law within them” (*Jeremiah 31:31, 33*). The old covenant was written on stone tablets, the New Covenant is the Word himself, not carved in stone and not written down, but living in a person of flesh; still living in the Bread of Life and therefore still living in those who receive it. God's law, which is his Word is truly within us when we receive Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

In the Gospel which we do not read today; that for the 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year in year B, we would read: “Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day”. (*John 6: 54*)

St Paul, writing to the Corinthians, and in our second reading for today speaks of the ‘last day’ when the last enemy, death is destroyed. Everything will happen in its proper order (*1 Corinthians 15:23*), and as we celebrate this great feast of Our Lady, we honour her who already has her place in heaven, as was revealed to John, and as we read in the first reading.

Last week we read the words of St Augustine: “Si comprehendis, non est Deus”: if you can understand it, it isn't God. In the last of the glorious mysteries of the Rosary we are invited to meditate on the Coronation of Our Lady and the glory of the Saints. Many books of devotion are accompanied by pictures, but there are none which do justice to the subject. We could re-phrase St Augustine: “If you can paint it, it isn't heaven”.

At Mass we are given a foretaste of heaven; not by what we can see or hear but by what we experience within ourselves, as we receive the ‘heart of flesh’ of Jesus himself. We are able to share with Our Lady the sheer joy of knowing that the life of Jesus lives in us just as surely as it lived in the womb of Our Lady on earth, and that she now shares in that life in heaven.



# Notices of Interest

**Bible Alive** for August & September is now available - only £3.00! If you wish to purchase a copy, they are near the hand-sanitiser in the narthex as you come into church.

**Repository:** There is a display of cards in the Foyer. If you wish to buy anything, please come to the Foyer after Sunday Mass, or the Office on Mon, Wed or Friday mornings & speak to the Secretary who will show you what to do & where to go.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

**Baptism Preparation:** The next preparation will be in the Sacristy on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September, 7pm. Please note that you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

**First Holy Communion 2022:** We are already planning our preparation for First Holy Communions next year! So if you have a child who will be in year group 3, 4, 5 or 6 this September and who would like to be involved in next year's programme watch this space! There will be more details in September!

**Confirmation:** At last we have a date: 1<sup>st</sup> October; feast of St Thérèse of Lisieux! The Confirmation will be at St Gregory's.

**Catechists & Youth Leaders - Blaze:** NYMO would like to bring together the Confirmation Catechists and Youth Leaders on 4<sup>th</sup> September at Holy Ghost Church, Luton, 11am – 1pm, to spend some time with them as they prayerfully discern the best way to evangelise and form our young people through Blaze. There are invitation cards on the table at the back of the church.

**SPUC:** Help protect the lives of Unborn Children & send a message that abortion is harmful to unborn children & their mothers by joining this year's March for Life. The march is on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September & will take place in Central London. It is a great Pro Life event & it is encouraging to be with so many Pro Life supporters. For further details either go onto the March for Life website [marchforlife.co.uk](http://marchforlife.co.uk) or contact William on 07393965643 or [wpcurrie@btinternet.com](mailto:wpcurrie@btinternet.com). It is not enough just to say that we are Pro Life: we must take action to stop abortion & the terrible damage it is doing to vulnerable girls, women & their unborn children.

**Mission Northampton:** Mission Northampton will be based at the new St Thomas Centre at Northampton Cathedral, but be a town-wide project involving all the parishes & Catholic schools in the town. It is being led by Fr David Donaghue, & there will be a variety of initiatives to seek to proclaim the Gospel, & make us all better missionary disciples. Please keep praying for it, & for our own parish, that we may become all that God wishes us to be, & that, like the first Christians, we may be devoted to the teaching of the apostles, to the fellowship, to the Breaking of Bread & to the prayers. May we all be truly missionary disciples, & this a missionary parish. If you are interested in being part of this exciting new initiative he would like to hear from you. There will be a prayer evening & presentation shortly. Please contact Fr David for further information: [frdaviddonaghue@northamptondiocese.org](mailto:frdaviddonaghue@northamptondiocese.org)

**News from the Foodstore!** We as a parish are continuing to support the Cathedral Foodstore by supplying toiletries to add to food bags. The Cathedral supply these provisions each week to families in need from around Northampton. Please help us to continue our commitment to provide household & personal hygiene products. We aim to add 2 items to each bag & there are approximately 80 bag sent out each week, which serves around 250 people. At the moment we have very little in reserve. (Except for baby products.) Please donate what you can, & continue to pray for this work. Many Thanks, Gregory Care.

**Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group** continues to pray together online via Skype and by telephone.

**Tots @ St Gregory's:** We are planning to restart on Tuesday September 7<sup>th</sup>, 9.30 - 11.30. Refreshments provided. £1 per family. All welcome!

**Vianney Mission Prayer Group** will not meet during this time.

**Parish Finances:** Continued thanks for the wonderful generosity that you are showing, to the parish, in the special collections, to CAFOD, Missio, and in gifts for the kitchen refurbishment.

**Standing Order via Donor's Own Bank.** You can set up a standing order for donations to your parish using either your on line bank account or in branch. The information required to make the donation is as follows:

Bank; **NatWest**  
Sort Code; **60-06-11**  
Account Number; **46898093**  
Account Name; **Northampton Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust**  
Payment Ref; Parish Name/Area: **(St. Gregory's, Northampton)**

**Choir Matters:** I hope you have been pleased to hear the small group of choir members recently & that you were all able to join in the Mass settings over the last two weeks. Thanks to Deacon Michael, I expect to have Power Point slides on show. These will include words of those hymns we will be using so let's hear you praise the Lord in song! You will still need to be masked & we are encouraged to sing but sing with restraint to lessen the risk of transmission of the virus. Because of time constraints, the entry hymn at 11:00 Mass will not include every verse nor will we have a hymn at the end. Offertory & Communion hymns will be as full as time allows. Our 1<sup>st</sup> monthly choir practice was last Thurs.; the next is due 2 Sep - Feast of St Gregory, Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>. *Alec*

**The Catholicism Course:** The "Catholicism" course is running on Tuesday evenings through the summer, starting at 7.30. While it does form a continuous course, each session does stand alone, so if you have to miss one or more, you can dip in to those you can. It will run on Zoom to start with, and depending on changes to regulations and if the participants would prefer, could change to 'face to face' later. There are ten sessions:

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| 1  | July 6 <sup>th</sup>       | The revelation of God become Man              |
| 2  | July 20 <sup>th</sup>      | The Teaching of Jesus                         |
| 3  | July 27 <sup>th</sup>      | God, than whom nothing greater can be thought |
| 4  | August 3 <sup>rd</sup>     | <b>Mary, Mother of God</b>                    |
| 5  | August 10 <sup>th</sup>    | Peter and Paul; the first Missions            |
| 6  | August 17 <sup>th</sup>    | Christ and the Church                         |
| 7  | August 24 <sup>th</sup>    | The Eucharist                                 |
| 8  | August 31 <sup>st</sup>    | The Communion of Saints                       |
| 9  | September 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Prayer and the Life of the Spirit             |
| 10 | September 14 <sup>th</sup> | The Last Things                               |

please email to Fr Andrew for the Zoom link

**St Gregory's next Alpha:** Below are the dates of the next Alpha course which we are hoping will be able to be in the hall and in person. It is highly recommended for everyone, and is very enjoyable.

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|-------------------------|---|
| <b>First session:</b>   | <b>21<sup>st</sup> September 2021:</b> Is there more to life than this?       |
| <b>Second Session:</b>  | <b>28<sup>th</sup> September 2021</b> Who is Jesus?                           |
| <b>Third Session:</b>   | <b>5<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b> Why did Jesus die?                         |
| <b>Fourth Session</b>   | <b>12<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b> How can I be sure of my faith?            |
| <b>Fifth Session</b>    | <b>19<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b> Why and how do I pray?                    |
| <b>Sixth Session</b>    | <b>9<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b> How does God guide us?                    |
| <b>Seventh Session</b>  | <b>16<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b> Why and how should I read the Bible?     |
| <b>Away-Day</b>         | <b>19<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b> Who is the Holy Spirit? |
| <b>Eighth Session</b>   | <b>23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021</b> How can I resist evil?                   |
| <b>Ninth Session</b>    | <b>30<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b> Why and how should we tell others?       |
| <b>Tenth Session</b>    | <b>7<sup>th</sup> December 2021</b> What about the Church?                    |
| <b>Eleventh Session</b> | <b>14<sup>th</sup> December 2021</b> What about the rest of my life?          |

Each session starts with a good meal (A proper evening meal, not just a snack), then we watch a film together about our faith. After the film we have a conversation around our table about what we have seen and heard. It is good to have established believers as well a potential converts and those who simply want to know more about our faith. There is no charge, but donations are cheerfully accepted.

# Scripture Readings 15th August 2021, Assumption of Our Lady

These tumultuous chapters of Revelation imagine how the mystery of God's plan of salvation will be fulfilled in the "end days". After the seventh angel blows his trumpet the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of God and his Christ, and those who are destroying the earth will be destroyed. First the Christ (Messiah) is born from Israel, before the dragon is hurled down from heaven, only to make war on the rest of Israel's children – the Church. But those who share Jesus' death on earth will also share his glory in heaven – indeed they are already sharing in the resurrection triumph. Revelation is certain of Christ's ultimate victory.

The Psalm from a Royal Wedding Song praises the bridegroom and his bride, assuring us of Christ's final victory.

And Paul reminds the Corinthians how this victory has been won: by Christ's death. His raising from the dead is a "first fruit" of what

is to come: the bodily resurrection of all the dead, when Christ does away with all his enemies, including the last enemy, which is death.

Mary's joyful Magnificat, which is said or sung every morning in the Church throughout the world, summarises salvation history and anticipates her Son's fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets in his proclamation of the Beatitudes.

Psalm Response: **On your right stands the queen, in garments of gold.**

(Rev 11:19; 12:1-6,10; Ps 44(45):10-16; 1 Cor 15:20-26; Lk 1:39-56)

*Chris Oliver*

## Refreshments after 9.00 am Sunday and Wednesday Mass

**Come and see! Today, after the 9.00 Mass there will be refreshments available.** We are still following precautions against COVID, and please do not go against the social distancing guidelines, but if you wish, you are welcome to have a drink and

refreshment in the hall after the 9.00 am Mass, prepared in the newly-completed kitchen.

Refreshments will also be offered on Wednesday mornings after Mass for any who wish.

# Taking Climate-change seriously

The recent report from the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) is clear and to the point. "It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred".

It is true that the climate has changed continually over the centuries, there was a warm period in the Middle Ages and what is known as the 'little ice age' in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but the change in the last twenty years is about four times greater than the variations in temperature over the previous two thousand years.

Nature has in-built self corrections. This is classically demonstrated in the relative populations of rabbits and foxes. As foxes eat rabbits the number of rabbits diminishes which then means that there is not enough food for foxes, so then their numbers reduce. This allows the rabbit population to build up, which means that there is then more food for foxes, and so the cycle continues. However, if the foxes were to hunt the rabbits to extinction, they would have a serious problem.

What the IPCC is saying is that we have a very short time before the climate change cannot be reversed. One example of this is that the polar ice-caps are white which reflects light and heat. This protects them from melting. However the oceans do not reflect light and heat, and are warming, which is resulting in the melting of the edges of the ice-caps, leading to less white on the planet, which means that less light and heat is reflected and more is absorbed, leading to even more warming.

Instead of being in a stable equilibrium, we are reaching instability, and the risk is that it will become impossible to prevent an exponential increase in global warming, eventually making the planet uninhabitable. That is an extreme view, and unlikely to happen in the near future.

As the oceans warm up, and ice-caps melt, the water level will rise, and this will impact on the people who live nearest to sea level. It is, of course, true that many such places are the playgrounds of the

very rich, but they can afford to build flood defences or move to higher ground. The real victims will be the poorest people in the poorest countries who will become migrants seeking somewhere to live.

However, the extra water in the oceans and warmer temperatures has another effect, which is increased evaporation — some of that water becomes clouds, and these clouds move to less warm parts of the planet, and then fall as rain. This then creates an additional problem, flooding. Just in the last few years we have seen flood events which used to be called 'once in a century' taking place far more frequently.

The IPCC is saying that it is human influence that has caused this climate change. In particular they note heatwaves, extreme rainfall, tropical cyclones, droughts as being likely to be caused by human activity.

In all of these events, it is the poorest who are least able to adapt to change in climate, and therefore will suffer most.

While rich countries and people can always give aid to poorer countries and people, the better course, that which CAFOD adopts, is to help poorer countries and people to develop and eventually to become financially independent and not in need of aid. This is also the aim of the FairTrade movement.

We are seeing record temperatures in southern Europe and unusual weather events in many parts of the world. For those whose holiday arrangements in Greece are being ruined, we feel a measure of sympathy, while for those whose homes are destroyed, whose livelihoods are taken from them, for those who have suffered personal injury or even death we must be willing to share in their pain by being willing to make our own sacrifice for the good of our common home.

Both drought and flood have their impact on agriculture, and this has its impact on the food supply — again, affecting the poorest most. It seems to be generally agreed that this year's COP26 meeting is crucial. Please keep informed and keep praying.

## SECOND COLLECTIONS 2021



<b>28<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<b>CAFOD (Lenten Fast Day 26<sup>th</sup> Feb)</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> April</b>	<b>Good Friday Collection for the Holy Places</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Diocesan Priests' Training Fund</b>
<b>16<sup>th</sup> May</b>	<b>Mass Media</b>
<b>20<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Day for Life</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Peter's Pence</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Apostleship of the Sea</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>Home Mission Sunday</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	<b>CAFOD (Harvest Fast Day 1<sup>st</sup> October)</b>
<b>24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>Mission Sunday</b>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>Bishop's Maintenance Fund</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>Sick &amp; Retired Priests' Fund</b>