



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

Scripture is inspired by God

“Let us take up this book! Let us receive it from the Lord who continually offers it to us through the Church! Let us devour it, so that it can become our very life! Let us savour it deeply: it will make demands of us, but it will give us joy because it is sweet as honey.”

These are the words which open “The Gift of Scripture” which was published by the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales in 2005, and are themselves quoted from Pope St John Paul II’s Apostolic Exhortation “*Ecclesia in Europa*” in 2003. The theme of ‘joy’ keeps repeating, and it is worth hanging on to that thought. Next Sunday is the day when the Church again thinks about Mission, and Pope Francis, in *Evangelii Gaudium* speaks of how we should not look as though we have just been to a funeral, but show the joy of the resurrection.

St Paul tells Timothy that “all Scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used for teaching, for refuting error, for guiding people’s lives and teaching them to be holy” (2 *Timothy* 3:16). It is worth noting that this letter is addressed to someone who is to be a teacher himself. There is an important occasion related in the Acts of the Apostles, that of the Ethiopian travelling home from Jerusalem and reading from the prophesy of Isaiah. The Deacon Philip happens to be in earshot and hears the Ethiopian reading and asks if he understands what he is reading. He replies that without someone to explain, how can he? So Philip gets into the chariot and explains the passage and how it relates to Jesus. (*Acts* 8:30-31)

This illustrates a vital truth; that the Scriptures are not a stand-alone document. The Scriptures form a central part of what we call ‘Tradition’. Tradition is literally that which is handed down to us (from the Latin *tradere* — to hand on, from which we also get the word ‘trade’). Some of the oldest texts of Scripture are found in quotations in sermons and the teaching of early Christian leaders; the people known as the Early Fathers. They were using the Scriptures as the basis of their teaching.

We read the Scriptures in the context of the Church. This is the context in which the books of the New Testament were written, and in which those documents that were chosen by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to be given their place in our Bible.

The Scriptures can guide our life and make us holy. However, we, like the Ethiopian need to understand what we are reading. Fortunately we do not do this on our own. We have the collected wisdom of the Church down nearly 2,000 years to help us, and many saints and scholars have left us explanations and commentaries on every book of the Bible. Modern technology has come to our help, and there are many video courses available to us. At St Gregory’s we use the ‘Bible Timeline’ course and others produced by Ascension Press in America, we have Bible Alive and each week

there is a short explanation of the Sunday readings in the newsletter. None of us need to be ignorant of the Scriptures. St Jerome observed that ‘to be ignorant of the Scriptures is to be ignorant of Christ’.

We are not just called to be Ethiopians! We are called to be Philips! To be a Philip we must have a good understanding ourselves, so we graduate from being Ethiopians to being Philips.

The Scriptures are not secret, but they are seeds which will only germinate and grow with the warming of the Holy Spirit and the watering of good teaching. The seed of the scriptures grow within us though our prayer and our life of Sacramental grace.

[Flat-pack furniture needs its instructions, but then normally there is a need for someone to explain what the instructions mean.]

The word which is translated as ‘inspired’ is θεοπνευστος (theopneustos) which literally means ‘God-breathed’. God breathed through the authors of the books of the Bible, and that makes God the author of the Scriptures, but they were written by human writers, in the context in which they lived and the circumstances which they faced. To fully understand passages of the Bible, we need to have some understanding of the origins of the writing and the ‘genre’ in which it is written. For example, poetry employs a different set of rules for interpretation than that of a recipe.

Because of the different styles and circumstances of Scripture, there are sometimes apparent contradictions. For example, Jesus is recorded as saying “He who is not for me is against me” (*Matthew* 12:30 and *Luke* 11:23) but also “He who is not against me is for me” (*Luke* 9:50 and *Mark* 9:40). At first sight these seem to be contradictory, and we need to understand the different contexts in which each was said.

This highlights the danger of fundamentalism. The Bible needs to be taken as a whole. Fundamentalism tends to focus on particular favourite texts, while ignoring others which might offer a different perspective. Thus it gives only a partial view of the Bible and therefore of the word of God.

“Stand at the crossroads, and look well, and ask yourselves which path it was that stood you in good stead long ago. That path follow, and you shall find rest for your souls” (*Jeremiah* 6:16). “Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” (*Romans* 15:4)

The Church encourages us all to be better acquainted with the Bible, to read it on our own, listen to it being read in church, to join in study of the Scriptures. As the words of the Scriptures have enlightened and inspired Christians in past generation, so may it do in ours.

Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for October & November 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: The Repository is open after every Sunday Mass – Catholic Diaries for 2023 are now available! We also need more helpers prepared to stand for a few minutes after Mass - all stock is marked, so an easy task! *Contact Kath.healey.789@ gmail.com*

Thursday Holy Hour and Adoration: A request has been made that there be more opportunity for Eucharistic Adoration. As a trial, Holy Hour will be a Holy Two Hours, from 9am until 11am. However, this can only continue if there are sufficient numbers to sustain it. No one is expected to remain for the entire two hours, come for as long as you can or want to.

World Mission Sunday: This Sunday is World Mission Sunday, when the Holy Father invites all Catholics to contribute to a special collection for Missio, his charity for world mission. Please support Missio in helping missionaries to work alongside communities throughout the world that are poor or in need, regardless of their background or belief. Join in on this special day that unites Catholics all over the world in prayer and celebration of our Church's mission to share God's love with all people. Please give generously using the envelopes available at the back of the Church, call 02078219755 (office hours) or visit Missio's website to give a single gift, set up a direct debit and gift aid your donation if possible: missio.org.uk.

St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School and Nursery: Reception Open Morning for children coming into Reception Class in September 2023. Join us for an information session & tour, to view our school & see learning in action on Wednesday 19th October at 10am. We look forward to welcoming you to our lovely school! There are still a limited number of Nursery places too. School & nursery visits are also welcome, so please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01604 403511.

November is the Month of the Holy Souls and there will be a Mass of Requiem for all those whose funerals have taken place from St Gregory's at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 2nd November. The names of all those whose funerals have taken place since November 2019 (the last time we were able to commemorate this occasion without restrictions) will be automatically included, but everyone is welcome and is invited to ask for the name of family members who have died to be included. There will be particular mention made of all who have died of COVID. Please book this date, and invite any you know who might find this a help in grief.

Save the Date: Saturday 18th March 2023 Encounter Northampton, a day hosted by Mission Northampton in St Gregory's Hall from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. More details later!

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday 7th November at 7.00 pm in the Sacristy. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

First Holy Communion 2023: Important Date for First Communion Families: Last Sunday there was an introduction to this year's programme & the opportunity to register children. If this day was inconvenient there will be a session at Sacred Heart **today, Sunday 16th**, after 10:30 Mass which will be the same. We look forward to meeting you.

Confirmation in 2023: Please watch this space for information.

Prison Chaplaincy: Following Prisoner Sunday last week, we would like to highlight the hidden but wonderful work of our prison chaplains across the diocese, bringing light to very dark places. If you'd like to know more about prison chaplaincy, how your parish might be able to get involved, or are interested in volunteering yourself, find out more here: <https://pastoralministryoffice.org/home-copy/get-involved/prison-chaplaincy/>.

Accommodation Needed: Fr. Gareth Leyshon is attending a conference in Northampton and is looking for accommodation from 18-20 November. If you are able to help, please contact Clare at lazylion26@hotmail.com

Choir Matters: I expect choir members to be at October Sunday Masses by 10:45 to check the hymns etc. as planned: Oct 9: 408 & 206. Oct 16: 527 & 568. Oct 23: ICA & 560. Oct 30: 641, 522 & 283. *Alec*

Food Parcels: Please contact Gregory Care (07434669011) if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel.

Tots @ St Gregory's: We have re-started: tots and their carers welcome, 9.30-11.30 on Tuesdays during term-time £1 per adult!!

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

A Course on the Psalms: The dates for this have had to be modified, those who started last week have been notified, but anyone else who would like to join is asked to email Fr Andrew. After Christmas there will be a new course starting: "What We Believe: The Beauty of the Catholic Faith". This is from the Ascension Press.

The Gathering 2022: Bearing Fruit in Plenty. Saturday 22nd October 1-5pm. Northampton Diocese Women's Ministry Group warmly invite you to an afternoon of sharing, reflection, synodal conversation, worship and prayer at Thornton College MK17 0HJ. Tea time refreshments provided. There is no charge for this event, but please book on: www.Eventbrite.co.uk/e/416930188417

Parish Finances: Much the easiest way to support the parish financially is through a standing order directly from your own bank account. The information required for this 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)**
If you pay income tax, please ask for a Gift Aid form.

Church Heating: God is good! The past weeks have not been unduly cold, and we will keep going without heating the church for as long as is possible. The church heating has to be on for two hours before it even begins to warm up, so not running it for weekday Mass is a way of making a considerable saving. Please come in warm clothing! We will heat the church and hall on Sundays, but the extra cost of this will be more than the saving on weekdays.

Refreshment Donations: Below is the schedule for refreshment donations through the year:

From the first Sunday in Advent to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:	The Hope Centre
From the Second Sunday in ordinary time to the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday:	Gregory Care
Through Lent and Eastertide:	CAFOD
Ordinary Time until the end of August:	Refreshment Fund
September until the Harvest collection:	CAFOD
After harvest until the beginning of Advent:	The Bible Society

Prayers for Ukraine: Please continue to pray for an end to the war in Ukraine:

O God, author and lover of peace,
to know you is to live,
to serve you is to reign.
Defend against every attack
those who cry to you
so that we, who trust in your protection,
may not fear the weapons of any foe.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen

Scripture Readings 16th October 2022, 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

During the Exodus, after escaping from Egypt across the Red Sea, the Israelites' frequently grumbled about God, who responded by giving them water, quail and manna. Then they were challenged by the Amalekites living between Palestine and Sinai. Moses needed a lot of human help to keep his arms up! But his persistence showed complete faith in God. They continued to quarrel and test the Lord, but he showed yet again that he will always look after them.

The Psalmist, full of confidence in the Lord, assures his companion he too may have total confidence in God.

Paul emphasises that Timothy, like Moses, must "be persistent" in proclaiming the word "whether it is convenient or inconvenient". He describes the uses of scripture: "for teaching, for refuting error, for guidance and for teaching people to be holy". For Paul,

writing before the Gospels were written, "scripture" meant what we now call the Old Testament. So we need to persist in trying to understand the Jewish Scriptures.

Just before Jesus enters Jerusalem Luke gives us two parables about prayer. Today we hear how the persistent widow gets justice. Jesus assures us: God will "see justice done to his chosen who cry out to him day and night even when he delays to help them".

Psalm Response: **Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.**

(Ex 17:8-13 Ps 120(121) 2 Tim 3:14-4:2 Lk 18:1-8)

Chris Oliver

5th Session this week

The structure of the Alpha course is carefully and prayerfully worked out. It begins with our human dis-content. The Preacher of the Old Testament (the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes) says that 'all is vanity' or 'sheer futility'. (*Ecclesiastes 1:2*) What is the point of life? The preacher of the Old Testament was writing before Jesus, and thanks to his life, teaching, death and resurrection, we know that life is not sheer futility, but that through Jesus we can have life in its fullness. (*John 10:10*) Please pray for all those doing this Alpha course, and if you have not yet experienced Alpha, think about joining in the spring. Please come, and if you can, bring a friend. There is no charge, but donations are cheerfully accepted. For catering purposes, please register at www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha
Many people have found this valuable for themselves, but this is also an easy way for anyone to fulfil the wish of Pope Francis that we all become Missionary Disciples. Just come and bring a friend!

First session:	September 20th 2022:	Is there more to life than this?
Second Session:	September 27th 2022:	Who is Jesus?
Third Session:	October 4th 2022:	Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session:	October 11th 2022:	How can I have faith?
Fifth Session:	October 18th 2022:	Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session:	October 25th 2022:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Seventh Session:	November 8th 2022:	How does God guide us?
Away-Day:	November 11th - 12th:	Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? How can I make the most of the rest of my life?
Eighth Session:	November 15th 2022:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	November 22nd 2022:	Why and how should I tell others?
Tenth Session:	November 29th 2022:	Does God heal today?
Eleventh Session:	December 6th 2022:	What about the Church?

This Sunday is World Mission Sunday

World Mission Sunday is one of three annual Papal collections when the entire global Church comes together to support mission. From all over the world, the collections support churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in countries where the Church is new, young or poor. Every single Catholic parish in the world comes together to pray for missionaries and their work in spreading the Good News.

Here, where the Church is better established, we are in a position to help fund the poorer parts of the world. However, we are also conscious that mission is not just something that goes on elsewhere; in our country and in this parish, the need for mission is just as great.

We support the mission of the Church here because that is Christ's command to us, but recognising that his command reaches out to 'all nations' (*Matthew 28:19*) we also gladly support the work of 'Missio', which is the organisation that helps fund all the major missionary societies and orders across the world, and particularly in deprived and impoverished areas and those places on the margins. While this work is bringing the Gospel to these areas, it is also bringing development in education, health care, better farming, clean water and sanitation. In many parts of the world, the Catholic Church is the main provider of schools and hospitals for the remote communities and deprived areas. Missio is frequently the main source of funding for this work.

The Gospel message is a message of peace. Sadly, in former times missionaries went out with aggressive colonial military forces to dominate and exploit foreign lands. The legacy of the colonial past of the former world powers is not always a happy one, and after independence, there has all too often been conflict between rival ethnic groups or religions. Often the national frontiers have not followed the lines of tribal homelands, provoking disputes which have become wars. Tragically, the history of the Church has not always been on the side of the indigenous population, but rather on the side of the colonial power. Today the missionary activity of the Church is to support the local people, and to help bring peace.

The magazine 'Mission Today', which is distributed to all who have 'Red Boxes' and give to 'Missio' contains many interesting articles about the missionary work of the Church in the poorest and most needy countries; for example in Ethiopia, where there has been severe famine, and Nigeria where there is much violence between different communities.

The global Mission command of Jesus is a powerful reminder that there is only one world, and that we all share one planet on which we live. There is just one God who created this wonderful world and all people, and calls all people to love him, to love one another and live in peace with each other. Our mission work helps to bring about that world in which the resources are fairly shared and people can live in peace.