



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.”**

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VISION

The Shepherd of the Sheep

We are familiar with the image of Jesus as the ‘Good Shepherd’ and Christ as the gate to the sheepfold. We are also familiar with sheep playing a significant part in school Nativity plays, even if it is only shepherds who figure in the Biblical texts. We understand the work of the ‘pastor’ in Christian ministry.

However, in St Mark’s Gospel, shepherds only occur twice, once in the prediction of Peter’s denial and the Apostles’ desertion of Jesus on Good Friday, where Our Lord quotes the prophet Zechariah: “I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered” (*Zechariah 13:7*), and the other in the passage we read in today’s Gospel passage.

In both passages, Jesus is seen as the Shepherd, and in today’s Gospel, he is teaching the sheep “at some length” (*Mark 6:34*). This leads on to the miraculous feeding of the five thousand. They have stayed late listening to the lengthy teaching of Jesus, and are hungry.

Our sequence of Gospel readings switches next Sunday to St John who tells us of this event, and then for the next four Sundays we hear the lengthy teaching of Jesus on the Bread of Life, recounted in the sixth chapter of St John’s Gospel. This is indeed length teaching — so much so that we spread it over four weeks.

Back in Lent we were invited to share in the insights of a book by Matthew Kelly: “Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic”. The recordings are still available on our parish web-site as the homilies for the weekdays of Lent. The four signs are prayer, study, generosity and evangelisation, and in the third week of Lent we considered the second of those signs, study. This begins with the willingness to listen to Jesus teaching us ‘at some length’.

If we are to understand the teachings of Jesus we need to commit some time for this, but it is not sufficient merely to be there when the words are read — it is necessary to actively listen, and because much of the teaching of Jesus is in parables or in the events of his life, death and resurrection, it is also necessary to work out how this applies to our own life and individual and particular condition.

As the Body of Christ on earth, the Church continues to teach, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. St Luke tells us that ‘the crowds pressed upon Jesus to hear the Word of God’ (*Luke 5:1*). Sadly, today the crowds do not seem to be pressing in on the Church to hear the Word of God; we need to reflect upon this.

Maybe what we are saying is not recognised as the Word of God. Maybe we have become too much like the teachers of Israel in the 1st century whom Jesus criticised so much. Maybe people today are like sheep without a shepherd, because the shepherds are not authentically speaking the Word of God.

It is certainly the case that people are interested in hearing the words of the Supreme Pastor, the Successor of Peter. It is probable that he will attend the Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in the autumn. Sadly, within the Church there are a small but vocal few who appear to oppose him, and this is a gift to those who oppose the Church. We have a responsibility to proclaim, with Pope Francis the inclusive love of God for all his people.

Our Bishops are also speaking the Word of God. They are preaching and teaching the Faith day by day. Sadly, the secular media is not interested in this. Sadly, but not surprisingly. When people do their job well, this is not news.

Last week in this newsletter we spoke of ‘Cultural Transformation’ of the parish. One area of such transformation is that of the recognition of the need for Bible study and a greater understanding of the Faith by all Catholics. The ‘Catholicism’ course which has just begun is a wonderful opportunity, and so many Catholics have said that they have learned so much from it when we ran it before.

It would indeed be a strange irony if the world was seeking to hear the Word of God but Catholics were not! It is sadly true that in the past there was a culture in the Church of not studying the Bible. It has been said (falsely) that at the reformation we got the Sacraments and Protestants got the Bible, as though it were a division of assets at a divorce. The Bible is our treasure as much as are the Sacraments, and unless we engage with it we will miss so much. Indeed, in the next four weeks we will find the Biblical basis for our understanding of the Sacrament of the Mass.

A ‘disciple’ is one who learns. There is a school whose motto is “Audio, Video, Disco”, which is not to do with modern technology and entertainment, but translates as “I hear, I see, I learn”. Pope Francis has the vision of us all being ‘Missionary Disciples’ — in other words, people who not only learn but also teach. We do not yet know it all, but what we do know, we will pass on to others.

Our vision is that we will do this: “confidently and humbly proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ”. This is a collective task; we are all part of this mission, but we all have different ways in which we contribute to this. Just as in the whole running of society in which there are many different jobs to be done, so too in the church there are many different vocations.

Our welcome team are exercising one vocation. Another vocation is to invite people to be made welcome. Another is to show friendship to those we welcome. Yet another is to explain to those we welcome as new friends what we are here for and why we have our hope in Christ (*See 1 Peter 3:15*).

Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for July & August 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 & items for First Communion in the Foyer. If you wish to buy anything, please come to the Church 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 6th 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 Communion 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: 1st 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 4th 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.

Readers at Mass: If anyone wishes to become a reader at Mass (Sundays and Weekdays), please contact Deacon Michael, which will enable us to prepare rotas for when some sort of normality returns!

Bishop David has produced a series of short talks focussed on 'The Church'. These videos can be viewed on the Northampton Diocese YouTube channel. Simply type 'Northampton Diocese' into the search bar on YouTube and click on 'The Church' playlist. All the videos in this series so far will be displayed.

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 4th 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 or contact William on 07393965643 or 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.

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

Tots @St Gregory's: As with other meetings, Tots has been cancelled until further notice.

Vianney Mission Prayer Group will not meet during this time.

New Pastoral Area: After much consideration and prayer Bishop David has re-amalgamated the two Northampton Pastoral Areas. The new Pastoral Area includes the entire town, together with Towcester and Daventry. Wellingborough and Rushden are now joined with Kettering and Corby. In practical terms for the parish as a whole, we continue to work closely with Sacred Heart and Billing, particularly in relation to preparation for First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Continuing Adult Formation and in our evangelistic outreach. Canon Brendan Killeen continues as Dean, and we look forward to increasing co-operation with the other parishes of our new Pastoral Area.

Gregory Care Toiletries Appeal update: Thank you for your continued support & for your generosity. We will keep you updated!

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, There is also a letter of thanks from the Kiltegan Fathers (St Patrick's Missionaries) for the support given to them through the collection of used postage stamps organised by Linda Fleming — see below.

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)**

Kiltegan Fathers (St Patrick's Missionaries) "Thank you so much for the stamps you sent us, and so many! Fr Seamus Reihill started collecting used stamps when he was sent home from Nigeria in 1964 – so ill he was expected to die! Thankfully he is still going strong, in his nineties. The used stamps have brought in a huge amount of money in support of the missions over the years. He, and the other Fathers thank you so much, and also to all your helpers and supporters, and, at risk of being greedy, please keep up the good work"

Northampton Street Pastors are looking for Christian volunteers, particularly more Catholics, to join their team. They offer support to vulnerable people on weekend evenings in the town centre. There is a training day on 7th August at Kingdom Life Church. If you are interested, please contact Teresa at northampton.admin@streetpastors.org.uk

The Catholicism Course: Following on from the Alpha course which has just finished, the "Catholicism" course will be run 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 th | The revelation of God become Man |
| 2 July 20 th | The Teaching of Jesus |
| 3 July 27 th | God, than whom nothing greater can be thought |
| 4 August 3 rd | Mary, Mother of God |
| 5 August 10 th | Peter and Paul; the first Missions |
| 6 August 17 th | Christ and the Church |
| 7 August 24 th | The Eucharist |
| 8 August 31 st | The Communion of Saints |
| 9 September 7 th | Prayer and the Life of the Spirit |
| 10 September 14 th | The Last Things |

please email to Fr Andrew for the Zoom link

Scripture Readings 18th July 2021, 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Jeremiah was preaching around 600 BC. For forty years before the exile he reminded Judah's rulers how they had broken the covenant, worshipping other gods and taking advantage of the poor. His warnings were ignored, Jerusalem was destroyed, and the people taken into exile in Babylon.

But the Lord promises to rescue his people. He will make a new covenant and send a descendant of David to rule with truth, integrity and honesty.

The Psalm celebrates God's loving care for his people, like a shepherd guarding and guiding his flock, and looking forward to his generous end-time feast.

Paul tells the Ephesians that Gentiles and Jews, previously separated by the Law, have now become one "by the blood of Christ". The Law's barriers have been broken down, and God's

covenant now extends to Gentiles. Early proposals for Christians to ignore the Jewish Scriptures were rejected, and the Old Testament readings now included at Mass can help our faith.

Mark's Gospel has described the death of John the Baptist while the apostles were away on their mission. On their return Jesus takes them away 'on retreat'. But the crowds follow, setting the scene for the feeding miracles. For the next five weeks we switch to John's Gospel for a fuller account of Eucharistic feeding.

Psalm Response:

**The Lord is my shepherd:
there is nothing I shall want.**

(Jeremiah 23: 1-6; Psalm 22(23); Eph 2: 13-18; Mark 6: 30-34)

Chris Oliver



Kitchen Makeover Update

IT'S FINISHED. At last the kitchen is fully functional and I am pleased to say it had its first use by the Brownies last Wednesday evening.

It seems such a long time ago that we emptied the storeroom and kitchen, demolished the old kitchen, knocked down the wall to make the kitchen bigger, took all the debris to the recycling centre, built a new wall, installed new efficient lighting, arranged for the plastering and flooring, rewired the electrics for the new layout, painted the walls door and ceiling, did the plumbing and installed the new equipment and cooker and finally replacing all the

crockery and utensils etc. and so many other jobs and details to many to list, all to make the fine looking up to date and efficient kitchen we now have. Few; what a lot of hard work that was. So now there is only one thing left to say and that is a great big

THANK YOU to everyone who have

helped and offered to help and have given so much time and put in so much effort in so many ways and especially for putting up with me as project manager.

Cliff Snelling

Job Vacancy: Diocesan Finance Supervisor –Bishop's House, Northampton. Full Time 40 hours per week: Start date: As soon as possible.

We are currently recruiting for a Diocesan Finance Supervisor to provide support to the Diocesan Accounts Manager and Chief Operating Officer on delivering the financial functions at Diocesan level and in our parishes. Full information for the position, detailing the specific experience and skills required can be found by visiting <https://northamptondiocese.org/jobs/> or via email hadmin@northamptondiocese.com. Applications should include our application form, CV and a covering letter. The closing date for applications will be Friday 23rd July 2021 and interviews will take place w/c 26th July 2021

SECOND COLLECTIONS 2021



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