



# 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

## The Bread of Angels

The second week of the reading of the discourse on the Bread of Life is coupled with the story of the giving of Manna in the desert; Manna which the psalm describes as the ‘Bread of Angels’.

Before going further into today’s readings, it is worth noticing that we have left out the account of Jesus walking on the water. (*John 6:16-21*) We read this account in St Matthew’s Gospel in lectionary Year A.

[We read the Gospels on a three-year cycle, designated years A, B and C, reading from Matthew in year A, Mark and John in year B and Luke in year C.]

Although this account is omitted, it is significant in the sequence. Last week we were told that the feeding of the 5,000 took place ‘shortly before the Passover’. Within the Passover story, the crossing of the Red Sea is crucial, and the crossing of the Sea of Galilee reminds us of that escape of the Israelites from Egypt. We need to keep the context of the Passover in mind as we continue with the Gospel reading.

Our first reading about the Manna tells of events after the crossing of the Red Sea. While still in Egypt, the Israelites had sufficient food, but once across the sea, they were entering the desert. The people complained to Moses; they said they would have preferred to die in Egypt, where at least they had food. In fact, Moses had to deal with the complaints of the people throughout the journeying towards the promised land.

The Psalm is a meditation on the events of the Passover, and has a very important preface: “The things we have heard and understood, the things our fathers have told us, these we will not hide from their children but will tell them to the next generation: the glories of the LORD and his might, and the marvellous deeds he has done. He established a decree in Jacob; in Israel he set up a law. To our fathers he gave a command to make it known to their children, that the next generation might know it, the children yet to be born. They should arise and declare it to their children, that they should set their hope in God, and never forget God’s deeds, but keep every one of his commands.” (*Psalm 78:3-7 or Psalm 77:3-7*)

The instruction to ‘teach your children’ was fundamental to Jewish life, and ought to be for us as well. It is clearest in the passage known as the ‘Shema’ “Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” (*Deuteronomy 6:4-9*)

Just as the Jewish people are instructed to teach their children, so within the Christian tradition, parents are the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith (*Prayer in the Baptism Liturgy*).

To return to the Psalm, Manna is recognised as a gift from God, and described as the ‘bread of angels’. St Thomas Aquinas was to take up that phrase in his great Eucharistic Hymn *Lauda Sion*: “Lo, the bread of angels is made food for pilgrims”

Manna, of course, was food for the body. In the second reading St Paul speaks of a ‘spiritual revolution’ and Jesus points to this when he observes that the people are only looking for bread to feed physical hunger. The climax of our Gospel passage today is the proclamation by Jesus that he is the ‘bread of life’. It is Jesus whom the people should be seeking, not free bread.

The Gospel acclamation points us in the right direction with the response that Jesus gives to Satan at his temptation: “Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (*Matthew 4:4 quoting Deuteronomy 8:3*). John has already told us that Jesus himself is the Word made flesh (*John 1:14*), so all of this is pointing us to the person of Jesus himself.

When Jesus at the Last Supper said of the Passover bread that “This is my body” (*Mark 14:22*), he was giving us the pattern for the Eucharist. We continue to keep this important association with the Passover by using unleavened bread for Mass rather than any sort of bread that has risen, and, of course, recognise Jesus as the Passover Lamb.

Jesus continually invites us to come to him, and when he says that those who do will never be hungry, we should read this together with Jesus teaching on the mountainside: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (*Matthew 5:6*).

We recognise Jesus truly present in the Eucharist and hear the words of St Martha: “The master is here and is calling you” (*John 11:28*)



# Notices of Interest

**Bible Alive** for 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 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 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: 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.

**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 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 and presentation in early August. Please contact Fr David for further information: [frdaviddonaghue@northamptondiocese.org](mailto:frdaviddonaghue@northamptondiocese.org)

**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.

**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 and personal hygiene products. We aim to add 2 items to each bag and 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, and continue to pray for this work. Many Thanks, Gregory Care

**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 that from Sun. 25<sup>th</sup> July we will be able to have singing by the congregation, supported by the choir. BUT no MASK = NO SING, & the 1m-plus spacing rule still applies. On that Sunday we will use the Missal Mass setting, including the Gloria which is sung as a duet between Choir & Congregation. Once Power Point presentations have been devised (thanks Rev Michael), the congregation will be able to join in singing hymns. The choir will have their first monthly practice on Thurs. 5 Aug; there will be lots to get through. The next practice will be 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept, just before the feast of St Gregory on 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Anniversary of the Dedication of our Church is the Sunday following. New members welcome to join us to improve the contribution the choir make in serving and praising the Lord. *Alec*

**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](mailto:northampton.admin@streetpastors.org.uk)

**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**

# Scripture Readings 1st August 2021, 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Exodus, the second of the five books of the Law, tells of Moses leading the Israelites through the desert to the promised land, a collection of slaves becoming a people, developing culture and laws. Above all coming to recognise and worship the God who saved them as the one God. They often rebelled and murmured against Moses. But God fed them in the desert with quails and manna – 'daily, or tomorrow's bread'.

The Psalm reminds us of the importance of handing down to later generations the traditions of God's dealings with his people.

Paul continues reminding the Ephesians of the new rules they must live by. Not overturning the rules in Exodus, but demanding more and deeper conformity to Jesus' way. We have to put aside our old self which – as Paul knows very well – so easily "gets corrupted by

following illusory desires". We must "put on the new self that has been created in God's way".

In chapter 6 of John's Gospel, after Jesus fed five thousand, he starts to explain the meaning of this miracle. Jesus feeds us, just as God fed the Israelites in the wilderness. Gently Jesus corrects the Jews' understanding of Exodus: It was not "Moses who gave" but Jesus' "Father who gives the bread from heaven" – now and always.

Psalm Response: **The Lord gave them bread from heaven.**

(Exodus 16: 2-4, 12-15; Psalm 77(78); Eph 4: 17, 20-24; John 6: 24-35

Chris Oliver

## Hall cleaning progress and use.

**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

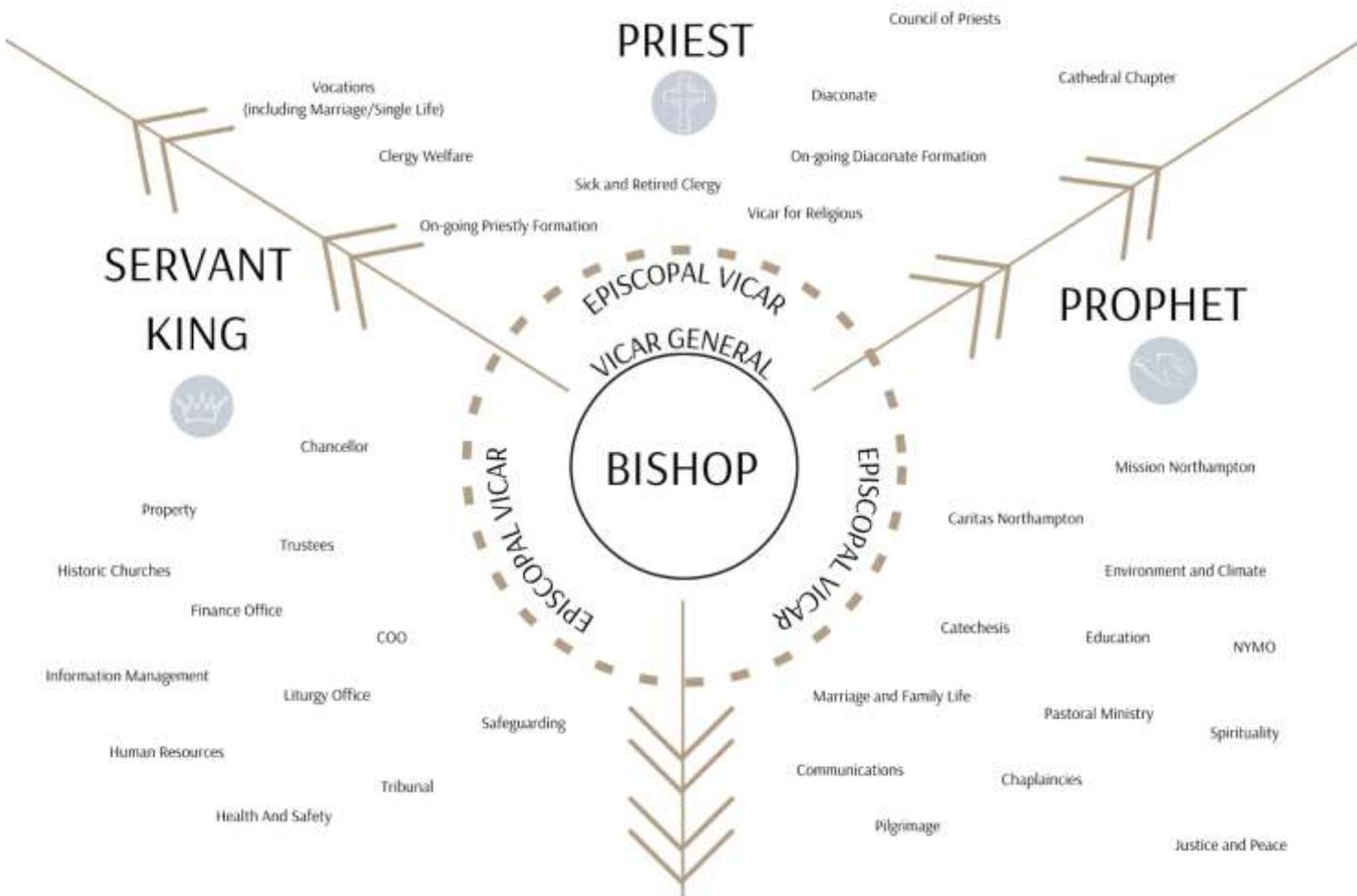
refreshment in the hall after the 9.00 am Mass, prepared in the newly-completed kitchen.

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

## Diocesan Framework

Bishop David has established a new framework for the working of the administration of the Diocese, based on the person of Jesus, as Priest, Prophet and King. (See the *Catechism of the Catholic*

*Church §436*) All of this is outward-pointing, that is to say, it is mission-oriented, directing the entire diocese towards the task of evangelisation, whether directly or indirectly.



## 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>