



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

Hearts on fire; Feet on the Move

This is the theme that Pope Francis has chosen for this year's World Mission Day, and it is drawn from the encounter that Cleopas and his companion had on their way to and at Emmaus on the first Easter evening. (See *Luke 24:13-35*) “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” (*Verse 32*)

These two described the experience of ‘hearts on fire’. We may be lulled into thinking that this was a one-off experience; something specific to the evening of the first Easter Day. We need to read this in the context of the early Church, in which it was written and to whom it was first addressed.

The word ‘Mass’ had not yet come into usage in the Christian community; the phrase that was used to describe what we now call Mass was ‘The Breaking of Bread’, drawn from the instruction given by Jesus at the Last Supper: “Do this in memory of me”. So we listen again to the words in Luke’s Gospel: “He was known to them in the breaking of the bread.” (*Verse 35*) It would be a mistake to limit this experience simply to the evening meal at Emmaus, and the Church has understood that at every ‘Breaking of Bread’, Jesus is made known to us; that Jesus is really and truly present in the Eucharist. St Paul is even stronger in how he puts it: “For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgement on himself”. (*1 Corinthians 11:29*)

The presence of Jesus in the ‘Breaking of Bread’ is not limited to his presence in the Eucharistic Bread, the Blessed Sacrament, and just as on that first Easter Day, before the action of taking bread and blessing it, breaking it and sharing it, done by Jesus at Emmaus, they had listened to him explaining the Scriptures on their journey. So we too, before the bread is brought to the Altar, hear the Scriptures read and hear an explanation of what they mean to us. Do our hearts burn within us as we hear the words of Scripture? Those who proclaim the Word of God have a duty to do it in such a way that they can be heard and understood, as does the preacher, but the burning is kindled by something else.

Jesus had already said: “I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!” (*Luke 12:49*) The lasting source of the fire was to come at Pentecost when “tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.” (*Acts 2:3*) The Apostles, then went out to boldly proclaim the Good News to peoples of every language and nation in Jerusalem.

It is the Holy Spirit in our hearts that makes them burn — not a medical heartburn but a spiritual one. We often sing at Pentecost:

“O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing”

From “*Come down, O Love Divine*”

“Hearts on Fire” is a description of a person filled with the Holy Spirit, which should mean ‘all faithful Christians’. The sad truth is that for all of us, we can go through a time of luke-warmness. If that is so, we should heed the words of the Apocalypse: “I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.” (*Revelation 3:15-16*) Advice is given: “I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.” (*Revelation 3:18*)

The gold refined by fire refers to words in the prophesy of Malachi: “he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver” (*Malachi 3:3*), and the white garment speaks of the Baptismal Robe given to all the newly-Baptised; their Wedding Garment as they share in the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. The eye-salve refers to Tobit whose sight was restored by Raphael. (*Tobit 11:7-15*)

All of this is encouraging us to seek a renewal of faith, and to have the Holy Spirit burning more strongly in our hearts and lives. It is the Holy Spirit that spurs us on to action.

Before a steam engine can get to work, the fire must be lit, but action is not immediate. The water in the boiler must come up to temperature before the wheels can start to turn. So too for us. The Holy Spirit may begin as a small flame, but it has to warm us up into action. For Cleopas and his companion, this was immediate, so too for the Apostles at Pentecost, but for us, it can be a slower process.

“Feet on the Move” speaks to us of those missionaries who have made great journeys to proclaim the Gospel, and the work of ‘Missio’, for whom we pray and who we support financially today is the Church’s main agency for evangelisation in foreign countries. But the call to mission is not just to places overseas, it is to the whole world, and so the call is not just to support foreign missions financially and by prayer; it is also a call to be engaged in the mission of the Church at home.

These are not competing claims on our time, our prayers or our money, they are complimentary. Behind it is the Church’s call for all Christians to be Missionary Disciples. If we have a truly missionary heart, we will not be satisfied with just supporting foreign missions and having no regard for evangelisation in our own locality, and equally, if we are enthusiastic evangelists, we will also have a concern for those who are evangelising in other places.

None of us can ignore the call of Jesus to “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.” (*Mark 16:15*)

May the Holy Spirit burn brightly in the heart of each one of us that our hearts may be on fire and that we be active in the proclamation of the Gospel here, and supportive of the proclamation of the Gospel through the work of ‘Missio’.

Notices of Interest

Car Park Safety: Neither the Parish nor the Diocese are responsible for the safety of persons (adults or children), cars or their contents while in the car-park.

Repository: The Repository is open after every Sunday Mass wherever possible! We 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.

Bible Alive for October & November is now available - only £3.00! If you wish to purchase a copy, they are in the narthex as you come into church.

Thursday Holy Hour & Adoration: Holy Hour remains as Holy Two Hours, from 9am until 11am. It is important that at least two people are present throughout the time of adoration.

Tots @ St Gregory's: St Greg's Tiny Tots runs each Tuesday in term time from 9:30-11:30 in the church hall. We charge £1 per group which includes snacks & coffee! If you have care of a pre-school child, please join us!!

Choir Notes: Yesterday we had our first Saturday morning practice. Next one will be 4 Nov when the focus will be on Christmas music.
Alec

Catholic Youth Ministry Internships: Castlerigg Manor (The Lancaster Diocese Retreat Centre) is looking for young Catholics aged 18-25 to join their Youth Ministry Internship Programme. The scheme gives participants wide ranging experience, skills, training, and qualifications as well as the opportunity to work with a fantastic team based in the English Lake District. For more information contact director@castleriggmanor.co.uk

Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group continues to pray together online via Skype and by telephone and on the first Saturday of the month, here in the Church, from 10am-12pm.

URGENT NOTE ON FINANCES If you have transferred to standing orders and pay income tax please contact Fr Andrew (preferably by email) so that the Gift Aid can be linked to your donation. Claims can only be made for up to three years, so there is some urgency about this.

Fewer Electrical Hazards: There are still a few small jobs needing to be done, but mostly we have put right things that were required. Part of safeguarding is to ensure that in every respect the church is as safe as possible for all who come here.

Fire Safety — Important notice. We have had trays made to go under the racks where candles burn to prevent the possibility of a naked flame falling on unlit candles below. Unlit candles **must not** be placed on these trays & must not be stacked one on top of another.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday evening, 6th Nov. at 7pm. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book a place.

First Holy Communion 2023: Enrolment for 2024 will be Sunday 8th Oct. after the 11am Mass. There will be a welcome to the children who are registered & their parents at the 11am Mass on Sunday 5th Nov. All sessions will be on Saturday afternoons at Sacred Heart, Weston Favell. Details, dates, times will be available at registration. Please see the separate article on the way the programme works.

Confirmation in 2023: Confirmation sessions have resumed, and those enrolled should have received an email with details.

Food Parcels: Please contact Gregory Care (07434 669011) if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel.

Alpha in the Autumn: Alpha is now running weekly on-line, Tuesday evenings. For more info visit www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha

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)**

Refreshment Donations:

Below is the schedule for refreshment donations through the year:

From the first Sunday in Advent	The Hope Centre
to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:	
From the Second Sunday in ordinary time	Gregory Care
to the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday:	
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

Helpers Needed to clean the Church on the last Saturday of every month, (so, 28th October) after the morning Mass. All welcome, especially the younger, more energetic ones!

Missio Matters: Anyone wishing to become a supporter of missionary work over the year – no matter how small the donation – should contact Dorothy (9) or Alec (11) after Mass or phone/email: 01604 622153 a.unsworth@ntlworld.com.

Thomas Becket School are hoping to achieve the 'Live Simply Award' from CAFOD. The three strands of this award come under the headings of 'living simply', 'in solidarity' and 'sustainably'. Everything they do will be founded in prayer. This has led a group of students to identify a small area of the school to create a small garden of reflection and prayer and another area at the front of the school to create planters to make the environment more beautiful to welcome everyone to the school. They are appealing to the parishes to join with them in their first project by donating a bag of bulbs or if possible, some gardening expertise to assist them. The bulb planting will take place in November when every member of Thomas Becket Community will plant one bulb each.

An Advent Journey with John the Baptist: 4 Monday evenings, 7.30-8.30pm, from 27th Nov, with Fr John Udris & Avril Baigent. Available on YouTube so does not require zoom & can be played via smart TVs. Here is last year's series to give a flavour of what to expect:

https://pastoralministryoffice.org/walking_by_starlight-2/

Mission Prayer

Heavenly Father
it is your will that we should make disciples of all nations.
We ask you to bless the mission of our Diocese of Northampton
and guide our hearts and minds
so that your will might be done
and your kingdom be build up here on earth.
We pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit,
without which our work is in vain,
and we entrust ourselves to your beloved Son,
for we know that he is with us for all time, now and for ever.
Amen

Prayer 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

22nd October 2023, 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

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 Amelekites 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

Lumen Gentium — The Light of the Nations

Lumen Gentium is a much longer document than either of the two that we have already considered, and relates to the very nature of the Church. Significantly for today, World Mission Sunday, it has much to say about the missionary activity of the Church and the call to evangelisation.

It begins by recognising the foundation of the Church by Jesus himself; the call of the Apostles, the teachings of Jesus, his passion, death and resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Bible contains many images of the Church; a sheepfold and a flock, cared for by the Good Shepherd; a vineyard cared for by the heavenly vine-dresser; the building which has Christ as the cornerstone, build on the foundation of the apostles, and in which we are called to be living stones.

The Church is also called the "Jerusalem which is above" and our "Mother". At this time of renewed fighting in the Holy Land, this understanding of the Church must inform our prayer for peace in the earthly Jerusalem and its country.

The second chapter goes more deeply into the make-up of the Church; the People of God. While recognising that "anyone who fears God and does what is right has been acceptable to him" it notes that from the story of Noah, from the call of Abraham, from the exodus after slavery in Egypt and throughout the Old Testament, God wished to save people not as "individuals without any bond or link between them, but rather, to make them into a people who might acknowledge him and serve him in holiness".

The call to personal holiness cokes up in detail in chapter 5, and is of vital importance to us and the Church in every age. Chapters 3 and 4 deal with the people of the Church and the nature of the 'hierarchy' of the Church. The process of 'synodality' which is taking place at present is the further working out of how the clergy and lay-people co-operate in fulfilling God's plan. In all of this, it is vital that the voice of the Holy Spirit is heard and obeyed.

Chapter 6 considers how the consecrated life through vows in the various religious orders enriches the Church and supports the increase in holiness of the entire Church.

The seventh chapter is entitled 'The Pilgrim Church' which, through holiness and virtue is journeying towards heaven where the Church in its fullness already exists in the presence of God. In the celebration of Mass we are given a foretaste of heaven, and as pilgrims, both individually and collectively, we must keep the vision of heaven as our ultimate destination. This reflects back to the universal call to holiness of chapter 5.

The final chapter is on Our Lady. Originally it was planned to produce a separate document on the role of Mary, but the Council was determined that Mary cannot be separated from the Church. On the same day as Lumen Gentium was approved by the Council, Pope Paul VI proclaimed 'Mother of the Church' as an official description of Our Lady. As a loving mother, Mary wishes the best for all her children and the ultimate salvation of all people.

Preparation for First Holy Communion — Growing Up Catholic

We have now completed the enrolment process, and the number enrolled is the greatest it has been since we started doing the preparation in the parishes rather than in the schools. Our course for this year is completely full, which is a matter for rejoicing. **Therefore there can be no more enrolments.**

However, it is also a matter for regret since late-comers will have to be asked to wait until next year. As it is, the room will be very crowded, and we have to comply with the health and safety regulations.

If the trend continues, we will need to run two parallel sessions next year, but to be able to do this, we will need many more helpers. Anyone who would like to join the team will be very welcome, there is no need for previous experience or any particular knowledge; all that is needed is a love for Jesus, a love for the Church and a willingness to work with children and their parents. This year all sessions are on Saturday afternoons and are held at Sacred Heart church near the Weston Favell shopping centre, but if next year we

need to run parallel sessions, a decision will need to be made about when and where that would be. All helpers and leaders are required to have DBS clearance

A key part of our preparation is that parents/carers have a vital role in the process. They cannot just drop off their child and go shopping! The Baptism Rite calls parents the 'first teachers of their child in the ways of faith', and the Second Vatican Council restated the traditional teaching of the Church that it is the parents who have the primary responsibility for the Christian education of their children. "The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute" (*Vatican II Gravissimum Educationis* §3)

[DBS is the 'Disclosure and Barring Service', a government body which helps Voluntary Sector organisations to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain types of work, especially involving children or vulnerable adults through access to criminal record information.]