



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

How lovely is your dwelling-place

Fifty years after the opening of the church, on 3rd September 2004 Bishop Leo McCartie came for the solemn consecration of St Gregory’s. It represented the beginning of a new era in the life of the parish.

It is sometimes wondered why the church was not consecrated when it was first opened. The reason for this is that consecration means a permanent setting aside for the purposes of God, and this cannot be done while there is a debt on the building. Since most parishes incur a debt when building a new church, it is usual to delay the consecration until the debt is paid off. Although St Gregory’s could have been consecrated earlier, the golden jubilee was a good occasion for this to take place.

It came at a significant time in the life of the Catholic Church in this country. The following week (*September 12th 2004*) in our newsletter was a piece about the establishment of the Catholic Agency to Support Evangelisation “A dynamic new agency has been launched by the Bishops of England and Wales to support and resource the Catholic community to share the Good News of Jesus Christ where they live and work.”



This has developed over the years, and our parish has been involved in the work of evangelisation. When Maria Heath came to work with us, her main focus was to be in evangelisation, and during that time the Catholic Church has laid increasing emphasis on the importance of this. The “Divine Renovation” principles represent a way in which this is put into practice in parishes, such that we are no longer worrying so much about fewer priests but more about sharing the Gospel with more people. In this way, the Church will grow and God will supply all that we need, including priests.

The psalm which is quoted in the headline of this piece speaks of the loveliness of God’s house, and we should be careful not to limit this understand of ‘dwelling-place’ to the building, just as we must not confine our understanding of ‘church’ to the building. Indeed, through the Holy Spirit, God’s ‘dwelling-place’ is in our hearts and lives. “They are happy, who dwell in your house, for ever singing your praise.” (*Psalm 83:5*) The ‘dwelling in your house’ speaks of being part of the community of faith; not actually living in the church!

The ‘loveliness’ of which the psalm speaks is not therefore to do with the physical or artistic beauty of the building or its contents. It is to do with the beauty of the lives of the people of faith. St Teresa of Calcutta is quoted as telling people to “do something beautiful for God”. It is in this that the ‘loveliness’ of Christian life is to be found.

The crosses which are etched into the wall of the building speak to us of the pain and suffering of the world, and that they are anointed in the consecration of the church reminds us of the Good Samaritan who poured oil onto the



wounds of the man who had been robbed. (*Luke 10:34*) This in turn reminds us of Jesus’ final instruction to the lawyer whose question: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” caused Jesus to tell the parable. Jesus told him to “go and do likewise”. (*Luke 10:37*) We too are told to “go and do likewise”. In our support for CAFOD, for the Hope Centre and the Cathedral Foodstore, we are trying to obey



this, and in the coming weeks we will also be asked to support refugees from Afghanistan.

In this way we keep the light burning in front of the consecration crosses in our church.

Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for 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 morning & 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 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: 1st October; feast of St Thérèse of Lisieux! The Confirmation will be at St Gregory's.

Mission Northampton: Mission Northampton is based at the St Thomas Centre at Northampton Cathedral, but is a town-wide project involving all the parishes & Catholic schools in the town. If you are interested in being part of this new initiative he would like to hear from you. Please contact Fr David for further information: frdavidonaghue@northamptondiocese.org

News from the Foodstore! We as a parish continue 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 continue our commitment to provide household & personal hygiene products. We aim to add 2 items to each bag & there are approximately 80 bags sent out each week. At the moment we have very little in reserve. (Except baby products.) Please donate what you can, & continue to pray for this work. Many Thanks, Gregory Care.

Choir Matters: Our next monthly choir practice will be 2 Sep - Feast of St Gregory, Friday 3rd. *Alec*

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

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

Tots @ St Gregory's: Tuesday September 7th is our definite start date! We will be in the church hall from 9:30 – 11:30 each school week Tuesday starting from 7th! If you have care of a baby or pre-school child on Tuesday mornings why not join our very friendly and fun group? We only charge £1 for an adult and however many children they bring and this includes snack and all activities!

Vianney Mission Prayer Group will not meet during this time.

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. There are two sessions left:

1 September 7th Prayer and the Life of the Spirit

2 September 14th The Last Things

please email to Fr Andrew for the Zoom link

Zoom course on the Mass: When the present 'Catholicism' course ends, on Tuesday evenings there will be the Alpha course on Tuesdays, but on Mondays there will be a course entitled "A Biblical Walk through the Mass". There are four sessions: Mondays, 20th and 27th September and 4th and 11th October, starting at 7.30 pm. Please email to Fr Andrew for the Zoom link

Courses for Readers: There will be a course for readers on Zoom starting on Wednesday 22nd September, and following that the Bible Timeline course will start on Zoom on Wednesday evenings, beginning at 7.30 pm. All are welcome, but those who proclaim the Scriptures at Mass are particularly encouraged to take part.

Pastoral Ministry Office Refresh Webinars: Monday 6th September, 7-8 pm. How can we start thinking about bringing back people to our churches, and making our welcome as good as it can be? Join Fr Nicholas King, biblical translator and scholar, who will be sharing stories of welcome from St Luke's Gospel. To register, go to <https://refresh.renew.eventbrite.co.uk>. You'll find lots of other resources to refresh your ministry here: <https://pastoralministryoffice.org/refresh/>.

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.

First session: 21st September 2021: Is there more to life than this?
Second Session: 28th September 2021 Who is Jesus?
Third Session: 5th October 2021 Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session 12th October 2021 How can I be sure of my faith?
Fifth Session 19th October 2021 Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session 9th November 2021 How does God guide us?
Seventh Session 16th November 2021 Why and how should I read the Bible?
Away-Day 19th -20th November 2021 Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session 23rd November 2021 How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session 30th November 2021 Why and how should we tell others?
Tenth Session 7th December 2021 What about the Church?
Eleventh Session 14th December 2021 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 as potential converts and those who simply want to know more about our faith. There is no charge, but donations are cheerfully accepted.

During the 40 hours

As well as the times of Mass which are advertised elsewhere in this newsletter, Morning Prayer will be said on Friday and Saturday at 8.00 am, and Evening Prayer at 6.00 pm. Night prayer will be said on Friday at 9.00 pm, and on Saturday after the final Mass. The words of this will be available in a booklet for anyone who would like to take part. There will also be a time of adoration with the content and style particularly suitable for children (and a parent or carer) on Saturday between 11.00 am and 12 noon. No one needs to stay for the whole hour and they can pop in at any point in that hour for as long as wanted. The hour will include prayer and song, stories and maybe even drawing a picture for Jesus! This is a great opportunity for children. There is also a time of praise worship for about half-an-hour before the 10.00 pm Mass on Saturday. To sign up to come and pray during the 40 hours please see: <https://signup.com/go/PPozmCH>

Anniversary of the Consecration of the Church

Ezekiel was deported to Babylon with the Jews in 598 BC. He explained the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple as God's punishment for his people, and predicted a new day and a new temple for Israel. Today we hear about the extensive supply of life-giving water that will pour from this new temple, the source of God's blessing. An ample supply of water would obviously be an enormous benefit in this dry land, and even make the Dead Sea fresh enough for fish.

The psalm is a hymn of victory: we trust in the Lord, he will protect us in his city.

The Jews believed God dwelt in the temple in Jerusalem. But, writing from Ephesus around AD 54, Paul tells the Corinthians that "you are God's sanctuary" since "God's Spirit dwells in you". They are being built into "God's holy temple". They should stop quarrelling among themselves and be a community united in loving

service. Sowing dissension damages God's temple and will be punished.

Near the beginning of John's gospel, after the disciples are chosen and the marriage at Cana, Jesus proclaims his mission by cleansing the Jerusalem temple. The temple had become a business, in which those in religious authority profited from the spiritual needs of the people. His Father's house should not be misused: trade and power have no place in it.

Psalm Response: **The waters of a river give joy to God's city, the holy place where the Most High dwells.**

(Ezek 47:1-2, 8-9, 12; Ps 45(46):2-3,5-6,8-9; 1 Cor 3:9-11, 16-17; Jn 2:13-22)

Chris Oliver

Refreshments after 9.00 Mass on Sundays and Wednesdays

Elsewhere in this newsletter is an invitation to join a webinar when Fr Nicholas King will speak about the stories of welcome in the Gospel of Luke (*see Pastoral Ministry Office Refresh Webinars*). The sharing of a meal is an important part of welcome, and Our Lady's Magnificat points to this when she says that "he has filled the hungry with good things". Later, when Peter's mother-in-law is healed, she immediately get up to wait on Jesus and the disciples. Matthew gives a banquet in Jesus' honour, and Jesus feeds five thousand. The theme continues to the Last Supper and after the

resurrection it is at a meal that he is known to the disciples at Emmaus.

The word 'companion' means 'one with whom we share bread', and as companions, as well as sharing the 'Bread of Life' at Mass, we can also share in refreshments after Mass. While we remain careful not to risk infection, the invitation is there for any who wish to meet in the hall after 9.00 Mass on Sundays and Wednesdays

What do you want me to do, Lord? (as promised: more this week)

If Apostolic Discipleship is to be the theme for the parish when we eventually come out of the pandemic, we must, like good scouts, 'be prepared'.

Last week we saw some of the ways in which this apostolic discipleship can be made practical, and a summary of them is listed below. However, this is far from exhaustive, and there are many other ways in which the discipleship can be exercised. Again, these do not cover the entire field of God's plan, and the hope is that during the 40 hours prayer this week, everyone will be asking God to reveal to them the way in which He is calling you to service

Liturgy and Worship

The ministry of welcome.

The proclamation of the Scriptures during Mass.

Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist at Mass.

Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist to take the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and housebound. (Those who take the Blessed Sacrament to the housebound need to have a DBS clearance as part of the Church's safeguarding procedures.)

Leaders and helpers of the Liturgy of the Word for children in the hall (commonly called 'Children's Liturgy') (also needing to be DBS cleared).

Evangelisation

Our primary means of evangelisation is the Alpha course, and the team running this is always seeking more helpers. However, to understand how the course runs, it is really helpful to have done the course as a participant before joining the team. We have a course beginning on Tuesday September 21st at 7.30 pm, and you can make

a significant contribution by coming yourself and bringing someone with you. Please remember that the evening starts with a meal (not a snack), so don't eat before you come! Fr David Donaghue, who is leading 'Mission Northampton' will be part of this Alpha group, and he will have other ways in which you might be able to help the evangelisation ministry of the Church in the town.

Care of our Common Home

We are very aware of the way in which the climate is changing, and how we all need to be conscious of our 'carbon footprint'. Through CAFOD we can become more active in the care of our planet.

Support for the Needy

Through 'Gregory Care' we seek to help those in material need in our parish, and through co-operation with other parishes, principally the Cathedral, we extend that support to the town. The need for this is growing, and with the expected arrival of refugees from Afghanistan, will grow even more. At present there are very few people actively involved in this work.

Stella Maris (formally Apostleship of the Sea) is now represented by Bob Maine, Missio is now represented by Alec Unsworth and Dorothy Pallett. The Life House (in our parish) is represented by Kathleen Fisher and Marcelle Brown. Aideen Fogarty represents the parish for Justice and Peace matters. Help may be appreciated.

Care of our building

Mike Gibson and Cliff Snelling look after Health and Safety in the church and hall and (with Tom Nicholson) deal with minor repairs, but additional help when work has to be done is welcome.

Please use the 40 Hours prayer time to ask God what he wants you to do. He has created you for a purpose!

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