



# 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

# Post-Covid

On Saturday 20th March over eighty members of the pastoral area councils of the Diocese met on zoom to reflect and gather to seek God’s way forward for our local areas.

Bishop David focussed on two key themes, ‘**Vision and process**’. He stated clearly his desire for every area of our diocese to be steeped in prayer that leads to mission in our evangelistic efforts and our solidarity with those on the fringes.

He began by thanking the councils for all their ministries throughout the last twelve months, recognising that many of us have gone beyond our comfort zone with “*creativity and imagination*”.

For anyone who has not heard Bishop David speak, the vision that he shared is very clear. He summed it up to the councils in this way, “*For years we have been hearing about two models of being Church, mission or maintenance. It is increasingly clear, this is a false choice. We are not maintaining the numbers we have been used to. There is only one option, and that is mission*”.

To support our mission Bishop David announced the beginning of two new diocesan agencies; **Caritas Northampton** and **Mission Northampton**. These two agencies will spearhead the work of our councils across our two diocesan priorities of evangelisation and social outreach.

## Caritas Northampton

Many other dioceses have Caritas departments, and are linked to the Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN), which is an agency of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales. Their purpose is to animate and co-ordinate the network of social action charities and dioceses, working in collaboration with them to help poor, vulnerable and marginalised people find their voice and to enable them to improve their lives.

CSAN is a national member of the [Caritas Internationalis confederation](#) within the [Caritas Europa](#) group. England and Wales have two distinct Caritas national members: the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development ([CAFOD](#)), and CSAN for domestic social action.

## Mission Northampton

Our ‘Vision Statement’ speaks of us aspiring to be a ‘thriving’ church, and thriving implies growing. A baby that is not growing would not be described as ‘thriving’! We will only grow if we engage in mission, and this has been at the heart of our parish life for many years now.

Covid has given us a chance to re-set a number of our parish activities, and in some of them we have found that within the disaster that the pandemic has been, there have been also some opportunities. Psalm 84 speaks of those who go through the ‘bitter valley’ on their pilgrimage to Jerusalem find even in the bitterness some blessings. We too can find blessings in this time of hardship.

One of the greatest blessings has been in the work of the stewards, without whom we would have not been allowed to have the church open at all. They have, as well as performing their duty in maintaining a COVID-secure environment, offered a warm welcome to all, both regular parishioners and visitors, and many have commented in appreciation of the friendly reception that they have received at the door. It would be wonderful if a ‘welcome-team’ could keep this ministry going when the restrictions end.

An expression that has become important in the understanding of the mission of the Church is ‘invitational discipleship’. When we invite people to our church, we want them to feel ‘at home’, and the ministry of welcome in the first step in this. The welcome at the door is not the whole story; the person on the same pew can also be friendly and encouraging — the ministry of welcome extends way beyond just what happens in the narthex, but what happens there is vital.

We have completed last week our first on-line Alpha course, and while we have missed the ‘in-person’ meeting with people, (and the meal!), it has been a good experience for many, and it has been requested that we repeat this even after the end of restrictions, as well as running the traditional format Alpha course. Here is a wonderful and easy way in which we can all be invitational disciples — invite someone to come with us to an Alpha course. The next one will be (restrictions permitting) in the Autumn, and then on-line early in the New Year.



# Notices of Interest

**Bible Alive** for Easter & May is now available. The cost is £3.00. If you want to purchase a copy, they are near the hand-sanitiser in the narthex as you come into church.

**Repository:** If you wish to buy anything, please come to the Church between 9 and 10am & speak to a Steward who will show you what to do & where to go.

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

**Baptism Preparation:** Please note that you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

**First Holy Communion 2021:** The programme is running through 'Loom', an on line platform used by many schools. Parents need to 'home-school' children. The programme is called "Growing Up Catholic", and there are 6 sessions preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, followed by six sessions preparing for First Holy Communion.

**Confirmation:** At last we have a date: 1<sup>st</sup> October; feast of St Thérèse of Lisieux!

**Re-Envisioning Catechesis:** The Church has recently produced a new version of the "Directory for Catechesis", which makes clear the link between evangelisation & the teaching of the Faith. One fruit of this is that the diocesan department for catechesis has been moved from NORES to the new department for Mission. To help those engaged in Sacramental preparation, there will be an on line course over 5 consecutive Thursday evenings, starting 17<sup>th</sup> June 7.30 pm (ending at 8.45 pm) on Zoom. If anyone would like to take part, please let Fr Andrew know (by email, please), and the parish will make the booking.

**Gregory Care Toiletries Collection:** Your generosity is very much appreciated. The toiletries and hygiene products you provide, not only support people by helping to maintain a hygiene standard that is a basic need dignity, self worth and confidence; fundamental for good mental health. Although this all started during the pandemic which at last seems to be coming more under control there are still many families living in real hardship. When we report - 90 bags being delivered that equates to hundreds of people, while it is true we pack food parcels for some single people most are for families some with nine members. God has given us many different gifts and talents some of us have the means to donate items, some may have creative ideas of how we could raise money for this endeavour or secure some kind of sponsorship towards this project (if this is you, please let us know!) One way we can all be supportive and part of this effort is through prayer for the ongoing success of the food bank and all those it serves. Please Pray

**Thanks from MISSIO:** Fr Tony Chantry, Missio National Director writes: "Thank-you! It is with gratitude that I acknowledge how, by your prayers throughout 2020, you have continued to care for our global family, and for the missionaries who serve them. Through your parish's Rex Boxes, and individuals giving to the Ted Box directly, St Gregory the Great raised £709.22 in 2020."

## **Pru Hill RIP**

Pru's funeral Mass will be on Wednesday June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11.00 am. Pru was a tireless supporter of (amongst other things) the Red Box appeal for Missio. They have sent this appreciation of her:

All at Missio would like to express our sincere condolences on the passing of our dear supporter Pru Hill. As a promoter of over 9 years, Pru answered the call to share the Gospel through her actions and in her work in supporting the young & poor Church through the Red Box. Mass is offered each day for our deceased supporters in Lisieux where St Thérèse, the Patroness of Mission, is buried. Pru will also be remembered at our Masses here in our Missio chapel.

**The Summer webinar series** Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30pm.

Diocesan Summer Webinar: Divine Renovation week 4, *Transforming our parish culture*. An evening of inspiration and practical ideas as we look to the future of our parishes. With internationally renowned worship leader and musician Jo Boyce of CJM music. You can find out more and register here: [https://readalong\\_divine\\_renovation.eventbrite.co.uk](https://readalong_divine_renovation.eventbrite.co.uk).

**CAFOD:** As coronavirus brings devastation across India, CAFOD is working with local Church agency, Caritas India, to provide vital support to poor communities. Already £200,000 has been pledged. This is helping to distribute PPE kits to frontline health workers, promote COVID & vaccine awareness campaigns, & set up safely run isolation & quarantine centres. You can donate online here: [cafod.org.uk/give](https://cafod.org.uk/give). Please pray for the people of India & all those affected by the pandemic.

**Lifeteen Summer Camp 2021:** From Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> July, 3pm to Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August till 2pm. Cost £225.00 for camping (provide own tent), £275.00 for dormitory, £50.00 for online camp. You will be required to pay a £50.00 non-refundable deposit when booking, final payment due by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Alton Castle, Staffordshire (transport will NOT be provided). Summer Camp is 5 days of fun and activities where young Catholics gain formation and friendships. Included in the price is accommodation, all food, daily Mass and Reconciliation, all activities including a day at Alton Towers Theme Park, biking, trekking, climbing, archery, campfires and much more. For more information and to go to the bookings page visit <https://nymo.org/summertimecamp/>

**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.

**Track and Trace:** The government have now released their app to support track & trace & we have a QR code which can be scanned to record your presence at church. This is not obligatory, but should help in the important task of controlling the spread of the virus. As responsible members of society, we should comply with this request.

**Parish Finances:** Thank you to everyone who has been so very generous during this lockdown. Our parish finances are reasonably stable. Your generosity is much appreciated!

**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)**

**Pro Life Chain - Saturday 29th May 2021:** Sat. 29th May SPUC Northampton holding Pro Life Chain St Peters Way. This act of silent witness is to remember the millions of lives lost to abortion since the Abortion Act 1967. It will take place between 11am & 1pm. Please join us at this important event. Last year twelve pro-life supporters stood together in order to proclaim the pro-life message. It is not easy to take part in a public display in relation to such a controversial subject, but it is so important that we speak up for the unborn. If you can join us or want more information then please contact William on 07393965643 or [wpcurrie@btinternet.com](mailto:wpcurrie@btinternet.com) Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.

# Scripture Readings 9th May 2021, 6th Sunday of Easter, Year B

The readings from Easter to Pentecost from Luke's Book of Acts show Jesus continuing his ministry through the Church. The Pentecost reading will describe the visual effects of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles. After Saul had left for Tarsus, Peter brought Tabitha back to life, and a vision showed him that nothing made by God is unclean. Immediately he is invited into the "unclean" house of Cornelius. While Peter hesitates, the Holy Spirit comes down on Cornelius and his household. The visual effects of this bring Peter to realise that the gospel must go to "the (Gentile) nations".

The Psalm urges all creation to praise the Lord for His victorious salvation.

The Easter season readings from John's first letter conclude with this passionate demand that we "love one another". God's love for us was

revealed when He sent his Son "to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away".

Jesus' long last supper teaching is drawing towards its climax on Pentecost Sunday, his promise to send the Advocate. Today's reading continues from last weeks' description of Jesus as the vine: we are to show that we abide in Jesus by keeping the commandments, just as Jesus has kept the Father's commandments. Jesus' commandment is that we should love one another.

Psalm Response:

**The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations.**

(Acts 10: 25-26,34-35,44,48 ; Psalm 97(98):1-4 ; 1 John 4: 7-10 ; John 15: 9-17)

Chris Oliver

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## Kitchen Makeover

The enlargement of the kitchen has been completed, and the first-fix of the electrics will be done this week. The kitchen things that were kept in the store-room will now be kept in the kitchen, but the store-room will be somewhat smaller. On the basis that Parkinson's Law applies to storage space; that junk expands to fill the space available for it, the benefit is that we will accumulate less rubbish!

Many thanks to those who have already helped in this work. More volunteer labour will be gratefully received in due course. Cliff Snelling will project-manage the operation, and specific requests for help will come from time to time. We plan to complete this during the time that the hall remains closed due to the restrictions, and have it ready for when we can re-open for our normal use.



## Narthex revamp

The map which has been in the narthex for many years was intended to be a reminder of the global nature of the Church, and that we have people at St Gregory's whose original home was far away from here. The plan is that on the boards either side of the door will be the message "Welcome" in the language of every place represented here. You may be asked to help!

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## Pentecost Novena of Prayer

This is the first and original Novena; nine day of prayer, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:12-14). We continue to pray with them.

### Friday: Intercession for a growth in trust

Begin by invoking the Holy Spirit using Pope John XXIII's 'invocation' prayer:

Renew your wonders in this our day, as by a new Pentecost. Grant to your Church that, being of one mind and steadfast in prayer with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and following the lead of Blessed Peter, it may advance the reign of our Divine Saviour, the reign of truth and justice, the reign of love and peace. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, in your power and might to renew the face of the earth. Holy Spirit, awaken the whole human race and help us to build bridges of trust that open our hearts to the Good News of Jesus Christ. 'See now, he is the God of my salvation.

I have trust and no fear, for the Lord is my strength, my song, he is my salvation.' (Isaiah 12:2)

Prayer Intention Pray for a growth in trust that enables those we love, those we care about and those we know to open their hearts to the Holy Spirit, who is the first evangeliser.

### Saturday: Intercession for the renewal of the Church

Pray again the 'invocation prayer of Pope John XXIII as you did yesterday.

Come Holy Spirit, in your power and might to renew the face of the earth. Come Holy Spirit, rekindle your fire and renew your Church.

'In the days to come – it is the Lord who speaks - I will pour out my Spirit upon all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even on my slaves, men and women, in those days, I will pour out my spirit. I will display portents in heaven above and signs on the earth below. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great day of the Lord dawns. All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.' (Joel 2: 28-31)

Prayer Intention Pray for the 'Spirituality of Pentecost' to renew the Church throughout the world – especially in this continent, nation, diocese, parish and in your own life.

[www.thykingdomcome.global/sites/default/files/2020-01/Catholic%20Novena.pdf](http://www.thykingdomcome.global/sites/default/files/2020-01/Catholic%20Novena.pdf)



## 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>

