

Local Church

The Diocese

of

Northampton

The Diocese of England and Wales



Can you find the Diocese of Northampton?

Local Church

A **Diocese** is an area that includes people and parishes

under the care of a **Bishop**.

Northampton Diocese

The Diocese of Northampton consists of the counties of Bedford, Buckingham and Northampton, and that part of Berkshire that lies to the north of the River Thames.



The Diocese was established on 29th September, 1850 by Pope Pius IX.

Patrons of the Diocese

The Patrons of the Diocese are
Our Blessed Lady Immaculate whose feast day we celebrate on 8th December
and
St Thomas of Canterbury whose feast day we celebrate on 29th December

Who was St Thomas of Canterbury?
Why is he our patron saint?

This is our Diocesan Coat of Arms:



What do these pictures represent?
What does 'Sub tuum Praesidium' mean?

St Thomas of Canterbury

Feast Day: 29th December



Thomas Becket was born in 1118 in London. After his parents died, he worked in an office. He loved hunting and other sports. When Thomas was about twenty-four, he went to work in the house of the archbishop of Canterbury and then began to study to become a priest.

Soon he became a great favourite of King Henry II. People said that the king and Thomas were such close friends that they had only one heart and one mind.

When Thomas was thirty-six, King Henry made him his chancellor. As chancellor of England, Thomas had a large household and lived in grand style. Yet he was also a man of prayer and very good to the poor.

When the archbishop of Canterbury died, the king wanted the pope to give Thomas this position. It would just mean that Thomas would have to be made a priest. But Thomas said that he did not want to be the archbishop of Canterbury.

Thomas knew that, as archbishop, he would have to defend the Church from the king and that would mean trouble. "Your affection for me would turn into hatred," he warned Henry.

The king paid no attention and Thomas was made a priest and a bishop in 1162. At first, things were fine. But soon, the king began to demand money from the Church, which Thomas felt was not right.

The king grew more and more angry with his friend. Finally, he began to treat Thomas very unkindly. For a while, Thomas was tempted to give in to the king. Then he began to realise just how much Henry wanted to control the Church.

Thomas was sorry that he had even thought of giving in to the king. He said sorry to God, and after that held firm and only did what was right.

One day, the king was very angry. He said: "Will no one rid me of this archbishop?" Some of his knights took him seriously and went off to murder the archbishop.

They attacked him in his own cathedral. Thomas died, saying, "For the name of Jesus and in defence of the Church, I am willing to die." It was December 29, 1170.

The entire Christian world was horrified at such a crime. Pope Alexander III held the king personally responsible for the murder.

Soon miracles began to happen at Thomas' tomb and he was proclaimed a saint by the same pope in 1173.



Can you find out about the story of Thomas, the falcon and the duck?
What is his connection to Northampton?

The Bishop

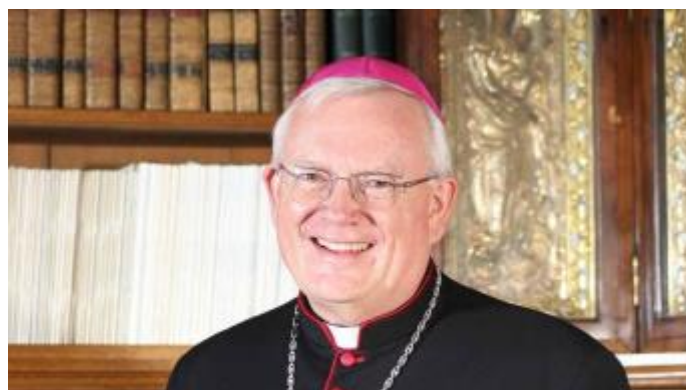
The Bishop is the person chosen to look after and care for God's people in an area called a Diocese.

The Bishops of the Diocese have been:

Rt. Rev. William Wareing.	1850-1858.
Rt. Rev. Francis Kerril Amherst.	1858-1879.
Rt. Rev. Arthur Grange Riddell.	1880-1907.
Rt. Rev. Frederick William Keating.	1908-1921.
Rt. Rev. Dudley Charles Cary-Elwes.	1921-1932.
Rt. Rev. Laurence Youens.	1933-1939.
Rt. Rev. Thomas Leo Parker.	1941-1967.
Rt. Rev. Charles Alexander Grant.	1967-1982.
Rt. Rev. Francis Gerard Thomas.	1982-1988.
Rt. Rev. Patrick Leo McCartie.	1990-2001.
Rt. Rev. Kevin John Patrick McDonald.	2001-2003.
Rt. Rev. Peter John Haworth Doyle.	2005 - Present

Bishop Peter

Bishop Peter is the 12th Bishop of Northampton.



Bishop Peter was born in Wilpshire,
near Blackburn in Lancashire on 3rd May, 1944.

He was ordained priest in St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth on 8th June, 1968

and was ordained Bishop of Northampton in the Cathedral
of Our Lady Immaculate and St Thomas of Canterbury on 28th June, 2005.
He lives in Northampton.

An Interview with Bishop Peter

DO BISHOPS PRAY ALL DAY?

Find out the **real facts** from Bishop Peter Doyle – Bishop of Northampton Diocese.

By Lily and Natalie

Today we interviewed the Bishop to find out the real facts about his role as a Bishop. We asked if it was true that his day is spent praying. His reply was although prayer is the backbone of his life, he certainly doesn't spend the day on his knees! We asked him how long he had been a priest? The Bishop said, "I have been a priest for 37 years, before being ordained a Bishop 12 years ago." We asked the Bishop do you like your job? To which he replied, "Yes I do like it now but when I was first made a Bishop I felt very isolated but now I feel very much part of the family of the Diocese."



We asked the Bishop is there anything he didn't like about his job. "It's hard making difficult decisions" was his reply.

Our final question was to ask the Bishop what his hobbies were, he told us that he used to go ski-ing and play rugby. Now he enjoys watching rugby and supporting Northampton Saints. We all agreed that the Bishop works very hard looking after over 70 parishes as well as fitting in time for prayer.

What does the Bishop do?

Bishop Peter is responsible for the whole of the Diocese: all the parishes and schools. He is responsible for the spiritual welfare of all.

The Bishop visits each school and parish in the Diocese. He encourages everyone in their journey of faith.

Bishop Peter meets with the priests of the Diocese both individually and collectively. He relies on them to carry out his responsibility in their own parishes.

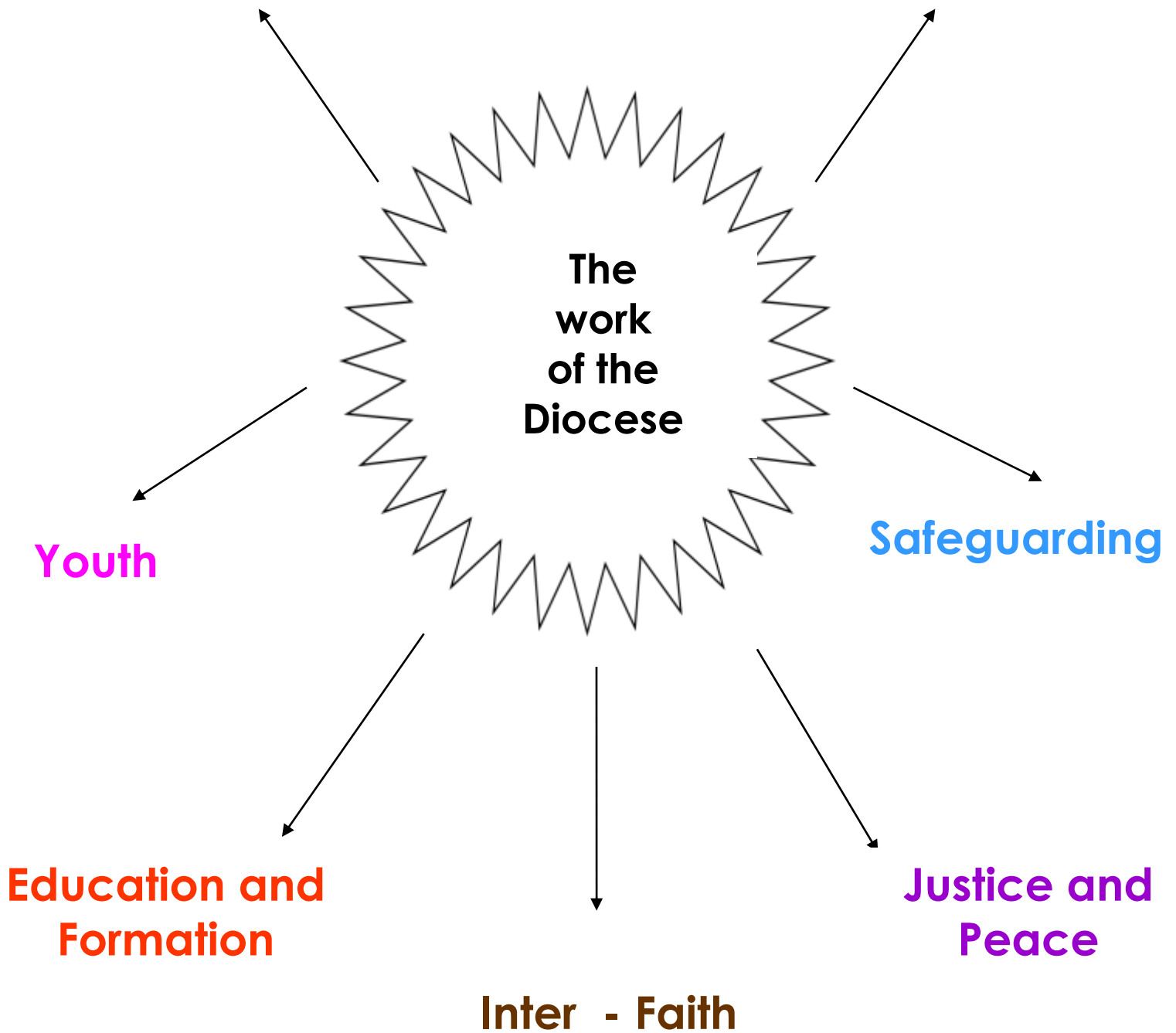
The Bishop also attends many celebrations in parishes and schools.

Liturgy

Communication

Ecumenism





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Liturgy

The Diocese celebrates public worship.
For example Mass and other sacraments.

Ecumenism

The Diocese is keen to form and sustain good relationships through dialogue and prayer with neighbouring Christian communities.

Safeguarding

The Diocese is committed to ensure that everyone: young, old and those particularly vulnerable are protected from harm.

Justice and Peace

The Diocese works for justice and peace encouraging fair treatment for everyone.

Education and Formation

The Diocese supports Catholic education, promotes life-long learning and provides opportunities to develop faith through its schools and parishes.

Youth

The Diocese is actively involved in engaging young people aged 11 – 30 to explore and enjoy their faith.

Communication

The Diocese maintains an openness in exchanging information with all outside agencies.

Inter - Faith

The Diocese values and upholds dialogue with those of other world faiths.

Bishop Parker Catholic Primary School Bletchley

Bishop Peter came to our school in May 2016 to celebrate the schools
40th anniversary.

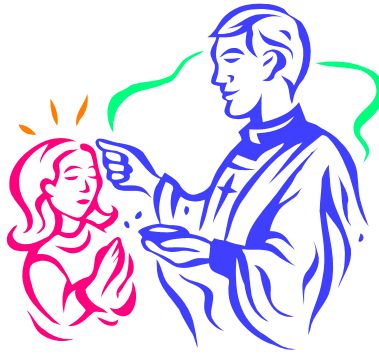
He celebrated Mass,
blessed the new entrance
and the new library
and met with the children, staff and governors.



Do you recognise anyone?

The Priest

A priest leads the parish family.



Who is your Parish Priest?

What does he do?

How does he lead?

Who helps him?

Invite your parish priest into school to talk about what he does.



What is the name of your parish?

Lay People

Lay people are baptised members of the Church.
All lay people are called to live like Jesus everyday.
For example, parents bringing up their children.



Lay people make up the parish.
Name some of the lay people in your parish.
What do they do?

A lay person can support the parish and the priest by:

prayer



giving out communion



caring for those in need



reading at Mass



A lay person can take an active part in parish groups.
A lay person can offer their special skills. For example:
flower arranging, youth clubs, accounting, music
and being a parish catechist.

But most importantly every member of the church is a witness
to Jesus by the way they live.