



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

Blessings and Woes

Deacon Paul Carlson was the first lay catechist in the diocese of St Paul and Minneapolis, and taught Scripture to Deacons in formation after his own ordination to the Diaconate. Below is a quotation from his writings:

No other NT writer except the author of the Epistle of James emphasizes the social justice aspect of Christian living to the depth that Luke does. He preserves the many sayings of Jesus warning that those with material possessions have a responsibility to the poor and disadvantaged. He attacks the racism and discrimination against the untouchables that existed.

They were the lepers, Samaritans, gentiles, tax collectors, women, and the poor who had no voice.

The theme is established beginning with Mary's Magnificat: "He has deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places. The hungry he has given every good thing and the rich he has sent empty away" (*Luke 1:52*).

Only Luke reports what John the Baptizer's reply was to the crowds who asked what must we do? "He who has two coats let him share with him who has none, and he who has food let him do likewise" (*Luke 3:11*). When Levi the tax collector was called to follow Jesus he "left everything behind" (*Luke 5:28*). In Luke's sermon on the plain a special blessing is given to the poor, the hungry, and those who mourn. In contrast he warns the rich, the well fed, and happy that their day is coming (*Luke 6: 20-26*).

He eats with Simon the Pharisee but also permits a woman known as a sinner to wash his feet. Then forgives her sins (*Luke 7:36-50*). A group of women including Mary Magdalene served him out of their means (*Luke 8:1-3*). Of all the synoptic gospels, Luke is the only one who places the Samaritans in a favourable light. The good Samaritan stopped and ministered to a man who had been beaten by robbers. Whereas a priest and a Levite passed him by (*Luke 10:35-37*). He cured ten lepers and the only one came back to thank him and he was a Samaritan (*Luke 17:11-19*).

Jesus' last acts before entering Jerusalem were to heal a blind man begging along the roadside in Jericho (*Luke 18:35-43*) and dining with Zacchaeus the tax collector (*Luke 19:1-10*). These two stories are very symbolic

and summarize all of Jesus' ministry. He came to bring hope to society's unfortunate ones. In the case of Zacchaeus a tax collector and rich, he was able to get through the "eye of a needle" by giving half of his fortune to the poor.

Our Gospel today is from the "Sermon on the Plain", which has clear parallels with the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel (*Matthew 5:1 - 7:28*).

However there are significant differences, and the first and most obvious is the location. Matthew places this teaching on the mountain because, writing to a Jewish audience, he is wanting to remind his readers of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. Here, Jesus is giving the new law to the Christian community.

Luke, on the other hand is writing to a Greek audience with whom the story of Moses will have less resonance. As Greeks, however, they would be familiar with the Agora, which was the central square of any town, and was the centre of political, spiritual, social and commercial life. It was in the agora that new laws would be read and published.

Luke's Beatitudes differ from those of Matthew in that Luke's relate to the material condition rather than the spiritual condition; indeed, Luke's first is "Blessed are the poor", not "Blessed are the poor in spirit" of Matthew. His other blessed people are the hungry (not those who "hunger after righteousness"), those who weep and those whom people hate, who are excluded, reviled or defamed.

The "woes" exactly correspond to the "blessed", woe to the rich, woe to the well-fed, woe to those who are laughing, woe to those who are celebrities and well-spoken of.

The idea of the "preferential option for the poor" is not new, it is there, four-square in St Luke's Gospel. Is the reason why we are more familiar with Matthew's "sermon on the mount" than Luke's "sermon on the plain" because we find Jesus' teaching in Luke more challenging?

In four weeks from today we have the CAFOD Lent collection following the Family Fast Day on 15th March. Maybe we could keep these words from today's Gospel in mind then.

We should also remember the blessing on those who are excluded, reviled or defamed, and seek to be people who welcome the stranger, the refugee, this immigrant and those who are marginalised by society. If we cannot do this out of humanitarian concern, we should do it because Jesus commands it.



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Website: www.stgregory.org.uk

Sunday 17th February 2019 Sixth Sunday of the Year Parish Mass Book - Year C Page 63

Priest:

Fr Andrew Behrens ☎ 713015

E-mail: priest@stgregory.org.uk

Deacons:

Rev Michael Fleming ☎ 647750

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Pastoral Assistant:

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Sunday <i>6th Sunday of the Year</i>	9.00 am	Mass	The Parish
	11.00 am	Mass	Fr. John Harris RIP
Monday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Kathleen Scott RIP
Tuesday Feria	9.00 am	Mass (Followed by prayers for the sick)	Bonnie & Paddy O'Dwyer
Wednesday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Michael Moriarty RIP
Thursday St. Peter Damian	9.00 am	Celebration of Word & Communion	
	6.45 pm	Benediction	
	7.00 pm	Mass	Bridget & Patrick Philbin
Friday St. Peter's Chair	9.00 am	Mass	Sr. Mary Josepha & Sr. Margaret Erica Campbell
	2.20 pm	Healing Mass	
Saturday St. Polycarp	9.00 am	Mass	Shali Francis
	9.30 am	Confessions	
Sunday <i>7th Sunday of the Year</i>	9.00 am	Mass	The Parish
	11.00 am	Mass	Tony Refoy RIP

Your Offering To The Parish:

Last Sunday's collection was £543.44. Thank you!

Standing Order gifts to the Parish:

Each week £300 is given through standing orders.

Gift Aid benefits to the parish:

The value of Gift Aid averages £137 per week.

Appeal Next Week:

Karuri Project

Counters This Week:

M. Murtagh, L. Allen, Anna Smith.

Cleaners This Week:

George & Another.

Readings for This Sunday

Jeremiah 17: 5-8.

A curse on the man who puts his trust in man.

1 Corinthians 15: 12, 16-20.

If Christ has not been raised, your believing is useless.

Luke 6: 17, 20-26.

How happy are you who are poor. Alas for you who are rich.

Readings for Next Sunday

1 Samuel 26: 2-23; 1 Corinthians 15: 45-49; Luke 6: 27-38. (Page 65)

During this season of

Peace on Earth; Christian Unity;

Ordinary Time, Winter,

Victims of Trafficking;

to pray for:

Racial Justice; The Unemployed.

In Hospital? Let the Chaplaincy know on 01604 714556

If you are in need, please ring Gregory Care on 07982 235379,
Someone will respond as soon as possible. Please be patient.

Are you new to the parish? You are welcome!
Please introduce yourself to one of the clergy

Live Video streaming from the Cathedral: <https://www.churchservices.tv/northamptoncathedral>

An important message for any who sometimes attend Mass at the Cathedral: The Cathedral will no longer send envelopes from other Parishes back, so if you occasionally attend Sunday Mass there, please do not put St. Gregory's Envelopes into the collection, but save them until you are next here, or consider setting up a standing order (see Fr. Andrew)

Please pray for the sick

Sylvia Marlow	Kelly-Ann
Cecilia Pereira	Robert Fleming
Fr Philip Swingler	Joan McAllister
Michael Spowart	Jean O'Neill
Dominic Nicholls	Clara Korejwo
Alf Shipman	Ziadi Family
Owen	Khanh Phan
Kath Seemark	Robert Moore
Fr Ed Worthy	Sarah Dunster
Liam Murphy	Kim Do
Margaret Farragher	Sr. Margaret
Dulcie Miranda	Chris Butler
Joan Healy	Lily Butler
Irmgard Wraxall	Rachel
Sylvia Clark	Phyllis Albon
Maurice Murphy	Doris Old
Sylvester Dauksta	Rita
Lorraine Woolard	Erica Campbell
Dolores Behan	Vera Curly
Richard Redmond	Chau
Teresa Redmond	Damien Darkko
Maire West	Michael Graney
Paul Mandel	Fr. John O'Brien
Kathleen Healey	Candy Docherty
Leo Bell	Elaine Donnelly
Jennifer Ogbata	May Eamons
Stephen Aneke	Michael Folon
John Bosco Cullen	Nina Fenlon
Philomena Fraher	Michael Fraher
Maureen Smith	Edward Taylan
Fr. Malachy Eleanya	Peter
Catherine Stratten	Mary Rumsey
Baby Lorenzo Diccico	

Anniversaries:

May they Rest in Peace

Maud Woods	Kathleen Osbourn
Frances Marsden	Patricia Gunning
Yvonne Lucovich	Albert Bryant
Bradley Forskitt	James Holmes
Ina Lohan	Margaret O'Leary
Mary Allibon	Eugene Murray
Geraldine Fitzgerald	Fr. John Harris
Annie Mulcahy	Patrick Gribben
Terry Costello	Lilian Maisfield
Betty Clarke	Maria Pentecostes
Jack Wilson	Judith Coyle
Lynn Farrell	Elizabeth Wood
Winifred Roberts	Baby Poppy Clark
William Glibbery	Philip Meenaghan
Jane Noble	Arvenelle Ventour
Maria Diaz	Ann Sinnott
Arthur Sanders	Bernadette Gaye
Patricia Howard	William Currie

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY

For a generous welcome to the victims of human trafficking, enforced prostitution, and violence.

Notices of Interest

The Repository: The Repository has now reverted to its normal pattern - open after Sunday Masses. *Kathleen Healey*



We welcome into the family of the Church
Cillian Charles Eugene McTaggart
who received Christian Baptism last week.
Please pray for him and his family.

Prayer List for the Sick: Would everybody please scan through the 'sick list' to see if all the names still need to be on there. Many thanks. *Caryll*

Bible Alive for February is now available in the lobby area. Please give this publication a try - it has daily readings & good articles - all for only £2:50! **Please remember to put money in the box marked 'Books & Papers' in the entrance lobby.**

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Please remember this important spiritual powerhouse of the parish. Exposition begins after the morning liturgy of Word and Communion on Thursdays and continues until 6.45 pm.

24-Hour Eucharistic Adoration at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Great Billing: The Diocesan Shrine and parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour will be hosting a 24 Hour Eucharistic Adoration of the Lord on 15th-16th March. The Eucharistic Adoration begins with a Holy Mass at 10am on Friday 15th March and will be concluded with Mass on Saturday 16th March at 10am. Come let us worship the risen Lord "in Spirit and Truth." (John 4:24).

Save the Hope Centre: St Gregory's has supported the Hope Centre since it first began at Bishops' House. We have given food every week, and supported it financially. Now it needs another sort of support as **Midland Heart are seeking to evict it from Oasis House. Please sign the petition!**

Life House Quiz Night: Tickets for the Fish & Chips and Quiz night on 1st March will be on sale in the foyer next to the repository shop after 9.00am and 11am masses from Sunday 3rd February. Tickets cost £10. Ticket numbers are limited so please buy as early as possible. Suitable donated raffle prizes will be gratefully received and can be given to the ticket sellers.

The Prayer Group meets every Thursday in the Sacristy from 2pm until 3.30pm for Praise, reading of Scripture and Intercession. We are a small group, and would warmly welcome newcomers!

New Parent & Baby Group at St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Grange Road. Wednesdays, 9.15am - 10.15am. £1 per adult. Refreshments provided by the PTFA.

Fitness & Pilates for Mid Life & Beyond! Classes Wed, 10.30, in the Church Hall with Theresa, who is fully qualified & insured. For further info, please contact Theresa on 07773577804

The Prayer Group meets every Thursday in the Sacristy from 2pm until 3.30pm for Praise, reading of Scripture and Intercession. We are a small group, and would warmly welcome newcomers!

Blessed Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group continues monthly on 1st Saturday of each month in the Sacristy at 10am. (Next meeting is March 2nd) All welcome.

Vianney Mission Prayer Group meets every 2nd Wednesday of the month in the Sacristy, 6pm - 7pm. **Next meeting 13th March.** All welcome.

Communion to Those With Limited Mobility: Holy Communion is brought to those in the FRONT ROW.

Flame 2019: The Day's Theme will be 'Significance'. Those preparing for Confirmation will be at Flame 2019

Choir Matters: Next Practices are: Ash Wed Mar 6, then Thursdays in Lent to prepare for Easter: Mar 14, 21, 28, Apr: 4, 11. These start after evening Mass and finish at 9pm. *Alec*

Becoming a Catholic: For adults interested in becoming a Catholic, the parish runs Journey in Faith process (RCIA). Also offered for adults who are Catholic but have not received all the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation & Eucharist. Please speak to Alex Heath (07963032175), Fr Andrew or Maria Heath.

Tots @St Gregory's: Tots @ St. Gregory's: Tuesdays **during school term-time** from 9.30 - 11.30. Refreshments provided. 50p per family. All welcome!

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next Baptism Preparation will be at 7.00 pm, Monday 25th February 2019, in the Sacristy.

First Holy Communion — 2019 Next session will be 2nd March. Please note that this is a whole-day session, and is of vital importance in the programme. Remember also to be at Mass each Sunday and get your stickers each week.

If any parents willing to become helpers, please contact Stella or Jean for details. No special prior qualifications or experience required, but DBS clearance will need to be obtained.

Confirmation Preparation: The trip to "Flame" is on March 2nd: coach leaves at 8.45 am **DON'T BE LATE!**

Catholic Basics Course: Part Two: **Church** 11 April, Part Three: **The Moral Life** 16 May, Part Four: **Prayer** 13 June. After a very successful launch, join us for another day of engaging teaching with opportunities for interaction and discussion. Cost: £25 per person per day (£10 for the unwaged). Price includes a full lunch. No qualifications needed - just interest, good will and a sense of humour! Part 2: CHURCH April 11 2019, 10am-3pm (arrive 9.30am for refreshments). NORES Centre, Holy Ghost Parish, 33 Westbourne Road, Luton, LU4 8JD. To book, contact admin@nores.org.uk or phone Jackie on 01582 723312.

Facebook page: St Gregory's has a page on Facebook, and frequently carries news before it gets into the newsletter as well as reminders for events. Address: <https://www.facebook.com/StGregsNorthampton>

Ceili Dancing: Wednesday evenings, starts 8pm. Learn Ceili Dancing in a friendly atmosphere at St Gregory's Hall from 8pm - 9.15pm. All ages welcome! Ceád Mile Failte. For further info please phone Pat Franks on 07710624921

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The inspiration for this prayer is to be found in the First Letter of St John, in the beautiful passage that begins: "Beloved, let us love one another" (1 John 4:7).

"If we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us" (1 John 4:12). "God is love, and those who abide in live abide in God, and God abides in them" (1 John 4:16).

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are just and true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

This is explained: "By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us his Spirit" (1 John 4:13)

"Grace is participation in the life of God" (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1997), and so living in love is a fruit of grace, a fruit of the free gift of God, given through the Holy Spirit. We pray that God's Holy Spirit will constantly inspire and guide us.

Scripture Readings 17th February 2019, 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year C

Jeremiah lived through a stormy period about 600 BC, before and during the exile. He suffered much through sieges and imprisonments. The despair he felt at the sins of his people against God's covenant may have led him to doubt. But Jeremiah never lost hope that God is merciful, and that his new covenant would save his people. In spite of temptations and disappointments, we must trust in the Lord.

The psalm praises those who do not gradually accommodate themselves to secular behaviour around us, but who "delight in the law of the Lord" and so achieve true happiness.

Paul had reminded the Corinthians of the centrality of the resurrection to our faith. Now he explains: without Christ's resurrection from the dead, there is no resurrection of the body for us.

Therefore, no bodily life after our death – this life is all we have. He compares the resurrection of the dead to sowing a seed: the body which dies "is not the body which is to be", which will be energised by the Spirit. "What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable".

In Luke's gospel, Jesus had chosen the twelve from his disciples. Now he proclaims God's justice is coming, showing the way to real happiness.

Psalm Response: **Happy the man who has placed his trust in the Lord.**

(Jer 17: 5-8; Psalm 1:1-4.6; 1 Cor 15:12,16-20; Luke 6: 17,20-26) *Chris Oliver*

NEXT ALPHA: Tuesday evenings, 7.30 – 9.45 pm from 30th April – 16th July,(except 28th May) BEGINS ON TUESDAY 30th APRIL plus Friday evening to Saturday 22nd to 23rd June

Saints of the week: St Peter Damian and St Polycarp: The Chair of Peter

Peter Damian was born just over a thousand years ago, in the year 1007 in Ravenna, and having been orphaned at a young age, was educated by his elder brother who was Archpriest of Ravenna. He did well in his education and eventually became a professor at the University of Parma.

In about the year 1035 he abandoned his university career and entered the hermitage at Fonte Avellana. It was a time when there was sadly a great deal of corruption in the Church, and Peter was seeking a life closer to what he considered to be Gospel values. His life was so austere that he became ill, and he had to moderate his discipline. He became prior of the community, and insisted on an austere life, but he introduced the practice of a daily siesta!

In 1057 he was appointed Cardinal-Bishop of Ostia, and from this position, he constantly sought to reform the Church and stamp out abuses, although today we would think his idea of abuse as excessively strict. For example, he reprimanded the Bishop of Florence for playing chess!

Above all, he was a man of prayer, and was always most at home in a monastic community and in prayer. He refused unnecessary luxuries and always encouraged others to a life of prayer, fasting and virtue.

He died during the monastic office of Matins in the year 1072.

It is not known exactly when Polycarp was born, but probably around the year 69, and had met many of the Apostles and others who were eye-witnesses of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He became a pupil of St John, and a contemporary account tells of how he was ordained by apostles and appointed Bishop of Smyrna. (In the book of Revelation, the Church in Smyrna is the only one of the seven not to have a complaint made: *see Revelation 2:8-10*)

Having the advantage of knowing not just the teachings that are in the recorded Gospels, but also hearing the memories of the

apostles that were never written down (see *John 20:31*), he was a champion of the teaching of the Apostles. The Church was beginning to be attacked by heresies: those who said that Jesus was not really human at all but God pretending to be human (as many of the Greek 'gods' did in their mythologies); the Marcionites who denied the whole of the Old Testament and claimed that the God who is the Father of Jesus was not the same God as that of the Old Testament.

This was the era in which the Christian Church was trying to find forms of words to express the truth about the person of Jesus. It is not surprising that some wrong ideas were expressed, and Polycarp was important in defending the truth that he had heard from the Apostles themselves.

As the spread of Christianity continued and the Church grew in numbers, the Roman authorities became more and more concerned about this religion that claimed a higher authority than that of the Emperor. Polycarp was arrested, and the soldiers suggested that he submitted to the state's demand in saying 'Caesar is Lord' and sacrificing to him. He refused, and it was decreed that he should be burned to death, but an eyewitness recorded that "as the flame blazed forth in great fury, we to whom it was given to witness it, beheld a great miracle. The fire did not seem to touch the bishop's body. Rather, shaping itself into the form of an arch, it encompassed – as by a circle – the body of the martyr." The executioners, seeing that it was not going to plan, stabbed him to death. He was immediately recognised as a saint.

The feast of the Chair of St Peter celebrates the unity of the Church around the Cathedra (Bishop's throne) of Peter and his successors. We proclaim that the Church which Polycarp defended, and which St Peter Damian served, is the same Church to which we belong. As we celebrate this feast we express our loyalty to the Pope; and the continuous succession of the Church, which, although sometimes imperfect, yet is guided by the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised (*see John 16:13*).