



The Catholic Parish of Saint Gregory the Great Northampton



PART OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON, REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 234091



“A truly thriving Catholic community, confidently and humbly proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.”



World Peace Day

Peace as a Journey of Hope: Dialogue, Reconciliation and Ecological Conversion

If there is one common theme running through all of Pope Francis' World Day of Peace messages, it is Christian hope.

While addressing the challenges facing the modern world, and offering concrete solutions to the same, the Pope's messages always end up focusing on the face of Jesus, as the source of our hope and inspiration for peaceful coexistence.

“Hope” is again at the heart of Pope Francis latest World Day of Peace message, which opens with the statement: “Peace is a great and precious value, the object of our hope and the aspiration of the entire human family”. Hope, writes the Pope, is “the virtue that inspires us and keeps us moving forward, even when obstacles seem insurmountable”.

Pope Francis acknowledges how “the terrible trials of internal and international conflicts, often aggravated by ruthless acts of violence, have an enduring effect on the body and soul of humanity”. “Mistrust and fear weaken relationships and increase the risk of violence, creating a vicious circle that can never lead to a relationship of peace”.

On the other hand, writes Pope Francis, “Peace emerges from the



depths of the human heart and political will must always be renewed, so that new ways can be found to reconcile and unite individuals and communities”. That journey of reconciliation “calls for patience and trust”, says the Pope. “Peace will not be obtained unless it is hoped for”.

The world does not need empty words, continues Pope Francis, “but convinced witnesses, peacemakers who are open to a dialogue that rejects exclusion or manipulation”. Peace is a process that requires enduring commitment, he adds. “It is a patient effort to seek truth and justice, to honor the memory of victims and to open the way, step by step, to a shared hope stronger than the desire for vengeance”.

Finally, Pope Francis refers to the recent Synod on the Pan-Amazon Region. “Faced with the consequences of our hostility towards others, our lack of respect for our common home or our abusive exploitation of natural resources, we are in need of an ecological conversion”, he writes, one that will “lead us to a new way of looking at life”.

The Pope concludes with a renewed call “for a peaceful relationship between communities and the land, between present and past, between experience...and hope”.

Reprinted from “Vatican News”



Has anyone here seen James; J – A – M – E – S; James, not from the Isle of Man!

The DVDs for the “James” course have been mislaid, any help in finding them would be much appreciated.

Ecumenical Bible Study – this Wednesday evening at Abington Avenue United Reformed Church. Refreshments at 7.00 pm, start at 7.30 pm. End at about 9.15 pm. All are welcome

Notices of Interest

Philip Bartley, formerly of Spinney Hill Road, died on Sunday 29th December. The requiem Mass will be held at 12.00pm Tuesday 28th January, here at St Gregory's, followed by burial at Kingsthorpe cemetery. R.I.P.

The family of Italia Jacobs would like to thank Fr Andrew and all those who contributed to the sincere and thoughtful funeral service for our wonderful Mum. Many thanks also to all those who attended the service - your prayers, kindness and support are much appreciated.

Shared Bible Study for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be on Wednesday evening, 22nd January at Abington Avenue United Reformed Church; refreshments from 7.00 pm, start at 7.30. This year's theme has been prepared by Christians in Malta. All are welcome.

The Repository: The Repository has now reverted to its normal pattern - open after Sunday Masses. We have a new set of blank cards made by the nuns of the Carmelite Convent at Quindenham which are now on display. Several people asked for blank cards. These are a bit special, as well as supporting a good cause. *Kathleen Healey*

Choir Matters: The next practice is Feb 6, then Lent preparation for Easter: Mar 5, 12, 19, 26, Apr 2, followed by 1st Thurs. of the month: May 7, etc. New members are always welcome especially if they sing and are good at hill-walking (steps to the choir gallery are steep). *Alec*

Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group meets 1st Saturday of every month in the Sacristy, 10am. **Next meeting February 1st.** All welcome.

Vianney Mission Prayer Group meets 2nd Wednesday of every month in the Sacristy, 6pm - 7pm. **Next meeting February 12th.** All welcome.

Bible Alive for January is now available in the lobby area. 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.**

The Hope Centre are looking for empty ice cream tubs and margarine tubs (NOT yoghurt pots). Please continue to donate only the large ice cream tubs and margarine tubs, as these will be used for placing dinners and puddings in for the homeless. Thank you!

The Big Sleep Out 2020: Siobhan O'Donovan is once again taking part in the Big Sleep Out for the Hope Centre. This year it takes place in the Saints Rugby Club Grounds on Friday 31st January. **If you would be able to sponsor her, there are sponsorship forms at both Church doors. Please do sign one if you can!** She will collect the sponsorship monies on Sunday 2nd February, after both Masses. Thank you for your support.

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. Anyone able to come during the afternoon would be especially welcome. **Throughout the winter, this will be in the Sacristy, which should be more comfortable.**

Looking forward to Lent! There will be a course on Tuesday evenings through Lent using the talks by Bishop Robert Barron entitled "The Mystery of God". It would be particularly suitable to all who have done the Alpha course, although everyone is welcome. We live in an age in which atheism is becoming increasingly active and militant, and in which many regard religion as irrational or even dangerous. Authors like Richard Dawkins and many others make the case against religion. This course helps us to give a rational answer, and to draw people who have been sucked into un-belief back to God

A Day at Turvey Saturday 25th January, 10am – 4pm. The day will include talks, Praise & Worship and Prayer Ministry. Suggested donation £10 (for the monks). Pay on the day, no need to book. For full details see poster.

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.

Faith group leader weekend - 14 to 16 February, Kings Park Centre, Northampton. I hope that leaders in the parishes will take advantage of this opportunity for training and formation. It is suitable for anyone leading RCIA, Lent or Advent Groups, Bible Timeline etc. The weekend will cover small group skills, leading prayer, forming a group and tricky situations. Places are limited so booking essential. <http://formationpathways.co.uk/events/>.

Bible Timeline courses. The course on Romans has begun, but it is not too late to join (Mondays, 1.00 to 3.00 pm). Due to the mislaying of the DVDs of the JAMES course, last week the BIBLICAL WALK WITH MARY course was begun, but again, anyone wishing to join from next week will be welcome, and will not miss out! This is in connection with the rededication of England as Mary's Dowry. During Lent there will be a course entitled "The Mystery of God", from Bishop Robert Barron. **Information on local courses can be found at:** www.bible-groups.info/timeline

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next Baptism Preparation Session will be on Monday 20th January, 7pm, in the Sacristy.

First Holy Communion — 2020 The next preparation session for children is on Saturday 11th January at Sacred Heart Church Hall, from 2.00 pm until 4.30 pm. . It is also essential that children attend Mass each week.

Tots @St Gregory's: If you have charge of a pre-school baby or child on Tuesday mornings, come to Tots @ St Gregory's which runs in the parish hall, 9:30-11:30. We are a friendly, welcoming group where all have fun; refreshments are provided. The cost is £1 for each adult regardless of how many children you bring! We run throughout the school terms.

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children - Youth Conference 2020: SPUC Northampton would like to sponsor a young person aged 18-25 to attend the 2020 SPUC Youth Conference. The conference runs from Friday 28th February to Sunday 1st March at the Willows Training Centre, Wyboston Lakes Resort, Wyboston, Bedford. If you are interested or would like to have more details then please contact William Currie at wpcurrie@btinternet.com.

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

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children- 'Tiny Feet' coffee morning: Please come to our coffee morning from 10.30am on Saturday 25th January, in the parish hall at St Gregory's, in order to help us raise funds for SPUC. Apart from the chance to socialise, eat good cake & escape Saturday morning chores, it will be an opportunity to find out more about the work of SPUC and meet your local members. Even if you may not be able to become directly involved in pro-life work, your support of this event will be a vital contribution in our efforts to spread the pro-life message. Please keep us & all unborn children in your prayers.

Scripture Readings 19th January 2020, 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Second Isaiah's servant songs were written after the Israelites had been released from their captivity in Babylon. The servant, chosen before he was born, is to take God's salvation to the whole world, as well as to Israel.

The psalm offers thanks to God for rescue from danger. Doing God's will is the best sacrifice we can offer, trusting in God's Law and his plans for us.

From now until Lent we read from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, written from Ephesus about 56AD. Paul cannot stop talking about the centre of his life: Jesus, who called him to be his envoy. Those in the "assembly called by God in Corinth", are called to be holy, part of the universal fellowship of believers, and subject

to Christ's authority. He blesses them with grace – God's unconditional love – and peace.

John's Gospel does not have Jesus being baptised. Instead, after the Baptist insists to questioners from Jerusalem that he is not the Messiah, he recognises Jesus. Uniquely he describes Jesus as the Passover sacrificial "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world", the "Chosen one of God", who "baptises with the Holy Spirit". This gift of new life in God, is greater than the cleansing given by John's baptism with water.

Psalm Response: **Here I am, Lord! I come to do your will.**

(Isaiah 49: 3,5-6; Psalm 39(40); 1 Corinthians 1:1-3; John 1:29-34)

Chris Oliver

The Season of Creation

Actions to Live Simply :

Tip No. 33: Actions to Live Simply: 'Garden Spring time' avoid using weed killers and chemicals in your garden soils, also having bonfires.

Tip No. 32: Actions to Live Simply: Live Simply parishes are doing what Pope Francis is asking us all to do: "to care especially for the disadvantaged and those living in poverty".

Climate Change is causing a devastating drought in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and up to half the population of those countries are on the brink of starvation. The CAFOD Lent fast day appeal will help to support the healthcare work in Zimbabwe, and CAFOD has already given £50,000 in emergency response. Pope Francis has been reminding us that the poorest people suffer disproportionately from climate change and natural disasters; one example of this is that where bread can be bought in Zimbabwe it now costs 15 times more than it did a year ago. For us, that would mean a cost of up to £15 for a loaf. For the poorest people, even bread is unaffordable.

Many thanks to Harry and Helen Charles who have offered to co-ordinate our parish's work towards the "Living Simply Award". Anyone who is interested is being involved in this, please contact them, or speak to Fr Andrew

Saints this week

Three of the saints we celebrate this week were early martyrs of the Church. St Sebastian died in 288, Agnes and Vincent in 304. They all suffered under the reign of the emperor Diocletian, who was the last pagan emperor of Rome. Agnes and Sebastian both died in Rome, Vincent in Valencia in Spain. Persecution totally failed to suppress the Church as Tertullian had observed a century earlier "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church".

St Francis de Sales lived from 1567 to 1622, and from 1602 was Bishop of Geneva, a city which was under Calvinist rule. He sought to bring people back to the Catholic faith, and his teaching that "whoever wants to preach effectively must preach with love" is a good motto which remains true today. The feast of the conversion of St Paul marks the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity which began on Saturday.

The Year of the Word



The Bible at Centre of Church's Mission in Bangladesh

"As baptized, we have the responsibility to preach the message of God, keeping the Word of God in our hearts and bringing it into our lives," Bishop James Romen Boiragi of the diocese of Khulna and President of the Commission for Catechesis and Biblical Apostolate, told Fides News Agency within the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Bangladesh.

Underlining the centrality of the Bible in the mission of the Church, Bishop Boiragi explained: "The message of God present in the Bible must be preached with our lives, bearing witness of faith with life and behaviour. If we allow ourselves to always be guided by referring to the Bible, every believer would become a living Bible, with great benefit for evangelization."

The Bishop recalled the theme of the recent day of the Bible, celebrated last December "Your word is a lamp for my feet, and a light on my path" and proposed it again as a leitmotif of the path of evangelization of the Church in Bangladesh for 2020.

He said: "In this new year let us ask the Catholics of Bangladesh to know and deepen their responsibilities as baptized, who are sent to announce the Good News, according to the Bible. May the Bible become our light, make our life divine: this is my prayer."

Father Ripon Anthony D'Rozario, Tejgaon's parish priest in Dhaka, also involved in the biblical apostolate in the country, said that Catholics should take care of the Holy Bible: "I have noticed that in many houses there is a Bible, but we do not read it often. I invite everyone to read the Bible every day because it is the Word of God and spiritual food for us". Proshanto Gomes, a lay Catholic, told Fides that "with the reading of the Bible, God stays with me. I spend my days with God's blessings."

The Episcopal Commission for Catechesis and the Biblical Apostolate is committed to promoting, in all the dioceses of Bangladesh, the Biblical apostolate, assisting and collaborating in the preparation and dissemination of catechetical and biblical materials in the local languages by providing the training of catechists and teachers of Catholic religion. (Report by Zenit.org)

