



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

A Traditional Neapolitan Crib



This crib scene dates from the 18th century, and comes from the shop of the great master Marco Ferringo in Saint Gregorio Armeno, Naples. It is in the church of St Ignatio in Rome.

The figures in the crib are made of ceramics and porcelain, and their costumes represent the clothing of the time. The Neapolitan crib is really detailed and is built according to a theological understanding.

It is built as a pyramid, at whose summit is the Holy Family, the true cornerstone, from which the representation of Bethlehem descends. The nativity of Jesus is not represented in a cave but in the ruins of a pagan temple.

Christ, the Light of the Gentiles is born amid the ruins of the place of pagan worship — He is the true God, and the false Gods of the pagans are nothing next to him.

Christ has his throne as a manger, the wood of which pre-figures the cross, and reveals that his kingdom is one of service and not of power.

Under the place of the nativity, there are some caves, symbolically representing hell, the dark power that was overcome by the light of

Christ. The caves are also the place to which Christ will descend to rescue Adam after his crucifixion.

The first impression of the crib scene is one of beauty and harmony. The message is that, built around the Holy Family, the creation reflects the harmony of the divine plan. Every element is in its right place, and working together, contributing to the fulfilment of God's global design.

Another characteristic of the Neapolitan crib is that it is never complete. There is always a place to add more shepherds and people. Christ walks with the story of humanity which is not static, not ended, but is always in progress.

Today our crib is set in the 21st century, and the scene is our community. We are in that crib, as we worship the Christ-child, born into the ruins of our society. It is not complete; for the story is not ended. Another generation will come; and empty places will be filled by people we will help to bring in.

The crib is not a look back at an event in history, it is an event in eternity, and therefore an event is every age and generation.



22 Park Avenue North
Northampton. NN3 2HS

Website: www.stgregory.org.uk

Sunday 23rd December 2018

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Parish Mass Book - Year C

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Priest:

Fr Andrew Behrens ☎ 713015

E-mail: priest@stgregory.org.uk

Deacons:

Rev Michael Fleming ☎ 647750

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Rev Rory Stewart (ret) ☎ 408407

Pastoral Assistant:

Maria Heath

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Sunday <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	9.00 am	Mass	The Parish
	11.00 am	Mass	Joseph & Elizabeth Brennan RIP
Monday <i>Christmas Eve</i>	9.00 am	Mass	George McCarron
	5.00 pm 11.30 pm	Vigil Mass Carol Service	Children of the Parish
Tuesday <i>Christmas Day</i>	12.00 am	Midnight Mass (Page 34) Mass (Page 37) Mass (Page 38)	Bishop Francis Thomas St. Gregory's Clergy Parish, Parishioners & Families
	9.00 am		
	11.00 am		
Wednesday St. Stephen	10.00 am	Mass (<i>Please note unusual time</i>)	Altar Servers
	Thursday St. John	9.00 am	Celebration of Word & Communion
6.45 pm		Benediction	
7.00 pm		Mass	
Friday The Holy Innocents	9.00 am	Mass	Jackie Bazeley RIP
	Saturday St. Thomas Becket	9.00 am	Mass
9.30 am		Confessions	
Sunday <i>The Holy Family</i>	9.00 am	Mass	The Parish Breda Coleman's Intentions
	11.00 am	Mass	

Your Offering To The Parish:

Last Sunday's collection was £741.70. 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.

Counters This Week:

C.P., L. Allen.

Cleaners This Week:

Pru & Another.

Readings for This Sunday

Micah 5: 1-4.

Out of you will be born the one who is to rule over Israel.

Hebrews 10: 5-10.

Here I am! I am coming to obey your will.

Luke 1: 39-45.

Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?

Readings for Next Sunday

1 Samuel 1: 20-22, 24-28; I John 3: 1-2, 21-24; Luke 2: 41-52. (Page 40)

During this season of

Migrants & Refugees;

Christmas,

Openness to God's Word; Expectant Mothers;

to pray for:

The Bishop, Clergy & People of the Diocese.

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
Frank Burke	Khanh Phan
Kath Seamark	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
Br Paul Greaves	Michael Graney
Paul Mandel	Fr. John O'Brien
Kathleen Healey	Candy Docherty
Leo Bell	Elaine Donnely
Jennifer Ogbata	May Eamons
Stephen Aneke	Michael Folon
John Bosco Cullen	N. Donegan
Philomena Fraher	Michael Fraher
Maureen Smith	Edward Taylan
Fr. Malachy Eleanya	Peter
Nancy Ginnelly	Mary Rumsey
Maire West	Owen

Anniversaries:

May they Rest in Peace

Thomas Kane	Helena Freeman
William Kneeshaw	Gerard Tuite
Marina McCarlie	Joseph Daly
Emily Glazebrook	Teresa Glibbery
Michael O'Grady	Joan Darby
William Coventry	Michael Walsh
Brian Donnelly	Irene Hearne
Thomas Billingham	Louisa Percival
Douglas Golding	Vita Cohen
Doreen Bowers	Joseph Casey
Beatrice Bowers	Tony Haynes
Joy Tomczyszyn	Eileen Condron
Antonio Pannese	Grace Johnson
John Patton	Rainer Neilson
Patrick Pattern	Adela Cond
Josephine Mullally	

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS **FOR DECEMBER**

That people who are involved
in the service and transmission
of faith may find, in their
dialogue with culture, a
language suited to the
conditions of the present time.

Notices of Interest

The Repository is open in the Foyer after Sunday Masses for the sale of cards & other devotional items. We still welcome offers of help, especially after 11 o'clock Mass. *Kathleen Healey. Tel 629103.*

A message from Rory and Anne Stewart: To all our dear friends and parishioners in our wonderful Parish of St. Gregory's. "Thank you all so much for the prayers, cards and presents which we have received in abundance from your generosity, especially since the recent bouts of illness which have affected Anne. We have gone to 'sunny?' Devon for our Christmas break, but be assured that you will be remembered in our prayers in our absence from you all." May the good Lord repay your generosity out of His abundance and grace. Love to you all. *Rory & Anne.*

Bible Alive for January 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.**

Choir Matters: Practices will be weekly, after Thurs. evening Mass. New members always welcome, as are the old ones! *Alec*

Manna House: With sorrow it is announced that the Manna House Bookshop will close with effect from 31st January 2019.

To the Lady Who Bought a Jewellery Box at the Life House sale: There is a shelf that belongs with the box – please pick it up from the Sacristy. Thank you!

Biblical Walk Through the Mass: If anyone has the DVDs for this course, please can they be returned to Fr Andrew.

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!**

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

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 January 5th) All welcome.

Vianney Mission Prayer Group meets every 2nd Wednesday of the month in the Sacristy, 6pm - 7pm. Next meeting 9th January. All welcome.

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!

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

Catholic Basics Course: Want to know more about your Faith? Join us for a basic introduction to the Catholic Faith in 4 parts: God, The Church, The Moral Life and Prayer. For each part there is a day of engaging teaching with opportunities for interaction & discussion. Cost: £25 per person per day (£10 for the unwaged). Price includes full lunch. No qualifications needed - just interest, good will & a sense of humour! Launch and Part I: Jan. 31, 10-3pm (arr. 9.30 for refreshments). NORES Centre, 33 Westbourne Road, Luton, LU4 8JD. To book, contact admin@nores.org.uk or phone Jackie on 01582 723312

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

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.

Save the Date: A quiz night including a fish and chip supper will be taking place on **Friday 1st March 2019** at 7.00pm in St Gregory's Church Hall in aid of the Northampton Life House. Tickets cost £10 and will be available shortly after Christmas.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next Baptism Preparation will be at 7pm, Monday 21st January 2019, in the Sacristy.

First Holy Communion — 2019 The next session will be on 12th January. Please remember to be at Mass each Sunday and at Christmas (Very important!)

Confirmation Preparation: The next session will be on 19th January.

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

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! Ceáid Mile Failte. For further info please phone Pat Franks on 07710624921

272 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>

Christmas Flowers in memory of or thanksgiving for:

Norman Jackson	Rebecca Holt	The Agnew Family	The Pallett Family	Jacqui Brewer	Bill & Frances Currie
Louie Short	Eileen Brewer	The Comley Family	The Kearns Family	Jean Eckett	Mary & Andrew Macdonald
Derek Rumsey	Brendan Moen	James Donnelly	The Munro Family	Rodney Brewer	The Macdonald Family
The Liebe Family	Louise Whalley	The Stratten Family	The Tyrrell family	Victor Rumsey	The Robinson Family
		The Emanuel Family			Nora Scott's Family & Friends

Scripture Readings 23rd December 2018, 4th Sunday of Advent, Year C

Micah was prophesying in Judea around 720 BC. The rich were defrauding the poor, and prophets even misleading the people by assuring them that all was well. Which is what people wanted to hear. No, said Micah: “Zion would be plowed like a field” – utterly destroyed, as happened in the exile in 586 BC. But a remnant would survive, and a ruler would come from Bethlehem, David’s birthplace. When “she who is to give birth gives birth”, the mother of the Immanuel, then the remnant will come back to the Lord.

The Psalm pleads that the Lord's help come soon, as Israel is being hard pressed by its enemies.

Hebrews continues to explain the differences between Christ’s sacrifice and animal and food sacrifices offered in the Temple:

We know this prayer well as it comes in the Angelus which we say each day. It is an ancient prayer, and is first recorded as being said on the Feast of the Annunciation.

The incarnation (taking human life) is clearly linked to the Passion, Cross and resurrection of Jesus, and by placing this prayer just before Christmas, the Church is emphasising the unity of the events of the life of Christ.

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,
your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an angel,
may by his Passion and Cross
be brought to the glory of His Resurrection

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.

these had to be repeated again and again, because they did not bring forgiveness of sin. Only Christ’s sacrifice could remit sins: it is the fulfilment of God’s will, rather than the holocausts he does not want. Jesus is seen as explicitly offering himself, so that not only are our sins forgiven but we may be made holy.

The Gospel begins the Christmas story with Mary’s visit to Elizabeth, soon to give birth to the last of the Old Testament prophets.

Psalm Response: **God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.**

(Micah 5: 1-4; Ps 79(80); Hebrews 10: 5-10; Luke 1: 39-44)

Chris Oliver

Long before Christmas was instituted as a feast in the Church’s calendar, the fundamental Christian day of celebration was every Sunday (“The Lord’s Day” (*Acts 20:7, Apocalypse 1:10*). This is the day of the resurrection: the eighth day and the first day, and as we prepare to celebrate Christmas, on the last Sunday before Christmas, we are reminded of the primacy of Sunday in the Christian calendar.

James: Pearls for Wise Living

James is one of the most practical books of the Bible. Its teachings speak loudly to those who feel torn between the competing demands of this world and their faith. This study offers “pearls for wise living” by applying the wisdom of James to our current day. For anyone who has struggled to live a truly Christian life, James offers a wealth of practical solutions for handling and even sanctifying everyday circumstances. Join us for **James: Pearls for Wise Living** at St Gregory's Church Hall beginning Monday 14th January 2019 at 1pm and continuing weekly until 1st April 2019 (except half term break on 18th February) .

Follow Me: Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John

Being Catholic takes more than simply believing in God or doing what he asks of us. Jesus wants you to be more than just a believer—he wants you to be his disciple and friend. To help you answer this call to deeper friendship with Christ join us for **Follow Me : Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John** at St Gregory's Sacristy beginning on Tuesday 15th January 2019 at 10.00 am and continuing weekly until 18th March 2019 (except half term break on 19th February). For more information or to register for **James: Pearls for Wise Living or Follow Me: Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John**, call Julie at 01604 456321 or via email: NN.BibleTimeLineTeam@aol.com. Study Guide for each course costs £22.

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 Stephen	St John	The Holy Innocents	St Thomas Becket
<p>One of the first seven Deacons, although ordained for the work of material ministry to the poor, he was a fearless preacher, and it was because of this that he was arrested, tried and then stoned to death. He was “full of grace and power” (<i>Acts 6:8</i>), and he spoke with wisdom and the Spirit (<i>see Acts 6:10</i>).</p> <p>His death is told in Acts 7:59 – 60; he died in faithful service of God and forgiving those who were stoning him. In this he had a good death. While we pray that ours may be peaceful; may it also be as good as Stephen’s</p>	<p>St John is one of the twelve Apostles, chosen by Jesus. Of the twelve, one of the more prominent in the Gospels, the author of one and also of three letters in the New Testament as well as the last book, The Apocalypse.</p> <p>His writings speak of God’s love for us, and tell us of Jesus’ commandment that we should love one another (John 13:34).</p> <p>The symbol of John is the eagle; believed to be the highest flying of the birds, and therefore having the best view.</p>	<p>The children that Herod killed because of the sin of an evil ruler. Down the years of human history there have been many other innocent victims of human sinfulness.</p> <p>In our generation, millions of unborn babies are killed without ever seeing the light of day — this is called “pro-choice”, but the babies were never offered a choice. Like Herod’s victims, they died because their very existence did not suit someone else. By God’s grace, they continue to exist with God</p>	<p>Co-patron of our Diocese with Our Lady, St Thomas Becket died at the whim of King Henry II of England.</p> <p>His connection with Northampton is by chance — the Royal court happened to be in Northampton Castle when Becket was brought for trial in the accusation of defying the King in defending the rights of the Church against the King. Before sentence was passed, Becket fled and went into exile in France. On his return, he was murdered in the Cathedral of Canterbury on 29th December 1170.</p>

