



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

# Christmas Blessings



The Adoration of the Shepherds by Andrea Pozzo (1642 – 1709). A Jesuit lay brother and one of the most significant Baroque painters.

In Hospital? Let the Chaplaincy know on 01604 714556. Are you new to the parish? You are welcome! Please introduce yourself to one of the clergy



# Notices of Interest

**The Repository:** Once again the Repository has had a successful Christmas season. I would like to thank you Parishioners for all the support, which has enabled us to make substantial donations to our Parish charity & to the Hope Centre. Special thanks are due to my loyal band of helpers now & throughout the year, & this year to the "heavy lifters" who made the displays in the Hall possible. So thank you to Tom, Cliff & the Anachebe family, notably David & Daniel for their cheerfulness & smiles! We still need extra help after Masses if anyone feels they could volunteer. Happy New Year to you all.  
*Kathleen Healey*

**Catholic Newspapers - Important Announcement:** If you regularly buy one of the Catholic newspapers, please read the notice pinned by the newspaper area.

**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.**

**Film at Sacred Heart.** Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan, 6pm, Sacred Heart Church parish hall, there will be a showing of a film about Sr Clare Crockett who passed away in the Ecuador earthquake in 2016. She was a budding actress who left her career & the open doors to fame behind to give her life to God.

**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.

**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!

**Christmas Flowers:** Envelopes are available in the Display Area for donations for Christmas flowers, which may be given in memory of a person, in thanksgiving, or as a gift! Names of those in whose memory flowers are given will be included in the newsletter for Christmas. As last year, arty crafty people are invited to do window displays - trays will be available after either Mass next Sunday.

**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. **Throughout the winter, this will be in the Sacristy, which should be more comfortable.**

**Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group** meets 1st Saturday of every month in the Sacristy, 10am. **Next meeting January 4<sup>th</sup>.** All welcome.

**Vianney Mission Prayer Group** meets 2nd Wednesday of every month in the Sacristy, 6pm - 7pm. **Next meeting January 8<sup>th</sup>.** All welcome.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

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

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

**Confirmation Preparation.** Classes begin in January 2020 & will generally be held on Saturday afternoons leading to Confirmation in July. If you have problems attending registration, please email Kathleen on kathfish@hotmail.com

**Choir Matters:** The next practice is Feb 6, then Lent preparation for Easter: Mar 5, 12, 19, 26, Apr 2, followed by 1<sup>st</sup> 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*

**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.

**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 - 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. This is a fantastic opportunity for a young person to be with like-minded people, sharing the pro-life message and listening to some inspirational speakers. The only stipulation is that the person chosen will have to provide their own transport to and from the conference. SPUC Northampton will cover the cost of all meals, accommodation and social activities. If you are interested or would like to have more details then please contact William Currie at wpcurie@btinternet.com or leave your details with Father Andrew.

**Bible Timeline courses.** There will be **two new Timeline courses** in January at St. Gregory's Church. Mondays in the sacristy at 1pm: ROMANS & Tuesdays in the sacristy at 10am: JAMES. There will also be a course starting 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 for 5 weeks on Tuesdays at 10am in the sacristy at St Gregory's: A BIBLICAL WALK WITH MARY in connection with the rededication of England as Mary's Dowry. Don't forget the Bible Timeline course at Sacred Heart continues Tuesdays, 10.15am, term time until Easter 2020. 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](http://www.bible-groups.info/timeline)**

## Christmas Flowers in memory of or thanksgiving for:

Malcolm Allen  
Arthur Eyles  
N. Kennard  
Mary Cashman  
Watts Family  
James Donnelly  
Brendan Moen  
Peter, Joseph & Francis Johnson  
John Hobson  
Andrew & Mary MacDonald  
Nancy & Mick Ginnelley  
Patrick & Bridget Philbin

Fred Jones  
Leann Hannelly  
The Agnew Family  
Michael Moore  
Reg & Mary Timmins  
Derek Rumsey  
Rebecca Holt  
Win & John Thrush  
A Wonderful Dad  
Annelie Johnson  
Chris Butler  
Annie Eyles

Brewer & Comley Families  
The Robinson Family  
The Munro Family  
Tim, Eve and John Perkins  
Antonio Pannese  
Louie Short  
Louise Whaley  
Bill & Ivy Johnson  
Two Healthy Grandchildren (Hugo & Dylan)  
Bill & Frances Currie  
Tyrrell, Pallett, Emmanuel & Liebe Families

# Scripture Readings 25th December 2019, Nativity of the Lord, Year A

Around 720 BC Judah was threatened by many enemies. Isaiah advised the kings to stand firm, because the Lord would give a sign: “the maiden shall be with child”. The birth of a helpless baby gives hope for the future. But this future must be founded on justice and integrity. Early Christians adopted these words as a marvellous way to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

All three psalms invite all creation to praise God as king and judge, for he alone is God and he will make all things right.

Written over 60 years after Jesus’ birth, Paul summarises the gospel to Titus: a compassionate God chose to offer us the free gift of being “at one” with him. But God’s revelation of salvation in Christ demands we transform our lives and “give up everything that does not lead to God”. The reading from Hebrews tells us that God has spoken to us through his son, who is “the perfect copy of his nature”.

Luke places the birth of the Christ firmly in time and space. Jesus was a man born miraculously to a virgin in Bethlehem in Judea. The

peace and quiet of the undercroft, where animals gave warmth, must have been a welcome relief for Mary, after the noise and bustle of the inn. The simplicity of Jesus’ birth is important: God comes as a vulnerable baby to draw us into a relationship with him. The royal birth announcement was sent not to royalty, but to poor shepherds, outcasts excluded from Temple worship by their occupation. Joseph, of the house of David, named Jesus as his son. Jesus lived in history, growing up in Nazareth in Galilee.

By the time John’s gospel was written, Christians had come to realise that Jesus had existed as the Word of God before time began. So John’s prologue seeks to describe the complexity of the creator becoming part of his own creation.

(Midnight: Isaiah 9:1-7; Psalm 95(96); Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14)  
(Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12; Psalm 96(97); Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20)  
(Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 97(98); Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18)

Chris Oliver

# Scripture Readings 29th December 2019, Holy Family, Year A

The Wisdom of the Son of Sirach was written about 200 BC and much used in the Church to present moral teachings. He sees the family as set up by God, in which we learn and practice kindness and honour to each other, just as we respect and honour the Lord.

The psalm celebrates the blessings of family life: husband, wife and children respecting the Lord.

The letter to the Colossians advises that wisdom and knowledge should be interpreted only in relation to Christ. Our baptism frees us from man-made religious rules. Not total autonomy: our lives must reflect the Spirit of Christ within us, while seeking to avoid offending our neighbours. But following these precepts and forgiving others is not easy. This beautiful description of the ideal community and family life assumes the normal family structure of the letter’s time

and culture. Husbands, wives and children should treat each other in the way the Lord would, showing mutual respect and duty.

In Matthew’s gospel Jesus is taken to Egypt, with Hosea reminding us of God’s deep love and care for Israel, his son. After the slaughter of the innocents, echoing the deaths of Egypt’s first-born before Israel’s exodus from slavery, Jesus is called back. The family return to Israel and settle in Nazareth in Galilee.

Psalm Response: **O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.**

(Sirach/Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6,12-14; Psalm 127(128); Colossians 3:12-21; Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23)

Chris Oliver

# The Season of Creation

## Actions to Live Simply :

Communication with eye contact melts ‘Stranger fears’.

**Tip No. 27:** **Solidarity with the poor:** *New Year Resolutions*  
(1) Buy FAIRTRADE bananas, fruit, tea, coffee & chocolate.  
(2) Bring tins/packs of food to Mass weekly for the Hope centre and Food Bank. Try visiting Daily Bread Coop on Bedford Road.

**Tip No. 28:** **Live sustainably with creation:** Trees take in Carbon Dioxide gas, reducing the climate change effect.  
**New Years Resolution:** Plant a small tree in your garden, or buddy up with someone who has the space . We can put you together: just let us know. Tel. 714246

## PRAYER

God of peace and justice,  
you give us the capacity to change,  
to bring about a world that mirrors your wisdom.  
Create in us a desire to act in solidarity,  
so that the pillars of injustice crumble  
and those now crushed are set free. Amen

In order to reduce the carbon footprint of the parish through the winter the Thursday Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will be in the Sacristy. This should also make it more comfortable for those praying, and (as a spin-off benefit) reduce the heating bill for the parish  
The parish is also investigating the possibility of rainwater harvesting for flushing the toilets.

**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.

There are many saints this week; on Thursday St Stephen, one of the first deacons and first martyr. His day is associated with generosity; hence “Boxing Day”, the day on which gift boxes were traditionally given. On Friday we celebrate St John, the “disciple Jesus loved” and author of the fourth gospel, on Saturday the Holy Innocents, the

children murdered by King Herod when we remember the unborn children who have been murdered. In the following week we celebrate St Thomas Becket, co-patron of our diocese, and on Thursday SS Basil the Great and Gregory Nazienzen (21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the ordination of Fr Andrew).

# The Year of the Word




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

**In Hospital? Let the Chaplaincy know on 01604 714556**

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

**During this season of**

Refugees;

**Advent, We are**

to God's Word, Expectant Mothers

**asked to pray for:**

Clergy & People of the Diocese.

Migrants &

Open-ness

The Bishop,

