



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

Dioceesan Feast!

December 8th is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, and is one of the feast-days of our Diocese (along with the feast of St Thomas of Canterbury, which falls on December 29th).

The feast this year falls next Saturday, and we are all invited to come to the Mass in the Cathedral at 11.30 am. The main celebrant will be His Excellency Archbishop Edward Adams, Apostolic Nuncio to the Court of St James, Papal Nuncio to the Great Britain.

This brings to an end our “Year of Prayer and Vocation”, and Bishop Peter speaks of “storing away the Diocesan Year of Prayer and Vocation banners and prayer cards”; which has the risk that we forget about it! Our Bishop says: “we must not stop praying or welcoming and loving in our parishes, in our schools, and in our homes!” (*from the Pastoral letter for today*).

The feast of the Immaculate Conception celebrates an important moment in God’s plan of salvation. He had raised up a people who had the benefit of the Law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets; the understanding of the truth that there is only one God and the experience of the monarchy of King David (the shepherd-king).

God had brought about an empire which stretched from the frontiers of India to the Adriatic, from Egypt to the frontiers of what is now Russia. Although by the time of the birth of Christ this empire had collapsed, it left a legacy of a common language (Greek), in which the Good News could be proclaimed and understood across a vast area. After the death of Alexander the Great, his empire was divided, but one of the successor empires, that of Rome, which controlled Judea famously built roads down which the messengers of the Good News could travel.

God’s plan was coming together! Now for the detail. The Word of God was to take flesh in truly human form, and for this to happen, he had to have a human mother. This could be no ordinary woman, she had to be willing to take on this task — she had to be a truly holy woman.

From the first moment of her being, she had to be fit for this purpose, and so, from the first moment of her being she was preserved from that legacy of sin which, in the first place was what made the redemption of the world necessary. So we celebrate this first intervention of God to prepare for the birth of his Son; he prepared his mother, from the moment of her conception for her unique and

momentous vocation. This event set the clock ticking towards the countdown of the event from which we measure all dates.

There could not be a better time of the year to be celebrating this beginning of the final countdown to the events of our Salvation. This Sunday we also celebrate the beginning of Advent; the start of our New Year. This may be the end of the “Year of Prayer and Vocation”, but it is inevitably also a beginning.

An important part of Catholic teaching is the “Universal Vocation of Holiness”

“The Church, whose mystery is being set forth by this Sacred Synod, is believed to be indefectibly holy. Indeed Christ, the Son of God, who with the Father and the Spirit is praised as “uniquely holy,” (1*) loved the Church as His bride, delivering Himself up for her. He did this that He might sanctify her (*Ephesians 5:25f*). He united her to Himself as His own body and brought it to perfection by the gift of the Holy Spirit for God’s glory. Therefore in the Church, everyone whether belonging to the hierarchy, or being cared for by it, is called to holiness, according to the saying of the Apostle: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification” (*1 Thessalonians. 4:3; cf. Ephesians. 1:4*). However, this holiness of the Church is unceasingly manifested, and must be manifested, in the fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful; it is expressed in many ways in individuals, who in their walk of life, tend toward the perfection of charity, thus causing the edification of others; in a very special way this (holiness) appears in the practice of the counsels, customarily called “evangelical.” This practice of the counsels, under the impulsion of the Holy Spirit, undertaken by many Christians, either privately or in a Church-approved condition or state of life, gives and must give in the world an outstanding witness and example of this same holiness.”

Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, Chapter V, paragraph 39

During this coming year, we will be celebrating many of the saints who are “optional” in the Church’s calendar. They are presented to us not just as citizens of heaven who pray for us, but as people whose lives are exemplary, and who offer us a pattern of life that we can imitate. May we all continue to grow in holiness in this New Year.



22 Park Avenue North
Northampton. NN3 2HS

Website: www.stgregory.org.uk

Sunday 2nd December 2018

First Sunday of Advent

Parish Mass Book - Year B

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Priest:

Fr Andrew Behrens ☎ 713015
E-mail: priest@stgregory.org.uk

Deacons:

Rev Michael Fleming ☎ 647750
E-mail: mvf@btinternet.com
Rev Rory Stewart (ret) ☎ 408407

Pastoral Assistant:

Maria Heath ☎ 07952 040830
E-mail: maria.heath@yahoo.co.uk

Sunday <i>1st Sunday of Advent</i>	9.00 am 11.00 am	Mass	Dante Davighi The Parish
Monday St. Francis Xavier	9.00 am	Mass	Con Dwyer RIP
Tuesday St John Damascene	9.00 am	Mass (Followed by prayers for the sick)	Catherine Clarke
Wednesday St Birinus	9.00 am 11.00 am	Mass Celebration of Word & Communion (St Andrew's)	Anthony Healey RIP
Thursday St Nicholas	9.00 am 6.45 pm 7.00 pm	Celebration of Word & Communion Benediction Mass	David Abraham's Intentions
Friday St. Ambrose	9.00 am	Mass	Patricia Convey's Intentions
Saturday Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Page 136)	9.00 am 9.30 am 11.30 am	Mass Confessions Mass (Cathedral)	Hugh Bonner RIP
Sunday <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i>	9.00 am 11.00 am	Mass	The Parish Fr. John Harris RIP

Your Offering To The Parish: Last Sunday's collection was £815.78. 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: Paul & Clare Sefton, C. Stratten.
Cleaners This Week: George & Another.

Readings for This Sunday

Jeremiah 33: 14-16. *I will make a virtuous Branch grow for David.*
1 Thessalonians 3: 12-4:2. *May the Lord confirm your hearts in holiness.*
Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36. *Your liberation is near at hand.*

Readings for Next Sunday

Baruch 5: 1-9; Philippians 1: 4-6, 8-11; Luke 3: 1-6. (Page 28)

During this season of Ordinary Time, Autumn, we are asked to pray for:
 Teachers & Pupils; The Harvest;
 The Spread of the Gospel;
 Prisoners & their Families;
 Victims of War; Young People.

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
Irgard Wraxall	Rachel
Sylvia Clark	Phyllis Albon
Maurice Murphy	Doris Old
Sylvester Dauksta	Rita
Lorraine Woolard	Rita Barry
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
Constance Unsworth	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
Stephen Aneke	

Anniversaries:

May they Rest in Peace

Robert Pope	Bridget Connolly
Nora Runton	Edgar Dawson
Margaret Behan	Jozsef Demeter
John Devini	Elizabeth Nagle
Carmela Perrina	Linda Hall
Michael Brennan	Gertrude Browne
John Cregan	Sean Walsh
Patrick Prendergast	Geoffrey Cumberpatch
William Lack	Joseph O'Connell
Stefan Tymkiw	Alphonso Bryan
Margaret Thompson	Martha Kelly
Edith Philpot	Alan Newbery
Ellen Hancock	Charles Ford
Johnnie Green	Ann Bassi
William Windram	Helen Penny
Peter Sweeney	Florence Bradley
Stefan Szyehta	Nora Walsh

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



We welcome into the family of the Church
Temple Okeibuno Ilechie
who received Christian Baptism last week.
Please pray for her and her family.

Repository HELP! Cards & other items for Christmas are on sale in the Hall after both Masses, as well as our other stock. As I have had a major operation I will not be able to help for some weeks. This means our loyal, but small, band of sellers will be under pressure and we desperately need offers of help for at least the Christmas period. It only involves a few moments after Mass & perhaps some help moving the tables in & out of the Hall. Please help if you can. Ring (01604) 629103 or just turn up! Kathleen Healey

Christmas Flowers: Help! Sadly Catherine Stratten is unwell and feels unable to take charge of Christmas flowers this year. It is more than a one-person job; would anyone willing to help please offer their services to Fr Andrew as soon as possible.

Fairtrade: There will be Fairtrade products on sale in the hall after the 9.00 Mass this Sunday. Please always try to shop fairly!

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!

2019 Office Diary: The diary for next year is now available. If you know of any Mass intentions you require for 2019, please do see me in the Office as soon as possible – dates get filled up very quickly! *Caryll*

Bible Alive for December 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.**

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 12th December.** All welcome.

Communion to Those With Limited Mobility: Holy Communion is brought to those in the FRONT ROW on EITHER SIDE and to wheel-chair users, but not anywhere else in church.

Choir Matters: Practices will be after Thurs. evening Mass on Dec 6, 13, 20, not Jan 3. New members always welcome, as are the old ones! *Alec*

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 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.

Mass to Mark the Close of the Diocesan Year of Prayer & Vocation on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Sat. 8 Dec. 11.30 in the Cathedral. "I hope representatives from all our parishes and a good number of clergy can join me on this occasion to welcome the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Edward Joseph Adams, who is presiding and preaching at the Mass". *Bishop Peter*

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!

Bernard Weston RIP. We pray for the soul of Bernard Weston, a faithful parishioner of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour at Great Billing, and the builder of St Gregory's Church. May he rest in peace.

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. Classes run for 8 weeks, led by Theresa who is fully qualified & insured. 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! Ceád Mile Failte. For further info please phone Pat Franks on 07710624921

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!

Flame 2019: The theme for the day is 'Significance'. Significance is defined as "worthy of attention," "with meaning," "important." In terms of Scripture, it is a word which resonates deeply with God's words from heaven at the Baptism of Jesus, and the Transfiguration, "You are my Beloved." We are in a world where it's easy to feel constrained to measure self-esteem in Twitter and Instagram "likes", responses to Facebook status updates, and Snapchat conversations. Flame2019 hopes that it offers a fresh depth of perspective for young people, centred in their creation in the image and likeness of God.

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>

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

Scripture Readings 2nd December 2018, 1st Sunday of Advent, Year C

A few weeks ago we heard Jeremiah promising the deliverance of his people. This week he describes how this hope will be realised, even though Jerusalem and the Temple had been destroyed. A descendant of David will bring honesty, integrity and security to Israel.

Jeremiah's complex writings changed Jewish expectations from a single Day of Judgement to a gradual process: an initial time of suffering, then an in-between period. This was identified by early Christians as now, after Christ's death had inaugurated the New Covenant, while we await the promised completion in Christ's second coming.

These rather mild verses from the psalm fail to show its directness: "In your kindness, recall me – You".

The earliest New Testament writing, Paul wrote this first letter to the Thessalonians from Corinth, probably in 51 AD, where Timothy had brought news of the Thessalonian church's progress. Paul prays that the Lord should increase their love for one another, exhorting them to show this love by leading moral lives.

We are starting the year of Luke, but the gospel for the beginning of Advent is from the end of Jesus' ministry, where he warns us to be ready for the end times. Every one of us faces an end time, and we must live our lives as if it comes today.

Psalm Response: **To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.**

(Jeremiah 33:14-16; Ps 24(25); 1 Thess 3:12 - 4:2; Luke 21:25-28, 34-36)

Chris Oliver

The prayer brings together the theme of the two comings of Christ; his coming at Christmas for which we are immediately preparing, and his coming at the end of this, for which we should be always prepared.

There is a degree of haste on our part: we "run forth to meet your Christ".

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom

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.

We do not run empty-handed; we come with "righteous deeds" — that is to say, with the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

The Gospel warns us against the other way of life, with coarsened hearts. It is by living in the way of faith, fruitful in good works, that we may hope to be held "worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom"

Hope Centre to be made homeless

It is a strange irony that the Hope Centre is the Mayor of Northampton's charity for the year and yet the Borough Council is supporting Midland Heart in evicting them from Oasis House. Ironically Midland Heart has on their web-page: (on Saturday 27th October, and several days after the announcement of their decision to evict the Hope Centre) "Oasis House is a revolutionary service that offers accommodation & support to homeless people in Northampton. There are 48 units at the scheme with 9 direct access beds & 39 move on apartments. Oasis House services are delivered in partnership by Northampton Borough council who have their gateway housing solutions team on site, Northampton Hope Centre who provide day centre services to the homeless by providing meals, clothing, training & activities."

St Gregory's parish have been supporters of the Hope Centre since its very start. There is an on-line petition at: <https://www.change.org/p/midlands-heart-save-the-hope-centre>.

Saints of the week

<u>St Francis Xavier</u>	<u>St John Damascene</u>	<u>St Birinus</u>	<u>St Nicholas</u>	<u>St Ambrose</u>
He was born in the Basque country of Spain in 1506 and met Ignatius of Loyola when they were students in Paris. One of the founding members of the Society of Jesus, he was ordained priest in 1537, and was sent as a missionary to India. After establishing missions in Goa and Malacca, he went on to Japan, and then to China where he died of a fever in 1552	Born into a Christian family in Damascus in the second half of the seventh century, while under Muslim rule, he entered the monastery of St Sabas near Jerusalem where he wrote many theological works in a simple, readable and easily understood style. He is regarded as one of the Church Fathers and was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1883.	Birinus came to England in about the year 634, intending to work in a remote part of Britain, but finding that Wessex was still pagan, he set up his mission there, and baptised the King. He built the church in Dorchester-on-Thames, and founded churches across Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. He died in 649.	Bishop of Myra in Turkey, he is remembered for his generosity to a poor man who could not afford dowries for his three daughters. This is the origin of the three golden balls as the sign of pawnbrokers, whose patron he is. He is also a patron of children, perhaps better known as "Santa 'Claus". (The original "Santa Suit" was based on bishop's robes.)	Ambrose came from Germany in the early 4 th century, and after education in Rome, was appointed prefect of the area around Milan. He was preparing for Baptism when the bishop died, and Ambrose was baptised, ordained and made bishop within a week in December 374. At the Easter Vigil in 387 he baptised St Augustine of Hippo and died in 397.