



# 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

## Mid-Lent (Laetare) Sunday

Although frequently known as “Mid-Lent Sunday”, we are actually more than half-way through Lent, and the petition in our prayer for today (see inside) that we may “hasten” towards Easter is possibly a reluctant intention! Indeed, so often time seems to be passing too quickly.

Part of the purpose of the Christian year is to help us to be ready for each celebration as it comes, but all too often the pressure of the secular world means that we find that we are running just to stand still.

The season of Lent offers us nearly seven weeks to get ready for Easter. The popular understanding that Lent is for giving things up can so easily obscure the true purpose of Lent is to allow us to prepare for Easter as God’s speed.

It is true that the precepts of prayer, fasting and almsgiving are fundamental to Lent, but they are not the actual purpose of Lent; rather they are means towards the purpose of preparing for celebrating the joy of the Resurrection.

The most significant preparation for Easter is for those who are preparing for Baptism or to be received into the Church. It is always a joy to be welcoming new people into the life of Christ lived through the life of the Church. On the last three Wednesdays we have been celebrating specific parts of their preparation, linked with three Gospel stories; the meeting of Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well, (*told in John 5:5 to 5:42*) which speaks of the thirst for the water of life in Baptism; the healing of the man who had been blind from his birth, (*told in John 9:1-41*) which indicates to us the understanding of the reality of everything seen in the light of Jesus. Finally, the raising of Lazarus (*told in John 11:1-45*) which is a foretaste of the Resurrection of Christ.

For those of us whose Baptism took place, perhaps many years ago, it is a time of renewal and as we renew our Baptismal promises at Easter, we too use this season of Lent to prepare.

## Leading up to Easter

In the week before Holy Week there will be a special series of films helping us to understand the events of the Passion.

On Monday evening 8<sup>th</sup> April, (starting at 7.30) the film looks at the agony in the garden; on the significance of the Mount of Olives in the Old Testament as well as for Jesus, and how the prayer of the agony speaks to us of the true vocation of Jesus and his obedience of the Father: “Not my will but yours be done” (*Luke 22:42; see also Mark 14:36 and Matthew 26:39*). The apostles are told to “watch and pray that you may not enter temptation” (*Mark 14:18; see also Matthew 26:41 and Luke 22:46*). We need to hear those words ourselves.

The second film, on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April examines the betrayal, arrest and trial of Jesus by the Sanhedrin, showing how Jesus is acting out of his own will: “No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord” (*See John 10:18*). We follow Jesus to the court of Caiaphas and hear the denials of Peter and see the fate of Judas.

On Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April the story moves on to the trial before Pilate, and we see how the crowd which had welcomed Jesus with “Hosanna” just a few days before, is now shouting “Crucify him”. Pilate asks Jesus if he is a King, but Jesus speaks of a different sort of kingship and kingdom. The film will show the nature of

Barabbas who was released rather than Jesus, and the significance of this; how the Chief Priests denied their adherence to the ancient kingdom of David: “We have no King but Caesar” (*John 19:15*) and how Pilate consciously connives in an injustice.

Thursday’s film (11<sup>th</sup> April) is following the Way of the Cross, and invites us to meditate on the event of the crucifixion, the wine mixed with myrrh, the soldiers casting lots to divide up Jesus’ clothes, the inscription on the Cross, the darkness and finally the blood and water flowing from Jesus’ pierced side.

The last of the films, on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April will be a little later as we will be walking the Way of the Cross at 7.30, and the film will follow on after. This film considers the last words of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels.

If you cannot get to all of the evenings, each one is worth seeing (even if you can only get to one). This will help us to enter Holy Week on the following Sunday; and to follow Jesus through this week with greater understanding and devotion. This would surely help us to fulfil the opening prayer for today: with visible devotion and eager faith we may be prepared for the celebration of the Resurrection.



22 Park Avenue North  
Northampton. NN3 2HS

Website: [www.stgregory.org.uk](http://www.stgregory.org.uk)

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019**  
**Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare)**  
**Parish Mass Book - Year C**  
**Page 80**

**Priest:**

Fr Andrew Behrens ☎ 713015  
E-mail: [priest@stgregory.org.uk](mailto:priest@stgregory.org.uk)

**Deacons:**

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

**Pastoral Assistant:**

Maria Heath ☎ 07952 040830  
E-mail: [maria.heath@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:maria.heath@yahoo.co.uk)

<b>Sunday</b> <i>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent (Laetare)</i>	9.00 am	Mass	Dante Davighi RIP
	11.00 am 4.30 pm	Mass Stations of the Cross	The Parish
Monday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Agnes Hegarty RIP
Tuesday Feria	9.00 am	Mass (Followed by prayers for the sick)	Josie McQuaide
Wednesday Feria	9.00 am 7.00 pm	Mass <b>Thanksgiving Mass- Cathedral</b> for the Hope Centre & the Homeless	Erica Campbell's Intentions
Thursday Feria	9.00 am 6.45 pm 7.00 pm	Celebration of Word & Communion Benediction Mass	Holy Souls
Friday Feria	9.00 am 7.30 pm	Mass Stations of the Cross (St. Matthew's)	Roseanne Ogbata & Family's Intentions
Saturday Feria	9.00 am 9.30 am	Mass Confessions	Annie Robin
<b>Sunday</b> <i>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent</i>	9.00 am	Mass	George Walsh
	11.00 am 4.30 pm	Mass Stations of the Cross	The Parish

**Your Offering To The Parish:**

Last Sunday's collection was £799.26. 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.

**Special Extra Collection Last Week:**

Disaster Appeal for Cyclone Idai £903.00 Thank you!

**Ongoing Lent Collection for CAFOD:**

Progress to be reported soon.

**Counters This Week:**

M. Bonner, Mrs Morgan, I. Wrxall.

**Cleaners This Week:**

Aideen & Another.

**Readings for This Sunday**

**Joshua 5: 9-12.**

*The People of God keep the Passover on their entry into the promised land.*

**2 Corinthians 5: 17-21.**

*God reconciled us to himself through Christ.*

**Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32.**

*Your brother here was dead and has come to life.*

**Readings for Next Sunday**

**Isaiah 43: 16-21; Philippians 3: 8-14; John 8: 1-11. (Page 82)**

**During this season of**

Candidates for the Sacraments;

**Lent, we are asked**

The Needy and Hungry of the World;

**to pray for:**

Penitents and Wanderers.

**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)

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

**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 Seamark	Robert Moore
Fr Ed Worthy	Sarah Dunster
Liam Murphy	Kim Do
Margaret Farragher	Sr. Margaret
Dulcie Miranda	Sylvia Clark
Joan Healy	Lily Butler
Jayne Miller	Rachel
Baby Lorenzo Diccico	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	Mary Rumsey
Philomena Fraher	Michael Fraher
Maureen Smith	Edward Taylan
Fr. Malachy Eleanya	Peter
Catherine Stratten	Eileen Howell

**Anniversaries:**

**May they Rest in Peace**

Martin Ryan	Bertha Davies
Reginald Thompson	Joan O'Connor
James Quinn	Cheung Cheng
Joan O'Connell	Teresa Johnson
Francis O'Neill	Daniel Ryan
Bridget Mills	Mary Pontin
Elizabeth Moynihan	Briquet Callanan
Rose McClelland	Emily Page
Anne Harris	John Cleary
Clement Penny	Emily Hollowell
Christine Fitzjohn	Irene Taylor
Winifred Charles	Agnes Penn
Michael Melanaphy	Agnes Fossey
Alice Byrne	David Jeffrey
Mary Brennan	Tom Robson
Cristian Frent	Maria Schlicht
Ellen Taylor	Bridget Walsh
Anna Delaney	Christina Port
Catherine Cleaver	Danny Nagle
Thomas Curry	Edward Zziwa
Regina Van Raemdonck-Bryssinck	

**POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS  
FOR APRIL**

For doctors and their humanitarian collaborators in war zones, who risk their lives to save the lives of others.

# Notices of Interest

**The Repository:** The Repository has now reverted to its normal pattern - open after Sunday Masses. Easter cards are now available and 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion and Confirmation cards will be on sale from next week. *Kathleen Healey*

**Bible Alive** for Lent 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.**

**Easter Flowers:** There are envelopes for donations for flowers to decorate the church for Easter in the display area. Please return them to the Sacristy or put them in the collection.

**Car Park - Important Message:** The car park has limited parking space, but double parking must not happen! If you block cars or the entrance, emergency vehicles will not be able to get in, and other users will not be able to get out in an emergency. **Please be considerate** - if the car park is full, please use one of the side streets to park. *Caryll*

**CAFOD/Supporting Children With Cancer UK:** Charity concert at St. Francis & St. Therese Church, NN4 0RZ, Friday May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Tickets £12.50 (including free glass of wine). Bar & Raffle. Full details on the notice board.

**Mass for victims and survivors of abuse,** their families and supporters at St Mary's in Woburn Sands at 12 noon on 12 October 2019. All victims and survivors of abuse, their families and supporters are invited to this Mass. The focus will be on healing, reconciliation and the forming of compassionate links with the Church. There will be light refreshments after the Mass.

**Individual meetings for victims and survivors,** families and supporters with Bishop Peter. Bishop Peter is offering to meet with victims and survivors, their families and supporters commencing from May 2019 and continuing on a bimonthly basis. For more details or to book a meeting with the Bishop, contact the safeguarding office on: 01604 723514.

**Good Friday Walk of Witness:** Starts at St. Alban's Church at 10:15am and ends at Christ Church at approximately 12 noon. Please see posters for full details.

**Life in the Spirit:** Lenten Retreat at Sacred Heart Church Hall, Pyramid Close, Weston Favell, Northampton NN3 8DP. **Every Wednesday from 6<sup>th</sup> March to 24<sup>th</sup> April 2019.** Each session starts at 7.00pm in the Church Hall. All welcome!

**Thanksgiving Mass for the Mayor's Charity, the Hope Centre and the Homeless.** Bishop Peter will be celebrating Mass on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 7.00pm in the Cathedral. The Mayor Tony Ansell and other Civic guests will be attending. A collection will be taken during the Mass for this charitable work. All are welcome.

**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 April 6<sup>th</sup>) All welcome.

**Vianney Mission Prayer Group** meets every 2nd Wednesday of the month in the Sacristy, 6pm - 7pm. Next meeting 10<sup>th</sup> April. All welcome.

**A Day of Reflection for Catholic Women:** Our Lady of Grace, Squirrel Lane, High Wycombe, HP12 4RY. Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April 10.30am to 3pm. See Poster for full details.

**Choir Matters:** Next Practices are Thursdays in Lent to prepare for Easter: Apr: 4, 11. These start after evening Mass and finish at 9pm. *Alec*

**Mass For Married Life:** Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Woburn Sands, MK17 8NN. Gathering from 11.30am. Mass at 12 noon, Celebrant Bishop Peter Doyle. See poster for full details.

**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.

**Fitness & Pilates for Mid Life & Beyond!** Classes Wed, 10.30am in the Church Hall with 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!

**Piano Concert** by Margaret Fingerhut Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May, 7pm, at Northampton School for Girls in aid of Northampton Town of Sanctuary. Tickets £12.50. See poster for details.

**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.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

**Baptism Preparation:** The next Baptism Preparation will be at 7.00 pm, Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019, in the Sacristy.

**First Holy Communion — 2019** Next session will be 30<sup>th</sup> March. The session starts at 2.00 pm, and parents are asked to stay until, about 2.45 pm. 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:**

**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>

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**Catholic Basics Course: Part Two: Church** 11 April, **Part Three: The Moral Life** 16 May, **Part Four: Prayer** 13 June. After a 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](mailto:admin@nores.org.uk) or phone Jackie on 01582 723312.

There are a number of interesting words in this prayer, whose meaning is more complicated than might at first appear.

Our normal usage of the word “prompt” carries a meaning of immediacy; without delay. However, the Latin word from which this is derived, and which is translated as “prompt” has a meaning of “being visible”.

O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that with prompt devotion and eager faith the Christian people may hasten towards the solemn celebrations to come.

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.

The meaning of “Sollemnia” in the Latin is not fully realised by “solemn”. It actually refers to an annual occasion, and only from this became religious, and our idea of “solemnity” in the usual meaning of the word has given a twist which was not in the original.

What we are praying for is that we may be clearly and certainly moving towards Easter with deliberate preparation; not “sleep-walking” towards it! (*More on the front page.*)

## Scripture Readings 31st March 2019, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, Year C

In the book of Joshua Israel’s conquest of Canaan, the promised land, starts with the miraculous crossing of the Jordan. The river waters were held back until all the people had crossed on dry ground. Then, before celebrating the Passover, all the men who had been born during the Exodus were circumcised to mark them now as Israelites, so removing the “shame of Egypt”. The place where they crossed was named Gilgal, a pun on the word meaning “remove”.

The psalm offers grateful praise to God for rescuing us from danger, and encourages fear of the Lord, keeping our tongues from evil.

Paul insists to the Corinthians that as new creations in Christ they must not forget their old ways of seeing the world. We have been

given work to do, that of showing visibly in our lives that God has reconciled us to himself, just as Christ did by dying on the Cross.

Although Luke’s unique parable in today’s gospel is usually called “The Prodigal Son”, the behaviour of the other two people in the story is important. The father rushes out to meet his returning son – a marvellous image of God the Father. But are we sometimes tempted to imitate the other son’s reactions to his father’s reconciliation with “this son of yours”?

Psalm Response: **Taste and see that the Lord is good.**

(Joshua 5: 9, 10-12; Psalm 26(27); 2 Cor 5: 17-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11-32)

*Chris Oliver*

## St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Academies Trust Lenten Service

The pupils of the St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Academies Trust enjoyed working together to provide an opportunity for the wider community to share in their Lenten journey, which allowed us all to take time to be with Jesus and relive His suffering in a service of reflection, prayer and music.

The pupils, led by Mrs Darwin, the Trust Chaplain, identified Jesus’ suffering by following the Stations of the Cross, through their readings, modern day reflections, prayers and hymns. Each of the four schools were represented by readers and their school choirs.

Jasmine from The Good Shepherd read the words of Jesus:  
“...I realised I had to be utterly humiliated to fully appreciate the misery some people suffer. This way, I can look them in the eye and say: ‘I understand your pain. I am one with you.’”

Through this reflection, on His physical and emotional journey towards the cross, we recognised that the experiences of Jesus and the onlookers, teach us how to witness Jesus in our lives today.

All the choirs sang in adoration, having practised individually in their schools with Mrs Ro Sefton. Their harmonies filled the Cathedral as the children united to lead each hymn for the congregation. Whilst this was happening, Quaku and Isaac from Thomas Becket and St Gregory’s respectively, carried the cross symbolising Jesus’ journey through each of the stations around the Cathedral.

Phizana from St Mary’s, reminded us of the example set by the women of Jerusalem when they showed us that true compassion means getting involved and doing everything you can to help.

The service was brought to a close by Thomas Becket’s rendition of ‘God so Loved the World’.

This service of reflection brought us all closer to Jesus and gave the congregation a chance to take time and reflect during the season of Lent. Thank you to the Cathedral team, all the staff, Mrs Darwin and Mrs Sefton for preparing the children on their Lenten journey.



# NEXT ALPHA:

**Tuesday evenings, 7.30 – 9.45 pm**

**from 30<sup>th</sup> April – 16<sup>th</sup> July, (except 28<sup>th</sup> May)**

**BEGINS ON TUESDAY 30<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

**plus Friday evening to Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

**Please come and bring a friend!**