



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

Epiphany

Last week this piece in the newsletter began: “Mortal life on earth is totally dependent on our relationship with the sun.” The feast of the Epiphany reminds us that our eternal life is totally dependent on the Son — the Son of God.

The word “Epiphany” comes from a Greek root: φαίνειν (phainein) meaning “to display”. The suffix “epi” mean “to”, so the complete meaning speaks of Jesus being displayed to, in this case, the Magi from the East.

We can see in this something of our parish vision — Jesus is displayed to the Magi both “confidently and humbly”. We can learn an important lesson from this.

As we look at the Epiphany Crib we do not see a great deal of action, nor do we hear any words spoken. Our Lady sits with the child Jesus on her knee. Joseph stands beside her, silently protecting his wife and her divine Son.



One of our new dismissals at Mass says: “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life”. This is as much with “being” as with “doing”.

The first way in which we can display Jesus to the world is by our holiness. This is a state of “being” more than an agenda of “doing” and “saying”.

Our Lady sits at the focus of the picture holding Jesus and displaying Him to the Magi. We must also display Jesus to those we know and meet. In other words, our life must be in accord with the life of Jesus. Mary does not conceal Jesus from the visitors even though they are not of her faith.

There are many traditions about the Magi — even that there were three comes from traditions that are not in Scripture. All we are told is that wise men from the East arrived in Jerusalem, saying that they had seen a star indicating that a new King of the Jews was born. The probability is that they came from Babylon, where there had been a thriving school of astronomy. The Jewish historian Josephus, writing in the 1st Christian century tells of a belief in the first century before Christ that a new ruler of the world would arise in Judah.

If the star of Bethlehem was (as is widely supposed) the conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn and Mars in the constellation of Pisces which took place in 7-6 BC, (now thought to be the likely time of the birth of Jesus) then the astrological interpretation would be that a birth had taken place of a ruler who would bring salvation in Judea

This would indicate that the “wise men” were astrologers, and at first sight this presents a problem in that Christian practice forbids this practice.

“All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to “unveil” the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honour, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church §2116

St Gregory Nazianzen, writing in the 4th century observes that the moment the Magi adore Jesus, astrology came to an end. St Paul writes to the Colossians: “He is the image of the unseen God, the first-born of all creation, for in him were created all things in heaven and earth: everything visible and everything invisible, thrones, ruling forces, sovereignties, powers — all things were created through him and for him. (*Colossians 1:15-16*)

The stars and planets are subject to Christ; to think that they have any control over human life is not compatible with Christian teaching.

The Epiphany represents astrology submitting before Christ: “In the magi, representatives of the neighbouring pagan religions, the Gospel sees the first-fruits of the nations, who welcome the good news of salvation through the Incarnation. the magi’s coming to Jerusalem in order to pay homage to the king of the Jews shows that they seek in Israel, in the messianic light of the star of David, the one who will be king of the nations. Their coming means that pagans can discover Jesus and worship him as Son of God and Saviour of the world only by turning towards the Jews and receiving from them the messianic promise as contained in the Old Testament.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church §528

We are called, like Our Lady and Joseph, to confidently and humbly show Christ to the unbelieving world, so that thy, like the Magi may “fall down and worship him” (*Matthew 2:11*)

Acknowledgements to “Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives”; Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI



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Website: www.stgregory.org.uk

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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

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| Sunday <i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i> | 9.00 am | Mass | Coln Folan – get well |
| | 11.00 am | Mass | The Parish |
| Monday Feria | 9.00 am | Mass | Carmel McDonagh RIP |
| Tuesday Feria | 9.00 am | Mass (Followed by prayers for the sick) | Amanda Niland RIP |
| Wednesday Feria | 9.00 am | Mass | Rose Kelly RIP |
| | 11.00 am | Celebration of Word & Communion (St Andrew's) | |
| Thursday Feria | 9.00 am | Celebration of Word & Communion | |
| | 6.45 pm | Benediction | |
| | 7.00 pm | Mass | Sheena (Thanksgiving) |
| Friday Feria | 9.00 am | Mass | Hugh Bonner RIP |
| Saturday St. Aelred of Rievaulx | 9.00 am | Mass | Joe Murtagh RIP |
| | 9.30 am | Confessions | |
| Sunday <i>The Baptism of the Lord</i> | 9.00 am | Mass | Doris Costello RIP |
| | 11.00 am | Mass | The Parish |

Your Offering To The Parish:

Last Sunday's collection was £649.19. 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.

Second Collection Next Week:

The Life House

Counters This Week:

Paul & Clare Sefton, C. Stratten.

Cleaners This Week:

Aideen & Another.

Readings for This Sunday

Isaiah 60: 1-6.

Above you the glory of the Lord appears.

Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6.

It has now been revealed that pagans shared the same inheritance.

Matthew 2: 1-12.

We saw his star and have come to do the king homage.

Readings for Next Sunday

Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11; Titus 2: 11-14, 3: 4-7; Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22. (Page 50)

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)

The funeral of John Shoreland will be at the Cathedral on Thursday 17th January at 11.00 am

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 |
| Owen | Mary Rumsey |
| Maire West | |

Anniversaries:

May they Rest in Peace

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Charlotte Glibbery | Lucy Duke |
| Patrick Greene | Arnold Darby |
| Tony Haynes | Heather Peterson |
| Victoria Habib | Michael McCrossan |
| Jean Evans | Diane Murphy |
| John McDonald | Nancy Smith |
| Patrick Cawley | Josephine Scott |
| Adrian Williams | Agnes Parsons |
| Cicely Chapman | Elsie Coleman |
| Michael Murphy | Hannah McAdam |
| Jeremiah Hartigan | Eileen Davis |
| Constantino Perrina | Thomas Mann |
| William Blundell | Edward Dagg |
| Michael Murray | Patrick Ryan |
| Rosalie Muddiman | Rachel Curran |
| Cornelius O'Donoghue | Margaret Doherty |
| Ethel Holt | William Wright |
| Francis Corcoran | Mary Bosworth |
| Elizabeth Farrugia | |

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY

That young people, especially in Latin America, follow the example of Mary and respond to the call of the Lord to communicate the joy of the Gospel to the world.

Notices of Interest

The Repository: The Repository has now reverted to its normal pattern - open after Sunday Mass. But, owing to my health circumstances some Christmas stock was overlooked, including Advent Calendars & Church Art Calendars, as well as the second crate of cards. I must apologise to anyone who was disappointed. I have put the Church Art Calendars at the back of the Church for anyone who would still like some. Please put money in the Repository wall box in the foyer or the books & papers box in the porch. *Kathleen Healey*



We welcome into the family of the Church
Francesco Panariello and
Agnes Patricia Nyaley
who received Christian Baptism last week.
Please pray for them and their families.

Fairtrade: We will no longer be holding a Fair Trade Stall in the Church Hall as Traidcraft is being reorganised. Thank you to all who have supported the stall over the last 20 years. Please continue to buy Fair Trade goods, which can now be purchased in most shops and supermarkets.

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.**

Tour of Our Lady of Walsingham: The Diocese of Northampton is first for the Dowry Tour of Our Lady of Walsingham in 2019! From Thurs. 7th Feb. to Sat. 9th Feb. 2019 in the Cathedral Church of Our Lady & St. Thomas. Further details to follow.

Choir Matters: Practices will be weekly from 1st Thursday in February, after Thurs. evening Mass. New members always welcome, as are the old ones! *Alec*

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!

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

Our Lady of Kibeho: in 1981 at Kibeho College in Rwanda, a young girl claimed to have seen a vision of the Virgin Mary who warned her of the unimaginable: Rwanda becoming hell on earth. She was ignored by her friends & scolded by her school but then another student saw the vision, & another, & the impossible appeared to be true. Katori Hall's *Our Lady Of Kibeho* presents us with a haunting insight into the true events that captured the world's attention. A vibrantly theatrical meditation on faith & everyday miracles, it was hailed "the most important play of the year" by the Wall Street Journal when it premiered in New York in 2014. Featuring stirring original music, the UK premiere of *Our Lady Of Kibeho* promises to be an epic event. It will be directed by Artistic Director James Dacre, who premiered Katori Hall's *The Mountaintop*, which won the Olivier Award for Best New Play in 2010. It is on at the Royal Theatre in Northampton from 12th January to 2nd February

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.

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

The funeral of Nancy Ginnelly will be at St Gregory's Church on Friday 18th January at 11.30 am. Her body will be received into church on Thursday evening, 17th January at 6.00 pm. May she rest in peace.

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 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!**

Blessed Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group continues monthly on 1st Saturday of each month in the Sacristy at 10am. (Next meeting is February 2nd) 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!

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.

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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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

Scripture Readings 6th January 2019, Epiphany, Year C

Third Isaiah was writing just after the Israelites had returned from exile in Babylon. After God promises to punish those who fail to keep his covenant, he offers participation in the future messianic salvation to all who believe in the Lord and keep his commandments. Isaiah visualises the new Jerusalem, illuminated by God, to which all peoples will stream, and a time when their offerings will be acceptable.

The psalm prays that the king's reign will be just, long, prosperous and glorious, with support for the poor.

Paul sees the Church, Christ's body, as the new Jerusalem, part of God's plan for the whole of creation. Paul joyfully tells the Ephesians that God's plan was always to take the gospel message to all: Gentiles as well as Jews are to share equally in the inheritance promised by God.

In Luke's Gospel an angel announced Jesus' birth to poor Jewish shepherds, excluded from Temple worship by their occupation. Today Matthew describes Gentile scholars travelling from afar to bring kingly offerings to the new-born child. God's plan is already becoming known beyond Israel. But the scholars needed the Jewish scriptures to help find Jesus. We too need the Old Testament to help us understand God's plan and what he has done in Jesus for our salvation.

Psalm Response: **All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.**

(Isaiah 60:1-6; Ps 71(72); Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 ; Matthew 2:1-12)

Chris Oliver

This prayer dates from around 100 years after the time of our patron, Pope St Gregory the Great, and expresses one of the ideas found in his famous commentary of the Book of Job. That we "may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory" echoes Gregory's "May we ascend all the way into the heights of contemplating the innermost light. Through love we are already lifted up to contemplating the glory of the heavenly reign." (*Sermons on Job: 27:15*)

O God, who on this day revealed your only begotten Son to the nations by the guidance of a star, grant in your mercy that we, who know you already by faith may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory

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.

Both the Magi and King Herod had an interest in the star. The difference between them was that the Magi travelled by faith, even though at that moment they had not discovered the object of their faith. Herod, on the other hand was motivated by fear. We are not like Herod; we know God by faith, and so pray that we may be lifted up to contemplate the glory of the heavenly reign, the beauty of God's sublime glory.

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.

Bible Timeline and other courses start in the week beginning 13th January — James on Monday 14th, John and Timeline on Tuesday 15th

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

Saint of the week: St Aelred of Rivieux

Abbot of Rievaulx, homilist and historian (1109-66). St. Aelred, was the son of one of those married priests of whom there were many in England in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. He was born at Hexham, but at an early age made the acquaintance of David, St. Margaret's youngest son, shortly afterwards King of Scotland, at whose court he apparently acted for some years as a sort of page, or companion to the young Prince Henry. King David was impressed by the pious English youth, promoted him in his household, and wished to make him bishop, but Aelred decided to become a Cistercian monk, in the recently founded abbey of Rievaulx in Yorkshire. Soon he was appointed master of novices, and was long remembered for his extraordinary tenderness and patience towards those under his charge. In 1143 when William, Earl of Lincoln, founded a new Cistercian abbey in

his estates at Revesby in Lincolnshire, St. Aelred was sent with twelve monks to take possession of the new foundation. His stay at Revesby, was not of long duration, for in 1146 he was elected abbot of Rievaulx. He was present in Westminster Abbey, at the inauguration of the shrine of St. Edward the Confessor, in 1163, and, in view of this event, he wrote a life of the saintly king. Throughout his last years Aelred gave an extraordinary example of heroic patience under a succession of infirmities. He died on 12 January, 1166. St. Aelred left a considerable collection of sermons, the remarkable eloquence of which has earned for him the title of the English St. Bernard. He was the author of several books, notably the "The Mirror of Charity" and "Spiritual Friendship".