



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

40 Hours of Prayer

There are three precepts of Lent; Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. This week we have a very special opportunity to spend time in prayer with Our Lord. He extended a special challenge to his disciples and to us after his last supper: “Could you not watch with me one hour” (*Mark 14:37, Matthew 26:50*).

The origin of the 40 Hours devotion lies in the era of the renewal of the Church following the Council of Trent in the middle of the 16th century. This was a time of renewal of personal prayer life, of growing enthusiasm for the Faith and a reawakening of the sense of the mission of the Church. In many ways, a time not unlike our own.

Because it is still quite cold, especially at night, we will be praying in the Sacristy, and through the night access will be through the fire door in the garden. (Please do not worry if you hear the dog barking — she cannot get out!)

There is a chart leaning against the Altar rails inviting you to sign up and commit to a period of time during the 40 Hours. It is important that there are always people there, and groups who want to pray together (for example, charismatic groups, the Cyprian Tansi group, John Vianney group, small community groups, singing groups, Lectio Divina groups are all very welcome).



We will all have particular reasons for prayer to be important at this time:

- ✘ We pray in thanksgiving for the faithful ministry of Bishop Peter, and pray for his in his forthcoming retirement.
- ✘ We pray for David, our Bishop-elect, who will be moving into Bishops' House during the time of our 40 Hours prayer.
- ✘ We pray for our own initiative for evangelisation, particularly for our Alpha Course, beginning on April 21st
- ✘ We pray that we may be spared the threatened pandemic of Covid-19 (Coronavirus) and for all those who are victims of this disease.
- ✘ We pray for a good response to the “Year of the Word”, and that we may all grow in our love and understanding of the Scriptures.
- ✘ We pray for God's blessing on the “Wordfest” event on June 6th, and for all those involved in preparations for it.
- ✘ We pray that England may be blessed as our country is re-dedicated to Our Lady as “Mary's Dowry”.
- ✘ We pray for our own particular and personal intentions.

Corvid-19 (Coronavirus): We are now in “Stage 2”

On Friday evening we received a message from Bishops' House saying that due to the increasing number of those being diagnosed with the coronavirus, we should implement Stage 2 of the guidance advice. Together with other parishes in Northampton, the following measures are now in place:

- (1) **No holy water in the stoops;**
- (2) **No sign of peace;**
- (3) **Communion only in the hand;**
- (4) **No communion from the chalice.**

The implementation of these procedures is not primarily to prevent the risk of infection (although this will be a consequence) but to reduce the high level of concern expressed by parishioners.

This will mean that there is no need for ministers of Communion for the chalice; if there is a need for an extraordinary minister of Communion, it is essential that he/she thoroughly washes hands before ministry. There is hand sanitiser in the sanctuary.

The best precaution we can all take is regular thorough hand-washing; Anti-bacterial gels do not protect against a virus.

Notices of Interest

The Repository: St Patrick's Day and Easter cards are now available. 1st Communion and Confirmation cards & items will be on display from Sun. April 5th. Any queries phone Kathleen Healey 01604 629103.



We welcome into the family of the Church
Aris-Andrei Antal
who received Christian Baptism last week.
Please pray for him and his family.

Bible Alive for Lent 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.**

40 Hours of Prayer: Thurs 12th March 7am to Friday 13th March 11pm. During the 40 hours the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed & people are invited to make extra time to pray during the day or night. Come on your own or come as a group. There will be a sign-up sheet available. Come and pray silently or lead some music/ bible reflection/a decade of the Rosary etc. If you plan to lead a time of prayer please add that on the sign-up sheet so others know about it. Thank you! Masses will continue at the normal times. There will be an extra Mass at 10pm on the Friday evening. For more information please see Maria Heath or one of the Alpha team.



Fairtrade Fortnight: Fairtrade Fortnight continues. Please try to buy traded products wherever possible. There is a display in the Lobby area and a poster with details of the good being done by the Fairtrade Foundation!

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!

Choir Matters: The next practice will be for Lent preparation for Easter: Mar 12, 19, 26, Apr 2, followed by 1st 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*

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

Vianney Mission Prayer Group meets 2nd Wednesday of every month in the Sacristy, 6pm - 7pm. **Next meeting March 11th.** All welcome.

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. Anyone able to come during the afternoon would be especially welcome. **Throughout the winter, this will be in the Sacristy, which should be more comfortable.**

Vocations Day: The Diocese of Northampton is running a Vocations Day for men who may be thinking about the possibility of priesthood. This will take place at Holy Family Church, Luton, LU3 3TA, on Saturday March 21st from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. Please contact Fr Andy at vocationsdirector@northamptondiocese.org if you would like to attend. See poster on noticeboard.

Life House Quiz: The proceeds earned from the event is £698.10, that includes ticket sales, donations, raffle and tea money. In addition the collection from the wall box in the church was £94.78, taking the total collection to £792.88.

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 Fáilte. For further info please phone Pat Franks on 07710624921

Thomas Becket class of 1980 are holding a 40 year reunion at Semilong working men's club on 11th July. 7pm-late. Tickets are £6 which include a light buffet and are available from Eventbrite, Thomas Becket class of 1980: 40 years later reunion... <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/thomas-becket-class-of-1980-40-years-later-reunion-tickets-89639505173?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

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 Session will be 7pm, Monday 23rd March, in the Sacristy.

First Holy Communion — 2020 The next preparation session for children is on Saturday 29th February at Sacred Heart Church Hall, from 2.00 pm until 4.30 pm. It is also essential that children attend Mass each week.

Confirmation - 3rd Preparation Session: Saturday 21st March at Sacred Heart Church hall from 3pm-6.30pm.

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children- Pro-Life

Chain On Saturday 25th April SPUC Northampton are forming a Pro-Life Chain on St Peters Way Northampton. It will be a silent act of witness to the lives of 9 million unborn babies killed by abortion since the implementation of the Abortion Act on 27 April 1968. Please will you come & join us? In order to make the chain we need a minimum of six people and being a group of just four we need your help. Please will you help us in this witness? The chain will be from 11am to 1pm but you could join us at any time. If you can help us then please contact William at wpcurrie@btinternet.com, or 499833, or give your name to Father Andrew. If we could save the life of just one baby or help a woman who has suffered trauma following an abortion then there will be great rejoicing in Heaven. Our Lady of Guadalupe Patroness of the Unborn-pray for us

During Lent! There will be a course on Tuesday evenings through Lent using the talks by Bishop Robert Barron entitled "The Mystery of God". It would be particularly suitable to all who have done the Alpha course, although everyone is welcome. Starts at 7.30 pm. On Fridays through Lent there will be our usual shared Stations of the Cross with St Matthew's, starting at 7.30 pm. **Information on local courses can be found at:** www.bible-groups.info/timeline

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.

Lenten Reflection: You are invited to join pupils from the Northampton Catholic Schools on their Lenten journey on Thursday 26th March, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. in Cathedral of Our Lady Immaculate & St Thomas of Canterbury, Primrose Hill, Northampton, NN2 6AG: take time to be with Jesus through the eyes of our young people in reflection, prayer and music.

Bishop Peter leaving: Bishop Peter leaves this Tuesday and as he leaves Northampton we pray that God will bless him in his retirement. On this Friday, Bishop-elect David moves into Bishop's House and his Episcopal Ordination takes place on March 19th at the Cathedral. Regrettably, those wishing to attend his ordination will be unable to do so due to the capacity restrictions of the Cathedral so admission is by ticket only, however the liturgy on the day will be available via live streaming.

Scripture Readings 12th March 2017, 2nd Sunday of Lent, Year A

After hearing last week about the Fall, Genesis moves past the Flood and the Tower of Babel to the times of the patriarchs, probably before 1500 BC. God tells Abram to travel from Haran near the Euphrates to “a land that I will show you”. God promises that Abram’s descendants will become a great nation which will be blessed, and will take God’s blessings to other peoples. Abram trusts in God and obeys, following the age-old migration route through Palestine to Egypt.

In one of his last letters Paul instructs Timothy to continue proclaiming the true gospel he received from Paul, and to correct the errors that will arise from false teachers. God’s plan, made before time began, was revealed by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who has

saved all humanity and abolished death. We cannot merit the grace to be holy, it is a free gift.

In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus for the first time tells his disciples of his coming passion. They are then given a preview of Jesus’ glory as the Son of God. Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus, who is the correct interpreter of the Law and the Prophets. Then Jesus predicts his resurrection, after which they will understand what they have seen.

Psalm Response: **May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you.**

Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 32; 2 Timothy 1:8-10; Matthew 17:1-9

Chris Oliver

The Season of Creation

Actions to Live Simply :

Tip No. 47: **Solidarity with the poor:** Listen more than you speak in a conversation.

Tip No. 46: **Living Sustainably with creation:** avoid looking at your mobile phone in the company of others.

The CAFOD Lent fast day appeal will help to support the healthcare work in Zimbabwe, and CAFOD has already given £50,000 in emergency response. Pope Francis has been reminding us that the poorest people suffer disproportionately from climate change and natural disasters; please be generous, and keep up the fast each week during Lent.

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

No Saint’s days this week — look forward to Wordfest!

‘For several months, CAFOD has been monitoring a situation of drought and food shortage in Zimbabwe and Zambia. Climate change in that region means temperatures are rising, water has become increasingly scarce and harvests have failed. The situation has escalated, and we are now responding to this food crisis with emergency aid.

Our local aid experts are supporting the worst-affected communities. We have so far committed over 160,000 to the emergency response. This currently includes delivering emergency food aid to the people in greatest need, through our Church network and creating access to safe, clean water through new pipelines, boreholes and wells.

It is your giving at Fast Days that allows work across the world to continue, enabling people to provide for themselves and be more resilient. This work is as crucial as ever.



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The Year of the Word



DIOCESAN SCRIPTURE FESTIVAL DAY

The Bishops have asked that we celebrate 2020 as the **Year of the Word**, with the beautiful title of **The God Who Speaks**. As part of our diocesan celebrations we are organising a Scripture Festival Day for families, catechists, readers, people who know a lot about the Bible, and people who don’t know anything at all, but wish they did!

With fantastic speakers, **CJM music**, **Rise Theatre**, a multitude of **workshops**, youth and children’s streams, the **National Scripture Tour** and a **sky dancing St Jerome**, book your place now and join us for a proper diocesan festival day.

We have special provision for children and young people which we want to be every bit as good as what’s going on for the adults. They are going to have the best time! Rise Theatre and the Cafod Schools Team will be going into the streams. We will also

have the fabulous John Hardwick, Christian puppeteer for the children’s stream.

The children and youth streams run from Reception to Year 6, and Year 7 to Year 13. All adult leaders will hold a diocesan DBS check. All children/young people must have a designated fee-paying adult present at the festival. Parents are responsible for their children/young people when not attending streams.

As reported last week, we have a considerable reserve to buy tickets; anyone who would like to go is asked to put their name on the list in the display area, together with the number of adults and children who would go. Contact will be made by email, and a block booking will be made by the parish.

