



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

Patroness of the Missions

Last Wednesday Pope Francis dedicated his weekly audience to St Thérèse of Lisieux, universal Patroness of the missions. He did not say anything about his going into hospital later the same day for a planned operation, but we give thanks that it went without complications. He is staying in hospital for a few days, and has cancelled all appointments for ten days. We pray for his continued recovery.

Pope Francis spoke of her:

She is patroness of the missions, but she was never sent on mission. She was a Carmelite nun who lived her life according to the way of littleness and weakness: she defined herself as “a small grain of sand.”

She may seem to be a strange patroness of missions, but, as Pope Francis points out:

She recounts in her “diary” that her desire was that of being a missionary, and that she wanted to be one not just for a few years, but for the rest of her life, even until the end of the world.

Pope Francis points to two events in the life of St Thérèse that influenced her and encouraged her in a life of prayer.

The first concerns the day that changed her life, Christmas 1886, when God worked a miracle in her heart. Shortly after that, Therese would turn 14 years old. As the youngest child, she was pampered by everyone at home. Returning from midnight Mass, however, her very tired father did not feel like being there when his daughter opened her gifts, and said, “Good thing it’s the last year!” Therese, who was very sensitive and easily moved to tears, was hurt, and went up to her room and cried. But she quickly suppressed her tears, went downstairs and, full of joy, she was the one who cheered her father. What had happened? On that night, when Jesus had made himself weak out of love, her soul became strong: in just a few moments, she had come out of the prison of her selfishness and self-pity; she began to feel that “charity entered her heart, with the need to forget herself” (cf. *Manuscript A*, 133-134). From then on, she directed her zeal toward others that they might find God, and, instead of seeking consolations for herself, she set out to “console Jesus, [to] make him loved by souls.”

The second event took place the following year. It speaks of her enormous charity, a charity which knew no limits.

Following the example of Jesus the Good Shepherd, her zeal was directed especially toward sinners, to “those far off.” This is revealed in the second episode. Therese learnt about a

criminal, Enrico Pranzini, sentenced to death for horrible crimes: he had been found guilty of the brutal murder of three people, and was destined for the guillotine; but he did not want to receive the consolations of the faith. Therese took him into her heart and did all she could: she prayed in every way for his conversion, so that he, whom, with brotherly compassion she called “poor wretched Pranzini,” might demonstrate a small sign of repentance and make room for God’s mercy in which Therese trusted blindly. The execution took place. The next day, Therese read in the newspaper that Pranzini, just before laying his head on the block, “all of a sudden, seized by a sudden inspiration, turned around, grabbed a Crucifix that the priest handed to him and kissed three times the sacred wounds” of Jesus. The saint remarked, “Then his soul went to receive the merciful sentence of the One who declared that in Heaven there will be more joy for a single sinner who repents than for the ninety-nine righteous who have no need of repentance!” (*Manuscript A*, 135).

Thérèse had a great devotion to the ‘Holy Face’, the representation of the face of Jesus which had grown from a picture based on the image on the veil of St Veronica, and which was a popular devotion at the time. Indeed, she incorporated this into her name at her profession: “Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face”. As a Carmelite nun she was not able to be a ‘front-line’ missionary, but she supported the missions with her prayers, and by writing to missionaries. In one such letter she writes:

“Look at Jesus in his face, there you will see how he loves us.”
(Quoted by Fr John Udris; “*The Gift of Thérèse of Lisieux*”)

Such is the power of intercession moved by charity; such is the engine of mission! Missionaries, in fact – of whom Therese is patroness – are not only those who travel long distances, learn new languages, do good works, and are good at proclamation; no, a missionary is anyone who lives as an instrument of God’s love where they are. Missionaries are those who do everything so that, through their witness, their prayer, their intercession, *Jesus might pass by*.

As we seek to become what Pope Francis asks of us, a truly ‘missionary parish’, we recognise that prayer is a vital part of that mission. We have a shrine to St Thérèse, with a prayer below. Please pray that we may all become true ‘missionary disciples’ in whatever way God calls us.

Unattributed indented paragraphs are quoted from the Papal Audience of 7th June 2023

Notices of Interest

Car Park Safety: Please remember that Parents/Carers are responsible for children in their charge whilst using the car park. Neither the Parish nor the Diocese are responsible for the safety of persons (adults or children), cars or their contents while in the car-park.

Repository: The Repository is open after every Sunday Mass wherever possible! We need more helpers prepared to stand for a few minutes after Mass - all stock is marked, so an easy task!
Contact Kath.healey.789@gmail.com.

Bible Alive for June & July is now available - only £3.00! If you wish to purchase a copy, they are near the hand-sanitiser in the narthex as you come into church.

The Letter to the Romans: From Sunday 18th June, the second reading at Sunday Mass is from the Letter to the Romans, and there will be an on-line Bible Study run by the Diocese this Wednesday evening, 14th June at 7.30 pm. Please email Fr Andrew for the link which will be sent nearer the time.

Unity Walk: A Walk of Unity between People of Different Faiths, visiting 6 different places of worship with a break at noon for refreshments. Please see poster form full details.

Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group continues to pray together online via Skype and by telephone and on the first Saturday of the month, here in the Church, from 10am-12pm.

Thursday Holy Hour & Adoration: Holy Hour is now Holy Two Hours, from 9am until 11am. This will continue while there are sufficient numbers to sustain it, and remains in the Sacristy for the time being.

Choir notes: The next choir practice is after evening Mass on Thursday 29 June, the Holy Day feast of St Peter and St Paul. *Alec*

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday 26th June in the Sacristy at 7pm. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book a place.

First Holy Communion 2023: Enrolment for 2024 will be in the autumn; please watch this newsletter for information nearer the time.

Confirmation in 2023: Those interested in Confirmation preparation should have spoken to Helen and will know the plan for the coming months.

Can You Help Gregory Care? Gregory Care are in the process of tidying up a family garden in the Eastfield area. We are looking for someone who might help dig over a small vegetable plot to help the lady start to grow some of her own food. It would only take a couple of hours and is a 'one off job'.

If anyone could help please speak to one of the Gregory Care team or text message us (number below) and we'll get back to you

Food Parcels: Please contact Gregory Care (07434 669011) if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel.

Fire Safety — Important notice. Some years ago in response to instructions relating to the fire risk associated with votive candles, we had trays made to go under the racks where the candles burned to prevent the possibility of a naked flame falling on unlit candles below. Unlit candles **MUST NOT** be placed on these trays in any circumstances & must not be stacked one on top of another. This has been happening in recent weeks, and must not continue.

URGENT NOTE ON FINANCES

Many people transferred to Standing Orders with their bank through lockdown, and it is this that has kept the parish finances stable through that very difficult time. For this we are deeply grateful. However, it appears that Gift Aid declarations in many cases have not followed those standing orders. This does not require new Gift Aid declarations, **but please can any who have transferred to standing orders and pay income tax please contact Fr Andrew (preferably by email) so that their Gift Aid can be linked to their donation.** Claims can only be made for up to three years, so there is some urgency about this.

Parish Finances: Much the easiest way to support the parish financially is through a standing order directly from your own bank account. The information required for this is as follows:

Bank; **NatWest**
Sort Code; **60-06-11**
Account Number; **46898093**
Account Name; **Northampton Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust**
Payment Ref; Parish Name/Area: **(St. Gregory's, Northampton)**

Tots @ St Gregory's: Tots and their carers welcome, 9.30-11.30 on Tuesdays during term-time £1 per adult!

Second Collections - Updated: There have been a couple of alterations in the coming second collections for the rest of this year as follows:

25 th June	Day For Life
9 th July	Peter's Pence
23 rd July	The Mission Appeal
6 th August	Apostleship of the Sea
17 th September	Evangelii Gaudium (Home Mission)
8 th October	CAFOD (Harvest Fast Day 6 th Oct)
22 nd October	World Mission Sunday
5 th November	Bishop's Maintenance Fund
12 th November	Sick & Retired Priests' Fund

Caritas Northampton: The following items are needed for local families with young children:

Double bed and mattresses x 2

Wardrobe, chest of drawers, table and chairs. If anyone has anything to donate could they please call Caritas on 01604 434362 to arrange collection.

Alpha in the Autumn: The sessions will start in September, and although evenings will be light then, by the time it finishes it will be the first week in December, and many are less happy about coming out, so this will be an 'on-line' course through Zoom. However, so that those on the course can meet face-to-face, there will be a welcome session the week before the official start, on Tuesday 12th September in the Hall at 7.15 pm. Please register at www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha and the zoom link will be sent out in the week before each session. For any who live far away, we are sorry if you are unable to get to the 'face-to-face' session on 12th September, please do not let this put you off joining the course.

Mission Prayer

Heavenly Father,
it is your will that we should make disciples of all nations.
We ask you to bless the mission of our Diocese of Northampton and guide our hearts and minds,
so that your will might be done
and your kingdom be build up here on earth.
We pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit,
without which our work is in vain,
and we entrust ourselves to your beloved Son,
for we know that he is with us for all time, now and for ever.
Amen.

Assembly Insight

"Holiness is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God's grace"

(*Pope Francis, Rejoice and Exult, §34*)

Prayer for Ukraine:

Please continue to pray for an end to the war in Ukraine:

O God, author and lover of peace,
to know you is to live, to serve you is to reign.
Defend against every attack those who cry to you
so that we, who trust in your protection,
may not fear the weapons of any foe.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen

Scripture Readings 11th June 2023, Corpus Christi Year A

Deuteronomy, the "second" book of the law, collected and organised the whole Jewish law from the previous four books. It emphasises that Israel must remember how they had been tested in the wilderness so that they would not again neglect their God. God provided manna and land for their needs, but warned them not to think their success was due to their own efforts.

The psalm gratefully praises the Lord for his many gifts, both rain on the earth and laws for his people.

Paul recalls the wanderings of the Jews in the desert to warn the Corinthians to avoid idols. Worship, more than words and actions, implies the spiritual reality of becoming partners. We cannot share in Christ's body and blood while also seeking demons such as money and power. Belonging to Christ must be total.

Chapter six of John's gospel describes Jesus feeding the five thousand before saying that the manna came not from Moses but it is the Father who now offers "the true bread from heaven", which "gives life to the world" – ie Jesus himself. Jesus' teaching is stark. Many could not accept it then, or now. But Jesus insists: we must show we are united with him body and soul by our physical communion with him – and so be united with all his followers. Faith must always be shown by action.

Psalm Response:

O praise the Lord, Jerusalem!

(Deut 8:2-3,14-16; Ps 147; 1 Cor 10:16-17; Jn 6:51-58)

Chris Oliver

The Ministry of Welcome — Our 'One Step Challenge'

We all appreciate being made welcome, and are also very conscious if at any time we are made to feel unwelcome. The mission of the Church is greatly enhanced when visitors and newcomers are made to feel welcome; all too often we can be very welcoming to the people we know, but ignore those we don't, if we are only friendly to our friends.

The diocese ran an online course, and we can watch it, it is in two sessions, the first will be on Wednesday 21st June, the second on 28th June, 11.00 am in the Sacristy or at 7.30 pm. by Zoom. There is no commitment implied in coming to this course.

Alpha's final session for this course.

"Jesus never wrote a book, he formed a community. He started with a small group and that small group has grown and grown over two thousand years." (*From this week's Alpha Video*)

That community is the Church, and we can trace an unbroken chain from the first Apostles to the present day and to our own parish here in Northampton. It is a community which has spread throughout the world. It is a community which, at its centre, is a community of love; the love of God for each and every one of us, and is a love which is inclusive and seeks to embrace every person on earth.

Our next Alpha will be in the autumn, and the dates are here. It will be on line so that there will be no need to be out in the dark, nor to find a baby-sitter. Please visit www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha.

First session:	September 19th:	Is there more to life than this?
Second Session:	September 26th:	Who is Jesus?
Third Session:	October 3rd:	Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session:	October 10th:	How can I have faith?
Fifth Session:	October 17th:	Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session:	October 31st:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Seventh Session:	November 7th:	How does God guide us?
Away-Day:	November 11th:	Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session:	November 14th:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	November 21st:	Why and how should I tell others?
Tenth Session:	November 28th:	Does God heal today?
Eleventh Session:	December 4th:	What about the Church?

The Diocesan Mission Appeal and Special Collections

It is important to realise that the 'Diocese' is not a separate body from the parishes that makes it up. The Diocese is the sum of its parishes, and from a financial point of view, the only money the diocese has is that which comes through the parishes. There are some functions of the Church which do not need to be done in duplication by each parish, but are more efficiently done centrally. In order to fund such work which is done on behalf of the parishes there are professionals employed to manage these things (payroll and personnel; buildings surveys; gift aid; safeguarding, for example). This is paid for by regular contributions from each parish, in proportion to the parish income.

When the pandemic struck and we went into lockdown, the income for most parishes diminished dramatically, such that in order to maintain the minimum necessary services, the diocese had to take out a substantial loan, which now needs to be paid off.

Next week there will be special collections throughout the diocese to support the work of mission within the diocese, but since we had an extra collection last week, ours will be deferred until later in the year (23rd July), although the parish will make a significant contribution to this fund as part of our commitment to the importance of mission in our locality. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find the revised dates of special collections for this year. In the meanwhile, thank you for your generosity week by week and for the special collections.

CALLED & EQUIPPED

A year-long programme, offering a foundation in Catholic teaching and a journey of faith formation. It is for anyone active in parish life or coming into ministry.

There will be two information webinars about the course on 14th and 17th June at 7.30 pm

Visit www.pastoralministryoffice.org/called/

Rayner Willnecker has recently completed this programme, and would be happy to talk to anyone who might be interested in enrolling for the coming year.

Gregory Care

Support for refugees

We continue to work with local churches supporting refugees and thank you to those who have donated things through us in the past. We are now looking for:-

Suitcases, wool and knitting needles and children's bikes and helmets.

The wool and needles can be left in the Gregory Care box however if you have a bike you would like to donate please speak to one of the team so we can arrange collection and delivery.

Thank you.

Gregory Care

☎ 07434 669011