



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

Rejoice — Celebrate!

We are a thriving Catholic community!

CELEBRATE WHAT HAS BEEN DONE BY VOLUNTEERS DURING THE PANDEMIC

REPAINTING AND NEW LIGHTING IN THE ENTRANCE NARTHEX

COMPLETE KITCHEN REFURBISHMENT AND NEW BOILER

FLOOR IN THE HALL REVAMPED CHILDRENS AREA CREATED

TOILETS IMPROVED AND CLEANED REGULARLY

REFRESHMENTS AFTER MASS SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY

VARIETY OF COURSES AVAILABLE TO ALL:

- ✓ ALPHA COURSE RUNNING AGAIN
- ✓ CHILDRENS LITURGY RUNNING AGAIN
- ✓ BIBLE TIMELINE (on-line)
- ✓ EVANGELISATION COURSE (on-line)

TOTS@ST. GREGORY'S OPEN AGAIN

FULL CHOIR RUNNING AGAIN

FLOWERS ARRANGED

LOVELY GARDEN AND HEDGES MAINTAINED

NEW FENCE GIVEN AND ERECTED

WELCOMING AT ALMOST EVERY MASS — GETTING TO KNOW YOU

3 MASSES EACH SUNDAY TO KEEP US SAFE

NEW SIGNS ONGOING PROJECT AND BEAURIFUL WOODEN CROSS IN CAR PARK

WONDERFUL GENEROSITY TOWARDS:

- ✓ BAGS OF JOY APPEAL
- ✓ HOPE CENTRE
- ✓ TOILETRIES
- ✓ MISSIO (Perhaps the best year ever!)
- ✓ CAFOD
- ✓ THE PARISH

IMAGINE HOW MUCH MORE WE CAN ACHIEVE WITH YOUR HELP PLEASE DONATE YOUR TIME TO
ST GREGORY'S — EVEN ONE HOUR MAKES A DIFFERENCE. PLEASE — BE PART OF OUR RENEWAL.

Notices of Interest

Repository: A display of Christmas cards & other items are available in the Hall foyer. Due to Covid & the lack of new staff this will be in reduced form. Please observe Covid recommendations. I am grateful that my small but very loyal helpers will try to be available, but if there is no-one to help, please put money into wall box to the right of the Sacristy door. *Kathleen Healey (01604) 629103*



We welcome into the family of the Church
Gloria George
Who received Christian Baptism recently.
Please pray for her and her family.

Bible Alive for December 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.

Used Postage Stamps: As Christmas rapidly draws near could I appeal to everyone to save their used postage stamps. My loyal supporters will already know that the used postage stamps raise thousands of pounds for the missions abroad. It all started when a young priest became very ill & was sent back to England to die. He wanted to do something useful with his time, & eventually started collecting used postage stamps & postcards. This caught on in a big way & lots of money was, & still is being raised. It doesn't cost anything except a bit of time. They are being sent in the name of St Gregory's & I pay the postage myself. The good news is that the young priest is now in his 90s, & still going strong. Truly God works in mysterious ways. Thank you, *Linda Fleming*

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next preparation will be in the Sacristy on Mon. 10th January, 7pm. Please note that you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

First Holy Communion 2022: There will be six 'in-person' sessions preparing for first Reconciliation, both at Sacred Heart church, Weston Favell from 3.00 pm until 5.00 pm on Saturdays, 4th and 11th December before the Christmas break. Those preparing on-line will receive emails with what they need. After Christmas there will be sessions on January 15th, 22nd and 29th and on February 5th.

Confirmation in 2022: The next Confirmation programme will be announced soon, but there will be a time of reflection before any definite plans are made. Please keep looking at this space where information will appear.

Parish Finances: Continued thanks for the wonderful generosity that you are showing to the parish.

Standing Order via Donor's Own Bank. You can set up a standing order for donations to your parish using either your on line bank account or in branch. The information required to make the donation 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)**

Courses for Readers: The Bible Timeline course has started on Zoom on Wednesday evenings, beginning at 7.30pm. on 13th October. All are welcome, but those who proclaim the Scriptures at Mass are particularly encouraged to take part. Please email to Fr Andrew for further details. It is not too late to join!

LUX.Pilgrimage: A fun residential weekend for young Catholics aged 11 (Year 7) -18 years from 4th-6th February 2022 at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk (transportation included from Luton & Northampton). Please contact Fiona at fiona@nymo.org or visit www.nymo.org/lux for more information and to book your place

Penitential Liturgies before Christmas: There will be a penitential liturgy and opportunity for confession at the Cathedral on Monday 20th December and at St Gregory's on Tuesday 21st December, both at 7.00 pm. Confession is also available on Saturdays after the 9.00 am Mass, or by appointment (please email Fr Andrew).

Online Advent Retreat: Online retreat, Mondays through Advent 13th and 20th December 7.30-8.30pm. Join Fr John Udris and Avril Baigent for an online retreat helping us to pause, reflect and encounter the Lord. Last week focussed on the life of St Nicholas, and Fr John showed us how the saint reflects Jesus' own self-giving: "I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls." You can catch up with the session here: <https://youtu.be/3QowdeEslng?t=295>.

Our final two sessions focus on the lives of St Lucy and St Joseph. To join our online community on a Monday night register here: <https://lift-up-your-eyes.eventbrite.co.uk>, or watch the sessions here <https://pastoralministryoffice.org/lift-up-your-eyes/>

News from the Foodstore! The cupboard is bare! Your support and generosity is amazing, but the need is continuous. Thank you again for all that you have given; it is much appreciated, but may we ask again, particularly for basic toiletries, such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, shower gel, washing-up liquid. We as a parish are supplying toiletries to add to the food bags from the Cathedral Foodstore. Please donate what you can, & continue to pray for this work. Remember that as the weather gets colder, the need becomes greater. Many Thanks, *Gregory Care*.

Food Parcels: Please get in touch with Gregory Care (07434669011) if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel.

Choir Matters: To avoid travelling in the dark on Thursday's, choir members have asked for practices, up to Dec 17, to be moved to Fridays every week: 2-3:15. *Alec*

We Now Have Heating Again! **Please, please, please** can we all help to keep the heat in by closing the outside doors, and not leaving them open.

Tots @ St Gregory's: TINY TOTS will finish for Christmas this Tuesday (14th December) and re start on Tuesday 11th January. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year, if you have charge of a pre school child, from 9:30- 11:30 on a Tuesday morning!

Vacancies: The Diocese a number of vacancies. Full information for each position and how to apply can be found by visiting <https://northamptondiocese.org/jobs/> or via email hadmin@northamptondiocese.com

Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group continues to pray together online via Skype and by telephone.

The Net Charismatic Prayer Group. A new prayer group will commence meeting on Wednesday 19th January 2022 at 7.30pm to 9pm in the prayer room of The Sacred Heart Church Hall, Weston Favell. The Net will meet every first and third Wednesday of the month. Everyone is welcome!

Message From The Diocesan Finance Team: As the Catholic Bishops of England & Wales have decided to continue to offer a dispensation of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, we know many people won't be returning to churches at Christmas. We also know many people will wish to offer a gift to their priests for the sacrifices they make through the year. If you would like to offer a gift to your priest this Christmas, please call 01604 712065 between 9am-5pm from Monday 20th - Thursday 23rd and 9.00am-1pm on Friday 24th December. A member of the team would love to hear from you.

Scripture Readings 12th December 2021, 3rd Sunday of Advent, Year C

About 600 BC Zephaniah preached that Judah's idolatry would lead to a "day of wrath". But the Lord "is in your midst" and will mercifully spare a holy remnant. Jerusalem will finally enjoy the peace and joy of the Day of the Lord celebrated in this song, and recalled by Luke: "the Lord is with you".

Before 700BC first Isaiah prophesied that idolatry and social injustice would bring about the destruction of the northern kingdom Israel. But, he said, "a shoot shall spring from the root of Jesse" bringing justice to the world, and he celebrated this rescue with today's Psalm.

After instructing the Philippians in right moral behaviour and community living, Paul encourages them to look forward to the Lord's coming with confidence that the peace of God will come to them. They should celebrate publicly their joy in the Lord, but

not so exuberantly that others are offended or put off. They should always show kindness to all.

Luke's gospel continues from last week with the moral teaching preached by John the Baptist before Jesus started his ministry. Repentance must include conforming to God's justice. But John insists that he is not the Messiah, who is coming and will baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Psalm Response: **Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.**

(Zeph 3: 14-18; Is 12; Phil 4: 4-7; Luke 3: 10-18)

Chris Oliver

Adsumus Sancte Spiritus

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever. Amen

Love Christmas

Big thanks to everyone who gave to the 'Love Christmas' appeal from Caritas Northampton. The 'Bags of Joy' will be given to needy families across Northampton.

You continue to be wonderfully generous with the weekly collection of toiletries and food for the Hope Centre. It is a great testimony for our parish that we can respond at such short notice to this appeal; indeed, this parish is remarkable in its generosity. Although final figures are not in yet, this may well be the best year ever in the 'Missio' Red Box collection, and in spite of all the difficulties, our special collections throughout the year have remained at their pre-pandemic level, our general fund has remained healthy, CAFOD collections, giving to the Hope Centre and toiletries for the Cathedral Foodstore have all remained healthy. Through our giving, many people will have a happier Christmas than they might otherwise have had. Many thanks to everyone.

The Synod Process

It is becoming clearer how the synodal process will work, and the indications are that it could be a really significant time in the life of the Church. However, it is also potentially risky, and many people have focussed on the risks rather than the potential benefits.

The risks lie in the possibility that people with a specific agenda for a particular change or changes will try to hijack the process. Pope Francis is absolutely clear that the voice to which everyone must listen is that of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the 'Adsumus' prayer. It is also important to understand from the outset that this is not about changing the teaching of the Church.

The benefits are to be found in how we can be the Church more faithfully to Christ. To do this, we first need to fully understand what the Church *is*. In his earthly life Jesus gathered a community of people around him, and that community became the Church. Fundamentally, then, the Church is a community — one community, now distributed throughout the world. It is present in every locality where 'two or three meet together'; where we celebrate Eucharist, where we read his Word, where we pray, but it remains in every locality part of the whole.

Down 2,000 years of Christian history we have been guided by the Holy Spirit; at some times following that guidance better than at others, but guided into the truth, such that we have a creed and a moral code revealed to us by God.

The Holy Spirit sustains us, both individually and collectively in the Church, but to be a community in any real sense, there must be conversation, and it is this that the synodal process is seeking to encourage. Parish conversations will feed into diocesan conversations, these will feed into wider conversations, and ultimately into global conversations. These will help us to grow together as the once community of faith which Our Lord founded.

However, there is much more to it than that! Our own parish conversations will help us to grow together as the Eucharistic community that meets at St Gregory's and can bring great blessings to us.

It is worth thinking about these questions which are offered as 'conversation-starters':

- ? What does it mean to you to be a Catholic?
- ? What are your experiences of the Church doing something well?
- ? What are your experiences of when things have not gone so well?
- ? What are your dreams for the Church?

As a parish, we have a vision, stated on every newsletter, that we will be a thriving Catholic community, confidently and humbly proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.

On the front of this newsletter is a list (not necessarily complete) of many of the wonderful ways in which we are being Church here. Through these, and many other things, people are finding their faith made real in their lives. We have much to talk about!

Christmas Flowers

Envelopes are available for donations for Christmas flowers on the table in the narthex. If you wish your flowers to be in memory of a particular person, please write their name on the envelope. This will appear in the Christmas newsletter.

St Gregory's next Alpha:

To the right are the dates of the next Alpha course which we are hoping will be able to be in the hall and in person. It is highly recommended for everyone, and is very enjoyable. Each session starts with a good meal (A proper evening meal, not just a snack), then we watch a film together about our faith. After the film we have a conversation around our table about what we have seen and heard. It is good to have established believers as well as potential converts and those who simply want to know more about our faith. Please come, and if you can, bring a friend. There is no charge, but donations are cheerfully accepted. For catering purposes, please register at www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha

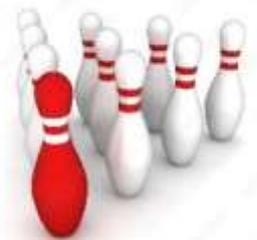
HELP IS NEEDED IN OUR KITCHEN!



We are looking for volunteers, to assist with serving coffee and tea, on Sunday after 09h00 Mass

Please see Jehanne or Rayner after Mass

SOCIAL EVENING TEN PIN BOWLING



Come along and join us for a fun evening.

When: Thursday, 16th December 2021

Time: 19h00

Cost: £10 per person

Contact Daniel (Dan.Davighi@outlook.com)

Lets smash those skittles down!

First session:	21st September 2021: Is there more to life than this?
Second Session:	28th September 2021 Who is Jesus?
Third Session:	5th October 2021 Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session	12th October 2021 How can I be sure of my faith?
Fifth Session	19th October 2021 Why and how do I pray?

Sixth Session	9th November 2021 How does God guide us?
Seventh Session	16th November 2021 Why and how should I read the Bible?
Away-Day	19th -20th November 2021 Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session	23rd November 2021 How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session	30th November 2021 Why and how should we tell others?
Tenth Session	7th December 2021 What about the Church?
Eleventh Session	14th December 2021 What about the rest of my life?