



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

Moving on to solid food

A new-born child is fed with milk, and it is one of those landmarks of growing up when solid food is introduced. Our spiritual life has landmarks which relate to the physical ones, and for the first time some of our young people are receiving the solid food of the Eucharist today, and others over the next two weeks.

This is a landmark; a milestone in their spiritual journey, but it is far from the end of that journey. Just as in our physical development we discover more about our foods as we grow older, so we continue to learn more about the mystery of the Eucharist as we grow spiritually.

Of course, this is only an analogy, not an exact comparison. In our culinary development we discover different tastes and textures, and the cuisine of different continents and countries. In our spiritual growth we discover different significances of the same food; the food that is the very life of Jesus, given so that he may live in us.

Our young people have been preparing for about 6 months to receive Holy Communion. Over the rest of their life they will discover more and more about what they receive.

In our ordinary food we receive energy. We measure this in kilo-calories or joules, and as we grow older many of us try not to consume too many of them. In our spiritual food we receive spiritual energy, which is manifested in strength to engage in virtue and to resist temptation. In truth, we cannot get enough of that! However, unlike ordinary food, where the more we eat the more calories we consume and the more

energy we get, just a small piece of the Eucharist is sufficient to give us the strength we need.

Our ordinary food also contains tiny quantities of minerals and trace elements that our bodies need for good health. The Eucharist is also a medicine for our souls. If we are struggling in our spiritual life, receiving Communion regularly will help us in that struggle.

Our ordinary food has a variety of flavours and aromas. These give us pleasure, and the blending of different foods brings delight, and sometimes awakens memories of previous meals. The Eucharist will physically taste much the same, but the different times, places and circumstances in which we receive it helps us to realise the wide variety of Christian life around the world, and the wonderful richness of God's creation.

This is the food that has nourished saints down the ages; the 'desert fathers' who sought God in solitude, the early martyrs of the Church, the great missionaries who took the Good News to far-away places, the contemplative nuns who found God in silence and the quiet order of their convents, popes, bishops, priests, and the faithful women and men who lived a life of faith and put love into action through good works in every age.

May this same food nourish those who today receive it for the first time, and continue to nourish them throughout their life.

CAFOD

CAFOD stands for the "Catholic Agency for Overseas Development", and is an international development charity which reaches out to people living in poverty with practical help, whatever their religion or culture. CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International.

Through their global Church network, one of the largest in the world, they have the potential to reach everyone. And they campaign for global justice, so that every woman, man and child can live a full and dignified life.

We are probably most conscious of the fund-raising side of CAFOD's work, and St Gregory's parish is a very generous parish for the relief work that it undertakes.

However, its name indicates that it is first of all an agency for overseas development. Only in emergency does it engage in relief work. Sadly those emergencies occur far too often, and too many of them are the result of human action: wars, genocides, poverty due to unjust trade, human-provoked droughts or floods

We should all want to see a fairer world, in which the resources are more evenly spread, and in which creation is respected; a world that we can feel happy to pass on to the next generation.

As well as fund-raising to meet the needs of the all-too-frequent crises, CAFOD engages in campaigning governments and industry. The pollution of rivers in this country is a scandal, but so too is the pollution of rivers throughout the world as a result of industry, where in many countries the workers are paid little while the shareholders in the developed world are enriched.

As well as being financially generous, can we also become more engaged in the other activities of CAFOD? Later this year there will be a General Election in which we are all given the chance to vote for our member of Parliament, and indirectly, contribute to the decision of who will form the next government. Whichever party that might be, we have the opportunity to have an influence, so that the new government is aware that at least some of the electorate is concerned for the 'common good', the welfare of all peoples, not just on this island but throughout the world, and for the welfare of the planet itself.

Notices of Interest



We welcome into the family of the Church Nieves Jacqueline Iris Eastman-Gonzalez who received Christian Baptism recently. Please pray for her and her family.

Repository: The Repository is open after Sunday Masses for the sale of cards and religious goods. Cards and items for First Communion and Confirmation are available. Red Communion ties are here & cost £6. Any queries or volunteers to 01604 629103 or Kath.healey.789@gmail.com

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

Choir Notes: next practices are Saturdays June 1, July 6, Aug 3, Aug 31, Oct 4, Nov 9, 16, 23, 30, Dec 7, 14, 11:00-12:30. There are vacancies for new members, especially ladies. *Alec*

Coming Events (for your diary):

Sunday 23rd June: Parish Picnic in the Park *More details nearer the time*

Friday 19th to Saturday 20th July: 40 Hours Adoration at St Gregory's

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)**

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday 27th May at 7.00 pm in the Sacristy. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book a place.

First Holy Communion 2023/4: All sessions are on Saturday afternoons at Sacred Heart, Weston Favell. Details, dates, times have been given to all those who are registered.

Confirmation in 2024: There will be practical sessions through February & March, & then teaching sessions from April. Email to childrens.liturgy@stgregory.org.uk for further information.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham:

8th June 2023:

A coach will leave from St. Gregory's at 8am on Saturday 8th June, leaving Walsingham at about 5.00pm. **Cost £20 per person** (payable in advance). To book, please speak to Caryll in the Office, or add your details to the list in the Lobby area and see one of the Clergy to pay.



Next Alpha Sessions:

Fifth Session:	May 14th:	Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session:	May 21st:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Seventh Session:	June 4th:	How does God guide us?
Away-Day:	June 8th:	Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session:	June 11th:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	June 18th:	Why and how should I tell others?
Tenth Session:	June 25th:	Does God heal today?
Eleventh Session:	July 2nd:	What about the Church?

Tots @ St Gregory's: St Greg's Tiny Tots runs each Tuesday in term time from 9:30-11:30 in the church hall. We charge £1 per group which includes snacks & coffee! If you have care of a pre-school child, please join us!!

Called & Equipped: What is God calling you to do next? Our year long formation course isn't for everyone but covering the foundations of Catholic teaching alongside developing a personal spirituality, it might just be for you. More here: <https://northamptondiocese.org/called-equipped/> & at our introductory webinar on 23rd May, 7.30pm.

Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group prays together online via Skype and by telephone and on the first Saturday of the month, here in the Hall: 10.00 am-12.00 pm.

Church Cleaning: Helpers needed to clean the Church on last Sat. every month (**next – 25th May**), after morning Mass. All welcome, especially younger, more energetic ones!

Fire Safety: Please be careful with the votive candle stands, and especially please ensure that children are safe. Unlit candles **must not** be placed on the trays under the places for candles and candles must not be stacked one on top of another.

The conflict in Sudan has created a massive crisis across the region: CAFOD's teams are working hard to support disabled and vulnerable people, by providing physical rehabilitation services, mental health support and access to humanitarian aid. Without this vital support, the huge needs in these areas are barely covered, if at all. **There will be an emergency collection on Sunday May 26th**

Vacancies: The Diocese is recruiting for a Financial Accountant & an Accounts Assistant to join their central team. For full information visit <https://northamptondiocese.org/jobs/>. Closing date Friday 17th May 2024. Interview dates to be confirmed. All candidates should complete an application form & email to: hr.admin@northamptondiocese.org, together with a covering letter detailing their qualifications, experience, & why they are interested in the position.

To help us prepare for the 40 Hours adoration (*taking place 7.00 am Friday 19th July- 11.00 pm Saturday 20th July 2024*) we will be having a short meeting after Mass on Wednesday morning 15th May at 9.45 am onwards. For those who would like to know more and help us to plan and organise this important 40 Hours please come for tea and coffee in the Parish Hall at 9.45 am on Wednesday 15th May 2024. We will repeat this session a little later at 10.00 am for those who can't make it for 9.45 am. If we have a few people who are willing to do a little bit each, together we will be able to plan a successful and fruitful 40 Hours. We look forward to seeing you there. For those who aren't available during the day for the meeting but would like to help please contact Fr Andrew or Alex on 07963032175 so you can still be involved.

Thursday Holy Hour & Adoration, 19th/20th July: There will be 40 hours of continuous adoration from 7.00 am on Friday 19th July until 11.00 pm on Saturday 20th July. This is part of the Year of Prayer leading up to the Jubilee year in 2025. It is important that at least two people are present throughout the time of adoration.

Wool for Stella Maris Woolly Hats Thank you so much everyone for your generosity to the Stella Maris Seafarers Charity. One Chaplain recently told me that "Giving them woolly hats not only helps keep them warm, it reminds them that someone is thinking of them." God Bless and again Thank you!
Bob <https://stellamaris.org.uk/>



Refreshment Donations:

Below is the schedule for refreshment donations through the year:

From the first Sunday in Advent to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:	The Hope Centre
From the Second Sunday in ordinary time to the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday:	Gregory Care
Through Lent and Eastertide:	CAFOD
Ordinary Time until the end of August:	Refreshment Fund
September until the Harvest collection:	CAFOD
After harvest until the beginning of Advent:	The Bible Society



For Sale: Small plaques of the church, gift-boxed, artist hand-made, a limited number available in the repository. £5 for Gregory Care.

Prayer for Peace for Ukraine and the Holy Land:

Please continue to pray for an end to wars, and for all victims of war:
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

Sunday 12th May: 7th Sunday of Eastertide, Year B

After the Ascension of the risen Jesus to his Father in heaven, the apostles, some women, and the mother and brothers of Jesus had formed a small community in Jerusalem. They met regularly in the upper room, praying together. They elected Matthias as an apostle to replace the traitor, Judas. It was urgent to rebuild the 12, the 12 judges of Israel, who were to become the foundation of Jesus' church. Matthias is never mentioned again.

This thanksgiving psalm tenderly praises the Lord's generosity to each one of us. God's mercy is so great because he knows our frailty, so all creation is called to join in this grateful praise.

Concluding our readings from his first letter, John continues to

emphasise the importance of love and remaining in Jesus, who shows us all we can and need to know about God.

At the end of the Last Supper, just before his arrest, Jesus prays for the Church, that it may be protected from the evil one, and that it should be one united body, just as Jesus is one with the father.

Before crossing the Kidron Valley to a garden Jesus prays for those who come to believe in him – and the Father through him – through the apostles' teaching.

Psalm Response: **The Lord has set his sway in heaven.**
(Acts 1:15-26, Ps 102 (103), 1 John 4:11-16, John 17:11-19)

Chris Oliver

World Day of Social Communication

Pope Francis, in his address for the 58th World Day of Social Communication (today) reflects on what it means to be human in the face of the increase of the use of artificial intelligence (AI).

Before all else, we need to set aside catastrophic predictions and their numbing effects. A century ago, Romano Guardini reflected on technology and humanity. Guardini urged us not to reject "the new" in an attempt to "preserve a beautiful world condemned to disappear". At the same time, he prophetically warned that "we are constantly in the process of becoming. We must enter into this process, each in his or her own way, with openness but also with sensitivity to everything that is destructive and inhumane therein". And he concluded: "These are technical, scientific and political problems, but they cannot be resolved except by starting from our humanity. A new kind of human being must take shape, endowed with a deeper spirituality and new freedom and interiority".

At this time in history, which risks becoming rich in technology and poor in humanity, our reflections must begin with the human heart. Only by adopting a spiritual way of viewing reality, only by recovering a wisdom of the heart, can we confront and interpret the newness of our time and rediscover the path to a fully human communication. In the Bible, the heart is seen as the place of freedom and decision-making. It symbolizes integrity and unity, but it also engages our emotions, desires, dreams; it is, above all, the inward place of our encounter with God. Wisdom of the heart, then, is the virtue that enables us to integrate the whole and its parts, our decisions and their consequences, our nobility and our vulnerability, our past and our future, our individuality and our membership within a larger community.

All of us are called to grow together, in humanity and as humanity. We are challenged to make a qualitative leap in order to become a complex, multi-ethnic, pluralistic, multireligious and multicultural society. We are called to reflect carefully on the theoretical development and the practical use of these new instruments of communication and knowledge. Their great possibilities for good are accompanied by the risk of turning everything into abstract calculations that reduce individuals to data, thinking to a mechanical process, experience to isolated cases, goodness to profit, and, above all, a denial of the uniqueness of each individual and his or her story. The concreteness of reality dissolves in a flurry of statistical data.

The digital revolution can bring us greater freedom, but not if it imprisons us in models that nowadays are called "echo chambers". In such cases, rather than increasing a pluralism of information, we risk finding ourselves adrift in a mire of confusion, prey to the interests of

the market or of the powers that be. It is unacceptable that the use of artificial intelligence should lead to groupthink, to a gathering of unverified data, to a collective editorial dereliction of duty. The representation of reality in "big data", however useful for the operation of machines, ultimately entails a substantial loss of the truth of things, hindering interpersonal communication and threatening our very humanity. Information cannot be separated from living relationships. These involve the body and immersion in the real world; they involve correlating not only data but also human experiences; they require sensitivity to faces and facial expressions, compassion and sharing.

The use of artificial intelligence can make a positive contribution to the communications sector, provided it does not eliminate the role of journalism on the ground but serves to support it. Provided too that it values the professionalism of communication, making every communicator more aware of his or her responsibilities, and enables all people to be, as they should, discerning participants in the work of communication.

The answers we give to these and other questions will determine if artificial intelligence will end up creating new castes based on access to information and thus giving rise to new forms of exploitation and inequality. Or, if it will lead to greater equality by promoting correct information and a greater awareness of the epochal change that we are experiencing by making it possible to acknowledge the many needs of individuals and of peoples within a well-structured and pluralistic network of information. If, on the one hand, we can glimpse the spectre of a new form of slavery, on the other, we can also envision a means of greater freedom; either the possibility that a select few can condition the thought of others, or that all people can participate in the development of thought.

The answer we give to these questions is not pre-determined; it depends on us. It is up to us to decide whether we will become fodder for algorithms or will nourish our hearts with that freedom without which we cannot grow in wisdom. Such wisdom matures by using time wisely and embracing our vulnerabilities. It grows in the covenant between generations, between those who remember the past and who look ahead to the future. Only together can we increase our capacity for discernment and vigilance and for seeing things in the light of their fulfilment. Lest our humanity lose its bearings, let us seek the wisdom that was present before all things (cf. *Sir* 1:4): it will help us also to put systems of artificial intelligence at the service of a fully human communication.

Pilgrimage to Northern France

You are invited to join Bishop David and Canon John Udris on pilgrimage to Northern France from 15-22 October 2024. The pilgrimage will begin with three nights in Lisieux, the home of St Terese, before we travel to Chartres to the beautiful Cathedral for one

night. Leaving Chartres we travel to Paris via Rouen. We travel home following three nights in the French capital. For more details visit <https://northamptondiocese.org/france/>