



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

It's Party-time!

That may seem a strange headline in view of all the troubles that face the world, and domestically, every household. Looking at all the catastrophes that we are facing, many would say that parties should be the last thing on our minds.

Today we celebrate the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven; the end of her mortal life on earth and the crowning glory of her being. We do not focus of the sorrows she endured, but on her entry into glory. This feast has been celebrated for centuries, as a mediaeval text says:

On the fifteenth day of the month is the feast which is St Mary's feast. On this day she departed from the world to Christ, and now she shines in the heavenly host among the crowd of holy virgins, as the sun shines upon this middle-earth. Angels rejoice there, and archangels exult, and all the saints are glad with St Mary.

This day was a public holiday for all people, and in the agricultural communities, was a rest from the back-breaking work of the harvest, which was done without any of the mechanical aids that we now have. But the labourers in the harvest would see all that remained to be gathered in, and gladly put down their tools and have a day of partying and celebrating.

The first part of the party was the most important - that was the celebration of Mass. Indeed, in Scotland this day was known as 'Marymass'. No party can begin without first thanking God for his blessings, and the greatest thanksgiving of all is Eucharist.

But what about all the harvest that remains to be gathered in? Or, in relation to our celebration today, what about all the problems that face us and the world at large. How are these to be addressed? We will come to that later — for now, let's party!

The Scriptures tell us nothing about the Assumption of Our Lady, although the reference traditionally applied to her from the Book of the Apocalypse of the “woman clothed with the sun and the moon at her feet, and with twelve stars on her head for a crown” (*Apocalypse 12:1*) has been understood as revealing Our Lady in heaven. We find assumptions in the Old Testament: Elijah (*2 Kings 2:11*) and Enoch (*Genesis 5:24*). That Scripture tells us nothing of it certainly does not mean it did not happen. St John tells us that “if everything that Jesus did and said were to be written down, the world itself could not contain all the books that would need to be written”. (*John 21:25*) We know little of the childhood of Jesus, yet he certainly had one!

From the earliest times stories were told of Our Lady which did not get included in the Scriptures which were acknowledged by the Church

“Over the course of a thousand years or so a rich narrative developed which traced Mary's life from the very beginning to the very end, from the joy of her parents at her conception to the moment when, surrounded by apostles on earth and angels in heaven, she was tenderly taken out of her earthly body. In between the story of her life was mapped out in a pattern which would have been familiar to many medieval women, through domestic, everyday scenes: parents rejoicing in the birth of a longed-for baby; a little girl learning to read with her mother, or climbing the steps to the temple like a child on her first day at school; a teenage Mary with her female friends, singing to her baby, at her churching*, or in the last days of her life. These were familiar rituals of childhood and motherhood which resonated with medieval audiences, and there's something profoundly beautiful about elevating such ordinary family relationships to the dignity of high art. Though Mary is unique and peerless, in these stories she is every medieval woman, not an unapproachably distant figure but a woman imagined in relationship to others: a daughter, wife, mother, friend. (*Quoted from the blog of “Clerk of Oxford*)

*“Churching” was the name of what we now call ‘Thanksgiving after childbirth’

These stories of medieval women are the same stories in the families of today; the same emotions and the same worries.

“In particular, the story of her Assumption is full of other people and their love for her - the apostles and her friends gathering around her bedside, Christ cradling her soul in his arms like a child. The Bible gives no information about the end of Mary's life, but numerous traditions and narratives on the subject had developed by the fifth and sixth centuries, telling how Christ received his mother's soul and/or body into heaven at the end of her life on earth.”



The image of Christ cradling the body of his mother; a reversal of the famous image of the ‘Pietà’ is shown in the picture after the 14th Station near the door out of the church towards the hall. It is entitled ‘De Secunda Pietate’ by Danilo Malatesta and was exhibited at St Gregory's Church in Rome during the Covid pandemic. The photographer envisaged Christ holding all of humanity in his arms. We can see, in

particular, how he holds all who have died, and looks on them with love. First among those he loves, his mother whom he receives, crowns and gives her the place which is hers. (*See Matthew 20:23*)

Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for August 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.

Repository: The Repository is open after every Sunday Mass. 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



We welcome into the family of the Church
Cillian Creagh
who received Christian Baptism recently.
Please pray for him and his family.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: Next date to be advertised here shortly. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

First Holy Communion 2023: Please watch this space for information. The programme will take a similar form to last year, in which a parent/carer will take a primary position in the teaching. The feedback from this system has been very encouraging.

Confirmation in 2023: Please watch this space for information.

The funeral of Tony Bull: This will be this Friday at 11.30 am. His body will be received into church on Thursday evening, at 5pm. Family flowers only, but donations to 'Stella Maris' (The Apostleship of the Sea) may be made in memory of Tony, either directly or via Hollowell's Funeral Directors.

Tots @ St Gregory's: We have had a great year and our last session will be on Tuesday 19th July and we re-start on Tuesday 6th September!!

Our Top Priority: "The Church exists to evangelise". This is the message from Pope St Paul VI, and has been reaffirmed by every Pope since. This applies to every parish, & our main parish evangelistic work is through Alpha. Our next Alpha will be needing help in various departments: you may be specifically asked! Please remember that both Pope Francis & Bishop David are telling us that we must be 'Missionary Disciples' & that we must be 'permanently in a state of Mission'. Your parish needs you; your Diocese needs you; your Church needs you.

Choir Matters: Pilgrimage Mass: this is a new & exciting Mass setting by Teresa Brown. It is already in use at 9am & I hope to introduce it at 11am starting this Sunday & during the rest of August. I hope you soon pick it up & are able to join in: remember what one of the Saints said – "the one who sings prays twice". *Alec*

Vocations to Priesthood: Vocations weekends are planned three times a year. These are weekends for men who are discerning priesthood. You may be in the very early stages of discernment & don't worry - you don't have to sign anything! You can take your time & meet priests who can share more about this incredible life. Priesthood is a gift to our diocese, & we would love to connect with you as you continue your journey with God. At any point you can contact the Diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Andy Richardson – (01582 502400) or vocationsdirector@northamptondiocese.org.

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

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

The European Christian Mission are recruiting for a Support Services Administrator to work in their office in Moulton Park. This is a part-time job, & applications close at 9am on Tues 30th August. For more information, please visit: <https://www.ecmbritain.org/we-are-hiring>

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)**

Money Matters: The diocese has asked every parish to set a budget for the year & to live within it so that the overall finances of the diocese can recover from the financial impact of the lockdown and the closing of churches. We have managed to keep within our budget for the first quarter of the financial year, but the increase in gas & electricity costs will be a challenge for us, and we must try to control our expenditure. One significant help would be to make your giving through standing order; the details of our account are above, & if you pay income tax, please ask for a Gift Aid form.

Young Catholic Adults (YCA) Weekend 7th - 9th October:

Theme: "The Communion of Saints' prayer & veneration of Holy Relics". During the weekend, Young Catholic Adults will run a retreat at Douai Abbey with Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge who will be holding Gregorian Chant workshops. There will also be a Marian Procession, Rosaries, Sung Masses, Confession, talks & socials. Prices: £12 (for the day) £55pp per night (residential). Book soon as places are limited! Please note, to guarantee your place Douai Abbey have requested that everyone books in 3 weeks before the start of the weekend (16th Sept). For info, go to <http://youngcatholicadults-latestnews.blogspot.co.uk/> or <http://www.youngcatholicadults.co.uk>. To book: <https://bookwhen.com/youngcatholicadults-douai2022>

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

Novena prayer for the Canonisation of Blessed Dominic Barberi

(Novena begins on Thursday and ends Friday of next week)

O God, who so lovingly raised Blessed Dominic to the heights of holiness, learning and apostolic zeal and made him a powerful minister of your mercy, listen to our humble request.

We pray that you will in your goodness, grant a miracle through the intercession of Blessed Dominic, so that the Church may further honour him on earth and that many more people will come to know and invoke the help of this faithful servant of the Church. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Prayers 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 14th August 2022, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

These tumultuous chapters of Revelation, certain of Christ's ultimate victory, imagine how the mystery of God's plan of salvation will be fulfilled in the "end days". After the seventh angel blows his trumpet the world will become the kingdom of God and his Christ. Those who are destroying the earth will be destroyed. But first the Christ (Messiah) is to be born from Israel, before the dragon is hurled from heaven, making war on the Church. Early Christians came to see in these words a fitting description of Mary's role in salvation. Those who share Jesus' death on earth will also share his glory in heaven – and are already sharing in the resurrection triumph.

The Psalm from a Royal Wedding Song also assures us of Christ's final victory.

And Paul reminds the Corinthians how this victory has been won: by Christ's death. His raising from the dead is a "first fruit" of

what is to come: the bodily resurrection of all the dead, when Christ does away with all his enemies, including the last enemy, which is death.

Mary's joyful Magnificat, which is said or sung every evening in the Church throughout the world, summarises salvation history and anticipates her Son's fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets in his proclamation of the Beatitudes.

Psalm Response: **On your right stands the queen, in garments of gold.**

(Rev 11:19; 12:1-6,10; Ps 44(45):10-16; 1 Cor 15:20-26; Lk 1:39-56)

Chris Oliver

Repainting the Church — Job Done!

Thanks to all who worked so hard in the repainting, certainly a job well-done. It is great to have the shrine of Our Lady made now for this great feast in her honour.

We also need more people to join the rota for refreshments after the Sunday Masses, especially after 11am. More people are needed for this important ministry!

Alpha in the Autumn

Each time we run the Alpha Course there are more people who speak of how much they have enjoyed it, and how it has deepened their faith and understanding of what life in Christ actually means. Please think about coming on the next one!

To the right are the dates of the next Alpha course which is 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. 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

Many people have found this valuable for themselves, but this is also an easy way for anyone to fulfil the wish of Pope Francis that we all become Missionary Disciples. Just come and bring a friend!

First session:	September 20th 2022:	Is there more to life than this?
Second Session:	September 27th 2022:	Who is Jesus?
Third Session:	October 4th 2022:	Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session:	October 11th 2022:	How can I have faith?
Fifth Session:	October 18th 2022:	Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session:	October 25th 2022:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Seventh Session:	November 8th 2022:	How does God guide us?
Away-Day:	November 11th - 12th:	Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? How can I make the most of the rest of my life?
Eighth Session:	November 15th 2022:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	November 22nd 2022:	Why and how should I tell others?
Tenth Session:	November 29th 2022:	Does God heal today?
Eleventh Session:	December 6th 2022:	What about the Church?

The Feast of St Gregory, our Patron

We will celebrate our Patron on Friday 2nd September with Mass at 7.00 pm followed by a social gathering in the hall. There will soon be lists to sign up to for the provision of food for the occasion. Please make a note of this date in your diary (or 'phone)

The problems that face us

Opinions will vary as to which of the many problems that face us is the most pressing, and this will to a great extent depend on our particular circumstances. The immediate problem of rampant inflation and sky-high energy bills must concern us all, but most significantly impacts the poorest most. The problem of the war in Ukraine, and care of refugees and other knock-on effects impact many people, problems with the NHS and social care provision will be the biggest concern for many, the present heat-wave, drought and long-term climate change are to the fore right now. On top of that we seem to have a leaderless and rudderless government. The phrase 'perfect storm' seems to sum up the situation.

Today we may party, but the problems still need to be faced. Some of them are completely out of our hands, and these we place in God's hands in prayer. Some problems may be in our

hands, collectively and individually. The first place to which we go is to God in prayer, asking him to reveal to us what it is that he wants each of us to do as individuals to help solve the problem. We may well feel powerless to effect any significant change, but the truth is that when we work together, great things can be done.

One of the lessons of the Old Testament prophets is that when we are faced with what we may call 'natural disaster', frequently behind it lies a lack of fidelity to God or a failure to keep his commands. In a society where a very large proportion of the population deny the very existence of God, it is no surprise that his commands are ignored. If people do not believe in God, it is no surprise that they do not see life as a gift of God, and therefore treat the life of the unborn with no respect. If people do not believe in God, it is no wonder that they do not treat his creation with respect. That is why evangelisation is one answer.

Adult Faith Formation - Autumn

There has been some interest already shown in resuming face-to-face courses in the autumn; anyone with particular requests is asked to email to Fr Andrew to indicate what they would like to study.

There are a number of courses that are available on video for us, but we can also devise courses to meet local needs. One of the requests that came from the Synod conversations was that there should be more opportunity for people to grow in their faith.

If the autumn allows us to resume face-to-face sessions, it would be good to offer opportunity for study in any area of the Faith that people want. Anyone who has a particular request, please send an email to Fr Andrew as soon as possible.

One which has been suggested is a Timeline of Church History, with particular reference to the saints whose days we celebrate through

the year, and connecting them to the era in which they lived and the historical circumstances of their life.

We also have an excellent course on the Mass, as well as several from Bishop Robert Barron.

Among the blessings that flow from these courses is the building up of confidence in the faith. Many who would like to be able to speak of their faith to others are reluctant, thinking that they don't know enough and might say something wrong. But in addition to this, most people enjoy the experience, and make new friends, building up the social life of the Church.

Details of what will be planned will appear soon, but NOW is your chance to influence what will be on offer.



Novena to pray for the Canonisation of Blessed Dominic Barberi

Thursday 18th August 2022 marks the beginning of the annual Novena to pray for the Canonisation of Blessed Dominic Barberi.

The Novena of Prayer lasts for nine days and concludes on his feast day on Friday 26th August.

Dominic Barberi (22nd June 1792 – 27th August 1849) was an Italian theologian and a member of the Passionist Congregation prominent in spreading Catholicism in England. He contributed to the conversion of John Henry Newman. In 1963, he was beatified by Pope Paul VI.

Blessed Dominic arrived in Britain in February 1842. He spent the next seven years based at Aston Hall in Staffordshire, from where he celebrated Mass, preached Missions, heard confessions, and received many people into the Catholic Church, the most famous being St John Henry Newman in October 1845.

Newman relates in his *Apologia* how Barberi arrived soaked from the rain and was drying himself by the fire when Newman knelt and asked to be received into the Catholic Church. This event is marked by a sculpture in the Catholic Church of Blessed Dominic Barberi at Littlemore. Two of Newman's companions at Littlemore were also received, and Barberi celebrated Mass for them the following morning.

On 27th August 1849, Barberi was travelling from Paddington, London to Woodchester, when at Pangbourne he suffered a heart attack. Because in London "the cholera was then prevalent", there were no hotels that would take him in, and so it was decided to bring him back to Reading (in the *Railway Tavern*, later the Duke of Edinburgh Hotel, now demolished). The up-train arrived more than an hour later, while "he remained in great agony but in peace and with 'Thy will be done' ever on his lips".

Barberi is buried in St. Anne and Blessed Dominic Church, Sutton, Merseyside, which is also the shrine of Elizabeth Prout and Ignatius Spencer.

"Blessed Dominic had a well-known reputation for sanctity and holiness of life. He is also remembered for his love for the poor, and those in need of prayer and help."

“In Birmingham his memory is held in special regard and each year there is a Novena of Prayer asking God to grant a miracle of healing through the intercession of Blessed Dominic, which could further his cause for Canonisation.

“Please pray the Novena during the nine days from August 18 until August 26. It can be prayed in the parish or at home.”

Novena Prayer for the Canonisation of Blessed Dominic Barberi

O God, who so lovingly raised Blessed Dominic
to the heights of holiness, learning and apostolic zeal
and made him a powerful minister of your mercy,
listen to our humble request.

We pray that you will in your goodness,
grant a miracle through the intercession of Blessed Dominic,
so that the Church may further honour him on earth
and that many more people will come to know
and invoke the help of this faithful servant of the Church.
We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Mary, Mother of Holy Hope, Pray for Us.
Saint John Henry Newman, Pray for Us.
Blessed Dominic Barberi, Pray for Us.