



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.”**

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VISION

This Sunday: World Peace

Peace in the world is so important that to have a single Sunday devoted to that theme is totally inadequate. At every Mass we pray for peace as part of our Liturgy, and in the present circumstances is surely part of the daily prayer of all good people.

The Bishops' conference of England and Wales has designated this day as a special day of prayer for Peace on Earth, and Pope Francis has chosen a particular way of thinking about this: “Artificial Intelligence and Peace”. We are hearing of the ways in which AI is being used in many fields, and among them, in the arms industry.

The Post Office Horizon scandal warns us of the dangers inherent in putting trust in computers; there is a story of a heat-seeking torpedo which, failing to find its target, turned round and sank the boat that fired it.

There is no doubt that AI can be used for good, but like all things, can also be used for ill. The use of AI in medicine can speed up the development of new medicines, it may help in industry and commerce; but will only be of benefit to humanity if it is programmed to seek real good rather than partisan advantage. For example, if it is programmed to see the ultimate good as the maximisation of profits or the dominance of one nation it will not work for the common good but for the good of one group at the expense of all others. This will not engender peace.

An artificial intelligence programmed for world peace would learn from the past conflicts and seek to understand their causes. As an old political slogan put it: “Tough on crime; tough on the causes of crime”.

The causes of most of the wars in the Middle East derive from the decisions that were made by the victorious powers after the First World War, with the then imperial powers seeking to maintain their dominance and their access to oil supplies. It is impossible to re-write history, and we have to live with these disastrous mistakes, but we need not only to learn from them and not make them again, but also to factor them into the way of creating a new environment for peace. As the world is seeking to reduce the dependence on fossil fuels, new factors can influence political decision-making. It is in this that Christian teaching and thinking; specifically Catholic Social Teaching has an important part to play.

Catholic Social Teaching fosters care for the common good — the good of all people. It seeks not just the good of some individuals but of all; not the good of one nation but the good of all, and, in keeping with the Divine example, is willing to make sacrifice for the good of others.

Artificial Intelligence programmed with that as the supreme good might be a way towards a better understanding of “what makes for peace” (*Luke 19:42*). Jesus approaches Jerusalem and weeps. “If only you had recognised the things that make for peace”, he said. “You did not recognise the time of your visitation from God” (*Luke 19:44*).

Clearly, as Christians we have a responsibility to help people to recognise that in Christ, humanity has a ‘visitation from God’ and that in Christ lie the ‘things that make for peace’..

Next Sunday: The Word of God

There is a risk that some of the good which sprung from the Second Vatican Council could be undone. The decree on the liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) says: “The Lord's Day (Sunday) is the original feast day, and it should be proposed to the piety of the faithful and taught to them so that it may become in fact a day of joy and of freedom from work. Other celebrations, unless they be truly of greatest importance, shall not have precedence over the Sunday which is the foundation and kernel of the whole liturgical year.” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* §106)

In other words, nothing should obscure the essential celebration that every Sunday is an Easter celebration. It is this that underpins the idea of the ‘Sunday Obligation’, which is a way of recognising the importance of the Sunday celebration of Mass. We should not think so much of ‘obligation’ as of the joy of the celebration, such that it would be unthinkable to be deliberately absent unless absolutely prevented from attending.

While we do not celebrate saints (with very few exceptions) on Sundays, there has grown up a trend of ‘worthy causes’ being attached to particular Sundays in the year. The causes themselves are important, but must not overshadow the supreme importance of the Resurrection, without which Sunday itself would not have its importance.

Next Sunday, designated the “Sunday of the Word of God” is not a special Sunday in the sense that *every* Sunday is a Sunday of the Word of God. However, it is a Sunday on which we remind ourselves of the importance of the liturgical proclamation of the Scriptures, and therefore of the ministry of those who proclaim the Scriptures. There will be a special Liturgy of the Word in the Cathedral at 3.00 in the afternoon next Sunday at which readers will be commissioned, and some of our parish readers will be taking part. Everyone is welcome to come and share in this celebration, but remember that it is not the Sunday Mass!

We pray that the Holy Spirit may help us to recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community and to discover the richness of different traditions and rituals in the Catholic Church.

Notices of Interest

Repository: The Repository is open after Sunday masses for the sale of cards and religious goods. We still need more helpers especially after 9am Mass. I want to express a huge thank you to the loyal band who make the whole enterprise possible! Any queries or volunteers to 01604 629103 or Kath.healey.789@gmail.com

Bible Alive for January is now available - only £3.00! If you wish to purchase a copy, they are in the narthex as you come into church. December is now sold out! There are, however, several small booklets of Walk with Me available for Advent. Please see the table in the Narthex.

Hope Centre: 50th Anniversary Big Sleepout! Saturday 3rd Feb. @ Northampton College, Lower Mounts Campus. Siobhan O'Donovan & Lorna Heron will be sleeping out again this year to raise much needed money for the homeless. There are sponsorship forms at both doors if you wish to sponsor them. They also have a fundraising page if you wish to donate online – just ask for details! Thanking you all in advance for your support and generosity. *Siobhan and Lorna*

Calling all Readers: The 3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time is designated as the “Sunday of the Word of God”, this year it falls on 21st January. One of the ways in which it is celebrated is in commissioning those who proclaim the Scriptures at Mass. There is a special celebration of the Word in the Cathedral at 3.00 in the afternoon, and all readers are invited to be there. For those who cannot come to that celebration, there will be commissioning at both Masses at St Gregory’s.

The Secrets of St Paul: A 10 week course on Zoom run by Mission Northampton, starting on Wednesday 10th January 2024 and running until Wednesday 27th March 2024, 7.30-9.00 pm. (Break for Ash Wednesday & half term: Wednesday 14th & 21st February). Book at: <https://northamptondiocese.org/courses/secrets-of-paul-online/>

Prepare for Lent: To be thinking about Lent even before Christmas is over may seem to be getting ahead of ourselves, but on 31st January there will be a Zoom study on the Lent Sunday readings. Please email to Fr Andrew for the link, which will be available nearer the time.

Donorbox: St. Gregory’s has now signed up with Donorbox to enable people to make donations to the Church via a QR code. This is a safe & easy way of making a one-off donation without having to have cash on you! If you have a smartphone, just point your camera at the QR code, click the link & the site will see you through the donation process. There is a larger version of this QR code in the Narthex area and in the hall for refreshment donations!



Thursday Holy Hour & Adoration: Holy Hour remains as Holy Two Hours, from 9am until 11am. It is important that at least two people are present throughout the time of adoration. During cold weather, Adoration will be in the Sacristy.

Cathedral Foodstore: Our continued thanks to all who donate to the toiletries for the Foodstore. Please remember that the Foodstore is open to everyone who may be experiencing hardship. Food can be purchased at substantially reduced prices (as it now operates as a food larder) All that is required is a form of ID and a genuine reason for needing to use the larder. It operates between 10:15 - 12:15 every Thursday in the St Thomas Centre (behind the Cathedral).

Church Cleaning: Helpers are needed to clean the Church on the last Saturday of every month (**next - Saturday 27th January 2024**), after the morning Mass. All welcome, especially younger, more energetic ones!

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 Hall, from 10am-12 pm.

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!!

Fire Safety — Important notice. 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.

Bookings are open for Lux 2024. For school years 7 to 13. Our theme this year is Dive. See the website for more information and to book: <https://nymo.org/lux-dive/>. If you have any questions then please email info@nymo.org.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday 26th February at 7pm 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: 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: To be announced.

Mission Northampton: There will be a weekly Zoom course entitled “Secrets of Paul”, lasting 10 weeks on Wednesdays starting on 10th January and running until 20th March (with a break for half-term on 21st February). There is a charge of £10 for the course, & visit <https://northamptondiocese.org/courses/secrets-of-paul-online/> to register.

Refreshment Donations:

Below is the schedule for refreshment donations through the year:
From the first Sunday in Advent The Hope Centre
to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:

From the Second Sunday in ordinary time *Gregory Care*
to the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday:

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

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

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

The Funeral Mass for Paul Sefton

Paul’s funeral Mass was live streamed for members of his family and friends overseas, and is now available at this web address:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJQaqwu2A6M>

Nellie Carroll RIP

With sorrow we record the death of Mrs Carroll; she will be buried in Ireland. Mass will be said for her on Monday 22nd January at 10.30, and her body will be taken back to Ireland for burial. May she rest in peace.