



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

The Witness of the Community

Next Thursday is Ascension Day; the day when what Jesus is saying in today's Gospel was fulfilled: “The world will no longer see me”, and leads us into the Novena of prayer for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, the Advocate who is with us for ever, the Spirit of truth.

We no longer see him in his human form, but yet we do see him in his sacramental form, hidden under the form of bread and wine. In one of the earliest Christian writings, St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians he forcefully asserts the real presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament: “For all who eat and drink without discerning the Lord's body eat and drink judgement against themselves”.
(1 Corinthians 11:29)

The Eucharistic prayers all speak of this as being the work of the Holy Spirit. For example: “Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Holy Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*Eucharistic Prayer II, Roman Missal*), or “Therefore, O Lord, we pray: may this same Holy Spirit graciously sanctify these offerings, that they may become the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*Eucharistic Prayer IV, Roman Missal*).

Today eight young Catholics will receive the gift of the life of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament for the first time at the 11.00 Mass. Earlier in his letter to the Corinthians St Paul writes alluding to infants who cannot take the solid food. Infants who quarrel and are jealous of each other and seek division rather than unity are fed on milk. Today they receive the solid food of the Body of the Lord; no longer infants, they take their place in the community sharing in the Eucharistic life of the Church. (*See 1 Corinthians 3:2*)

They are still young in their faith, and just as we, when we were weaned, still needed help to fully understand how to live, so too those who are receiving the solid food of the Eucharist need continuing help to understand the full significance of the food that they are receiving. Indeed, we probably all do!

The passage in which St Paul speaks of being fed on milk ends:

“Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are. Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their craftiness,” and again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.” So let no one boast of men. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future, all are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's.” (1 Corinthians 3:16-23)

“You are Christ's” is an important concept that goes back to our Baptism, when we were signed with the Cross with these words: “The Christian community welcomes you with great joy. In its name, I claim you for Christ our Saviour by the sign of his cross” (*Rite of Baptism for Children*)

This is, of course, at the initiative of the parents, supported by the godparents, and just before the child is ‘claimed for Christ’, they have made their declaration to bring their child up ‘in the practice of the faith’. They promise that they will ‘bring him or her up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour’. (*Rite of Baptism for Children*)

At the end of the Baptismal liturgy there is a blessing in which the parents are described as being ‘the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith’ and praying that ‘they may be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what they say and do’. The parents and godparents of these eight young Catholics deserve congratulations for having reached this stage in fulfilling that commitment that they made at their child's Baptism, as do the parents and godparents of those fourteen other children who will be receiving Holy Communion for the first time over the next few weeks.

When they were welcomed into the Church at their Baptism, it was in the name of ‘the Christian community’, and as these young people continue in their Christian life, more and more they will be helped by the example, prayers, support and encouragement of the Christian community here at St Gregory's. Over the past weeks we have been following the addresses of Pope Francis on evangelisation, and last week he spoke of the power of intercession with particular reference to the prayer of monks and nuns; the week before on the witness of the martyrs. Today our focus is on the witness of parents and of the Christian community, particularly towards young people.

If our witness and example does not measure up to the Gospel, we can hardly expect the next generation to recognise the value of the Gospel. St Paul has another challenge for us: he speaks of us as ‘called to be saints’. (*Romans 1:7*) The example of lives of the saints is certainly daunting, and the way in which their lives are told can sometimes make them appear as supermen or women, but when we read them more fully, we find that they were quite ordinary people, many of them with what we might call ‘colourful’ pasts, but who, at some point in their life came to recognise their relationship with God, and then grew in that relationship, fulfilling their vocation of service to God and to the human community in whatever way was right for them.

May we all seek to give the best possible example of Christian life to our young Catholics, and support them with encouragement, love and prayer.

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.

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.

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!
There is now a small display of items for 1st Holy Communion and Confirmation. *Contact Kath.healey.789@gmail.com.*

Bible Alive for June 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.

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

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham:

10th June 2023:

A coach will leave from St. Gregory's at 8am on Saturday 10th June, leaving Walsingham at about 5.00pm. **Cost £25 per person** (payable in advance). I understand that this is considerably more than in previous years, but the cost of coach hire has also increased dramatically. Please see poster for full details. To book, please speak to Caryl in the Office, or add your details to the list in the Lobby area and see one of the Clergy to pay.



Church Heating: Weekday Mass is now back in the church; Thursday adoration is in the Sacristy. We heat the church and hall on Sundays, but the extra cost of this will be more than the saving on weekdays.

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

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday 22nd May 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: The first group of young people are receiving Holy Communion for the first time today, and over the next three weeks there will be more. 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.

The Sheppard Singers in Concert: You may remember the Shepard Singers gave us a beautiful recital a few weeks ago. This Sunday, 14th May they will again be performing, this time at **Christ Church**, Northampton, NN1 5LL. The concert starts at 3pm – all welcome.

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.

The Diocesan Assembly: There will be preparation sessions for the delegates of our Pastoral area here at St Gregory's on May 24th and June 7th in church at 7pm.

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: Practice Thursday (18th May, Ascension Day) after evening Mass: 7:45 – 9pm. Come and join us as we strive to make our liturgy more inspiring. *Alec*

Vocations Weekend for Women (20s & 30s): Theme: Discerning God's Call in your life, 26-28 May. Liverpool. The weekend is organised by the Sisters, Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ). Jesus invites each of us to 'Come and See' - this weekend will give the opportunity to explore the vocation to religious life & to reflect on God's call to you. If you are wondering if God is calling you to religious life & would like to find out more why not come along? You are welcome to stay for the weekend or just come along on Saturday for the day. There will be opportunity for prayer, reflection & input, chance to ask questions & to meet others who are also wondering where God is calling them. For more information contact Sr Lynne fcJ at fcjvocationeurope@gmail.com or visit our website www.fcjsisters.org

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)**

PLEASE CHECK IF YOU HAVE ENVELOPES There are still a few planned giving envelope boxes. If you have transferred to a standing order, but there is a box for you, please let Fr Andrew know.

Eucharistic Minister's Training: The first session of the training course for both new and experienced Eucharistic Ministers was last Wednesday, further sessions are on Wednesdays 17th May and 31st May. It will run both in the morning at 11.00 and in the evening at 7.30. This will be followed by commissioning at the Masses on Sunday 11th June, the Feast of Corpus Christi. If possible, all Eucharistic Ministers should attend all three sessions, either in the morning or the evening. The ministry of giving the Blessed Sacrament to the faithful is important, & is a ministry of service. It is not a reward for the exceptionally holy. We all acknowledge that we are not worthy to receive Christ in the Eucharist, & the receiving is the greater honour than the giving. Deacon Michael is compiling a list of those willing to take up this ministry.

Sacred Heart Primary School, Luton, Head Teacher: The Governors of Sacred Heart Primary School are seeking to appoint an outstanding Head who will continue to lead this popular faith school and inspire its children, staff and families 'to be their best' The successful candidate will be a practising Catholic and be highly passionate about Religious Education and the Catholic Life within our school, working closely with the Subject Leader and our Parish Priest. See full details in the Narthex.

Assembly Insight

"I dream of a 'Missionary Option', that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, languages and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today's world rather than for her preservation"

(Pope Francis, The Joy of the Gospel §27)

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 14th May 2023, 6th Sunday of Easter Year A

After Stephen had been killed, Saul led “a great persecution” against the Church in Jerusalem. The Hellenists were therefore driven out of Jerusalem and Philip takes the gospel to Samaria. Peter and John came to investigate these first non-Jew converts. The apostles confirmed these new members by laying hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

The psalm praises God's power as revealed throughout history but especially during the Exodus.

Peter continues his advice to Christians suffering abuse and ridicule from their non-Christian neighbours. Do not be afraid! Stick to your principles, being ready to explain your reasons politely. And rejoice that your sufferings enable you to share in Christ's sufferings so that you may share in his glory.

In John's Gospel description of the Last Supper, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to continue his work after he returns to his Father. The supper ends with Jesus' great prayer to his Father for the Church he is leaving behind. All three persons of the Trinity are mentioned in the gospels, but the Church only gradually developed its understanding of the Trinity over many centuries. We believe that the Spirit **proceeds** from the Father **and** the Son (filioque). The Orthodox Church says that the Spirit **comes from** the Father **through** the Son.

Psalm Response: **Cry out with joy to God all the earth.**

(Acts 8:5-8,14-17; Psalm 65(66); 1 Peter 3:15-18 or 4:13-16; John 14:15-21 or 17:1-11)

Chris Oliver

Gregory Care

Coronation Big Lunch at St Gregory's Church.

A massive thank you to everyone who contributed in anyway, either by helping out or attending the Coronation Big Lunch.

The aim was to bring our community together in a fun environment. The numerous messages of appreciation would suggest this was achieved! Even the weather was kind to us. The age range of those joining us spanned over 100 years and it was lovely to see people catching up and playing together. We won't have to wait until the next Coronation before we see a similar get together!

Now back to business!! — Cathedral Foodstore

Thank you for all the toiletries you have been donating. Please continue to help us with basic toiletries for food bags given out by the Cathedral Foodstore. Each week we see numbers rising of those in need of this help. We are always looking for creative ways of raising money through sponsorship, fundraising or hosting a

collection point for food and toiletries, so if you can help please let us know.

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:-

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.

Skills and Resources.

We are updating our directory of skills! If there is anyone who could be called upon for a one off project such as gardening or transporting larger items around or if anyone has any storage (such as a garage) available to store small items of furniture we would be delighted to hear from you.

Thank you

Gregory Care

☎ 07434 669011

The Healing Garden

The Healing Garden is a place of sanctuary for survivors of abuse and all those in need of healing. A place which we hope will provide a relaxing and peaceful setting to spend time, experience quietness and contemplation, to help improve well-being and reduce isolation. Although the Healing Garden was opened in May 2022, it remains an ongoing development – a garden is never complete – which mirrors our diocesan commitment to listening and responding compassionately to those with lived experience of abuse and its impact.

Some parishes are having a special collection today for this; we will be doing this on June 4th. Tuesday of this week is the national day of prayer for victims and survivors of sexual abuse.

Alpha continues on May 16th 2023 — This Tuesday

“Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.”
(Ephesians 6:13-18)

First session:	March 14 th 2023:	Is there more to life than this?
Second Session:	March 21 st 2023:	Who is Jesus?
Third Session:	March 28 th 2023	Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session:	April 18 th 2023:	How can I have faith?
Fifth Session:	April 25 th 2023:	Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session:	May 2 nd 2023:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Seventh Session:	May 9 th 2023:	How does God guide us?
Away-Day:	May 12 th /13 th 2023	Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session:	May 16 th 2023:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	May 23 rd 2023:	Why and how should I tell others?
Tenth Session:	June 6 th 2023:	Does God heal today?
Eleventh Session:	June 13 th 2023:	What about the Church?