



# 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

## Our Vision of the parish in 2033

Last week there was a big conference in Harrogate, entitled the “Catholic Parish Summit”, attended by Bishops, Priests, Deacons and many from many walks of life and many places.

Among the Bishops were Archbishops Zbignevs Stankevics from Riga in Latvia and Mark O’Toole from Cardiff and Menevia, Bishops Kestutis Kevalas from Lithuania, Maksimijan Matjaz from Slovenia, Jan Liesen from Holland, John Keenan from Scotland and our own Bishop David. There were delegates from South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, USA and Canada as well as many from this island.

Altogether there were over 800 registered delegates, and the common factor was a desire to see the Church grow. Our diocese was not only represented by our bishop, but by a good number of people from many parishes, including the Cathedral and St Gregory’s.

In nine years we will be celebrating the 2,000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Resurrection and when the Church was given the commission to proclaim the Good News to the ends of the earth. (*Acts 1:8*) The increased secularisation of Europe and the (so-called) developed world gives the impression that we are not doing very well in this commission, although globally, the Church is indeed growing. However, in Western Europe over the last many decades, growth has been limited and we have been blessed by the arrival of people from other countries where the faith has been stronger.

The conference offered us a vision of how we could bring that growth which the Church is seeing in the (so called) developing world to this country, so that we could reach a point by 2033 where the Church can be on a firm trajectory of growth here. This is clearly not a ‘quick fix’ programme, and is not achieved by one simple action, and yet, at the heart, it does require a simple action on the part of many people. That decision is to become a missionary disciple.

There are many disciples who have listened to Jesus, and enjoy listening to him, but have not yet responded to his call to action: “Go out into the world and proclaim the Good News”. (*Mark 16:15*) The task is to encourage those who love



Jesus, to listen to him, who are fed by him to take the next step.

That can seem a frightening prospect, but at the conference we heard the stories of many who had embraced that fear and ‘put out into the deep’. (*Luke 5:4*) We heard from many whose faith had been awakened, and also many who had first come to faith through someone else who had ‘put out into the deep’.

We were reminded that the secular world is not actually making people happier. One way in which this is being clearly seen is the rise in issues of mental health, particularly among the young. This is not just an effect of lockdown, it is much more deep-rooted than that. Jesus has the answer to so many of today’s problems that lie at the cause of people’s unhappiness and discontent.

We heard many stories of young people who had not so much ‘rejected’ Christianity as had not the slightest understanding of what Christianity is; such is the poverty of religious education in many secular schools.

St Gregory’s embarked on this journey back in the autumn of 2017 and six-and-a-half years later it is time to take stock and set the course for the coming years. We have a small team who are actively engaged in the work of evangelisation; some on the ‘front-line’, others in active support, and vitally, some in daily prayer. To achieve the 2033 goal, backed by Pope Francis, we need to vastly enlarge this team. We are all being challenged!



# Notices of Interest



We welcome into the family of the Church  
Bernard Christopher Carlo Ward and  
Darcie-Mae Mary Sandra Ward  
who received Christian Baptism recently.  
Please pray for them and their families.

**Repository:** The Repository is open after Sunday Masses for the sale of cards and religious goods. A small display of cards and items for Confirmation is available. Any queries or volunteers to 01604 629103 or [Kath.healey.789@gmail.com](mailto:Kath.healey.789@gmail.com)

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

## 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

**40 Hours Adoration Planning:** The final planning meeting for our parish 40 hours adoration will be after the 7.00 pm Mass on Thursday 11th July. **Any who have missed the previous meetings are very welcome.** Blessed (soon to be Saint) Carlo Acutis- pray for us

**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)**

**Missio Matters:** Fr Anthony Chantry (National Director) & Fr Daniel Rooke (new Diocesan Director) invite all Missio supporters & Red Box holders to a Diocesan Mass to celebrate Mission. This will be at St Aidan's, Manor Rd, Kingsthorpe NN2 6QJ Sat 29 June at noon. Tea & coffee provided (bring own lunch if you want to stay, though beds are not provided). Further info [redbox@missio.org.uk](mailto:redbox@missio.org.uk) or 07593 544622 or See Dorothy (9) or Alec (11). St Gregory's were the highest contributors last year, so it would be appropriate if we had a significant presence at this Mass. Also, 25 Aug, one of the Missio Fathers will speak to us after both Masses. **Missio Supporters:** Copies of the latest magazines are available for you to collect in the red box at the church entrance. I have arranged envelopes in alphabetical order of surnames. There are spares for others who may be interested in adding their support to this work of the church in other countries. *Alec*

**Called & Equipped 2024:** What is God calling you to do next? Our year-long formation course covers the foundations of Catholic teaching alongside developing a personal spirituality, which might just be right for you. Find out more here: <https://northamptondiocese.org/called-equipped/> & sign up for our 2nd introductory webinar on Thurs 27th June, 7.30 - 8:30pm.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

**Baptism Preparation:** The next session will be on Monday 1st July 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 2023/4:** 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](mailto:childrens.liturgy@stgregory.org.uk) for further information.

**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.

**Choir Notes:** I have had to change several of the dates of our Saturday practices, 11-12:30. The new details are July 13; August 24; Oct 12; Nov 9, 16, 23, 30; Dec 7 and 14, then some time in February 2025 (Happy Christmas!). *Alec*

## Next Alpha Sessions:

**Eighth Session:** June 11th: Does God heal today?  
**Away-Day:** June 15th: Who is the Holy Spirit?  
**Ninth Session:** June 18th: How can I resist evil?  
**Tenth Session:** June 25th: Why and how should I tell others?  
**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!!

**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.

**Picnic in the Park:** If the rain holds off, Gregory Care is planning a picnic in Abington Park on Sunday 23rd June from 12.30 pm. There is no cost; just bring your own picnic and join us for a get-together and children's games.

**Church Cleaning:** Helpers needed to clean the Church on last Sat. every month (**next - 29th June**), after morning Mass. All welcome, especially younger, more energetic ones!

**Diocesan Bible Study:** The next Diocesan Bible Study will be on Wednesday evening, 12th June starting at 7.30 pm. It will look at the readings from 2 Corinthians which will be proclaimed from next Sunday until the beginning of July. Please email Fr Andrew for the Zoom link.

**Diocesan Opportunities:** Visit <https://northamptondiocese.org/jobs/> for full details.

**Knights of St Columba:** As a practising Catholic man, you may have an interest in helping those in need, serving your parish, developing your faith & giving something back to your community. By joining the Knights, you can do all that & more. You will work with like-minded men across your Diocese who can offer their experience & support. Working together towards a common goal, creates a strong bond of fraternity with new friends who become 'Brothers'. See poster for full details.

**Pilgrimage to Northern France** You are invited to join Bishop David & Canon John Udris on pilgrimage to Northern France from 15-22 Oct. The pilgrimage will begin with 3 nights in Lisieux, the home of St Thérèse, before we travel to Chartres to the beautiful Cathedral for 1 night. Leaving Chartres we travel to Paris via Rouen. We travel home following 3 nights in the French capital. For more details visit <https://northamptondiocese.org/france/>

**Abington Avenue URC** Friday Lunch - enjoy a hot lunch and pudding for £6 every Friday! Refreshments from 10.30am, lunch **12pm (pre-booking required)**. For more info please email [office.aaurc@gmail.com](mailto:office.aaurc@gmail.com) or visit [www.aaurc.co.uk](http://www.aaurc.co.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 16<sup>th</sup> June: 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Ezekiel has many chapters about Israel's failure to keep faith in God, culminating in the Babylonian exile. But God keeps **his** promises: He will restore his people to Israel. A remnant will survive and return to Zion, to build a renewed and perfect creation.

The Psalm extolls the Lord's just deeds: "the just" are so steadfast they appear rooted, flourishing "in the courts of our God", while "evildoers shall be scattered".

Paul has described some of his difficulties, accepting that "while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake". He encourages the Corinthians to have confidence in the Lord: whatever problems we face in our earthly lives, we look forward to making "our home with the Lord". Then our reward will be affected by our behaviour in this world.

In Mark's gospel Jesus describes the kingdom of God in parables. All around us are examples of transformation, seeds becoming unimaginable plants. We have got used to thinking of the kingdom of God as "somewhere else" – in "heaven" rather than on earth. But Jesus' parables do not suggest this, and in the Lord's Prayer we ask every day that God's kingdom come "on earth, as it is in heaven". Do we mean it? What are we doing about it?

Psalm Response: **It is good to give you thanks, O Lord.**

(Ezekiel 17: 22-24; Psalm 91(92); 2 Cor 5: 6-10; Mark 4: 26-34)

*Chris Oliver*

## Ignatius Spencer and a Third Spring

On Sunday afternoon, 7<sup>th</sup> July at 3.00 pm as part of the Becket Festival, there will be a lecture on the life of the Venerable Ignatius Spencer, who was one of the heroes of the 'Second Spring'.

St John Henry Newman described the re-birth of the Catholic Church in England as a 'Second Spring' in his homily at Mass at Oscott College on July 13<sup>th</sup> 1852. For 300 years Catholics had been persecuted, many had been tortured and put to death for their faith, and all had suffered discrimination and disadvantage. Most of this formally ended in 1829, although there still remain on the statute book some discrimination, even now.

In 1852, with Catholic dioceses re-established in England, Newman foresaw the 'coming in of a Second Spring', the first having begun with the mission of St Augustine, sent by our Patron, St Gregory, and come into a glorious summer when the Church established hospitals, schools, support for the hungry and homeless through the monasteries and all sanctified by prayer and worship.

This summer was tragically followed by the winter brought in by Henry VIII, so desperate to have a son that he sold this heritage for the hope of a dynasty. It is a further tragic irony that it was a daughter of his who gave her name to the Elizabethan Age, while his sickly and weak son died at the age of 16.

Throughout this winter, there were faithful Catholics who maintained the faith in secret. There were houses with 'Priest-holes'

where priests were able to hide if necessary and the children of Catholic families were sent abroad for their education. But in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the frost began to thaw, new Catholic churches were built, secret Catholics could come out into the open, and Catholic immigrants were able to come; particularly from Ireland. Missions were held, and there were many converts; most famously among them was John Henry Newman, later Cardinal Newman and now Saint John Henry Newman.

George Spencer was also a convert, 15 years before Newman. He had been brought up at Althorp, the great-great-great-great uncle of the Prince of Wales, but abandoned his wealth and heritage to become a Passionist priest, taking the name of Ignatius. He made it possible for Blessed Dominic Barberi to come to England, and they established a mission at Stone in Staffordshire to convert this land.

Through the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century we have endured another winter, but there are early signs of a new spring; a 'Third Spring'. May we ask the prayers of the Venerable Ignatius Spencer, who has a great connection to Northampton, that this not be in any way a 'false spring', but may lead to a new and glorious summer on our land. We seek a miracle to proceed the cause of the beatification of Ignatius Spencer. May the fruition of our mission be such a miracle!

Everyone is invited to come to the lecture at the Cathedral — in the St Thomas Centre, given by Fr Gerard Skinner who wrote a biography of Ignatius Spencer: 3.00 pm on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July.

## Picnic in the Park

Gregory Care have planned a St Gregory's 'Picnic in the Park' next Sunday (23rd June) immediately after 11.00 am mass (so approximately 12.30). There will be games, prizes, free ice cream and lots of fun. So come along with your picnic and enjoy yourself.

- ✚ We will be meeting near the aviary in Abington Park (the small park) close to toilets, the cafe and bandstand.
- ✚ Please join us if you are able, it will be a good opportunity to further develop our church community.

## CAFOD Big Pilgrimage

**1.30 pm on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July at the Cathedral**

This is a walking pilgrimage, in which you can choose:

- ✚ A 5-6 mile walk lasting between 2 and 2½ hours, or
  - ✚ A 2-3 mile walk lasting between 1 and 1¼ hours, or
  - ✚ A walk of your own design of a length of your choosing, or
- Just come any time between 1.30 and 5.00 pm, and you will find:

- Hospitality, refreshments and a warm welcome
- Space for prayer and reflection
- Interactive activities for people of all ages reflecting CAFOD's values of justice, hope and peace.

**You will also be able to find out how you can share the passion for justice and help support some of the world's most vulnerable people including those affected by the food crisis in Sudan.**