



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

A glimmer of light in the midst of this darkness

The Bishops of England and Wales are in consultation with the government regarding the re-opening of our churches for private prayer as a matter of urgency, seeking a date earlier than 4th July, which is what has been predicted. This is a matter that is controlled by law, not by the Church; please do not petition the bishop, but do feel free to petition your member of parliament or the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, or indeed the Prime Minister. They are the key people responsible for decisions which affect the closing of our churches. However, we do hope for a good outcome from the present consultation!

The first step will only be the opening of churches for private prayer, and for this to be permitted there will be strict conditions. We run the risk that if we do not meet these conditions, the lockdown will be re-imposed, and there is also the possibility of a fine.

Conditions for re-opening

The national rules for social distancing must be rigorously observed. There will need to be a ‘steward’ in the church to monitor that this is the case. Stewards must be people who are not themselves being shielded or in any of the vulnerable groups. Their responsibility is to ensure that social distancing is

maintained, if necessary, by controlling the number of people in the church at any one time. There will need to be a ‘one way’ system, with entry through the main door and exit through the side door.

The church must be cleaned fully at least once a day, using appropriate cleaning products. Areas that are likely to be touched frequently (e.g. door handles) should be cleaned more often.

In order to comply with these requirements, there is a need for a team of stewards, and if any who can volunteer for this would email to priest@stgregory.org.uk, that would be very welcome. Initially we would only open for limited hours, maybe 11.00 am to 2.00 pm, so we would need to cover three hours each day. If people could offer 1½ hour shifts, this could be managed.

There are a number of tasks that need to be accomplished before opening to meet with other requirements, and the church was cleaned last week.

We look forward to being able to be open, albeit for limited times and with these restrictions. However, if we can show that we can comply with these, it will surely hasten the time when we can resume more normal activity, and, above all, be able to share fully in the celebration of the Sacraments.

The Novena

The nine days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost are the original Novena; from which all other novenas derive. Because we cannot meet together this year, there will be short meditations which will be on Facebook and on the parish website, encouraging us to pray. There is already a preparatory video on both platforms (“prenovenal”), and there will be a second one by Thursday

(Ascension Day). From Friday there will be meditations each day, each based on one of the nine “fruits of the Holy Spirit” listed in Galatians 5:22-23.

Jesus tells us that we will be known by our fruits (*Matthew 7:16*) and that those who abide in Jesus will bear much fruit (*John 15:5*).

CAFOD Coronavirus appeal

Coronavirus (CoVid-19) has spread worldwide, with confirmed cases in several countries where we work. Its spread to countries with poor health systems is devastating. CAFOD’s local experts need your support to continue protecting lives.

How is CAFOD responding to coronavirus?

Families without enough to eat and without access to clean water, possibly living with underlying health conditions will be particularly vulnerable to coronavirus.

If it hits refugee camps, it could be catastrophic for the millions of people already struggling to access healthcare.

CAFOD is expanding and adapting its programme work to prevent the spread and reduce the risk of coronavirus in communities. Every step they take now; getting food and safe, clean water to families, will help prevent deaths and reduce suffering.

Their valuable experts on the ground understand the challenges and needs in their respective communities. They are able to respond quickly and are already engaged in providing support in many different ways.

In order to continue protecting and improving the lives of those in poor communities, your gifts are needed now more than ever. Please visit the CAFOD website and make your donation direct for this appeal.

STOP PRESS: CoVid-19 has been confirmed in Cox’s Bazaar refugee camp.

Notices of Interest

An Important Notice Regarding the Celebration of Mass:

We are instructed that there will be no public Masses during the present crisis; however, Mass will continue to be said daily and this will be on the parish website and our parish Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StGregsNorthampton>.

We have had to close the Church, although this will not affect the Mass being said privately by Fr. Andrew. Please do consider making your donations via one of the links below, remembering to state the Parish name of St. Gregory the Great, Northampton.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: The regular Thursday adoration is not taking place during this present emergency.

Bible Alive for Easter is now available. It has daily readings & good articles - all for only £2:50! If you want to purchase a copy, they are on a table outside the fire door to the foyer during the daytime, with a box of (out of date) green envelopes. You can put the payment in an envelope and post it through the presbytery door.

Hope Centre: The needs of the homeless are not changed during this emergency Please see the separate notice about the Hope Centre.

Notice from the Diocese

Online Donation: The Diocese has an online donation facility on the main Diocesan website through Virgin Money Giving (link below). If you use this option we ask that you please indicate in the notes section **which parish, including the parish name and area (St Gregory's, Northampton)** that you would like your donation to be attributed to. Please note that there is the facility to Gift Aid any donation <https://northamptondiocese.org/donate/>

Standing Order via Donor's Own Bank. You can set up a standing order for donations to your parish using either your on line bank account or in branch. The information required to make the donation 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)

More on parish finances: Most of the new planned giving boxes of envelopes have been delivered by hand, but if you can transfer to a standing order, that would be very helpful.

The Office: I can still access my emails, so if you need to speak to me please do email me at secretary@stgregory.org.uk. If you do need to speak to me by phone, I will be trying to get to the office on Fridays, so if it isn't urgent please leave a message, if it is urgent please email me with your phone number & I'll phone you back asap. Don't worry, any personal details (ie your phone no.) will be deleted as soon as I've phoned you back! If it's urgent that you speak to a Priest directly, please speak to Fr. Andrew by phoning (01604)713015 & choosing option 2 or 3.

God bless and stay safe. *Caryll*

Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group will not meet during this time.

Vianney Mission Prayer Group will not meet during this time.

Becoming a Catholic: For adults interested in becoming a Catholic, the parish runs Journey in Faith process (RCIA). Also offered for adults who are Catholic, but have not received all the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation & Eucharist. Please speak to Alex Heath (07963032175) or Fr Andrew.

Forthcoming Alpha Course: The next Alpha Course was due to start on Tuesday April 21st. In view of the current projections for the Coronavirus pandemic, we have to postpone this course. However, those who have registered will be kept informed about any change of date. Much the easiest way to enrol is through the web-site at <http://stgregory.org.uk/alpha/>.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: Please contact Deacon Michael direct (01604) 647750, E-mail: myf@btinternet.com for information.

First Holy Communion – 2020: The present course is suspended until the normal programme can be re-established.

Confirmation – 3rd Preparation Session: The present course is suspended until the normal programme can be re-established. There is a provisional date for Confirmation of 30th October.

Tots @St Gregory's: As with other meetings, Tots has been cancelled until further notice.

Online Prayer resources during this time

Live-streamed Mass from the Cathedral
<http://northamptoncathedral.org/live/>

Live-streamed Mass from Walsingham
<https://www.walsingham.org.uk/live-stream/>

Live-stream Mass from Lourdes
https://www.directfromlourdes.com/lourdes_live_tv

Fr Nicholas King leads Stations of the Cross
<https://vimeo.com/showcase/3785948>

Readings, homily and Spiritual Communion
<https://www.lentinisolation.com/videos>

EWTN
<https://www.ewtn.com/tv>

Sacred Space guided prayer
<https://www.sacredspace.ie/>

Cardinal Nichols leads Stations of the Cross
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16s7Nt_P2E

On participating in Mass on-line or through television

For most of us, it is a new experience to participate in Mass over the internet or on television. It is important not to be in the mindset of simply "watching television" or "watching a film". The Church as always asked for "active participation", and the medium of television make this quite difficult.

It is better if you can avoid sitting in an armchair or on a sofa, and try to adopt the same postures as you would in church (sitting, standing or kneeling), and to speak the responses; please do not simply be a viewer. On the back page of this newsletter is a simple prayer of Spiritual Communion.

Scripture Readings 17th May 2020, 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

The Season of Creation

Tip No. 65: *Living Sustainably with creation:* St Benedict said “Prefer nothing to the art of caring for others”.

Tip No. 64: *Living Sustainably with creation:* Seeing the flip side, Lockdown has given us TIME for family life, home cooking, gardening, reading, communicating with far away family and friends, laughing, doing jobs at home and playing with children.

Actions to LiveSimply : Communication regularly (telephone) with of our , ‘family in faith,’ can cheer our predicament, or with eye contact using WhatApp, Messenger or Skype.

Many thanks to Harry and Helen Charles who have offered to co-ordinate our parish's work towards the “Living Simply Award”. Anyone who is interested is being involved in this, please contact them, or speak to Fr Andrew

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children-SPUC

SPUC works to protect the lives of unborn children by working towards the repeal of the 1967 Abortion Act. Another vital part of its work is to support women who have suffered as a result of having an abortion.

Below are excerpts from a letter written by a lady called ‘Rachel’ to her two sons that she aborted. The letter appeared on the online forum ‘Her Voice’ which gives women an opportunity to express how abortion has adversely affected their lives.

“Dear Jude and Paul,
I remember being pregnant with you both, but I don't remember hearing your first words, seeing your beautiful faces or having the privilege to say you were my sons as you started your first day at school.”

“When I became pregnant with you, Jude, I just wanted to be ‘unpregnant’. I was asked if being pregnant would affect my mental health. I answered ‘yes’ and your life ended the next week....I was now living in fear and could see no way out.”

“Paul, I was awake when I aborted you and I heard your life being sucked away. Paralysed by pain, I watched the abortionist count the body parts to ensure all of your remains were removed.”

“I'm so saddened that for decades you were both nameless as you swirled around my heart and my memories, the dreams that I tried to bury.”

“Jude and Paul, did you know that when your life ended, part of me did too?”

“It was at Rachel's Vineyard that I was allowed to grieve.
“It was at Rachel's Vineyard that I heard the words that would change my life forever: ‘Rachel, it's not that you

could have been a mum, you are a mum!’ I realised for the first time that I am a mum.”

“Maybe someone reading this has had an abortion and is not aware that they are a mum and they can get support and healing too.”

“Aborting you both didn't stop me being your mum. I just became a mum of two dead children.”

“I love you Jude and Paul and I will spend the rest of my life showing you this by not allowing the lie that this is a reproductive right, that you didn't exist, and that this is the best we can do for mothers.”

“Love from Mum xxx”

The impact that abortion has upon the health of some women can be life-changing. Yet growing evidence suggests that women are not being fully informed and the consequences can be devastating.

If you, or anyone you know has been affected by abortion, please contact the Abortion Recovery Care and Helpline (ARCH) for free, non-judgemental, confidential support: 0345 603 8501 or info@archtrust.org.uk>email:info@archtrust.org.uk

If you would like to contact Rachel's Vineyard, please visit: www.rachelsvineyard.org.uk

If you would like to contact Her Voice, please email: hello@hervoice.org.uk



**During this time of restricted public worship, please keep reading the Bible.
The Easter “Bible Alive” is available — see the note elsewhere in this
newsletter.**

