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

# I have consecrated this House

There is a hymn written by William Bullock, an Anglican missionary to Canada, which speaks of the relationship of people with their place of worship. These are some of the verses:

We love the place, O God,
wherein thine honour dwells;
the joy of thine abode
all earthly joy excels.

We love the house of prayer,
wherein thy servants meet;
and thou, O Lord, art there
thy chosen flock to greet.

We love thine altar, Lord;
O what on earth so dear?
for there, in faith adored,
we find thy presence near.

We love the word of life,
the word that tells of peace,
of comfort in the strife,
and joys that never cease.

Every church fulfils a variety of needs, but broadly falls into two categories; a place of worship and a place of sanctuary. It is where the Eucharistic assembly meet for the liturgical worship. It is also where we may come for private and quiet prayer.

There is clearly a tension between these two uses. Except for really big buildings, it is difficult to find a quiet corner while Mass is being celebrated.

The tension is there in the architecture of the building. For the celebration of Mass there are three focal points which are of equal importance; the Altar, the Ambo and the Presidential Chair. However, outside Mass, the Tabernacle, the place of the presence of Jesus is the supreme focal point, and for particular prayers, the Sacred Heart or Our Lady or another shrine may be a focus of prayer.

It is clearly impossible to accommodate all these functions simultaneously, but we do want everyone to feel 'at home' in the church.

The sense that we are 'at home' in the church can be understood in another way – that we think of the church as a true part of our home. There are two sides of this; first that it is a place where we can relax in the presence of God and do not feel the need to 'stand on ceremony'. However it is also a place for which we have a responsibility.

We are blessed at St Gregory's in having a wonderful team of people who care for the building in a variety of ways. By regular cleaning and by the special 'big clean' occasions and by the many people who help in routine maintenance and repairs, the church is kept in good shape. However there is always room for more helpers. Just as we try to keep our homes tidy and clean, so we all can help to keep the church tidy and clean.

We keep the church open all day, from about 8.30 in the morning until the evening, normally until dusk, and it is well-used by people seeking a time of quiet prayer and meditation, or just rest and shade. All are welcome; it is God's house, but he has given it to us to use for worship and prayer, and to be our home, not just spiritually.

As a sign of the consecration of the Church, twelve large crosses were etched into the walls. They are in the 'hardware' of the church; they cannot be deleted or removed; they are not 'bolt-on' additions or 'after-market accessories'. They are not decorations, they are part of the very identity of the building. These crosses were anointed as part of the consecration ceremony twenty years ago.

However, there are many and various 'decorations' in the church, just as we have decorations in our homes. Chief among them are the portraits (or statues) of loved family members. We may well have pictures of our human mother in our home. So we have images of our heavenly mother in the church. We have a big one on the wall, and another of her at Walsingham; we have one which is a reproduction of a painting by Raphael, (known as the 'Granduca Madonna') and a reproduction of the famous icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour.

We also have pictures of Jesus; revealing his love in the Sacred Heart near the door out to the hall. Opposite it, high on the wall is a copy of the beautiful mosaic in the Sacré Coeur Basilica in Paris, with Jesus' arms outstretched in welcome. Of course, the central image of Jesus is the crucifix which dominates the apse of the church. There is a smaller crucifix above the twelfth Station of the Cross, which was rescued from the demolition of the Notre Dame convent Chapel, and is of particular significance to those who were educated by the Notre Dame sisters. There is another image of Jesus's face above the sixth station; an image to which St Thérèse of Lisieux had particular devotion. Above the fifth Station is a 'Lampadusa Cross', a cross made out of wood from a wrecked boat used by asylum-seekers crossing the Mediterranean from Africa to Europe, and near Our Lady is St Joseph at his work-bench.

Our family pictures include St Thérèse, patron of missions, St Thomas, patron of India, St Oscar Romero, a recent martyr, Blessed Cyprian Tansi, St Anna, grandmother of Jesus, St George, patron of England and St Gregory, our parish patron. There is also a painting of the nativity of Jesus, painted by Chris Fiddes, a teacher at St Mary's school and a representation of Our Lady made by a member of the staff at St Gregory's school.

These things, which are more than mere decorations are what make St Gregory's 'our church'. They carry memories of people, events and friendships that go back many years. They are not there because of artistic quality or monetary value; they are there because they represent the life of this parish and those who have built it, sustained it and developed it over the years. They are evidence of the life of the parish — that we are a parish which *is* alive.

Just as God breathed life into Adam at the dawn of creation, so by his consecration, God has breathed life into our parish, and made it a living being. It is that life for which we thank God as we celebrate the anniversary of that consecration today.

22 Park Avenue North
Northampton. NN3 2HS
**Website:** www.stgregory.org.uk

# 1st September 2024
# Anniversary of the Consecration of the Church.
# Parish Mass Book - Year B
# Page 119

**Priest:**
Fr Andrew Behrens ☎ 713015
E-mail: frandrew.behrens@northamptondiocese.org
**Deacon:**
Rev Michael Fleming ☎ 647750
E-mail: mvf@btinternet.com
**Parish Secretary:**
Caryll Comley ☎ 713015
Email: parish.stgregory@northamptondiocese.org
**Safeguarding representative**
Carol McNeil ☎ 07906802615

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| Sunday<br>***Anniversary of the Consecration of the Church*** | 9.00 am<br>11.00 am<br>5.00 pm | Mass<br>Mass<br>Mass (Syro Malabar Rite) | Andrew Condim<br>The Parish |
| Monday<br>Feria | 9.00 am | Mass | May Murtagh RIP |
| Tuesday<br>St. Gregory the Great | 9.00 am<br>7.00 pm | Mass<br>Mass | Fr. James Marks<br>The Parish |
| Wednesday<br>Feria | 9.00 am | Mass | Canon Dom. Eric Phillips |
| Thursday<br>Feria | 9.00-11am<br>7.00 pm | Holy Hours of Adoration<br>Mass | <br>Sue Hoggarth |
| Friday<br>Feria | 9.00 am | Mass | Maureen Salter's Intentions |
| Saturday<br>Feria | 9.00 am<br><br>5.00 pm | Mass<br><br>Ukrainian Mass | Nora Scott's Intentions |
| Sunday<br>***23rd Sunday of the Year*** | 9.00 am<br>11.00 am<br>1.30 pm<br>5.00 pm | Mass<br>Mass<br>Mass in Shona<br>Mass (Syro-Malabar Rite) | Derek Rumsey<br>The Parish |

**Your Offering to the Parish:** Last Week's collection was £. Thank you!
**Standing Order gifts to the Parish:** Each week £580 is given through standing orders.
**Donations through the Diocese:** An average of £90 is given each week.
**Gift Aid benefits to the parish:** The value of Gift Aid averages £136 per week.
**Cleaners This Week:** The Church is cleaned and sanitised on a regular basis.
**Counters this Week:** CC & CP

## Readings for this Sunday
**— see inside for details**

**Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12:** *A stream of living water flowing from the Temple.*
**1 Corinthians 3:9-11, 16-17:** *You are the temple of God.*
**John 2: 13-22:** *He was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body.*

## Readings for next Sunday

**Isaiah 35: 4-7; James 2: 1-5; Mark 7: 31-37. (Page 69)**

**During This Season of Ordinary Time, We are Asked to Pray For:** Human Life; Seafarers; Europe; Victims of Persecution or Oppression; Christian/Jewish Relations; The Environment.

## The Venerable Ignatius Spencer CP

Ignatius Spencer was a Passionist priest and a passionate evangelist, seeking the conversion of England. He is the great, great, great, great uncle of the Prince of Wales, and spent much of his life in the Diocese of Northampton. He also helped found the Sisters of the Cross and Passion who used to have a convent at Billing.

He has taken the first step towards being recognised as a saint, having the title of 'venerable'. The next stage of the process of canonisation requires a miracle at his intercession.

Please make this prayer for the mission of the Church in Northampton, a cause which is dear to the heart of Ignatius Spencer.

*Loving Father, your servant,*
*Ignatius Spencer*
*spent his entire life preaching the love shown for us*
*in the Passion of Your Son,*
*and working tirelessly*
*to bring the people of this country*
*to know that love.Help us to follow his example,*
*and show us that you are well pleased with his life,*
*by granting the favour we now ask through his intercession,*
*In particular, at this time we pray for your blessing on the mission of the Church in Northampton.Mary, Mother of Holy Hope, Pray for us. Amen.*

## Please Pray for the Sick:

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# Notices of Interest

We welcome into the family of the Church
Shenaya Dahso and Thomas Pio Rooney
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. Any queries or volunteers to 01604 629103 or Kath.healey.789@gmail.com

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

**SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

**Baptism Preparation:** The next session will be on Monday 12th August 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 2025/6: An important date for you diaries!** If you have a child in year 3 or older who wishes to make their First Communion next Summer there will be a meeting on 6th October after 11am Mass. It's a way off but very important so please save the date!

**Confirmation in 2024:** The enrolment date for the next Confirmation will be announced soon. Please keep watching this space.

**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)**

**Family Time:** You are cordially invited to a Family Get Together in the garden of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Great Billing, on Saturday 14th Sept between 2pm & 4pm. The event will be run by the Northampton Catenians, who will provide tea, coffee, soft drinks & snacks as well as some games/entertainment & a Bouncy Castle. This is an opportunity for people from all the Northampton & surrounding parishes to meet up & socialise as a community & get to know each other better. Please try to join us, & if you can, bring a plate of food/some snacks to share with your fellow parishioners. The more the merrier. No need to book, just turn up.

**Retreat Day at Diocesan Shrine, Our Lady's, Great Billing:** 28th Sept, 9am-4pm. Evangelisation & the writing of Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta. Day talks by Tony Hickey. Programme starts with Rosary at 9am followed by Mass at 9.30am. Please bring a light lunch. Light refreshments available: tea, coffee, biscuits & cake. For further info please contact Mark: 07724337202

**Tots @ St Gregory's**: We had our last session before the summer holidays on Tuesday 16th July from 9:30 - 11:30 and we will start again on Tuesday 10th September.

**Divine Music Day:** Sat 21st Sept. 11am to 3.30pm. Holy Ghost, Westbourne Road, Luton, LU48JD. When the Church Sings, She Comes Alive! A day of song & prayer with Chris Walker. "Come for practical ways to enliven our parish music & help our musicians prepare for the Year of Prayer & Jubilee." Christopher Walker is an inspirational Composer & Conductor of Church Music. Adults £10, children free but accompanied by an adult. Booking details to follow. For Group bookings please email music@northamptondiocese.org

**Training Sessions: (Please note the corrected dates)** There will be two sessions for each ministry, Ministers of the Eucharist and Proclaimers of the Word, and ideally everyone will come to both. The first will look at the spirituality of the ministry, the second will focus on the practicalities. All the sessions are in the evening, starting at 7.00 pm and ending at 9.00 pm, but if needed morning sessions can be arranged. The dates are:

| **Proclaimers of the Word** | **Ministers of the Eucharist** |
|---|---|
| Monday 23rd September and | Wednesday 25th September and |
| Monday 30th September | Wednesday 2nd October |

**Pilgrimage to Northern France** You are invited to join Bishop David & Canon John Udris on pilgrimage to Northern France from 15-22 Oct. For more details visit: https://northamptondiocese.org/france/

**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**: Next Practices are 11-12 on Saturdays: Oct 12th and Nov 9th 16th 23rd 30th, Dec 7th and 14th *Alec*

**Diocesan Mass for Marriage:** The annual Mass for Marriage & Family Life will be celebrated by Bishop David on 7 Sept at Northampton Cathedral. Gathering will be from 11:30am followed by Mass at 12pm. Bishop David will give his pastoral blessing to those couples celebrating significant milestones in their marriage i.e. 1, 10, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50, 60 years etc. If this is a special anniversary year for you please contact Sam Canning (MFL Co-ordinator) via email mfl@northamptondiocese.org by 25th August. Everyone welcome to attend & there will be refreshments after Mass in the Cathedral Centre.

**Missio:** The Mill Hill missionary priest, Father Kevin Hughes, wishes to thank the parish for the welcome and generous response to the Red Box appeal last weekend. If you did not get a chance to collect a Red Box or Direct Debit form, please speak to Dorothy (Mass at 9am) or Alec (Mass at 11am). You can find more information at www.missio.org.uk

**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 or visit www.aaurc.co.uk

**Church Cleaning:** Helpers needed to clean the Church on last Sat. every month (**next – 28th September**), after morning Mass. All welcome, especially younger, more energetic ones!

**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.

**March For Life UK** happens in London on Sat. 7th September. This year's theme is "Abortion isn't Healthcare". Join thousands at this family-friendly event. Find out more at marchforlife.co.uk

**INVOCATION AT ADOREMUS IS GOING TO BE INCREDIBLE!** Sunday 15th Sept, St Mary's, Oscott, Birmingham. Young people over 16 invited. The event is free, but please bring a picnic lunch and attendees need to be registered to attend. If you require transport, there will be a fee for this. It's part of the *Eucharistic Congress: Adoremus 2024*, which is celebrating and exploring the amazing gift that the Eucharist is to us as a Church: Jesus, who makes Himself accessible to us in such a humble way. Throughout the day we'll look at understanding, reverencing, and celebrating the gift of the Eucharist in our Catholic lives. To register, please visit…
https://nymo.org/invocation-at-adoremus-eucharistic-congress/

**Gregory Care**
Please contact Gregory Care (07434669011)
if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel, or is in material need.

**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**

# Scripture Readings for the Anniversary of the Consecration of the Church

Ezekiel was deported to Babylon with the Jews in 598 BC. He explained the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple as God's punishment for his people, and predicted a new day and a new temple for Israel. Today we hear about the extensive supply of life-giving water that will pour from this new temple, the source of God's blessing. An ample supply of water would obviously be an enormous benefit in this dry land, and even make the Dead Sea fresh enough for fish.

The psalm is a hymn of victory: we trust in the Lord, he will protect us in his city.

The Jews believed God dwelt in the temple in Jerusalem. But, writing from Ephesus around AD 54, Paul tells the Corinthians that "you are God's sanctuary" since "God's Spirit dwells in you". They are being built into "God's holy temple". They should stop quarrelling among themselves and be a community united in loving service. Sowing dissension damages God's temple and will be punished.

Near the beginning of John's gospel, after the disciples are chosen and the marriage at Cana, Jesus proclaims his mission by cleansing the Jerusalem temple. The temple had become a business, in which those in religious authority profited from the spiritual needs of the people. His Father's house should not be misused: trade and power have no place in it.

Psalm Respsonse: **The waters of a river give joy to God's city, the holy place where the Most High dwells.**

(Ezek 47:1-2, 8-9, 12; Ps 45(46):2-3,5-6,8-9; 1 Cor 3:9-11, 16-17; Jn 2:13-22)

*Chris Oliver*

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# Alpha in the Autumn — Dates and Subjects

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|---|---|---|
| First session: | September 17th | Is there more to life than this? |
| Second Session | September 24th | Who is Jesus? |
| Third Session | October 1st | Why did Jesus die? |
| Fourth Session | October 8th | How can I have faith? |
| Fifth Session | October 15th | Why and how do I pray? |
| Sixth Session: | October 22nd | Why and how should I read the Bible? |
| Seventh Session | November 5th | How does God guide us? |
| Eighth Session | November 12th | Does God heal today? |
| Alpha Away-Day | November 16th (Saturday) | Who is The Holy Spirit? |
| Ninth Session | November 19th | How can I resist evil? |
| Tenth Session | November 26th | Why and how should I tell others? |
| Eleventh Session | December 3rd | What about the Church? |

Alpha is a basic introduction to faith in God, in Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It is not a complete teaching scheme for the entire Christian faith. We plan to run Bishop Barron's 'Catholicism' course in the autumn for those who have completed Alpha.

**We need to recruit more helpers; if you are able to help in any way, please contact Daniel Davighi or speak to Fr Andrew. For more information and to book please see: https://stgregory.org.uk/alpha**

# Feast of St Gregory

Help is needed for the Feast of St Gregory, this Tuesday, 3rd September — in preparing the hall (3.00 pm – 4.00 pm), also for food contributions. These must be 'ready to eat', and can be brought any time from 5.00 pm. Help will be needed in serving tea and coffee, washing up and clearing away tables and chairs at the end. Offers of help to Jehanne Houghton please or just turn up!

# The Season of Creation

**"When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him."** (*Psalm 8:3-4*)

Each year the weeks between 1st September and 4th October (the feast day of St Francis of Assisi) are designated as the "Season of Creation", and in the newsletter we try to mark this in some way. Last year we showed photographs of the microscopic world, taken by Mike Gibson. This year we will be seeing photographs taken through a telescope by Steve Bell, astronomer in the parish.

This week the picture is of 'The Plough', or in America, the 'Big Dipper'. (Dipper means spoon in this context.) There are three stars which make up the handle, and then four making the bowl, but star nearest the handle is much less bright than the other six.

> "He who made the Pleiades and Orion,
> and turns deep darkness into the morning
> and darkens the day into night,
> who calls for the waters of the sea
> and pours them out on the surface of the earth,
> the Lord is his name." (*Amos 5:8*)

Mankind is only beginning to explore the mysteries of space; God is the creator, and we are the work of his hands. (*See Isaiah 64:8*)