



The Catholic Parish of Saint Gregory the Great Northampton



PART OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON, REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 294951

OUR
VISION

**“A truly thriving Catholic community,
confidently and humbly proclaiming the
Good News of Jesus Christ.”**

OUR
VISION

Zooming in to the Future

Zoom is a computer application that provides an online chat service and meeting facility which has been going since 2013, but since the lockdown earlier this year, has expanded vastly. From 10 million uses in a month in December 2019, it has risen to over 300 million uses a day!

Not everyone is an enthusiast. It has its research and development base in China, and some suspect that the Chinese government could listen in to Zoom conversations. However, since our use will be for Bible study and catechesis, they would be welcome to eavesdrop.

Since predictions are that we could be living with the restrictions on face-to-face meetings for another year or more, we need to find a way to continue our Bible study and catechesis, and Zoom seems to be the means that most people recommend.

Many people are already familiar with it, but for those who are not, there will be ‘Zoom virtual tea-parties’ next week, with no other purpose than to help people to become familiar with the application. It works on computers, tablets and smart-phones, and most modern lap-top computers, iPads and other tablets and smart-phones are fully equipped. Desktop computers need to have web-cams and microphones.

We have been celebrating a “Year of the Word”, but due to the pandemic many of the events which were in planning at the beginning of the year have had to be postponed. However, we have not lost sight of the significance of the year, whose objective remains to encourage all Catholics to engage more with the Bible. To this end, we will be offering the ‘Bible Timeline’ course through Zoom over the winter.

One of the joys of the courses has been the social gathering over tea/coffee and cakes/biscuits as we talk about the sections of the Bible that we are reading, before watching together a video which helps us to understand better the passages that we have been reading.

The ‘study’ is not heavily academic; apart from the Bible itself, the main other resource is the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and our main focus lies in discovering what the Bible is saying to us today and what its relevance is in our 21st century life.

In order to do this we do have to understand the context in which it is written, and this is, most of all, important for those who proclaim the Scriptures at Mass. Therefore, it is strenuously hoped that all who share in this important ministry will make use of this opportunity.

Here is where the benefit of Zoom comes in. You are able to take part from the comfort of your own home; those who are vulnerable are just as able to participate; those who prefer not to go out in the evenings in winter can stay in their domestic comfort; there is no travelling. The housebound are not disadvantaged for this, and it will be a joy to see the faces of people we have been missing over this time.

Tea or coffee are still available (and recommended), as are biscuits or cake; all you need to find is a quiet space. The examples that have been seen in television interviews through lockdown have shown us a great variety of places, from the cupboard under the stairs upwards!

This coming week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday there will be Zoom ‘Tea parties’ from 2.30 pm to 3.15 pm each day and on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 7.30 to 8.15. You will need to download the (free) Zoom app onto your chosen device. Tablets are probably the easiest; smart-phones seem to be less satisfactory, particularly if there are many participants, but lap-top and notebook computers are fine. As has already been said, desktop computers need to have a webcam attached. This is not difficult, they plug in to a USB socket.

To ‘come to’ a Zoom tea party, please email to Fr Andrew (priest@stgregory.org.uk) for the link. When you have the link, and a few minutes before the start time (or any time during the party), click the link and follow the instructions to join the meeting. Before this, it is a good idea to have made yourself a drink; tea, coffee or whatever takes your fancy and a plate of your favourite nibbles.

At the tea-parties we will consider what time(s) to run the Bible Timeline course, and any other courses that may be requested. There are study books available; we hold some in stock, but these need to be bought. For any for whom the cost is difficult, alternative provision can be made.

The current plans include:

Mondays at 1.00 pm:	The Letter to the Hebrews
Tuesdays at 10.00 am	The Gospel of Matthew
Thursdays at 1.00 pm	Biblical Walk with Mary
To be decided	Bible Timeline

Please join one (or more) of the tea parties this week, especially if you would like to join one of the Bible study courses, but just to be able to virtually meet through Zoom. Sometimes technology can appear frightening, but please give it a go!

Notices of Interest

Congratulations to Aileen Hasdell celebrating her 100th Birthday on 19th September

Confession: Confession will be available between 9.30 am and 12.00 noon daily, but please email first to arrange a time to ensure that Fr Andrew is free.

Agnes McLoughlin would like to thank Fr. Andrew and everyone else for their prayers, Mass cards & good wishes. She is doing well. God bless you all.

Repository - First communion and Confirmation: As the Parish can now proceed with modified versions of these great sacraments I have tried to provide some cards & gifts. It's a pity we can't have our usual Parish celebrations, but these occasions are of great spiritual importance to the candidates & their families, so people will want to commemorate them. I will put a small display of cards & mementoes on a rack & table in the Foyer. People can help themselves whenever the Church is open & put payment in the wall box on the right of the Sacristy door. For any problems, a member of staff will be present after both Sunday Masses. **Please remember to observe the regulations on masks & spacing. Please only touch items you intend to buy. I will clean & replenish items regularly as needed. Stay Safe.**

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

From 9.00 am to 12 noon on Thursdays, and then following Mass in the evening, until 8.30 pm.

Bible Alive for September & October is now available. The cost is £3.00. If you want to purchase a copy, they are near the hand-sanitiser in the narthex as you come into church. Please help yourself to a copy of The Crusader.

Supporting CAFOD and the Hope Centre: Please see the respective websites to make donations for CAFOD and / or the Hope Centre:

<https://cafod.org.uk/>

<https://northamptonhopecentre.org.uk/get-involved/donate/>

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), of which CAFOD is an active member has launched a nationwide appeal for funds. CAFOD is working in the most deprived areas of the world, helping local communities stricken by coronavirus to survive by:

- Delivering food to where it is needed most.
- Improving hygiene, handwashing and sanitation at the community and household level.
- Producing radio messages, posters and leaflets in local languages on risks and prevention.
- Training community volunteers to carry out awareness campaigns.

Visit <https://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-Emergencies/Coronavirus-appeal> or use a CAFOD envelope and give through the parish. There will be an opportunity to give to the appeal this Sunday.

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

Bishop David kicks off Autumn webinar series: On 5th August Pope Francis called on the Church to reflect on our current situation. In response, the diocesan Pastoral Ministry Office is hosting a series of online webinars on Monday evenings through the autumn. We begin on 21st September with Bishop David reflecting on the last six months, and posing some key questions as we go forward. Other topics include reaching out to the needy, building community, prayer and spirituality, and catechesis. The webinars are free to attend, but you will need to register to receive the web link. For more information and to register, please go to <https://postlockdownchurch.eventbrite.co.uk>.

Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group continues to pray together online via Skype and by telephone.

Vianney Mission Prayer Group will not meet during this time.

A 'Virtual' Pilgrimage of Reparation to Walsingham will take place on Sunday 27th September and will be led by Bishop Marcus Stock of Leeds. As you can imagine we are having to adapt to Covid-19 guidelines and so we have planned a 'Virtual Pilgrimage'. Bishop Marcus will be in Walsingham, God willing, but Covid-19 limitations result in the Shrine discouraging visits at weekend, therefore we are not running any coaches this year. Instead we will be offering an online participation which presents us with an opportunity to reach many more people than in previous years. We are also hopeful that the Relic Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be present in Walsingham. Online participation is through <https://www.walsingham.org.uk/live-stream/> or <https://www.youtube.com/WalsinghamCatholicTV>

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next Baptism Preparation will be on Monday 19th October, at 7pm in the Sacristy. **Please note that you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend to book your place.**

First Holy Communion 2020: We are happy to announce that enrolment for next year's programme for any child wishing to make their First Holy Communion who is in school year 3,4,5 or 6 will take place soon. The enrolment will be on line in December, so watch this space! At the moment we can't give any more details of how or when the preparation will take place but be assured, it will!

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 21st November at 7.00 pm (Apologies for yet another change — this has been difficult!).

PARISH FINANCES

As we increase our activities, and as colder weather approaches so that we need to turn the heating on, our finances will come under a bit of strain. We have managed to keep solvent through the lockdown; great thanks to all who have been so generous.

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)**

Holy Communion and face masks: Please note that wearing face masks is compulsory in churches, & you should wear one if you are not exempt. Stewards are not responsible for policing this, but may remind you that this is now the law. However, you clearly cannot have your mouth covered while receiving Holy Communion! The Church's rule is that you consume the Host before you move away from the minister. Please remove your mask before being given the Host. Priest and Deacon wear face-coverings for your protection.

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.

Scripture Readings 20th September 2020, 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Earlier in this chapter Isaiah invited us to the joyful banquet the Lord has prepared for us – "the supper of the Lamb". Today's reading urges us to "seek the Lord while he may be found": hidden and unimaginably different from us, yet he is near and wanting to give us his forgiveness.

The Psalm, a hymn of praise to God's mercy, recalls when the Israelites worshipped the golden calf: the Lord is "slow to anger and abounding in mercy".

For the next four weeks the second reading is from Paul's letter to the Philippians, probably written about 57 AD from Ephesus. Paul writes to thank the Philippians for the money they had sent him while he was in prison, and to encourage them to support each other in their pagan surroundings. Paul is very clear about his future life with

Christ immediately after death. Sharing in Christ's suffering means also sharing in the joy of the union with Christ which such suffering brings. Paul is torn between wishing to be gone and so be with Christ, or staying alive suffering in the Lord's work.

In Matthew's gospel even those rejected by others are swept up into the Lord's vineyard. Justice to those hired first is balanced by mercy to the latecomers.

Psalm Response: **The Lord is close to all who call him.**

Isa 55:6-9; Ps 144(146):2-3. 8-9. 17-18 r.18; Phil 1:20-24, 27; Matt 20:1-16a

Chris Oliver

The Season of Creation

Tip No. 98: *Living sustainably with creation:* *What can one person do about our common home? As consumers we can tell supermarkets and farmers what to supply by what we choose to buy each week. Refuse to buy eggs other than free range/organic to stop hens being caged. Reduce beef consumption to stop cattle being kept in barns instead of fields (a USA method).*

Tip No. 99: *Living sustainably with creation:* *What can one person do about climate change? Switch off lights, walk more/drive less miles. Avoid flying/ holiday in the UK. Recycle more, give the green waste to the council for composting. Do not burn it.*

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

There is something I would like to share with you.

I have been reading the book "**The Path to Rome – Modern Journeys to the Catholic Church**", ISBN 0 85244 486 9, which is a collection of accounts of people who have converted to Catholicism. Formerly being of no religion I didn't convert to Catholicism but I relate so much with many of the thoughts and experiences of the contributors to the book.

There is one part in particular that I would like to share with you from the contributor Keith Jarrett who, like me, had ventured inside many Christian churches; he writes:

"There is a sense of something holy, something quite special which is not present in the places of worship of other Christians. I believe this special sense of the holy comes chiefly to those who are in some way seeking to know the truth. It is as if Christ's real presence in the Catholic Church beckons us like a light from home. More powerful still is the effect on a sincere non-Catholic present at a Catholic Mass. I shall never forget going to the Requiem Mass . . . There was a conviction that this man was being sent joyfully on his way to God that I have never known in the often bleak and sorrowful funeral rites of the Church of England. In addition I was drawn by lay Catholic men and women . . . They seemed to practice a devout way of life and still be thoroughly human. Indeed what I perceived was that their very devotion to the Catholic faith actually enhanced their human qualities. I was certainly drawn by Catholic music . . ."

During the time when I was of no religion I would, from time to time, visit churches either as a place of interest or for an occasion, and like Jarrett I, too, felt there was something quite special in a Catholic church which was not present in other Christian churches. Jarrett's words "*this special sense of the holy*" is an excellent description of that feeling. He goes on to say "*[the special sense] comes chiefly to those who are in some way seeking to know the truth*". That was my position, but although I was seeking the truth, which in so many ways was staring me in the face, I persisted in trying to resist what in my

deepest conscience I really knew to be true, I simply would not admit it to myself.

He says; "*More powerful still is the effect on a sincere non-Catholic present at a Catholic Mass.*" I agree; I can't explain why but perhaps it is because of the overall ambience of that something quite special, the reverence in the way the Mass is conducted and the music and sung pieces. I would have to write an essay in an attempt to explain my understanding of the power and emotional effect of music and how I think it contributes to worship.

I can also relate to his comments on funerals and the Requiem Mass. My first involvement with St. Gregory's was for the funeral of my son, although a funeral service rather than a Mass, the way it was conducted gave me great comfort.

He continues; "*. . . I was drawn by lay Catholic men and women . . . They seemed to practice a devout way of life and still be thoroughly human. Indeed what I perceived was that their very devotion to the Catholic faith actually enhanced their human qualities.*" My relationship with St. Gregory's started when I attended an Alpha course. From the outset there was something about the people there, the ambience and sense of contentment emanating from them and their welcoming friendliness, something I had not seen in other groups or in other Christian churches. They had something I did not have, they knew something that I didn't. I am pleased to say that has now changed, indeed since being accepted into the Church my life has changed considerably. I am still seeking the truth and making progress but now I know I am on the right path.

If you've read this far, thank you, and thank you for all the help and support you have all given me.

Cliff

Thank you, Cliff for this testimony. We can all learn from what Cliff is telling us.



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

