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

Lo! He comes with clouds descending, Once for favoured sinners slain!

My brothers and sisters,
As today we celebrate *"Bambinelli Sunday"* let us be reminded of the 2009 words of **Pope Benedict XVI**:

> The blessing of the *"Bambinelli"* [Baby Jesus figures] as they are called in Rome, reminds us that the crib is a school of life where we can learn the secret of true joy. This does not consist in having many things but in feeling loved by the Lord, in giving oneself as a gift for others and in loving one another. Let us look at the crib. Our Lady and St Joseph do not seem to be a very fortunate family; their first child was born in the midst of great hardship; yet they are full of deep joy, because they love each other, they help each other and, especially, they are certain that God, who made himself present in the little Jesus, is at work in their story. And the shepherds? What did they have to rejoice about? That Newborn Infant was not to change their condition of poverty and marginalization. But faith helped them recognize the "babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger" as a "sign" of the fulfilment of God's promises for all human beings, "with whom he is pleased". *(Luke 2: 12&14)*

Advent is a wonderful season of joyful longing and wondrous expectation. However, this season can easily be lost amidst the busyness that envelopes us all at this time of the year. Therefore, as glorious as it is, as Catholics we really must avoid the ever-present temptation to rush too quickly to the Christmas Crib!

This is an urge that seems to grow stronger every year as we are daily bombarded with Christmas imagery on our TV screens, our mobile phones and all around us. In these final days of Advent let us all be determined to pause and celebrate what this season means and thus be truly open to the **blessings and grace of God** that are readily available to us at this time of year.

"Bambinelli Sunday" reminds us to pause before we hurriedly make our way to the Manger. Let each of us therefore wrap the Baby Jesus figures from our home Nativity Crib and then open it with **expectant joy and renewed longing** on the day of the Lord's Nativity.

I know that Deacon Michael, Fr Wayne, Fr Bennie and Fr Tony will join me in saying to each of you: **Enjoy Advent and then the season of Christmas will be even more glorious!** *Canon Christopher*

Thousand, thousand saints attending, Swell the triumph of his train. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

God appears on Earth to reign.

22 Park Avenue North
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Website: www.stgregory.org.uk

21st December 2025

Fourth Sunday of Advent

CTS New Sunday Missal
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Bambinelli Sunday, 21st December *Advent Sunday Four (page 42)*	Saint Gregory's Catholic School	**HOLY MASS**	**INTENTIONS:** **9.00 am** Jean Berchmans Museruka **11.00 am** The Parish
Wednesday, 24th December *Christmas Eve (page 81)*	*Northampton Cathedral* Saint Gregory's Catholic School	**HOLY MASS**	**INTENTIONS:** **2.00 pm** ***(Cathedral)*** The Children of the Parish **7.00 pm** ***(St. Gregory's School)*** Bishop Francis Thomas RIP
Thursday, 25th December *Christmas Day (page 94)*	Saint Gregory's Catholic School	**HOLY MASS**	**INTENTIONS:** **9.00 am** St Gregory's Clergy **11.00 am** Parish, Parishioners & Families
Sunday, 28th December *The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph (page 111)*	Saint Gregory's Catholic School	**HOLY MASS**	**INTENTIONS:** **9.00 am** **The Pike Family's Intentions** **11.00 am** **The Parish**

Supporting Your Parish: 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 remember that if you pay income tax, the Church can reclaim this on your giving: £2.50 for every £10 given; this is much simpler if you give by standing order.

Gregory Care – Next dates for your diary:
28th February: Table-Top Sale
9th May: Fun Day (Headlands celebration)
6th June: Picnic in the Park
We hope as many people as possible will join us at these fun-filled events!

The Giving Tree: Thank you for your great generosity! Please do bring any remaining *unwrapped* gifts back as soon as possible so we can get them delivered.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of: Margaret Farragher, RIP whose funeral takes place on Friday, 4th January 2026 at 11am in the Cathedral.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of: Bridie Walsh, RIP.

Please Pray for the Sick:

Some Joyful News: Whilst our focus is ensuring that we can return to St Gregory's Church as soon as possible, two smaller projects remain underway! These are covering the sanctuary platform and ambo in new carpet called: **"Gilded Chalice"** and the creation of a tabernacle veil, ambo fall and lectern falls in **"All Seasons fabric"**:

"The birds have a symbolic significance; they are the mediators between Heaven and Earth and in early Christian art they signified saved souls. The elegantly decorated urn, a container for oils and perfumes, signifies Mary Magdalene, one of the most popular of Christian saints and consequently much depicted in Christian art. Amongst the many flowers in the design, it is possible to distinguish the Blue Iris, a floral symbol of the Virgin Mary and the Thistle, a symbol of the Passion of Jesus Christ and the sufferings of the Christian martyrs. Finally, the grapevine symbolises abundant life and the grapes, the Eucharist."

Please contact Fr Wayne for more details.

St Michael the Archangel, defend us in this day of battle. Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust down into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

The Parish Litany:

Our Lady of Walsingham: **Pray for us!**
St Joseph: **Pray for us!**
Pope St Gregory the Great: **Pray for us!**
St Thomas of Canterbury: **Pray for us!**
All saints and angels of God: **Pray for us!**

The Divine Assistance Prayer:

May the divine assistance remain with us always, and may the souls of the faithful departed, + through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

Right To Life UK: 2025 has been one of the most challenging and busiest years ever for the UK pro-life movement. Thanks to your support there has been a strong response in Parliament, the media and the public. Visit **righttolife.org.uk/2025** for details.

The Prayer of the Faithful:
After each intention that is vocalised by the Deacon in the Intercessions at Mass there is a short pause while the faithful pray. Therefore, the Deacon leads us in the Intercessions, but we do the praying!

Christmas Eve & Day Collections: These will be divided between Canon Christopher and Fr Wayne who, in advance, offer their sincere appreciation for your generosity. Our two Priests receive a small 'wage' and therefore the collection on Christmas Eve and Day (and likewise on Easter Sunday) form a very sizeable part of their annual taxable income.

Over the coming months look out for details regarding the founding of the **'Confraternity of the Holy House, Corby'** in our parish. Life Membership is just £5 to cover the cost of the lovely enamel badge and prayer card.

Crown of Advent Novena: There was a truly wonderful response to the offering of this devotional opportunity following the Holy Masses at St Gregory's School on Sunday, 14th December with some 47 sets of Chaplet Beads and Prayer Cards being purchased. This, in addition to the 120 Novena Packs that have been purchased by parishioners in the three parishes in Corby and those choosing to receive the Novena prayers by email each day. So, as we make this prayerful journey together towards the Nativity of the Lord and the rising of the true Morning Star, may this Novena guide and prepare us, and our loved ones for whom it is offered, to be ready to welcome the Christ-child into our hearts with renewed faith and joyful expectation at Christmas. *Janet Northing*

Bambinelli Sunday: This Sunday you are asked to bring the Baby Jesus from your Christmas Crib to Holy Mass for it to be blessed. Once back home the Bambino is wrapped up, and the 'gift' is opened on Christmas Day, when it can be placed in the Crib. *Please encourage other people to bring their image of the Baby Jesus to Mass with them*. This tradition has been celebrated in Rome by the Holy Father, during his *Angelus* address, for over thirty years and the aim is to help children and young people (and us adults!) to prepare ourselves for the Birth of Jesus.

For our young people to colour-in as we approach the Lord's Nativity!

*A parent is asked to accompany their child as they collect **free crayons** after Mass from the Priest; these are a gift from Fr Christoper and Fr Wayne.*

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

A long time ago, Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem. When they arrived, there was no room for them to stay. So they rested in a quiet stable where the animals slept.

That special night, baby Jesus was born! Mary wrapped Him snugly and laid Him in a manger. Outside, shepherds were watching their sheep when an angel appeared. The angel said,

"I bring you good news of great joy… Today a Savior has been born to you."

A bright star shone in the sky, showing that God's promised Savior had finally come. Jesus was born to bring love, peace, and hope to the whole world!

We thank Jae Figueroa from Illinois, USA for permission to use this image in our newsletter.