



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

Open for Business!

With the greatest possible joy, we can announce that the church will be open between the hours of 11.00 am and 2.00 pm each day this week, and also on Thursday from 7.00 pm to 8.30 pm (with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament) Please come! Confession available — please email to Fr Andrew to fix a time.

Denounce Him!

The “Black Lives Matter” campaign has found a new target, former colonialists and slave traders. Seeing the statue of Edward Colston being deposited into the water in the harbour at Bristol was an iconic sight, and has led to a campaign to remove statues of others whose story has included profiting from the slave trade or being involved in colonisation.

It could be argued that this is a dangerous distraction from the very real discrimination that many of our community of non-white ethnicity are daily experiencing. If the focus of the protests becomes how we portray our history, the state of the present might not be remedied, and that must be the first priority. We must continue to ensure that everyone is treated with justice, whatever their race, nationality, skin-colour, religion or any other factor, including the unborn, the disabled, the elderly and the terminally ill.

That is not to say that history is unimportant — far from it. One of the most stupid sayings is attributed to Henry Ford: “History is bunk”. It has been said that “those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it”, and that “We learn from history that we do not learn from history”.

The Catholic Church has never been entirely happy with the description of Queen Elizabeth I as “Good Queen Bess” owing to the fierce persecution of Catholics during her reign and the many martyrs of that era. When her role in the establishment of the slave trade is considered, it may be that the word ‘good’ will be seen as less appropriate.

Trade with Africa had begun during the reign of Queen Mary, although this was not in slavery — it was to import gold, ivory and pepper. However Elizabeth I financed John Hawkins to capture slaves, and transport them for sale in the Caribbean. When she realised how lucrative this trade was, she gave Hawkins an even bigger boat to transport more slaves. ‘Good’ Queen Bess was actually one of the first slave traders. Should portraits of her be removed from all public places? She also encouraged the marauding exploits of Drake and Raleigh; in modern terms, a ‘state-sponsor of terrorism’.

We should be careful not to point particularly at Elizabeth I as a profiteer from the slave trade; the entire country profited to a great degree from this barbaric activity. In the 19th century Manchester was known as ‘Cottonopolis’, the centre of the cotton industry in the entire world. The vast majority of the world’s cotton was grown in slave plantations; it was not until 1865 that slavery was abolished in America, so all those who worked in the cotton industry were profiting from slavery.

Finger-pointing is an unpleasant business. It has acquired a new but equally disagreeable description; ‘calling out’. This is what is sometimes described as ‘compounding the sins I’m inclined to by condemning those I’ve no mind to’. I can ‘call out’ behaviour of which I disapprove, while hoping no one ‘calls out’ bad behaviour of which I am guilty. What is more important is that we should all recognise our own failures and seek to correct them.

Slavery is with us still today in other forms, and part of this slavery is manifest in cheap imports from other countries where the labour is so much cheaper. The Fairtrade movement seeks to remedy this situation and abolish this form of slavery, itself a legacy of the colonisation of the past. By being aware of the history of international trade, we can seek to trade fairly with other countries in the world.

Another form of slavery is present in our own country, and those who control the illegal immigration industry then hold those whom they have trafficked in effective slavery, many working in prostitution, or other illegal activities such as the drugs trade.

It is easy to jump on particular band-wagons and join in howling mobs seeking a particular change in our society. The real change that God seeks is expressed in the prayer that Jesus taught us: “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven”. To bring about this change, what is required is evangelisation, the message of the Gospel to all peoples. If we are to do that, we need to be living the Gospel ourselves, for it is by living well rather than by finger-pointing that we can be influencers in our modern society. May we not be profiteers from slavery in our generation, but rather embrace what Fairtrade really means.

Notices of Interest

Confession: Confession will be available between 11.00 am and 2.00 pm daily, but please email first to arrange a time to ensure that Fr Andrew is free.

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 Office: Now that the Church is finally allowed to open, I am happy to see people during office hours. However, I must ask you to stay at the office doorway so that social distancing can be maintained. Thank you. *Caryll*

Out of Date Contact Details: I have been working through contact telephone numbers to make sure that as many Parishioners as possible are contacted & are not in need of anything. However, I have found that many phone numbers are unobtainable, & I should appreciate it if you would take the time to email me with your up to date phone numbers/email addresses. Rest assured that your messages will be deleted as soon as I have checked that we have your correct contact details, & our 'address book' is securely password protected. My email address is secretary@stgregory.org.uk. Many thanks
Caryll

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

CAFOD Corona Virus online petition: Unite against the Corona Virus. We are living through the biggest Public Health Crisis in a century. Right across the UK it has been having a devastating impact on all our lives. Many people have lost loved ones. This is not a time for divisions. The world should unite in love & compassion. Out of love for our brothers & sisters please sign the online petition to our Prime Minister asking him to ensure the most vulnerable people are a priority in the UK's international efforts as well as at home. Visit <https://e-activist.com/page/59334/petition/1> to sign the petition online.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: Please contact Deacon Michael direct (01604) 647750, E-mail: mvf@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 20th November (Note change).

Bible Alive for July is now available. As well as the commentary on the daily readings for Mass, this edition carries an article on "Faith in a Pandemic" and an article on Nicky Gumbel who devised the 'Alpha' course. The cost is £3.00. 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. Please help yourself to a copy of The Crusader.

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)**

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/>.

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

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 previous page of this newsletter is a simple prayer of Spiritual Communion.

Scripture Readings 21st June 2020, 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

About 600 BC Jeremiah counselled King Zedekiah to be conciliatory towards Babylon, ruled by Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah expresses his internal doubts but concludes that the Lord is indeed on his side, and asks that he will see his persecutors punished. Against Jeremiah's advice, Zedekiah revolted, Jerusalem was destroyed and the people led into exile.

The psalm implores God to save him from unmerited suffering. The reference in an omitted verse to "vinegar to drink" and the expectation that "God will save Zion" led Christians to think of Messiah Christ.

In his letter to the Romans Paul reflects on the redemptive mystery of Christ. Sin, the dreadful power that has gripped humanity from the beginning, causes both bodily and spiritual death. Like Adam, all people pursue their own desires in opposition to God's will. But

God's free gift of grace makes life available to all.

In Matthew's gospel Jesus has described the trials the newly commissioned Apostles will face in their mission. They will be persecuted and even betrayed by members of their families. But they should "not worry about how they are to speak" in front of judges. They "will be given at that moment" what they are to say. Today's reading insists they can have complete confidence in God and must not be afraid.

Psalm Response: **In your great love, answer me, O God.**

(Jer 20: 10-13; Ps 68(69): 8-10.14.17.33-35; Romans 5: 12-15; Matthew 10: 26-33)

Chris Oliver

The Season of Creation

Tip No. 71: Living Sustainably with creation: "A prayer that does not lead to practical action for your brother- the poor, the sick, those in need of help, a brother in difficulty – is a sterile and incomplete prayer". Pope Francis.

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

Tip No. 70: Solidarity with the poor: Try making your main meal half a tin of baked Beans on a Baked Potato, use the rest of the baked beans the next day (main meal) on wholemeal bread. Join the 'The Poor in Spirit'. Send your saving to CAFOD.

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

Re-opening churches

It is a matter for rejoicing that we are allowed to open the church at last, and we must be grateful for the government's U-turn and climb-down over this. There are strict conditions, and there is a risk that if we do not abide by them, permission may be revoked. There must be two stewards on duty while the church is open, hand sanitiser must be available and seats that are used must be washed before the next person sits there. The maximum number of households that are allowed in at any one time is limited by the 2 metre social distancing rule. However, in spite of the difficulties, please make use of the

ability to come and pray in the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

Public Masses and corporate prayer are still forbidden, but the time on Monday will begin with a time of silent adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

We have a team of volunteer stewards, but for next week, additions to the team would be very welcome. Please email to Fr Andrew if you are able to help.

Saints this week

Saints a-plenty this week, on Monday SS John Fisher and Thomas More, on Tuesday St Etheldreda (AKA St Audrey), on Wednesday the birth of St John the Baptist and on Saturday S. Cyril of Alexandria.

John Fisher and Thomas More are relatively well-known, as is John the Baptist, but Etheldreda and Cyril of Alexandria may be less familiar.

Etheldreda was born into a noble and Christian family of East Anglia around 636, and made a vow of perpetual virginity, but in spite of this, was married as a young age, but was able to keep to her vow, and after only three years her husband died. She was then again married off by her family for political reasons to the King of Northumbria, but eventually was released from this and founded the abbey at Ely, where she died about 680. She was recognised as a saint and her shrine stood in the abbey at Ely, which was re-built in the 11th century until destroyed at the time of Henry VIII. Her feast-day was celebrated in Ely with a fair, known as 'St Audrey's Fair', at which

cheap goods were sold, from which we get the word 'tawdry'. A sad reminder of a holy life. More important is the message of finding and following the vocation that God gives us.

The years after Christianity became the imperial state religion following the Edict of Milan in 313 were marked with the exploration of the nature of Christ, and many disagreements threatened to tear the Church to pieces. How can Jesus be God and Man? Only after fierce arguments did the Church come to the understanding that we find expressed in the words of the creed that we say at Mass. Cyril of Alexandria was one of those whom the Church calls 'doctor'; that is to say, 'teacher' (the real meaning of the word), and is described as one of the 'Fathers of the Church'.

He was born in 376 and died in 444, and in defending the true divinity of Our Lord, also defended the understanding that Our Lady is truly the 'Mother of God'. It is impossible to see Jesus as truly God without recognising the crucial role that Our Lady played in God's plan of salvation. Cyril was a great promoter of devotion to Our Lady.



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

