



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

The Prayer of a Sinner

The psalm which we hear at Mass today is part of a prayer attributed to King David. While he is held up as the ideal king of Israel, it is also recognised that he was not perfect, and that there were serious failings and sins in his life.

His prayer in this psalm is one of asking for forgiveness and recognising that God is “good and forgiving”, as we affirm in the response.

It is with this in mind that we read the Gospel of the wheat and the darnel growing together in the field. In Jesus’ explanation of the parable, he tells us that the wheat are those who are “subjects of the kingdom” and the darnel are those who are “subjects of the evil one”.

St Thomas Aquinas, in his hymn ‘Lauda Sion’ reminds us the good and the guilty share in receiving the Eucharist, but we all recognise that the guilty are capable of repentance and conversion. Indeed, we all of us have, at some points in our life, numbered among the guilty!

[Lauda Sion is set as a chant during the readings for Corpus Christi, although seldom used as it is very long and optional, and there is no tune available for the translation in the lectionary.]

This is why God has given us the wonderful Sacrament of reconciliation: so that when we recognise that we have, even momentarily, allowed ourselves to become ‘subjects of the evil one’ - that is to say, allowed the evil one to determine our thoughts, words or actions - we can return to God, knowing him to be ‘good and forgiving’.

In order to understand this better, we can turn to the example of Jesus in the Gospels, and see how he responds to Zacchaeus, the reformed tax collector, or to Matthew himself who was called from his tax-collecting to become an apostle and evangelist. We equally see that Jesus does not condemn even those who nail him to the cross.

“There is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just people who need no repentance”. (*Luke 15:7*) This clearly tells us that the character of wheat or of darnel is not fixed from the start. To interpret the parable in this way is to take the analogy of the parable too far.

Saul was a great and enthusiastic persecutor of the Church, but he was converted and repented. Peter was forgiven for his denial of Christ. By God’s grace and loving mercy, we too can be forgiven, but true repentance is required. There must be a real change, and this is not necessarily sudden, immediate or instantaneous. It may take many months or years, and will involve both divine grace and human determination and effort.

Immediately after the parable of the wheat and the darnel comes another parable; that of the mustard seed — the smallest of all the seeds but grows into the largest shrub of all.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI, spoke of this, addressing catechists during the jubilee year of 2000. He speaks of:

“The temptation of impatience, the temptation of immediately finding the great success, in finding large numbers. But this is not God’s way. For the Kingdom of God as well as for evangelisation, the instrument and vehicle of the Kingdom of God, the parable of the grain of mustard seed is always valid (*see Matthew 13:31-32*).

The Kingdom of God always starts anew under this sign. New evangelisation cannot mean immediately attracting the large masses that have distanced themselves from the Church by using new and more refined methods. No—this is not what new evangelisation promises.

New evangelisation means never being satisfied with the fact that from the grain of mustard seed, the great tree of the Universal Church grew; never thinking that the fact that different birds may find place among its branches can suffice - rather, it means to dare, once again and with the humility of the small grain, to leave up to God the when and how it will grow

Evangelisation is not a new activity for the Church. In the same address, Cardinal Ratzinger speaks of ‘classic evangelisation’ which the Church has engaged in for 2,000 years, but which, in our generation, seems to be less effective.

We can see a progressive process of de-Christianisation and a loss of the essential human values, which is worrisome. A large part of today’s humanity does not find the Gospel in the permanent evangelisation of the Church: That is to say, the convincing response to the question: How to live?

This is why we are searching for, along with permanent and uninterrupted and never to be interrupted evangelisation, a new evangelisation, capable of being heard by that world that does not find access to “classic” evangelisation. Everyone needs the Gospel; the Gospel is destined to all and not only to a specific circle and this is why we are obliged to look for new ways of bringing the Gospel to all.

We are all called to this ministry in some way or other. Pope Francis and Bishop David have the same message, and for the sake of those who are not yet ‘subjects of the kingdom’, we must all respond.

[Indented paragraphs are from Cardinal Ratzinger’s address to catechists on December 12th 2000].



22 Park Avenue North
Northampton. NN3 2HS

Website: www.stgregory.org.uk

23rd July 2023
Sixteenth Sunday of the Year
Parish Mass Book - Year A
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Priest:
Fr Andrew Behrens ☎ 713015
E-mail: frandrew.behrens@northamptondiocese.org
Deacon:
Rev Michael Fleming ☎ 647750
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Parish Secretary:
Caryl Comley ☎ 713015
Email: parish.stgregory@northamptondiocese.org
Safeguarding representative
Carol McNeil ☎ 07906802615

Sunday <i>16th Sunday Of the Year</i>	9.00 am 11.00 am 5.00 pm	Mass Mass Mass (Syro-Malabar Rite)	The Parish Aunty Jeanine Beauflils
Monday St. Sharbel Makhlfuf	9.00 am	Mass	Mary Minney's Intentions
Tuesday St. James	9.00 am	Mass	Chinnamma Mathew RIP
Wednesday Ss Joachim & Anne	9.00 am	Mass	Wilkinson
Thursday Feria	9-11am 7.00 pm	Holy Hours of Adoration Mass	Dec'd Members of the Fleming Family
Friday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Paddy Barry RIP
Saturday Ss Martha, Mary & Lazarus	9.00 am 9.45 am	Mass Confessions	Mary Rumsey's Intentions
Sunday <i>17th Sunday Of the Year</i>	9.00 am 11.00 am 5.00 pm	Mass Mass Mass (Syro-Malabar Rite)	Aunty Brigitte Relmy The Parish

Your Offering to the Parish:

Last Sunday's collection was £346.69. Thank you!

Standing Order gifts to the Parish:

Each week £590 is given through standing orders.

Donations through the Diocese:

An average of £116 is given each week.

Gift Aid benefits to the parish:

The value of Gift Aid averages £136 per week.

Second Collection This Week:

The Mission Appeal

Cleaners This Week:

The Church is cleaned and sanitised on a regular basis.

Counters this Week:

CC & LA

Readings for this Sunday

Wisdom 12: 13, 16-19:

— see inside for details *After sin you will grant repentance.*

Romans 8: 26-27:

The Spirit expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words.

Matthew 13: 24-43:

Let them grow together until the harvest.

Readings for next Sunday

1 Kings 3: 5, 7-12; Romans 8: 28-30; Matthew 13: 44-52. (Page 58)

During this season

Human Life; Seafarers; Europe;

of Ordinary Time, Summer

Victims of Persecution or Oppression;

We are asked to pray for:

Christian/Jewish Relations; The Environment.

The Mission Appeal this week-end

"In business, you're either growing or dying". That is a common saying in the business world, & would be accepted as true by many. Can the same be true for the Church?

A recent study interprets the saying in three ways, & they may be helpful for us. Firstly, growth must be at the core of the culture of the organisation. How can we do more? How can we do it better? If we are only concerned to continue doing the same things; if we have no drive, we will not be an attractive community. The Church is attractive when it has a culture of growth, of mission & evangelisation at its heart.

The second way in which growth is important relates to aims & ambitions. "If you aim for the stars you might reach the moon". If the ambition of the Church is no more than still to be here next year, or in 10 years' time, that is not responding to the call of Jesus to proclaim the Good News. We must set our sights high, & be willing to invest energy & money to achieve the goals. Even if we don't reach our target, we will still have made progress.

The third way is that growth comes through people. Jesus chose those who were to be the first Apostles, & in our generation he has chosen us to continue that great work. So we must invest in people; in training & in support. It is through people that mission is accomplished, not through schemes & programmes, although they may help.

The Church cannot grow without a culture of growth from top to bottom, without the ambition to grow & without the people committed to growth. Please be generous in this appeal:

Please Pray for the Sick:

Debbie	Jean O'Neill
Fr Philip Swingle	Khanh Phan
Michael Spowart	Matt Murphy
Catherine Stratten	Deacon Rory
Diana George	Aileen Hasdell
Margaret Farragher	Katy
Peter Cawley	Brenda Paintin
Betty McKee	Rita Barry
Michael Woolmore	Mary Balham
Leo Bell	Maureen Bell
Michael Rowback	Margaret M
Marion Gilbert	Bridget Devane
Sandra Coughlan	Margaret Refoy
David Pick	Liam Murphy
Denise Faulkner	Yvonne Balhatchet
Peter Frost	Colin Smith
Jim O'Connor	Sheila Frost
Paul Gilbert	Sheila Dowling
Eileen Flanagan	John Hodges
Alyssia Wraxall	Bridie Walsh
Doris Jones	Jayne Miller
Gerry McGuinness	Elsie Smith
Frances Taylor	Florence Dunn
Glynis Garibaldi	Donald Green
Maire West	Theresa
Terry Hammond	Ester Snelling
Nora Scott	Thomas Boylan
Barbara Dmochowska	Seby Paul
Teresa Redmond	Barbara Jones
Tony Jones	Chris Hill
Carolina Madovi	

Anniversaries:

May they Rest in Peace

Edith McGill	Terence Collins
Philip Masson	Norah Battle
Anthony Lasslett	Kathleen Bradbury
Violet Burke	Amy Butlin
George Page	Margaret Millmore
Elizabeth Greaves	Michael Greenan
Antonietta Riseley	Anna Amalfitano
William Mulcahy	Martin Kelly
Ann Hill	George Penny
Lilian McGee	Kathleen Spring
Sarah Crossan	Johanna Hardy
James Cocks	Kathleen Burke
Pamela Haynes	Mary Franks
Malcolm Rudkin	John Condron
William McCarthy	Sean Kennedy

**POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS
FOR JULY:**

We pray that Catholics may place the celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of their lives, transforming human relationships in a very deep way and opening to the encounter with God and all their brothers and sisters.

Notices of Interest

Car Park Safety: Please remember that Parents/Carers are responsible for children in their charge whilst using the car park. Neither the Parish nor the Diocese are responsible for the safety of persons (adults or children), cars or their contents while in the car-park.

Repository: The Repository is open after every Sunday Mass wherever possible! We need more helpers prepared to stand for a few minutes after Mass - all stock is marked, so an easy task!
Contact Kath.healey.789@gmail.com.

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

Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group continues to pray together online via Skype and by telephone and on the first Saturday of the month, here in the Church, from 10am-12pm.

Thursday Holy Hour & Adoration: Holy Hour remains as Holy Two Hours, from 9am until 11am. This will continue while there are sufficient numbers to sustain it. It is important that at least two people are present throughout the time of adoration.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be reported here shortly. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book a place.

First Holy Communion 2023: Enrolment for 2024 will be Sunday 8th Oct. after the 11am Mass. There will be a welcome to the children who are registered & their parents at the 11am Mass on Sunday 5th Nov. All sessions will be on Saturday afternoons at Sacred Heart, Weston Favell. Details, dates and times will be available at the registration. Please see the separate article on the way the programme works.

Confirmation in 2023: Those interested in Confirmation preparation should have spoken to Helen & will know the plan for the coming months.

Food Parcels: Please contact Gregory Care (07434 669011) if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel.

Choir Notes: our next practice is after evening Mass on the Holy Day of the Assumption of Our Lady 15th Aug. Before that, we have an opportunity to share our faith with the residents of **The Crescent Care Home**, NN1 4SB, which is within a mile of St Gregory's. Apparently "Songs of Praise" is popular with that community so, following our Christmas carols selection, we will provide our own version of SOP. This will take place on **Thursday 27 July from 2-3pm**, not a note longer. Our singers will combine those regularly involved at 9 & 11 at St Gregory's but we would welcome others to help boost our cross-faith effort. Alec will be cracking jokes between each hymn - not something to be missed!

Missio Matters: Pennies from Heaven? After Sunday Mass (16th July) I made the mistake of getting on the weighing scales & found I had put on 4 pounds (about 2kg) that morning! Then I realised that I was holding a heavy red box in my hands - hence my weight increase. Unfortunately the donor handed this in before 9am Mass but no one knows who it was & there was no name on the box. I would be grateful if that person could give their name to Deacon Michael or Dorothy (at 9am) or me (at 11am) so that I can thank them & keep our records straight. *Alec*

Pilgrimage of Reparation & Prayer for the Sanctity of Life, to Walsingham: Sat. 5th August, led by Archbishop Kevin McDonald. For details see the poster on the noticeboard, or go to www.prolifepilgrimage.org. Please join in the 'great prayer for life' asked for by Pope Saint John Paul II.

Fire Safety — Important notice. Some years ago in response to instructions relating to the fire risk associated with votive candles, we had trays made to go under the racks where the candles burned to prevent the possibility of a naked flame falling on unlit candles below. Unlit candles **must not** be placed on these trays in any circumstances & must not be stacked one on top of another. This has been happening in recent weeks, and must not continue.

Tots @ St Gregory's: Our last session this term was on Tuesday 18th July. We start again on Tuesday 12th September at 9:30.

Dog lovers wanted! Hearing Dogs for Deaf People urgently need volunteers to care for and help train their gorgeous puppies. For more information, ring 01844 348122 or email volunteer@hearingdogs.org.uk

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)**

URGENT NOTE ON FINANCES

If you have transferred to standing orders and pay income tax please contact Fr Andrew (preferably by email) so that the Gift Aid can be linked to your donation. Claims can only be made for up to three years, so there is some urgency about this.

Refreshment Donations: Below is the schedule for refreshment donations through the year:

From the first Sunday in Advent to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:	The Hope Centre
From the Second Sunday in ordinary time to the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday:	Gregory Care
Through Lent and Eastertide:	CAFOD
Ordinary Time until the end of August:	Refreshment Fund
September until the Harvest collection:	CAFOD
After harvest until the beginning of Advent:	The Bible Society

Men's Walk: Monday evenings there is a walk for any men who would like to come along, no ongoing commitment required & those interested can come along to join whenever they are available. There is also an element of prayer & socialising some weeks as time allows. For more info about times & routes each week please contact Alex on 07963032175.

Mission Prayer

Heavenly Father
it is your will that we should make disciples of all nations.
We ask you to bless the mission of our Diocese of Northampton
and guide our hearts and minds
so that your will might be done
and your kingdom be build up here on earth.
We pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit,
without which our work is in vain,
and we entrust ourselves to your beloved Son,
for we know that he is with us for all time, now and for ever.
Amen.

Assembly Insight

"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation."
(1 Peter 2:9)

Prayer for Ukraine:

Please continue to pray for an end to the war in Ukraine:

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 23rd July 2023, 16th Sunday of Year A

The Book of Wisdom was probably written in Alexandria about 50 years before Christ, to encourage the faith of Jews living in a pagan Egypt. It wrestles with the age-old problem that evildoers are not punished in this world. Wisdom insists that God is just and merciful: he will reward the just after death, although this book does not say how. We can see that God moderates his own power with his justice from the way he gave the Canaanites time to repent during the exodus, and we should follow his example by showing mercy to those who hurt us.

The psalm really says it all this week: God is a loving God, a "God of mercy and compassion, slow to anger", "good and forgiving, full of love to all who call." Eventually "all the

nations" – ie the Gentiles – will come to adore God.

Paul has been telling the Romans we may have confidence in the future life God has planned for us. God sends the Spirit to help us and to enable us to express our prayers more meaningfully.

The Gospel shows God's mercy in action. Instead of venting punishment on sinners and immediately uprooting them, God patiently gives us time to repent.

Psalm Response: **O Lord, you are good and forgiving.**

(Wisdom 12:13,16-19; Ps 85(86); Rom 8:26-27; Mt 13:24-43)

Chris Oliver

How is the Diocese funded?

The diocese has no income of its own, it is totally reliant on the parishes for all its needs.

It provides certain facilities which need the economy of scale, and, above all, the services of the bishop. One of those facilities is the management of the payroll for parish and central staff, and ensuring that the minefield of employment law is safely negotiated. We are also part of a group purchasing scheme of gas and electricity, which saves us a great deal.

Fynnius Fogg Evening

Tickets will be available after Mass today at £12:50 for the fund-raising evening at the Cathedral Hall on 2nd September. This is to raise money for the Foodstore – Supper is included! (And a bar). Many of you will have seen them before and know what a fabulous evening it will be! We will also be collecting Tombola prizes over the next few weeks so if anyone has any new items suitable to donate please put them in the toiletry box at the back of church.

Stella Maris (formerly AOS)

(Second Collection on August 6th)

Stella Maris, a leading maritime charity dedicated to supporting seafarers and fishers worldwide, is launching a series of new workshops across the UK.

These workshops are aimed at empowering individuals to identify cases of modern slavery within the maritime industry, supporting victims and survivors of modern slavery and raising awareness of the issue.

According to the most recent report from the International Labour Organisation, there has been a 10% increase in forced labour since 2016. This is a trend recognised by Stella Maris chaplains around the world. Seafarers and fishers who endure extended periods away from home and who may face isolation on vessels can be particularly susceptible to exploitation. In response, Stella Maris is taking proactive steps to address and help combat this issue.

The newly developed workshops, funded by the Department for Transport through the Merchant Navy Welfare Board, will provide participants with essential knowledge and tools to identify signs of modern slavery and to respond effectively to potential cases. The sessions will be led by a panel of experts and will focus on key topics, including: recognising indicators of exploitation, ways to reduce the risks of modern slavery, understanding the emerging threats and trends in modern slavery, and identifying and accessing appropriate support networks for those escaping modern slavery. Attendees will also have the opportunity to hear the voices of some of those who have experienced modern slavery first hand.

Speaking about the initiative, Tim Hill MBE, CEO at Stella Maris, stated, "We are extremely proud to launch these workshops as part of our ongoing commitment to improving the welfare of seafarers and fishers. Forced labour and modern slavery have no place in the modern maritime sector in the UK. By empowering individuals to recognise and address instances of these crimes, we can help to create a safer environment for those who work at sea."

The workshops will be open to front-line port personnel, including ship visitors, ship operators, port authorities, law enforcement agencies, and other port stakeholders who come into contact with seafarers and fishers. To ensure accessibility and increased reach, the workshops will be held in six locations around the UK: Liverpool, Bristol, Hull, Glasgow, Portsmouth and Belfast. To find information about the workshop series, visit the Stella Maris website at www.stellamaris.org.uk/combating-modern-slavery/

Stella Maris believes that it is vital for all stakeholders in the maritime sector to work together in the fight against modern slavery. By equipping front-line workers and volunteers in the sector with the necessary knowledge and skills, it aims to inspire a network of advocates within the maritime industry who will collectively help to combat this issue.

While we are as far away from the sea as it is possible to be in England, we benefit from the work of seafarers and fishers through eating fish and receiving imported food and other goods. The work of Stella Maris is vital to the life of our country.

The Three Bees — The sign of the welcoming Church



Belong

Believe

Behave

We welcome all people to our church, and hope that they feel that they belong — like bees in the midst of a flower-bed.

We are a community of faith, and that faith revolves around the person of Jesus. We are trying to grow in our relationship with him day by day, and find that sharing in the Mass helps us. We hope that it will help all who are with us today. All are welcome.

We all sometimes behave badly, none of us is perfect!