



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

Faith, Hope and Charity

The opening prayer of Mass today prays that God will increase our faith, hope and charity, and make us love what he commands. This is worth thinking about.

“Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” (*Philippians 4:8*)

A virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions. The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God.

(*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1803*)

The Church identifies seven specific virtues, which it divides into two categories; cardinal virtues and theological virtues. The first four, the Cardinal Virtues are Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance, but those mentioned in today’s opening prayer are the remaining three, known as the Theological Virtues. This is because they originate from God himself. The Cardinal Virtues are rooted in the Theological Virtues; it is through faith, hope and charity that we can learn prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

The Theological Virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity. These virtues are infused into our souls by God, and it is through these that our moral decisions are made. They are the pledge of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in our minds.

(*See Catechism of the Catholic Church §1812*)

Faith

Faith is the theological virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that he has said and revealed to us, and that Holy Church proposes for our belief, because he is truth itself. By faith man freely commits his entire self to God. For this reason the believer seeks to know and do God's will. “The righteous shall live by faith.” (*Romans 1:17*) Living faith “work(s) through charity.” (*Galatians 5:6*)

The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation: “So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.” (*Matthew 10:32-33*)

(*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1814 and 1816*)

Hope

Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in

Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.” (*Hebrews 10:23*) “The Holy Spirit . . . he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.” (*Titus 3:6-7*)

(*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1817*)

The beatitudes raise our hope toward heaven as the new Promised Land; they trace the path that leads through the trials that await the disciples of Jesus. But through the merits of Jesus Christ and of his Passion, God keeps us in the “hope that does not disappoint.” (*Romans 5:5*) Hope is the “sure and steadfast anchor of the soul . . . that enters . . . where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf.” (*Hebrews 6:19-20*) Hope is also a weapon that protects us in the struggle of salvation: “Let us . . . put on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.” (*1 Thessalonians 5:8*) It affords us joy even under trial: “Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation.” (*Romans 12:12*) Hope is expressed and nourished in prayer, especially in the Our Father, the summary of everything that hope leads us to desire.

(*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1820*)

Charity

Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1822*)

Jesus makes charity the new commandment. By loving his own to the end, he makes manifest the Father's love which he receives. By loving one another, the disciples imitate the love of Jesus which they themselves receive. Jesus says: “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love.” (*John 15:9*) and again: “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” (*John 15:12*) (*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1823*)

Fruit of the Spirit and fullness of the Law, charity keeps the commandments of God and his Christ: “Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love.” (*John 15: 9-10*) (*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1824*)

“If I . . . have not charity,” says the Apostle, “I am nothing.” Whatever my privilege, service, or even virtue, “if I . . . have not charity, I gain nothing.” (*1 Corinthians 13:1-4*) Charity is superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues: “So faith, hope, charity abide, these three. But the greatest of these is charity.” (*1 Corinthians 13:13*) (*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1826*)

Notices of Interest

Thursday Holy Hour and Adoration: A request has been made that there be more opportunity for Eucharistic Adoration. From this week, as a trial, Holy Hour will be a Holy Two Hours, from 9.00 am until 11.00 am. However, this can only continue if there are sufficient numbers to sustain it. No one is expected to remain for the entire two hours, come for as long as you can or want to.

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

Repository: The Repository is open after every Sunday Mass – Catholic Diaries for 2023 are now available! 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*

The God who Speaks: The ‘Year of the Word’ continues and the Diocesan Bible Study sessions for the Sunday Mass readings are continuing. There will be a session on ‘Preparing for Advent and Christmas’ on 23rd November and in January there will be an introduction to the Year of Matthew (Year A in the lectionary)

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday 14th November at 7.00 pm in the Sacristy. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

First Holy Communion 2023: Important Dates for First Communion Families: Congratulations to all children who have enrolled on the First Holy Communion programme. You will now have all the dates of sessions. Please try to attend them all, and please enjoy the course!

Confirmation in 2023: Please watch this space for information.

Choir Matters: I expect choir members to be at October Sunday Masses by 10:45 to check the hymns etc. as planned: Oct 9: 408 & 206. Oct 16: 527 & 568. Oct 23: ICA & 560. Oct 30: 641, 522 & 283. *Alec*

Food Parcels: Please contact Gregory Care (07434669011) if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel.

World Mission Sunday: Thank you very much for your donations to World Mission Sunday last week. Your prayers and support will help missionaries work alongside communities in need throughout the world. Please pray for the work of Missio & all those working to offer the love of Jesus. For more information about Missio please go to missio.org.uk or phone 020 7821 9755

Donations will also be accepted today! Please give generously.

Accommodation Needed: Fr. Gareth Leyshon is attending a conference in Northampton and is looking for accommodation from 18-20 November. If you are able to help, please contact Clare at lazylion26@hotmail.com

Would You Like to Consider Joining (online) For the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or Diocesan Certificate in Religious Studies? Both courses offer the same eight modules in Scripture and Catholic Theology with the CCRS leading to a nationally recognised qualification. Those who follow the CCRS/DCRS say they gain a great deal from the course, deepening their knowledge and understanding of their faith. To find out more about the course, contact Ann Collon Email: educationserviceadmin@northamptondiocese.org or visit our website: www.northamptondioceseschools.org

Tots @ St Gregory's: We have re-started: tots and their carers welcome, 9.30-11.30 on Tuesdays during term-time £1 per adult!!

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

St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School and Nursery: If you missed last week's Reception Open Morning for children coming into Reception Class in September 2023, you are very welcome to come in for a visit. Please contact the school office first on 01604 403511. We look forward to welcoming you to our lovely school!

Save the Date: Saturday 18th March 2023 Encounter Northampton, a day hosted by Mission Northampton in St Gregory's Hall from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. More details later!

Church Heating: The church heating has to be on for two hours before it even begins to warm up, so not running it for weekday Mass is a way of making a considerable saving. Please come in warm clothing! We will heat the church and hall on Sundays, but the extra cost of this will be more than the saving on weekdays.

Job vacancy: Lay Chaplain for St. Gregory's & St. Mary's Catholic Primary Schools - a dedicated & highly motivated Lay Chaplain required to work in a high quality, vibrant & caring environment where we share a rich vision for our pupils & for the communities in which we work. Post is 22.5 hours pw. working 4 days across both schools. Deadline is midday on Wed. 9th Nov. Further info: <https://www.stgregoryscatholicprimaryschool.org.uk/page/?title=Vacancies&pid=31>

Flame 2023: The theme of Flame 2023 – which is exactly 150 days before World Youth Day in Lisbon – takes the WYD Scripture “Mary arose and went with haste” and crystallises it into the theme, “Rise Up!” Rise up after the pandemic, Rise up as young Catholics, Rise up – as Mary did – for the surprising and beautiful adventure that is our Catholic faith. **Sat 4th March 23 - book the date - more details soon**

A course on the Psalms: It is sub-titled “The School of Prayer”, with the invitation to ‘learn to pray like Christ’. Running on most Wednesdays from 28th September; there will be a few breaks; on 23rd November, 2nd November (All Soul's Day) and 5th October (a meeting which Fr Andrew needs to be at). After Christmas there will be a new course starting: “What We Believe: The Beauty of the Catholic Faith”. This is from the Ascension Press. There is a course in preparation on the history of the Church seen through the lives of saints in the Church calendar, which will run after Christmas

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)**

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**

Prayers 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 October 2019, 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Sirach was a Jerusalem sage writing about 180 BC. His wise maxims are much used by the Church. God does not approve “the gifts of the goddess, nor for their many sacrifices does he forgive their sins”. God is just, “he hears the cry of the oppressed”. God’s justice will be seen, he will wreak “vengeance upon the proud”.

The psalm urges us to praise the Lord, especially for his rescue of us. We should therefore keep his commandments.

Paul tells Timothy to expect a time to come “when people will not tolerate sound doctrine” “and will stop listening to the truth”. In every age Christians have experienced this happening. Paul is facing death alone. But God has not deserted him, enabling him to speak out at his trial, sending the gospel message to yet more Gentiles, even at this late hour.

In Luke’s gospel Jesus continues his teachings on prayer. After last week’s parable about the persistent widow comes this strong condemnation of insincere prayer. We should not imagine that the Pharisee was bad: he is a good man, conscientiously observing his religion. Yet Jesus says the tax collector went home justified “rather than” the Pharisee. Not “more than”! Why? Because the tax collector was humble enough to admit his need of God and of his mercy.

Psalm Response: **This poor man called; the Lord heard him.**

(Sir/Eccle’us 35:12-14,16-19 Ps 33(34) 2 Tim 4:6-8,16-18 Lk 18:9-14)

Chris Oliver

So I did sit and eat.

This is the last line of one of George Herbert’s poem, ‘Love bade me welcome’ from his 1633 collection: ‘The Temple: Sacred Poems’, and beautifully set to music by Vaughan Williams as one of the “Five Mystical Songs”.

It begins: “Love bade me welcome, but my soul drew back”. The invitation to Alpha has been made on a regular basis over several years now, and many have responded to the invitation, but many others have drawn back. It is twisting Herbert’s poem to apply it to Alpha; he is speaking of the invitation to Mass, and the eating is of receiving Communion. Next spring the invitation will go out again, and a plea that you will not be reluctant to share in the joy of Alpha

You will be able to register at www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha
Many people have found this valuable for themselves, but this is also an easy way for anyone to fulfil the wish of Pope Francis that we all become Missionary Disciples. Just come and bring a friend!

First session:	September 20th 2022:	Is there more to life than this?
Second Session:	September 27th 2022:	Who is Jesus?
Third Session:	October 4th 2022:	Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session:	October 11th 2022:	How can I have faith?
Fifth Session:	October 18th 2022:	Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session:	October 25th 2022:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Seventh Session:	November 8th 2022:	How does God guide us?
Away-Day:	November 11th - 12th:	Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? How can I make the most of the rest of my life?
Eighth Session:	November 15th 2022:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	November 22nd 2022:	Why and how should I tell others?
Tenth Session:	November 29th 2022:	Does God heal today?
Eleventh Session:	December 6th 2022:	What about the Church?

What is Love?

The petition of the opening prayer of today’s Mass is that God will ‘make us love what you command’. This does seem to go against the common understanding of what love is.

The question: “What is love” is the title of a song sung by a man in love with a girl who does not love him. There is a repeating line: “Oh baby, don’t hurt me”. It has a likeness to a passage from the Good Friday liturgy, the ‘Reproaches’ which are sung during the veneration of the Cross.

Love is more than a divine attribute, “God is love”. (1 John 4:8) It is in love and out of love that creation came into being, and we are commanded to “love one another”. (John 13:34-35) This is not a matter in which we have an option; it is a commandment which leaves no wiggle-room for exceptions. This is made very clear: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44) and “If you love those who love you what reward do you expect”. (Matthew 5:46)

This love is very different to the sort of love that is the subject of many songs; not the exclusive love of marriage, but rather, a totally inclusive love.

C. S. Lewis, the author of the ‘Narnia’ stories wrote a book entitled ‘The Four Loves’, in which he distinguishes between four different

Greek words, all of which are translated by the same English word, ‘love’. This problem in language creates a further problem for us in our practical obedience to God’s command given by Jesus.

There is a need for a clear understanding of what this command actually means for us. If we are praying that God will ‘make us love’ what he commands, what are we actually praying for?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes St Thomas Aquinas in saying that ‘to love is to will the good of the other’. Christian love is therefore an act of will, not simply an emotion that takes us over.

‘Love’ is not the top end of the scale of ‘liking’. There isn’t a spectrum that goes from ‘hate’ at one end via ‘like’ to end at ‘love’. Love is on a different plane altogether. We do not need to like our enemies, but we are required to love them. To love them is to will — that is, to desire — the best for them. That means that we do not actively seek to disadvantage them in any way, but rather to seek to help them. It also means that we do not selectively choose to love those whom we like as opposed to those whom we dislike.

There are many important consequences of this universal call to love. For example, the action of charities comes from this, especially those offering international aid. It has implications for us when we seek an improvement in our personal wealth, status or standard of living when others have less than we do.

If we have said 'Amen' to this prayer, we may need to consider what that implies!