



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

Bishop David's Vision

“Throughout the world, let us be ‘permanently in a state of mission’.”

(The Joy of the Gospel, §25)

The vision of Bishop David is, rightly a vision that extends way beyond any one parish, and quoting Pope Francis, in “The Joy of the Gospel”, puts his vision into a global context. Our Bishop has the responsibility for the Diocese of Northampton, and we have the responsibility for that small part of it which is the Parish of St Gregory the Great here in this town.

Our Parish Vision is in line with that of Bishop David's; we are to be a community which proclaims the Good News of Jesus Christ with humility and confidence.

“The Joy of the Gospel” gives specific instruction to the Bishops of the world: “The bishop must always foster this missionary communion in his diocesan Church, following the ideal of the first Christian communities, in which the believers were of one heart and one soul” (cf. Acts 4:32). (*The Joy of the Gospel, §31*)

Just as it is important that the Diocese follow the vision of our Bishop, it is also important that each parish should share in that vision, and within each parish, the vision should be shared by all the people of the parish. Although our vision was established long before our present Bishop was appointed, it is fundamentally the same vision, expressed in the first of two key messages that the Bishop wants to communicate to us all:

1 Mission — the Church exists to evangelise

Within this area Bishop David has set out a number of strategic principles:

We will share the living Gospel of Jesus Christ and build the Kingdom of God in every aspect of our work and life

One of the dismissals at the end of Mass says: “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life”. The sense of this is exactly the meaning of this principle. The effect of a truly Christian life is of itself missionary. Therefore, to fully embody this principle, our own life must fully embrace the life of the Gospel. An important task for the parish is to enable this to be fulfilled.

We will radiate our faith & values to the wider community who will know us by our love witnessed by our actions & behaviour

One of the ways in which we share the living Gospel of Jesus Christ is by the love that we show to those in need. Our support for the Hope Centre and the Cathedral Foodstore (through donations of toiletries) is one way in which this takes place.

We will provide opportunities for quality and effective youth engagement and formation across our diocese

This is an area in which we need to develop and grow. The Kerala community have brilliant opportunities for young people; this needs to be able to spread across the entire parish. Meanwhile, our Children's Liturgy is getting better established, but needs more helpers; as do all our Sacramental Preparation programmes.

We will provide effective pathways for adult formation beyond Confirmation including a locally based programme of evangelisation

COVID dealt a blow to the programme of Bible Study and other adult faith formation programmes that we were running. It is to be hoped that these can re-start in the autumn. Some have continued through ‘Zoom’, but only a small number have taken advantage of this.

We will reach out with God's message of salvation to those outside our parishes

‘Alpha’ is our main way of reaching out beyond our worshipping community. There is a small and dedicated team who are enabling this, but there is a real need for this team to be enlarged.

We will implement systems and processes which enable our key missionaries to prioritise mission activity.

This begs the question: ‘who are our key missionaries?’ When Ignatius of Loyola was recovering from injury, he read the life of St Francis and of St Dominic, and his response to what he read was: “I could do that too!” Do we have ‘key missionaries’ of the future in our pews. Joining the ‘Alpha’ team might be a way of finding out.

2 Communio — working together as “Living Stones”.

This second key message is derived from the passage already quoted from ‘The Joy of the Gospel’ which springs from the description of the early Church in Jerusalem: “The whole group of believers were united in heart and soul” (Acts 4:32). As a parish we must have a shared vision; shared in the Bishop's vision that we are “permanently in a state of mission”, and sharing in our parish vision that this is realised in our humbly and confidently sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. This is something that we all do together, as part of a single parish, and within a single Diocese under one Bishop.

Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for August 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. 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

Sea Sunday: Thank you for giving to Sea Sunday. Our parish raised £186.94. Your generous gifts will ensure that Stella Maris Chaplains can continue to be a friend for seafarers & fishers in times of need. Many thanks too to the knitters of hats & the suppliers of wool. These are most appreciated. Anyone who would like to join the knitters, please contact Bob Maine. To find out more about how your support helps those who live & work at sea please visit:
www.stellamaris.org.uk

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: Next date to be in the Sacristy on Monday 1st August, 7pm. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

First Holy Communion 2023: Please watch this space for information. The programme will take a similar form to last year, in which a parent/carer will take a primary position in the teaching. The feedback from this system has been very encouraging.

Confirmation in 2023: Please watch this space for information.

Vocations to Priesthood: Vocations weekends are planned three times a year. These are weekends for men who are discerning priesthood. You may be in the very early stages of discernment & don't worry - you don't have to sign anything! You can take your time & meet priests who can share more about this incredible life. Priesthood is a gift to our diocese, & we would love to connect with you as you continue your journey with God. At any point you can contact the Diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Andy Richardson – (01582 502400) or vocationsdirector@northamptondiocese.org.

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)**

Young Catholic Adults (YCA) Weekend 7th - 9th October:

Theme: "The Communion of Saints' prayer & veneration of Holy Relics". During the weekend, Young Catholic Adults will run a retreat at Douai Abbey with Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge who will be holding Gregorian Chant workshops. There will also be a Marian Procession, Rosaries, Sung Masses, Confession, talks & socials. Prices: £12 (for the day) £55pp per night (residential). Book soon as places are limited! Please note, to guarantee your place Douai Abbey have requested that everyone books in 3 weeks before the start of the weekend (16th Sept). For info, go to <http://youngcatholicadults-latestnews.blogspot.co.uk/> or <http://www.youngcatholicadults.co.uk>. To book: <https://bookwhen.com/youngcatholicadults-douai2022>

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

Tots @ St Gregory's: We have had a great year and our last session will be on Tuesday 19th July and we re-start on Tuesday 6th September!!

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

Warning: Help will be Needed: The next Alpha will be needing help in various departments: You may be specifically asked! Please remember that both Pope Francis and Bishop David are telling us that we must be 'Missionary Disciples' and that we must be 'permanently in a state of Mission'. Your parish needs you; your Diocese needs you; your Church needs you.

Employment Opportunities at the Diocese: For details of opportunities visit <https://northamptondiocese.org/jobs/> or via email hadmin@northamptondiocese.com

Choir Matters: Practices start after evening Mass, 1st Thursday each month: 7:45-9pm. Dates Aug 4, Sep 1, and Oct 6. Old age & infirmity are catching up with some familiar voices - including myself - & new members are needed...the view from the Gallery is great.
Alec.

Planned Giving Envelopes: If you use envelopes, please take your new box from beside the confessionals. Standing orders are managed by the Diocesan Finance Office, and the parish does not always have full details.

Pilgrimage of Reparation & Prayer for the Sanctity of Life: Walsingham National Catholic Shrine, Saturday 6th August, 12pm. Please see poster for details or contact Christopher & Margaret on (01858) 571242.

Unholy Mathematics: We now have the full figures for the last financial year. Leaving aside the one-off expenditure on the kitchen, we have made a small surplus over the year. However, the energy bills for the coming year will be a problem. There is more information on our financial situation opposite. One significant help would be to make your giving through standing order; the details of our account are above, and if you pay income tax, please ask for a Gift Aid form.

Wednesday evening Bible Study by Zoom: 8 week course on Romans led by Andrew Swafford and Jeff Cavins, subtitled "The Gospel of Salvation".

Session 8, 20th July Chapters 14-16: The End of the Story.
Please email to Fr Andrew for the Zoom link.

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

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| 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 24th July 2022, 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

After promising Abraham a son next year, God hesitates before revealing his plans for Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham urges God to be just to the threatened towns, where his nephew Lot lives. Later Lot defends his angelic guests from the depraved demands of the men of Sodom, and escapes before Sodom is destroyed.

The Psalm expresses heartfelt thanks to the Lord for his justice and love, confident in his continual help.

Paul urges the Colossians, whom he has never visited, to be confident in their understanding of "God's mystery", Christ. As Gentiles they were seen as sinners, outside the Jewish Law. But now the Law is overridden, so, "buried in Christ", they should follow only Christ. For Paul, the list of our debts, owed to God

for failing to carry out our duties under the covenant, is graphically nailed to the Cross and so destroyed.

Luke's version of the Our Father is shorter and more abrupt than Matthew's. Both versions look to the end days, especially "Do not put us to the test". "Daily bread" may refer to the Eucharist. Or it may mean "tomorrow's bread" – the heavenly banquet, like the double portion of manna collected in the desert before the Sabbath. God promises to respond to all our requests, as he did to Abraham.

Psalm Response: **On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.**

Chris Oliver

Repainting the Church

Due to COVID and so many people being unavailable, the painting has been delayed, but must at some point be done. Please, all who have already volunteered keep in touch with Cliff cliff.snelling@btinternet.com.

We also need more people to join the rota for refreshments after the Sunday Masses, especially after 11.00. The hope is to have sufficient people so that it will come round not more frequently than one week in five. Please see one of the people with badges on to find out more!

Alpha in the Autumn

Each time we run the Alpha Course there are more people who speak of how much they have enjoyed it, and how it has deepened their faith and understanding of what life in Christ actually means. Please think about coming on the next one!

To the right are the dates of the next Alpha course which is in the hall and in person. It is highly recommended for everyone, and is very enjoyable. Each session starts with a good meal (A proper evening meal, not just a snack), then we watch a film together about our faith. After the film we have a conversation around our table about what we have seen and heard. Please come, and if you can, bring a friend. There is no charge, but donations are cheerfully accepted. For catering purposes, please 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!

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| 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? |

Adult Faith Formation — Autumn

As you will have seen from the front page, one of Bishop David's Strategic Principles is "adult formation beyond Confirmation". This is in recognition that for many Catholics, apart from the regular Sunday homilies, their preparation for Confirmation was the last serious study of the faith that they have done. For some, that may have been many years ago.

There are a number of courses that are available on video for us, but we can also devise courses to meet local needs. One of the requests that came from the Synod conversations was that there should be more opportunity for people to grow in their faith.

If the autumn allows us to resume face-to-face sessions, it would be good to offer opportunity for study in any area of the Faith that people want. Anyone who has a particular request, please send an email to Fr Andrew as soon as possible.

One which has been suggested is a Timeline of Church History, with particular reference to the saints whose day we celebrate through the year, and connecting them to the era in which they lived and the historical circumstances of their life.

We also have an excellent course on the Mass, as well as several from Bishop Robert Barron.

Among the blessings that flow from these courses is the building up of confidence in the faith. Many who would like to be able to speak of their faith to others are reluctant, thinking that they don't know enough and might say something wrong. But in addition to this, most people enjoy the experience, and make new friends, building up the social life of the Church.

Details of what will be planned will appear soon, but NOW is your chance to influence what will be on offer.

The Feast of St Gregory, our Patron

We will celebrate our Patron on Friday 2nd September with Mass at 7.00 pm followed by a social gathering in the hall. There will soon be lists to sign up to for the provision of food for the occasion. Please make a note of this date for your diary (or 'phone).

