



The Catholic Parish of  
**Saint Gregory the Great**  
Northampton



PART OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON, REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 234091



**“A truly thriving Catholic community,  
confidently and humbly proclaiming the  
Good News of Jesus Christ.”**



***Happy Christmas, one and all!***  
**Come, come, come to the manger**



Original Painting by Catherine Mulligan, used by permission.

**My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.**

Merrily to Bethlehem the shepherds came,  
the sheep a-following to bless the Saviour's name.

The sheep know the voice of the Good Shepherd  
and they follow him. (See John 10:27)

To say 'Thank-you' to all who support the parish, a gift of water for ten families has been made to CAFOD



# Notices of Interest

**SPUC - Prayer Group; Help us save the lives of unborn children:** SPUC Northampton is actively looking for people to join the local branch. We meet every few weeks in order to plan & arrange pro-life initiatives. This is a personal invitation for you to join us. We promise that there will be no pressure to do anything you are not comfortable with. If you are unable to join the branch how would you feel about being part of our prayer team? We are looking for people to form a prayer team who will support us through prayer on an ongoing basis & on special occasions. All we ask is that you spend some time in prayer in support of our pro-life work. This can be done in the comfort of your own home or with others in the group. If you would like to join the branch or join the prayer group please contact William on 07393965643 (text is fine) or [wpcurrie@btinternet.com](mailto:wpcurrie@btinternet.com). Prayer is a very powerful weapon in the fight to save our unborn children and we beseech Our Lady of Guadalupe to intercede for us in this battle.

**LUX.VALOUR Weekend:** On Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st January 2021, we can all come together **online** for **LUX.Valour!** During our LUX.Valour weekend, we will be exploring what it means to be a young person of great bravery. How we can walk into the unknown of this New Year, confident that we are "not given a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power." 2 Timothy 1:7.  
<https://nymo.org/lux-valour/>

**COVID-19 Precautions** We will be in 'tier 3', & as responsible members of our community, we obey the Government Regulations in solidarity with so many others on whom are being imposed restrictions which impact severely on their lives & livelihoods. Now that we can return to Mass, we must continue to try to suppress the spread of the virus & support those who remain vulnerable.

**Face masks:** Wearing face masks is compulsory in churches & you should wear one if you can. Stewards are not responsible for policing this, but may remind you that this is the law.

**Bible Alive** for January is now available. The cost is £3.00. If you want to purchase a copy, they are near the hand-sanitiser in the narthex as you come into church.

**St Gregory's Catholic Primary School.** If you have a child due to start primary school in September 2021, St Gregory's are welcoming parents to visit the school and see it in action. Contact 01604 403511 to arrange a visit. Closing date for place applications is 15th January 2021 at 5pm.

**Exploring the Post-Lockdown Church:** The webinar series has been wonderful, and thank you to all who promoted it and came along throughout the series. We have had over 3,000 views! This is definitely something we will be looking to do again in the future. If you want to catch up with any you missed, all the videos are here: <http://formationpathways.co.uk/exploring-the-post-lockdown-church-webinar-series/>

**Tots @St Gregory's:** As with other meetings, Tots has been cancelled until further notice.

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

**Vianney Mission Prayer Group** will not meet during this time.

**Second Collections 2021:** Please see the poster in the porch for next year's second collections.

**Track and Trace:** The government have now released their app to support track & trace & we have a QR code which can be scanned to record your presence at church. This is not obligatory, but should help in the important task of controlling the spread of the virus. As responsible members of society, we should comply with this request.

**Financial Support for Self-Isolation:** Please see the following article regarding financial help available for those who are self-isolating;  
<https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/health/coronavirus/how-apply-self-isolation-financial-support-now-available-across-northamptonshire-3004756>

**Repository:** We have a stock of Calendars & diaries. If you wish to buy any, please come to the Church between 9 and 10.30am and speak to a Steward who will show you what to do and where to go.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

**Baptism Preparation:** The next Baptism Preparation will be on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January, at 7pm in the Sacristy.

**Please note that you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend to book your place.**

**First Holy Communion 2021:** If you have a child who wishes to make their 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion next year & are in school years 3-6, please email Stella at [swatts49@outlook.com](mailto:swatts49@outlook.com), who will note your name & the name & age of your child. This is still very much a first step as we are still unsure of how we can prepare the children at the moment; please be patient &, as soon as we possibly can, we'll give you more info about our programme & timings at which stage you can decide whether or not you wish to proceed.

**Confirmation:** Yet again we are thrown into confusion! We await more information. This continues to be difficult!

**Parish Finances:** As colder weather is here & have the heating on, our finances will come under a bit of strain. We have kept solvent through the lockdown; great thanks to all who have been so generous.

**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)**

## Christmas Flowers in Memory of or Thanksgiving for:

Malcolm Allen	John Perkins	Italia & Ben Jacobs	Diana Moriarty	Josie McQuaide	Fred Jones
Antonietta Riseley	Eddie Moriarty	Caterina Bradshaw	Jim Donnelly	Becky Holt	Stephen Goddard
Carla Marchese	Cecilia Peira	Derek Hodgkinson	Louise Whalley	Tim & Eve Perkins	Julie Moriarty
Colin Soper	Mary Wall	Derek Rumsey	James Donnelly	Louie Short	Tony Refoy
Pasqualino Menna	Jack Smith	Denis Ryan	Betty Smith	Dunn Family	Kerry Barber
Marly Cashman	Annie Eyles	Scott Warrington	Folan Family	Cloherly Family	Lydon Family
O'Toole Family	Walsh Family	O'Connell Family	Corrigan Family	Doran Family	Lynskey Family
Munday Family	Lennon Family	Mangon Family	Mr & Mrs Savory	Short Family	Holland Family
Fergus Family	Robb Family	Harriet & Family	Mr & Mrs J.C. McLoughlin	Dec'd Members of the Moen Family	
Dec'd Members of the Ogbata Family & Friends			Dec'd Members of the Rumsey Family		

# Christmas – The Nativity of the Lord (Night/Dawn/Day) Year B

Around 720 BC Judah was threatened by many enemies. Isaiah advised the kings to stand firm, because the Lord would give a sign: “the maiden shall be with child”. The birth of a helpless baby gives hope for the future. But this future must be founded on justice and integrity. Early Christians celebrated the birth of Jesus with these words.

The Psalms call all mankind, and all creation, to celebrate the glories of the Lord, King and judge.

Sixty years after Jesus’ birth, Paul gives Titus this summary of the gospel: our compassionate God chose to offer all humanity the free gift of being “at one” with him. But God’s revelation of salvation in Christ demands we transform our lives and “give up everything that does not lead to God”. The reading from Hebrews tells us that God has spoken to us through his son, who is “the perfect copy of his nature”.

Luke places the birth of the Christ firmly in time and space. Jesus was a man born miraculously to a virgin in Bethlehem in Judea. The peace and quiet of the undercroft, where animals

gave warmth, must have been a welcome relief for Mary, after the noise and bustle of the inn. The simplicity of Jesus’ birth is important: God comes as a vulnerable baby to draw us into a relationship with him. The royal birth announcement was sent not to royalty, but to poor shepherds, outcasts excluded from Temple worship by their occupation. Joseph, of the house of David, named Jesus as his son. Jesus lived in history, growing up in Nazareth in Galilee.

By the time John’s gospel was written, Christians had come to realise that Jesus had existed as the Word of God before time began. So John’s prologue seeks to describe the complexity of the creator becoming part of his own creation.

**Psalm Responses: Vigil: I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.**

**Night: Today a Saviour has been born to us; he is Christ the Lord.**

**Dawn: This day new light will shine upon the earth: the Lord is born for us.**

**Day: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

(Vigil: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 88; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:1-25)

(Midnight: Isaiah 9:1-7; Psalm 95; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14)

(Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12; Psalm 96; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20)

(Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 97; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18.)

## Holy Family – Sunday after Christmas Year B

God responds to Abram’s concern at his lack of heirs by promising him countless descendants. Even before male circumcision became a sign of this covenant, Abram was held righteous because he trusted in the Lord’s promise. Such was his faith that he travelled to a new land, and believed God’s promise of a son even in his old age. Sarah named their son Isaac, meaning “he who laughed”: Sarah had laughed at God’s promise that she would bear a son – now she perhaps feels the laugh is on her, caring for a new-born child in her nineties.

The Psalm praises God’s goodness to his people, recounting His promises and care for them.

The letter to the Hebrews describes how Abraham’s faith was strong enough for the supreme test: would he sacrifice his son – his only son – to God? Just as God sacrificed his only son on the Cross to show how much he loves us.

Luke’s description of the consecration to God of Jesus, as Mary’s first-born son, links Jesus’ birth to God’s promises: the promised redeemer has come, and Abraham’s descendants in faith will indeed be as numerous as the stars. But God is always faithful to his promises and, in his justice, innermost thoughts will be revealed.

**Psalm Response: He, the Lord, is our God, He remembers his covenant for ever.**

(Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3; Psalm 104 (105):1 -6, 8-9; Hebrews 11:8,11 -12, 17 -19; Luke 2:22-40)

*Chris Oliver*

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EVERYONE ATTENDING MASS

It is of the utmost importance that everyone is kept safe while in Church. There are a number of points to keep in mind.

## Welcome

Everyone is welcome to share our Christmas Mass, and a special welcome to those who are not regular worshippers at St Gregory’s. Welcome too to all those who may be returning after shielding. We are in strange times, and in order to help prevent the spread of the pandemic, things are somewhat different from normal times.

## Hand Sanitisation and ‘Test and Trace’

Everyone entering the church is asked to sanitise their hands, and offered a ‘Test and Trace’ form. It is not obligatory to fill the form in.

## Stewards

We are required to have stewards on duty; they will have a badge to identify them. They are there to help and to maintain the COVID-security of the church. Please follow any directions that a steward may give.

## Social Distancing

Government regulations require that while wearing masks, those not in the same household or bubble should maintain a distance of at least 1 metre between them. Those who are exempt from wearing a mask should maintain 2 metres separation from others. Alternate pews are blocked off to help this. Please do not push the empty pew in front of you forwards.

Those who are in a single household or bubble may sit together. However, there must be a 1 metre gap between bubbles.

We do not want to have to turn anyone away, and in order to maximise the seating capacity of the church, it may be necessary to ask you to sit in a specific place. Please understand that this will only happen in extreme necessity, and accept the request of the steward.

Children should remain within their bubble.

The regulations require that different households or bubbles do not associate with each other inside the church.

## One Way system

To avoid difficulties with social distancing, there is a one way system, with entry only through the main entrance (except for those with mobility difficulties), and exit through the side door. At the end of Mass, please maintain social distancing while waiting to leave the church.

During Mass, the procession for Communion comes up the centre aisle and returns down the side aisles. Those sitting in the short pews at the sides are asked to follow the one way system to go to the back and then up the centre aisle.

## Coming to Holy Communion

Masks should be worn throughout the Mass, but removed as you come up in the Communion procession. In the Communion procession it is important to maintain social distancing by leaving a clear metre between yourself and the person in front. If you are not receiving Communion, you should leave your mask on. Holy Communion is given into the hand — please hold your hands out with your right hand under your left. The minister of Communion will not say anything and you should not either. The minister will place the Host on your left hand, pick it up with your right hand place it in your mouth and consume it before you move away from the minister. Then return to your place by the side aisles, replacing your mask. Please avoid touching the parts of pews other than where you are sitting.

## Singing in church

It is forbidden for members of the congregation to sing in church, but soloists are allowed, and at some Masses there may be a singer. Please do not join in.

## The Collection

The collection is not taken at the normal time during the Mass, but at the end, as you go out you will pass someone holding a collection bag. It is the tradition of the Church that the Christmas collection is a gift to the priest. Many thanks for your kindness and generosity.

Conference of England and Wales declared this year 2020 as: THE GOD WHO SPEAKS: A YEAR OF THE WORD” and chose the theme in line with the spirit of the document, Verbum Domini. This initiative will be continued through 2021, not least because of the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

### The God Who Speaks- Our Liturgy of the Word

A Series of 3 Online Zoom Sessions exploring the upcoming Lectionary Readings and Seasons of the Liturgical Year. A valuable opportunity to develop our engagement with the Scriptures that we hear proclaimed at the Liturgy of the Word at Mass. Led by Mgr Kevin McGinnell, Chair of the Diocesan Liturgy Commission and Alex Heath is Adviser for Adult Faith Formation

**Tuesday 17 November 2020**, (7.30-8.30 pm) Preparing the Way for the Lord. Mark’s Gospel & The Season of Advent

**Tuesday 19 January 2021**, (7.30-8.30 pm) ‘He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures’ (Lk 24:45) <sup>(Lk 24:45)</sup> The importance of God’s Word for Christian identity & everyday living

**Tuesday 16 February 2021**, 7.30-8.30 pm: ‘Many more began to believe in him because of his Word’ (John 4:41) John’s Gospel & The Season of Lent

Each session will include input, prayer and the opportunity to make comments and ask questions. Cost: No charge but there will be the opportunity to make a donation. Please register in advance to secure a place by e mail or phone: email admin@nores.org.uk Once you booking is received you will be sent details of how to join the online Zoom sessions.

**The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)**, of which CAFOD is an active member has launched a nationwide appeal for funds. Visit <https://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-Emergencies/Coronavirus-appeal> or use a CAFOD envelope and give through the parish.



## SECOND COLLECTIONS 2021

5 <sup>th</sup> January	Life House
10 <sup>th</sup> January	Hope Centre
31 <sup>st</sup> January	Home Missions
28 <sup>th</sup> February	CAFOD (Lenten Fast Day 26 <sup>th</sup> Feb)
2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Good Friday Collection for the Holy Places
25 <sup>th</sup> April	Diocesan Priests’ Training Fund
16 <sup>th</sup> May	Mass Media
20 <sup>th</sup> June	Day for Life
27 <sup>th</sup> June	Peter’s Pence
11 <sup>th</sup> July	Apostleship of the Sea
19 <sup>th</sup> September	Home Mission Sunday
3 <sup>rd</sup> October	CAFOD (Harvest Fast Day 1 <sup>st</sup> October)
24 <sup>th</sup> October	Mission Sunday
7 <sup>th</sup> November	Bishop’s Maintenance Fund
14 <sup>th</sup> November	Sick & Retired Priests’ Fund

