



The Catholic Parish of Saint Gregory the Great Northampton



PART OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON, REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 234951

OUR
VISION

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

OUR
VISION

Love your Neighbour

We know the teaching “love your neighbour as yourself” from Luke’s and Mark’s Gospel as well as Matthew’s, although the context is different in each case. This suggests that the commandment itself was well-known to the early Christian community, even if the exact occasion when it was said, or perhaps, several occasions on which it was said were less clearly remembered.

Possibly it is actually Luke’s telling of this commandment that we remember best because it leads into the well-known parable of the Good Samaritan. “Who is my neighbour?” was the question that prompted the story, and the moral is that strangers are also my neighbours; which forces us to recognise that actually everyone is my neighbour.

The recent teaching given us by Pope Francis in ‘Fratelli Tutti’ makes this abundantly clear.

Jesus asks us to be present to those in need of help, regardless of whether or not they belong to our social group. In this case, the Samaritan *became a neighbour* to the wounded Judean. By approaching and making himself present, he crossed all cultural and historical barriers. Jesus concludes the parable by saying: “Go and do likewise” (Lk 10:37). In other words, he challenges us to put aside all differences and, in the face of suffering, to draw near to others with no questions asked. I should no longer say that I have neighbours to help, but that I must myself be a neighbour to others. (*Fratelli Tutti* §81)

That our lectionary couples the Matthew recounting of the commandment to love our neighbour with the passage from Exodus clearly links us to the same theme.

The Israelite people are told to welcome strangers, reminding them that they were strangers in Egypt. In the second reading, St Paul speaks of the welcome he was given in Thessalonika, even though he was a stranger there. In fact, the welcome that he was given provoked jealousy in the Jewish community, which led to problems, recounted in Acts 17:1-9.

However, when we read the Scriptures we must recognise that God is speaking to us now in the 21st century. We are not reading historic literature about events centuries ago: “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.”

The experience of Paul arousing the jealousy of some in Thessalonika is sadly echoed in the reaction that many present-day strangers

receive. In fact the story told in Acts 17:13 seems to be sadly all too often repeated as anti-immigration groups parade through areas with high numbers of migrant.

It is stated that there are more migrants and refugees now than at any time in history. Whether that is accurately true or not cannot be known for certain, but what is certain is that there are a very large number of people who have fled their native land; some because of war, others because of persecution or exploitation, others because of famine or flood, and some who have heard that there is a city with streets ‘paved with gold’ and are moving for material gain, or to seek fame and fortune.

Historically, Britain has been a welcoming country to migrants and refugees, and most of the population of this country can trace at least part of their ancestry to other countries. Ironically, that is true of many members of our present government, which is trying to prevent many of those who are hoping to make a new home for themselves in this country from fulfilling their wish.

The immediate causes of much migration are either poverty or war. Much of the poverty in other nations is caused by exploitative trade deals which do not recompense farmers or factory workers adequately for their labour. That is why the Fairtrade movement is so important. We can, each one of us play a (small but significant) part to reducing the injustice in the world and make a constructive contribution to the problems caused by migration.

Poverty and climate change together make a further driver to migration, as the poor have least choice about where they live. If their land becomes uninhabitable due to flooding or sea-level rise, as in parts of Bangladesh, they are forced to seek somewhere else to live, and join the millions of human migrants.

Warfare is one of the biggest drivers of human migration, and behind each of the fighting forces are the suppliers of arms and ammunition; frequently the richer countries of the world. Many of these wars are fought by client-states who are really fighting the battles of the super-powers, seeking to gain more influence and power for themselves. The goal of world peace would vastly reduce the number of migrants.

This country has greatly benefitted from migration, and it is shaming to us that we are not more welcoming. As God told Moses to instruct the people of Israel: “You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”

Notices of Interest

Repository - First communion and Confirmation: I have put a small display of cards & mementoes in the Foyer. People can help themselves whenever the Church is open & put payment in the wall box on the right of the Sacristy door. A member of staff will be present after Sunday Masses. **Please remember to observe the regulations on masks & spacing. Only touch items you intend to buy. Items will be cleaned & sanitised regularly. Stay Safe.**

Prayer Course: Are you interested in finding out more about prayer? Whether you're new to it or whether you've been praying for years, there's always more to experience. Join us for the prayer course on zoom beginning on Thurs 22 October, 8.00 to 9.30 pm, then every 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at the same time. To register and receive zoom details please email Maria: maria.heath@yahoo.co.uk

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

From 9.00 am to 12 noon on Thursdays, and then following Mass in the evening, until 8.30 pm.

Bible Alive for October 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. Please help yourself to a copy of The Crusader.

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/>

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.

Thomas Becket Catholic Secondary School. If you have a child due to start secondary school in September 2021, contact the school office on 01604 493211 to arrange a tour. The closing date for place applications is 31st October 2020.

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), of which CAFOD is an active member has launched a nationwide appeal for funds. CAFOD is working in the most deprived areas of the world, helping local communities stricken by coronavirus to survive by:

- Delivering food to where it is needed most.
- Improving hygiene, handwashing and sanitation at the community and household level.
- Producing radio messages, posters and leaflets in local languages on risks and prevention.
- Training community volunteers to carry out awareness campaigns.

Visit <https://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-Emergencies/Coronavirus-appeal> or use a CAFOD envelope and give through the parish. There will be an opportunity to give to the appeal this Sunday.

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. For the time being we are asked to continue to fill in a paper form, but this may change when the electronic system has bedded in.

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.

Exploring the Post-Lockdown Church – Monday webinars, Pastoral Ministry Office. Week 6: *Catechetics: adjusting to the new normal* – Veronica Murphy, Coordinator for Adult Faith Formation, Archdiocese of Liverpool, and Alex Heath, NORES. To Register please go to <http://postlockdownchurch.eventbrite.co.uk>

Electric Organ For Sale: A friend of mine wants to dispose of an electronic organ which has two manuals over 2 octaves each, at least 30 buttons including rhythm and/or chord options and has 8 foot pedals. The make is Kawai. I had a play and found it to be in good working order. My friend would like just a donation (£50?). I have seen a used version of the same model using Google at £95. If interested contact Alec, organist for 11:00 Mass or phone (622153). I have photos and a video.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next Baptism Preparation will be on Monday 30th November, 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 2020: We are happy to announce that enrolment for next year's programme for any child wishing to make their First Holy Communion who is in school year 3, 4, 5 or 6 will take place soon. The enrolment will be on line in December, so watch this space! At the moment we can't give any more details of how or when the preparation will take place but rest assured, it will!

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 21st November at 7.00 pm (Apologies for yet another change — this has been difficult!).

Parish Finances: As we increase our activities, & as colder weather approaches & we need to turn 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)**

Holy Communion and 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. However, you clearly cannot have your mouth covered while receiving Holy Communion! The Church's rule is that you consume the Host before you move away from the minister. Please remove your mask before being given the Host. Priest and Deacon wear face-coverings for your protection.

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.

Scripture Readings 25th October 2020, 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

In our reading from Exodus the Lord expands the rather general Ten Commandments into detailed rules for living, with practical laws and punishments. In this covenant or treaty the Lord promises his favour and the people accept certain obligations. Moses sprinkled blood on the people to seal this covenant with the Lord. The sacrificial meal, eating and drinking in the Lord's presence, ritually confirms the people now belong to the family of the Lord.

Five verses sum up this very long Psalm, thanking God for his help against enemies while welcoming his justice.

Continuing our reading from the earliest surviving Christian document, Paul concludes his address to the Thessalonians with fulsome praise for them. He knows they are chosen and loved by

God because others have told him the examples they give. Especially their imitation of Christ, and their acceptance of the word of the risen Lord, in spite of suffering persecution.

In Matthew's Gospel it is now the turn of the Pharisees to test Jesus. But they fare no better than the Sadducees heard last week. Again Jesus shows that he is the authoritative interpreter of the Jewish Scriptures. Even the detailed rules given to Moses can be summed up in the requirement to love God and your neighbour.

Psalm Response: **I love you, Lord, my strength.**

(Exod 22:20-26 (& cf 24:9-11) Ps 17:2-4. 47. 51. R.2 1 Thess 1:5-10; Matt 22:34-40)

The Season of Creation

Tip No. 100: ***Living sustainably with creation:** organic farming reduces nitrous oxide (300 times as bad as CO2) being released into the atmosphere by non organic farming. Buy organic foods as much as you can to halt climate change.*

Tip No. 99: ***Living sustainably with creation:** prevent waste caused by packaging. Buy loose food and non food products whenever possible, carrying them home in your own bags. Parishioner tip.....thank you.*

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

The Kiltegan Fathers

While staying in Rome, Fr Andrew had the good fortune to meet one of the Kiltegan Fathers, for whom we had an appeal back in February (BC, before COVID).

Fr Emmanuel Obi worked in Narus, South Sudan until recently, and spoke of his work there. When he arrived there was already a mission school set up, but only the children attended Mass. He began a programme of visiting the families of the children in the school, and encouraging parents to come with their children. The first week there were five adults, the next week fifteen, and gradually he began a programme of Catechesis for the adults. Because of the civil war in the area, the people had retreated into their own tribes, and even in one small area there was tension and mis-trust. He set up a 'small communities' programme, bringing together people of different tribes and cultures. They pray together and share their hopes and fears, and recognise their common brotherhood based on the Scriptures and the Eucharist.

The livelihoods of the area is based on nomadic farming because of the scarcity of water, and the drilling of new boreholes has helped to sustain the community. Fr Emmanuel said that he had seen people lie on the ground to drink from puddles in the mud. The provision of clean water is, of course, vital to health and wellbeing, but also helps to bring a stability to the communities, where without good pasture, the herdsmen have to leave their homes and take their animals to find food, and may be away for many months. Our parish CAFOD monthly offerings are directed to the project to bring clean water to isolated villages.

It was an honour for Fr Andrew to meet Fr Emmanuel and to hear first-hand about the mission of the Church, and how the work of the missionary societies and CAFOD are bound together to bring both the Gospel and material support.

It is not always easy, and Fr Emmanuel spoke of how since he left, he has heard that one of the priests on the Mission was attacked in the street. He wrote in the St Patrick's Mission magazine recently: "Missionary work is like farming. You plant, water and patiently wait for the seeds to germinate, take root and flourish. Such waiting demands patience, courage and enthusiasm. When we plant, not all the seeds may germinate and even when they do, sometimes crops can fail. But that does not mean that the farmer will not go out the next planting season to plant again. That is how it has been for me with missionary work. We are sometimes faced with opposition and even when some of our programmes fail to yield the desired goals, it does not mean we should give up."

Missionary work is not just confined to Africa or the traditional mission areas. St Paul of the Cross, who founded the Passionist order 300 years ago understood the need for mission in Italy then, and our need in England is greater even than that. Pope Francis asks that we all become 'missionary disciples', and this prayer is from the shrine of St Paul of the Cross, just a short distance from where Fr Andrew was staying:

"God our Father, you gifted Saint Paul of the Cross with such a fervent heart that he would inflame the world with the love of Jesus Crucified. Grant us, we pray, to share in the same passionate experience so that we may announce to our brothers and sisters, especially the crucified of our time, the merciful love of the Crucified Risen Lord. Amen

Indeed, may we all be passionate disciples of Jesus; passionate to share the love of God, supremely revealed in the Cross, with others."



Bible Study Programme resumes.

The foundation course is the “Bible Timeline”, and this will run on Wednesday evenings, from 7.00 to 9.00.

This coming week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday there will be Zoom ‘Tea parties’ from 2.30 pm to 3.15 pm each day and on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 7.30 to 8.15. You will need to download the (free) Zoom app onto your chosen device. Tablets are probably the easiest; smart-phones seem to be less satisfactory, particularly if there are many participants, but lap-top and notebook computers are fine. As has already been said, desktop computers need to have a webcam attached. This is not difficult, they plug in to a USB socket.

To ‘come to’ a Zoom tea party, please email to Fr Andrew (priest@stgregory.org.uk) for the link. When you have the link, and a few minutes before the start time (or any time during the party), click the link and follow the instructions to join the meeting. Before this, it is a good idea to have made yourself a drink; tea, coffee or whatever takes your fancy and a plate of your favourite nibbles.

At the tea-parties we will consider what time(s) to run the Bible Timeline course, and any other courses that may be requested. There are study books available; we hold some in stock, but these need to be bought. For any for whom the cost is difficult, alternative provision can be made.

The current plans include:

Mondays at 1.00 pm:	The Letter to the Hebrews
Tuesdays at 10.00 am	The Gospel of Matthew
Thursdays at 1.00 pm	Biblical Walk with Mary
To be decided	Bible Timeline

Please join one (or more) of the tea parties this week, especially if you would like to join one of the Bible study courses, but just to be able to virtually meet through Zoom. Sometimes technology can appear frightening, but please give it a go!

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

SECOND COLLECTIONS

13 th September	Holy Places
4 th October	CAFOD
11 th October	Peter's Pence
18 th October	World Mission
15 th November	World Communications
29 th November	Day for Life
13 th December	Home Mission
20 th December	Sea Sunday

