



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

Saintly and Religious

By good fortune, this week we have a commemoration of a saint or saints every day, and by looking at their life, we can get some help in understanding what a saintly life looks like.

The word ‘religious’ has a technical meaning in the Church – that is to say, belonging to a ‘religious order’, living under vows, but for the sense in which we read it in the first letter of St Paul to Timothy, we must look rather to the Scriptures. In the letter to James we find: “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained by the world”. (*James 1:27*) Pure religion is not to be unworldly or other-worldly; it is to be immersed in the world, but not to be ‘stained’ by it. The saints of this week show different ways of being ‘religious’. It is not a complete list of all the ways; that is as many as there are people. Each one of us has our own way of being religious.

“God has created me to do him some definite service. He has committed to me some work which he has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.” (*St John Henry Newman – A meditation on Trust in God.*) The way of being religious is to find and fulfil that definite service which is unique to each one of us

Even if we are inspired by one or more of these saints, our own way of saintliness will not be identical; it will be our own way in which God wishes us to serve him.

SS Cosmas and Damian were twin Arabian brothers who became Christians at some time in the third century. They were doctors who practiced medicine without charging a fee, and were much respected, but suffered martyrdom under the persecution of Diocletian at the beginning of the fourth century. They were known as the “unmercenaries” and their generosity attracted many to the Christian faith.

St Vincent de Paul was born in 1581, and ordained to the priesthood but initially sought a comfortable life, until hearing the confession of a dying peasant, experienced a conversion and set himself to work for the poorest; with the galley-slaves and those on the margins of society. He founded congregations of women to help in this work as well as a congregation of priests, and pioneered the founding of seminary training for priests.

St Wenceslaus, (Good King Wenceslas) was born in 907, the son of the Duke of Bohemia. He became Duke himself in about 925, and there are many stories of his generosity such as are told in the Christmas Carol. However, the aristocracy were not so fond of him, and he was assassinated by three noblemen and Wenceslas’ younger

brother who succeeded him as Duke. (He was never actually a King, in spite of the words of the Christmas Carol!)

St Michael, one of the three named Archangels is the leader of the army of angels (*Apocalypse 12:7-12*) ‘Prince of the Heavenly Host’ who defeated Satan and threw him out of heaven. He is seen as a protector of the Church, and strong in conflict with evil.

St Gabriel was the messenger of the Annunciation (*Luke 1:26*); the bringer of good news. Indeed, all the angels are messengers — that is their primary function.

St Raphael is only named in the Book of Tobit. (*Tobit 5:4, 6:11, 11:7 and 12:6-15*) The advice of Raphael to Tobit and Tobias is valuable: “Prayer with fasting is good, but better than both is almsgiving with righteousness. . . . It is better to give alms than to lay up gold. For almsgiving saves from death and purges away every sin.” (*Tobit 12:8-9*)

St Jerome was born in 342 and is best known as the first translator of the Bible from Greek into Latin. However, it was not just for this that he is recognised as a saint. He wrote commentaries on all the books of the Bible, and was a great lover of the Scriptures. He served as secretary to Pope Damasus until 384, and then moved to the Holy Land and settled in Bethlehem where he eventually died in 420.

St Thérèse of Lisieux is the most recent of the saints we celebrate this week, being born in 1873 in Alençon in north France, brought up in a devout family; her parents, Louis and Zélie Martin are the first (and only) married couple to be declared saints. She is best known for what has become known as ‘The Little Way’, the way of holiness without performing great deeds. She wrote of the little way of love, and of complete trust in God. She spoke of scattering little flowers of love. Although she lived an enclosed life in the Carmel at Lisieux from 1890 until her death in 1897, she might easily have been un-noticed outside Carmel but for the publication of some of her writings in 1898. Soon translations appeared in other languages, and news of her holiness and the value of her writings spread across the world. Her influence remains strong to this day, and she is the patron of missions.

Sanctity comes in many forms, and there is no single blueprint. Core to all holiness is a deep love for God and a deep love for his creation, and especially for people. This love is manifested in different ways by different people, and is radiated in the beauty of holiness and the profound joy that comes from being in a loving relationship with God and leading to the love for and the service of and his creation.

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 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 also 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*

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday 26th September 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 Date for First Communion Families: Sunday 9th October, after 11:00 Mass, there will be an introduction to this year's programme & the opportunity to register children. It is important that at least one parent accompany the children but we welcome whole families! If this day is inconvenient there will be a session at Sacred Heart on the following Sunday (16th) after 10:30 Mass which will be the same. We look forward to meeting you.

Confirmation in 2023: Please watch this space for information.

Nymo: Sat, 8th October, NYMO will be holding their annual Youth Ministry Conference, at the St Thomas Cathedral Centre, Northampton. This year the Conference will be looking at how we support our young people who have doubts about their sexuality, or identity. The conference starts at 11am. Full details, and booking, are on the NYMO website, www.nymo.org/conference

Choir Matters: A prominent member of the choir for many years, May Murtagh, died recently. Her funeral is on 6 Oct at 11:30. The date of the October choir practice that same day is cancelled. Instead, 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*

The Missio newsletter is in addressed envelopes & ready to collect in a red box by the confessional booths. Please collect your envelope & its contents; they are in alphabetical order. Spares available for those who would like to become supporters of this missionary work of the church. Missio is the official medium supported by the Pope to extend the influence of the Church. Financially, times are hard for us all; this gives us greater opportunity to share what we do have with others less fortunate than ourselves. *Alec*

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

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.

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.

The Relics of St. Bernadette: The relics will arrive at the Cathedral on Monday 10th October at 3pm and will remain until 13th October after the 7pm Mass. Please see posters for full details.

SPUC: Imagine you could save a child's life. Imagine you could save the lives of lots of children. In the centre of Northampton in a small unassuming office (British Pregnancy Advisory Service) every year approximately 2,000 unborn children are being killed by abortion. What can you do about this & how do you feel? You can do something by joining SPUC. We should feel outrage. Notwithstanding our Catholic faith, as human beings we should be appalled that innocent, vulnerable babies are being starved, poisoned, & torn apart in the womb. If you would like more info, please contact William Currie 07393965643/wpcurrie@btinternet.com. If you are unable to be involved directly, please support SPUC & other groups financially or with your prayers. Thank you.

August Hope Ministries: In partnership with World Mandate Ministries, we invite the women of your congregation to join us for a Healing Day on the 15th of October, to coincide with International Pregnancy and Infant Loss (PAIL) Awareness Day, at St. Giles Centre in Northampton, from 10:00AM – 3:00PM. On this Healing Day, we will break down barriers and misconceptions that women may have about the loss of their baby to set a solid foundation of hope and promise. For more information or to register for the event, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pregnancy-and-infant-loss-healing-day-tickets-391194893457>

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)**

Money Matters: We have now heard what the energy bills will be over the winter: for both gas and electricity, 3 times more than it was a year ago. Gas has gone up from £2785 for the winter to £8274 if the usage remains the same. 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 continue to heat the church on Sundays, but the extra cost of this will be more than the saving on weekdays. One significant help would be to make your giving through standing order; the details of our account are above, & if you pay income tax, please ask for a Gift Aid form.

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 25th September 2022, 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Amos warns both the northern kingdom, Israel, (*ie* Samaria), and the southern kingdom, Judea, with its capital Zion or Jerusalem, that the idle rich in both kingdoms will be the first to go into exile. 40 years later, in 721 BC, Samaria was conquered, and later Judea followed into exile.

The Psalm, echoed by Mary in Luke's Magnificat, confirms that God's justice will prevail: the hungry will be fed, the blind given sight, but the wicked will lose out.

Instructing Timothy how to organise the early Christian church, Paul also insists the rich should use their wealth for good deeds. Christians should ideally aspire to show the Christian virtues as examples to all, and so witness to the truth, until our Lord Jesus Christ returns to appear in glory as King of kings. And Paul

insists that only God "has immortality": we do not simply have souls that live on after death – our creed says we believe in "the resurrection of the body", a gift from God in which our whole person, body and soul, lives for ever.

The Gospel graphically illustrates the dangers of riches: the rich man, who is not named, asks that the poor man – who is named – Lazarus – be sent to relieve his torments in hell. Abraham tells him the rich should listen to the prophets.

Psalm Response: **My soul, give praise to the Lord.**

(Amos 6:1, 4-7, Ps 145(146):6-10, 1 Tim 6:11-16, Lk 16:19-31)

Chris Oliver

No such thing as a free lunch!

Our Autumn Alpha has begun, with a good number of people, and a team of helpers.

People who come on Alpha do so for a variety of reasons. Some are regular Mass-goers who would like a time to re-kindle their faith. You could see it as a sort of extended retreat, lasting eleven weeks but only for two hours each week.

Others come because they have been 'resting Catholics' for a while — some for many decades — and feel God calling them back into the practice of their faith. They may have been 'pray-at-home Catholics' or have stopped praying altogether, but want to 'come back home'.

Yet others come from 'out of the blue', and for all sorts of personal reasons are seeking meaning in their life, and have seen an advertisement for Alpha, and come. All are welcome; the meal is free although we do accept donations, and there are no strings attached. Although Alpha is not of Catholic origin, it is widely endorsed by the Catholic Church.

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?

Action for The Season of Creation

What can I do to help reduce Climate Change?

We can use less gas by reducing radiators heating walls	1) place insulation (covered in cooking foil) behind radiators.
	(2) Place a shelf 3 inches above the radiator, to deflect heat into the room
We can paint wood and metal garden furniture	instead of sending to the Tip.
We can replace fluorescent lights with LED batten,	which reduces electric use by 50%
We can make our own delicious vegetable soup,	reducing meat consumption



First Holy Communion Preparation

Preparation for first Holy Communion will start soon, with enrolling at St Gregory's on 9th October after the 11.00 Mass, or at Sacred Heart on the following Sunday, after Mass at 10.30 am. The preparation for the two parishes is run together, and takes place in the hall at Sacred Heart, Weston Favell on twelve Saturday afternoons, spread over eight months.

Parents promise at the baptism of their children that they will bring up their child in the practice of the Faith, and the way in which children are prepared honours this promise. A parent or carer sits with the child and together they follow the teaching and activities of the preparation course, so that the parent becomes the primary teacher, but led by a catechist so that parents are supported all the way through.

We have been using this system for a few years now, and the feed-back we get is generally very positive. It is a good way for both parent and child to grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Faith and is a happy time together for both.

Coming to the preparation sessions together, praying together and coming to Mass together is excellent Christian formation for children which will stand them in good stead throughout life, and it is part of the fulfilment of the promise that parents make at Baptism. If you have a child in school years 3 to 6, please come to the enrolment session on 9th October to find out more and to enrol your child. Once the sessions start, we may not be able to take any new enrolments.