



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



The Catholic Parish of Saint Gregory the Great Northampton

OUR
VISION

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

OUR
VISION

This is Holy Week

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, and we think of the crowds picking palm branches to wave in celebration of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

There are many aspects to explore in this event, but let us take a moment for a little horticultural digression. Just beside the statue of Our Lady in the garden is a camellia bush which is just coming into flower.

The Camellia has a number of symbolisms, one of which is ‘undying, eternal love’ and therefore has a particular significance as we enter Holy Week, in which we celebrate the eternal love of God for us, revealed in Our Lord laying down his life for his friends, for you and me (*see John 15:13*).

This is because when the flower dies, the petals and the calyx remain together, which is said to be unique among flowering plants.

The Camellia was named in honour of Georg Joseph Kamel SJ, one of a (large) number of Catholic priests and religious who were also significant scientists. Among them are Gregor Mendel, the father of genetics, Georges Lemaitre who first described the ‘big bang theory’ and Guy Consolmagno SJ, currently one of the foremost experts on meteorites and the Director of the Vatican Observatory.

Kamel was born in Brno, now in the Czech Republic, and joined the Jesuits in 1682, and worked as an apothecary and pharmacist. He asked to go on the missions and was sent to the Philippines, and in Manila he established the first botanical garden there.

Being the only member of the community there with any medical



knowledge, he fulfilled the role of doctor, with considerable success. He also described a variety of Camellia which grows wild in the Philippines, although other varieties are to be found in the

wild throughout southeast Asia. Sadly, he was unable to cure himself and died at the age of 45 in 1706.

The Camellia was first cultivated in England in 1739 by Lord Petre of Thorndon Hall in Essex, whose son, the 9th Baron Petre was one of the most significant Catholics in England at a time when it was still illegal; he was one of the prime movers in Catholic emancipation. It was the very fact that Catholics were not allowed to participate in public life that had allowed his father to follow his passion for horticulture.

Coming into flower in spring, the camellia is a flower for Easter, and as new life returns to the gardens, and the warmer weather approaches we see hope beyond the pandemic.

To return to Holy Week, we are obliged to follow the government restrictions, which means that the total number of those in church at any time is limited, and the various liturgies have to be simplified, abbreviated and there is no congregational singing. However, it is permitted to have a small group of singers and this will be a welcome return to our customary high standard of music in the parish.

If you are unable to attend Mass and the Holy Week liturgies in person, please follow the live-streamed Cathedral liturgies, where our Bishop will be presiding.

Holy Week main events

At St Gregory's:

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday

Mass at 9.00 am; 9.45 am Confessions

Thursday; Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7.00 pm; the church will remain open for private prayer for one hour after the end of Mass.

Good Friday; Liturgy of the Passion at 3.00 pm (admission by ticket only)

Holy Saturday; The Easter Vigil at 9.00 pm

Easter Day: Mass at 9.00 am, 11.00 am and 12 noon

At the Cathedral:

Monday; Penitential Liturgy at 7.00 pm (all welcome)

Thursday; Mass of Chrism (online only) at 11.00 am; Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7.00 pm.

Good Friday; Liturgy of the Passion at 3.00 pm, live streamed

Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil at 7.00 pm (live streamed)

Please note: until the end of restrictions, there will be an additional Sunday Mass at St Gregory's at 12.00 noon.

Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for Lent & Easter 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.

Repository: If you wish to buy anything, please come to the Church between 9 and 10am & speak to a Steward who will show you what to do & where to go. Easter cards now available.

Easter Flower Donations: Envelopes are available in the Foyer for donations for Easter flowers, which may be given in memory of a person, in thanksgiving, or as a gift! Names of those in whose memory flowers are given will be included in the newsletter for Easter.

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School is currently recruiting for a Breakfast Club Team Member and also a Lunchtime Supervisor (all details will be on the school website).

Parish Finances: Thank you to everyone who has been so very generous during this lockdown. Our parish finances are reasonably stable. Your generosity is much appreciated!

Standing Order via Donor's Own Bank. You can set up a standing order for donations to your parish using either your online 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)**

Masses and Covid security in Lockdown: It is of the greatest importance that the church is a place of safety from the COVID virus, & while clergy & stewards do all they can to have systems in place, there is a responsibility on everyone to adhere to government regulations & maintain the safety of **everyone** as well as themselves in church. While 'bubbles' & households may sit together, there should be at least 1 metre distance separating those not in the same 'bubble' or household & must wear masks. We are still allowed to come to Mass; this is in part because churches are safe places. It is up to us to keep the church safe.

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.

Being a Dynamic Catholic: Through Lent there are regular talks on the parish website and Facebook page based on a book entitled

"Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic" by Matthew Kelly. This could form part of a Lockdown Lent discipline.

Right to Life: A new parliamentary motion (EDM 1340) is calling on the Government to introduce new guidance on fetal pain. There is an easy-to-use tool which makes it simple to contact your MP, and ask them to sign this motion asking for new guidance on fetal pain: www.rightholife.org.uk/FetalPainMotion

On Tues. 30th March the NYMO team will be joined by Sarah Rae LaValla from the NET Ministry Team in Scotland. Sarah Rae is a missionary from Minnesota & she will be sharing on the theme The Face of Christ (in the time of zoom). With the usual mix of fun, worship, insight, reflection & prayer this retreat night will be a great way to spend the Tuesday of Holy Week. The evening will be from 8-9.30pm is open to all aged 18-30. A chance to join others from around the diocese & discover how Jesus wants to encounter us this Easter. To register email hello@nymo.org. The evening will be on zoom and the link will be sent to you on the morning of Tuesday 30th.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: Please note that you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

First Holy Communion 2021: The programme has started and is running through 'Loom', an online platform used by many schools. Parents need to 'home-school' children. The programme is called "Growing Up Catholic", and there are 6 sessions preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, followed by six sessions preparing for First Holy Communion. It is important that the first six sessions are completed by the end of the Easter holidays. Please email Stella at swatts49@outlook.com, for last-minute registration.

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

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.

Congratulations to Fr Andrew Coy, who was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood last Thursday, and is serving in the Cathedral Parish. We continue to pray for him in his ministry. Please be aware that this has created an opportunity for confusion, with two 'Fr Andrews' in town. The Cathedral is blessed with 'Young Fr Andrew', while St Gregory's copes with 'Old Fr Andrew'.



Narthex revamp

The map which has been in the narthex for many years was intended to be a reminder of the global nature of the Church, and that we have people at St Gregory's whose original home was far away from here. The plan is that on the boards either side of the door will be the message "Welcome" in the language of every place represented here. You may be asked to help!



Why Alpha: Pope Francis has asked that every parish and every Catholic have a missionary heart. In 2019, over 5,600 Catholic parishes and organisations around the world ran Alpha with an estimated 310,000 participants.

"The Alpha experience is not only a means through which one finds true life, but also a way to share the good news of the Living Christ." *Cardinal Mark Ouellet, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops and President of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America*

Scripture Readings 28th March 2021, Palm Sunday, Year B

Second Isaiah was writing during the exile of the Israelites in Babylon after Jerusalem was destroyed. The people are discouraged, in despair, and tempted to give up their faith in God. In today's 'servant-song' Isaiah offers consolation, recommending non-resistance and trust in the Lord.

Isaiah's words express our horror at the way Our Lord was treated. But, trusting confidently in his Father, Jesus "sets his face like flint", even though it is covered with spittle.

The Psalm moves from this mood to express unshaken faith, praising God for our redemption and the promised conversion of all peoples.

The hymn in Philippians rejoices that – unlike Adam – Jesus did not seek to be equal to God. But God raised him high, so that all creation should "acclaim Jesus as Lord, to the glory of God the Father".

Jesus died at Passover, when Jews celebrated their freedom from slavery. The soldiers, the Jewish leaders, the inscription on the Cross, all ironically give Jesus his true title of "King of the Jews", the Messiah, who frees us from death. When Jesus dies, the first human being in Mark's gospel to recognise Jesus as "Son of God" is a Gentile, the centurion. All the disciples had run away when Jesus was arrested. Only some women watched, and they saw where he was buried.

Psalm Response: **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**

(Is 50:4-7; Ps 21(22); Phil 2:6-11; Mark 14:1 – 15:47)

Chris Oliver

Arrangements for Holy Week

While restrictions remain, there is a limit to the number of people that the church can accommodate. Please be aware of this. If the church becomes full, the law requires that we refuse admission. Overall, there are two objectives; reverence and safety.

PALM SUNDAY (9.00 am, 11.00 am and 12.00 noon)

There can be no procession — palms will be blessed at the beginning of Mass, and distributed at the end as you leave the church. The Passion Gospel will be read in its shortest form.

HOLY THURSDAY MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (7.00 pm)

There can be no feet-washing, nor procession to the Altar of Repose. Mass will end in the normal way, and the Blessed Sacrament will be reposed in the Tabernacle. The church will remain open for private prayer for one hour after the end of Mass.

The Church is open half-an-hour before the start of each Mass; please be in good time and allow time to find parking spaces. If the church reaches the limit of numbers with social distancing, it will (by law) be necessary to refuse admission.

What is COP26?

COP stands for 'Conference of the Parties', and this year the 26th conference is taking place in Glasgow. The 'parties' are 43 countries which are industrialised or becoming industrialised. The Vatican has 'observer' status.

Where and when is COP26 being held?

The COP26 location is the Scottish Event Campus (SEC) in Glasgow, Scotland. The conference has been rearranged to take place between 1-12 November 2021 following the coronavirus pandemic. The UK, as the host country, will hold the COP presidency.

Why is COP26 important?

COP26 is critical because it is the first COP since the coronavirus pandemic began.

Governments are now planning how to rebuild from the pandemic and it is vital that these plans are based around the need for a global green and just transition.

Pope Francis has warned that it would be "a scandal" if the money governments are spending to rebuild economies and save businesses "were to focus on rescuing those industries that do not contribute to the inclusion of the excluded, the promotion of the least, the common good or the care of creation".

What will happen at COP26 climate talks?

COP26 will be the largest gathering of world leaders ever to take place on British soil. Many thousands of other people will also gather for the COP, both inside and outside the conference centre.

GOOD FRIDAY (3.00 pm)

Admission to the Liturgy at 3.00 will be by ticket only.

The Passion Gospel is proclaimed in the shortest form, and there is no individual veneration of the Cross.

HOLY SATURDAY EASTER VIGIL (9.00 pm)

There is no lighting of the new fire in the garden; the Easter Candle is blessed in the Sanctuary; there will be a reduced number of readings, and there will be no individual candles, Baptisms, nor sprinkling, but newly-blessed Holy Water will be available in small bottles at the end of Mass.

EASTER DAY (9.00 am, 11.00 am AND 12.00 noon)

All Masses will include the renewal of Baptismal Promises, but there will not be sprinkling of Holy Water.

The Church is open half-an-hour before the start of each Mass; please be in good time and allow time to find parking spaces. If the church reaches the limit of numbers with social distancing, it will (by law) be necessary to refuse admission.

Inside the conference, delegates such as politicians, diplomats and campaigners will hold formal and informal discussions. Businesses and civil society organisations such as charities will also contribute as observers to the COP process and with meetings called 'side-events' which will take place around the COP premises.

Discussions at COP26 are likely to focus on whether the commitments made by countries to cut emissions will be enough to halt dangerous temperature rises and get the world on track to reaching 'net zero' as soon as possible. The UK government set a 2050 net zero target after calls from campaigners up and down the country, including thousands of CAFOD supporters.

Negotiators will also discuss plans to provide climate finance support to countries worst hit by the climate crisis and how to help countries adapt to climate change impacts.

Outside the conference, thousands of campaigners will put pressure on COP delegates to show the ambition needed to urgently cut greenhouse gas emissions. Various events are planned, including large marches and demonstrations. More than 500,000 people were estimated to have joined a march in Madrid during COP25.

The UK is also hosting the G7 summit between 11-13 June 2021, when heads of government from seven of the world's richest countries will meet to discuss plans for a global recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. The G7 meeting will be a key moment for world leaders to cancel unjust debts and tackle the climate crisis.



SECOND COLLECTIONS 2021

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

Vianney Mission Prayer Group will not meet during this time.

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

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

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>

