



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

Honouring Sunday

During the pandemic, public worship was suspended for a time and there have been restrictions on parish life. As a result, people have been exploring other ways to practice their faith including Spiritual Communion via live streaming.

As people begin returning to more regular patterns of parish life and following the first face to face meeting of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales in Leeds, the bishops have issued the following statement about the importance of honouring Sunday:

Honouring Sunday

As the Synodal Pathway of listening and discerning unfolds, we the bishops of England and Wales, are paying particular attention to the hopes and fears, the joys and anxieties of all who are sharing their thoughts and feelings with us.

Longing for our Lord

We are attentive to the experience of the last year or so, when we have lived our faith through the limitations of the pandemic. We have heard of the longing which some express as a “homesickness”. We want to be in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. We yearn to celebrate the sacraments together, especially the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We desire to be nourished by our Lord in Holy Communion. The live streaming of the Mass and the remarkable response of our Catholic communities to those in need, have provided comfort, sustenance and resilience.

The Eucharist, source and summit

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our spiritual and pastoral life. Many people have said to us that they have appreciated the noble simplicity of the Mass at this time, which has allowed the mystery and majesty of our Lord’s sacrificial love to shine through.

The central appeal of the Mass, its beauty and its transcendence, raises our minds and hearts to God in an unambiguous and compelling manner. Our Lord Jesus invites us to receive anew the gift of Sunday as the preeminent day, the day of the Resurrection, when the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist. Here we stand together before our heavenly Father, offering our thanksgiving and prayer, through our Saviour in the Holy Spirit. Here we receive Christ in his Word. Here we are nourished by Christ in his precious



Body and Blood. This is our primary joy, for which there is no substitute, and from which we draw our strength.

The Gift of the Sunday Eucharist

The Sunday Eucharist is a gift; as God’s holy people we are called to praise and thank God in the most sublime way possible. When the Church speaks of the Sunday obligation, it reminds us that attending Mass is a personal response to the selfless offering of

Christ’s love.

At this time, we recognise that for some people there may be certain factors which hinder attendance at Sunday Mass. The pandemic is clearly not over. The risk of infection is still present. For some, there is legitimate fear in gathering together. As your bishops, we recognise that these prevailing circumstances suggest that not everyone is yet in the position to fulfil the absolute duty to attend freely Sunday Mass.

Responding to the Gift

We now encourage all Catholics to look again at the patterns which they have formed in recent months with regard to going to Mass on Sundays. This would include consideration and reflection about what we might do on Sundays, such as sports or shopping, or other leisure and social activities. This review, and the decisions which arise from it, fall to every Catholic and we trust this will be done with honesty, motivated by a real love for the Lord whom we encounter in the Mass.

The Sunday Mass is the very heartbeat of the Church and of our personal life of faith. We gather on the “first day of the week,” and devote ourselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). The Eucharist sustains us and spurs us on, renewing our gratitude and our hope. When we say “Amen” to Christ in receiving his Body and Blood, we express the love of God which is deep within us, and at the end of Mass, when we are sent forth, we express our love for our neighbour, especially those in need. These two dimensions reveal the full meaning of our faith. We are gathered together and sent out, we pray and are fed, we worship and we adore; these are intrinsic to our lives as those baptised into Christ.

Approved at the Plenary Assembly of Bishops in Leeds.

Thursday 18 November 2021

Notices of Interest

Repository: A display of Christmas cards & other items are available in the Hall foyer. Due to Covid & the lack of new staff this will be in reduced form. Please observe Covid recommendations. I am grateful that my small but very loyal helpers will try to be available, but if there is no-one to help, please put money into wall box to the right of the Sacristy door. *Kathleen Healey (01604) 629103*

Saturday Session Mission Event 4th December Cathedral St Thomas Centre All are warmly invited to the St Thomas Centre, next to the Cathedral, on 4th December 10.00 am-12 noon for a free mission event including refreshments, live worship music, speakers and Eucharistic adoration. This is an excellent opportunity to invite someone who may be interested in knowing more about our faith in Jesus. For more info please contact info@renewcatholicmission.co.uk

Red Box Scheme Donors: Missio have sent me your free calendar for 2022. These are at the back of the church in (as near as I could get) a Red Box. The envelopes are addressed to those concerned and are in alphabetical order. Please keep them that way! I do have some calendars spare so if others would like to financially support our Foreign Missionaries please speak to Alec or Dorothy or one of the clergy. *Alec*.

Used Postage Stamps: As Christmas rapidly draws near could I appeal to everyone to save their used postage stamps. My loyal supporters will already know that the used postage stamps raise thousands of pounds for the missions abroad. It all started when a young priest became very ill & was sent back to England to die. He wanted to do something useful with his time, & eventually started collecting used postage stamps & postcards. This caught on in a big way & lots of money was, & still is being raised. It doesn't cost anything except a bit of time. They are being sent in the name of St Gregory's & I pay the postage myself. The good news is that the young priest is now in his 90s, & still going strong. Truly God works in mysterious ways. Thank you, *Linda Fleming*

Bible Alive for December 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.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next preparation will be in the Sacristy on Mon. 10th January, 7pm. Please note that you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

First Holy Communion 2022: There will be six 'in-person' sessions preparing for first Reconciliation, both at Sacred Heart church, Weston Favell from 3.00 pm until 5.00 pm on Saturdays, 4th and 11th December before the Christmas break. Those preparing on-line will receive emails with what they need. After Christmas there will be sessions on January 15th, 22nd and 29th and on February 5th.

Confirmation in 2022: The next Confirmation programme will be announced soon, but there will be a time of reflection before any definite plans are made. Please keep looking at this space where information will appear.

Parish Finances: Continued thanks for the wonderful generosity that you are showing to the parish.

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)

SPUC - Silent Prayer Vigil: Please note that the Pro Life Vigil will start on Wednesday 8th Dec. from 10am to 12pm. In St. Giles Terrace. Further info from William on 07393965643 or wpcurrie@btinternet.com. The plight of the unborn child and the horror of abortion is the preeminent moral issue of our time. As Catholics we all have a duty before God to do all we can to save unborn children from abortion. Please consider joining us and if you are unable to do so then please support all Pro Life organisations and keep them in your prayers.

There will be a fundraising breakfast at Café 1850, Northampton Cathedral on Friday 3rd December for our for the Alzheimer's Society on 'Elf Day'. There will be a host of breakfast treats with a few festive touches! Open from 7.00 am, BBC Radio Northampton will be reporting from the event through the morning. We have limited tables remaining, so please email richard@northamptondiocese.com to book.

Online Advent Retreat: Mondays through Advent starting 29th November, 7.30-8.30 pm. Join Canon John Udris and Avril Baigent for an online retreat helping us to pause, reflect and encounter the Lord. Join our online community on a Monday night, or watch afterwards. Click here to book: https://lift_up_your_eyes.eventbrite.co.uk.

News from the Foodstore! Thank you again for your wonderful support. This is much appreciated, and the need continues, particularly for basic toiletries, such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, shower gel, washing-up liquid. We as a parish continue to support the Cathedral Foodstore by supplying toiletries to add to food bags. Please donate what you can, & continue to pray for this work. Remember that as the weather gets colder, the need becomes greater. Many Thanks, *Gregory Care*.

Choir Matters: To avoid travelling in the dark on Thursday's, choir members have asked for practices, up to Dec 17, to be moved to Fridays every week: 2-3:15. Our next session will be Nov 19. *Alec*

We Now Have Heating Again! Please, please, please can we all help to keep the heat in by closing the outside doors, and not leaving them open.

Tots @ St Gregory's: We will be in the hall from 9:30-11:30 each school week Tuesday! If you have care of a baby or pre-school child Tuesday mornings why not join our very friendly & fun group? We only charge £1 for an adult & however many children they bring & this includes snack & all activities!

Vacancies: The Diocese a number of vacancies. Full information for each position and how to apply can be found by visiting <https://northamptondiocese.org/jobs/> or via email hadmin@northamptondiocese.com

Thomas Becket School: Learning Support Assistant required. Start date 13th December, 30 hours per week, 8.30-3.30. See poster in Narthex for full details.

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

St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School Vacancy: Class Teacher (Maternity Cover) for KS1 starting January 2022 until July 2022, please contact the school for details 01604 403511

Courses for Readers: The Bible Timeline course has started on Zoom on Wednesday evenings, beginning at 7.30pm. on 13th October. All are welcome, but those who proclaim the Scriptures at Mass are particularly encouraged to take part. Please email to Fr Andrew for further details. It is not too late to join!

Scripture Readings 28th November 2021, First Sunday of Advent, Year C

A few weeks ago we heard Jeremiah promising the deliverance of his people. This week he describes how this hope will be realised, even though Jerusalem and the Temple had been destroyed. A descendant of David will bring honesty, integrity and security to Israel.

Jeremiah's complex writings changed Jewish expectations from a single Day of Judgement to a gradual process: an initial time of suffering, then an in-between period. This was identified by early Christians as now, after Christ's death had inaugurated the New Covenant, while we await the promised completion in Christ's second coming.

These rather mild verses from the Psalm fail to show its directness: "In your kindness, recall me – You".

The earliest New Testament writing, Paul wrote this first letter to the Thessalonians from Corinth, probably in 51 AD, where Timothy had brought news of the Thessalonian church's progress. Paul prays that the Lord should increase their love for one another, exhorting them to show this love by leading moral lives.

We are starting the year of Luke, but the gospel for the beginning of Advent is from the end of Jesus' ministry, where he warns us to be ready for the end times. Every one of us faces an end time, and we must live our lives as if it comes today.

Psalm Response: **To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.**

(Jeremiah 33:14-16; Ps 24(25); 1 Thess 3:12 - 4:2; Luke 21:25-28, 34-36)

Chris Oliver

Adsumus Sancte Spiritus

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.
We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever. Amen

The Synod Process

We now have more information about the way in which the preparations for the Synod will take place. The original timetable was clearly too short to allow for proper conversations to take place, and has been extended, as it is unlikely that much can be done before Christmas. However, there will be meetings set up in such a way that as many people as possible can take part. To help, there are certain specific questions which are posed:

- ? What does it mean to you to be a Catholic?
- ? What are your experiences of the Church doing something well?
- ? What are your experiences of when things have not gone so well?
- ? What are your dreams for the Church?

These are all personal questions, and the meetings are to hear the voices of as many people as possible. They are not there to find an 'agreed answer' or even a 'majority opinion'; there are likely to be almost as many answers as there are people. Every response is valuable and gracious listening essential.

The whole process is cast in the recognition of the need for us to become a better missionary parish, and for us all to become missionary disciples. As a parish, we have a vision, stated on every newsletter, that we will be a thriving Catholic community, confidently and humbly proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. If that is our collective 'dream' for our parish, how are we to get there? If we are to get there, what is required of each one of us as individuals?

Happy Birthday and Thank you

Deacon Michael Fleming was ordained Deacon on 15th July 1989, and has served in this parish for 32 years; he is currently the longest-serving Deacon in our Diocese. In addition to serving the parish, he has been Diocesan pilgrimage director for Walsingham and Lourdes. Over many years he has been one of the most faithful Deacons in his liturgical ministry at the Cathedral for Diocesan events, and for many years was closely involved in Catholic education, both at St Mary's Middle School and at our primary schools. Since retiring from his work for the NHS at Northampton General Hospital, within the parish, he has provided a chaplaincy service for St Andrew's Hospital as well as looking after Baptism preparation, and exercising his Diaconal ministry at almost every Mass, both Sundays and weekdays. In this, he has done, and continues to do over and above what any parish or priest could reasonably expect or ask. Parish and priest are grateful for this long and faithful ministry.

On Saturday Deacon Michael reaches the age of 75, which is the normal age for retirement from active ministry, and he is retiring from the responsibility of directing the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, but happily for the parish, has agreed to continue his local ministry here, as well as directing the annual Diocesan pilgrimage to Walsingham.

There will be a presentation to him at the end of the Mass at 9.00 am on Sunday — not to mark retirement but as a sign of the gratitude of the parish for all the work he has done and continues to do. Our thanks also to Linda for the continued support that she gives to Michael.

DO YOU SING OR PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT?



Why not join our fabulous CHOIR!

See Rosemary or Alec after Mass

Come and give it a bash!

HELP IS NEEDED IN OUR KITCHEN!



We are looking for volunteers, to assist with serving coffee and tea, on Sunday after 09h00 Mass

Please see Jehanne or Rayner after Mass

SOCIAL EVENING
TEN PIN BOWLING



Come along and join us for a fun evening.

When: Thursday, 16th December 2021

Time: 7.00 pm

Cost: £10 per person

Contact Daniel (Dan.Davighi@outlook.com)

Let's smash those skittles down!

St Gregory's next Alpha:

To the right are the dates of the next Alpha course which we are hoping will be able to be 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. It is good to have established believers as well as potential converts and those who simply want to know more about our faith. 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

First session:	21st September 2021: Is there more to life than this?
Second Session:	28th September 2021 Who is Jesus?
Third Session:	5th October 2021 Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session	12th October 2021 How can I be sure of my faith?
Fifth Session	19th October 2021 Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session	9th November 2021 How does God guide us?
Seventh Session	16th November 2021 Why and how should I read the Bible?
Away-Day	19th -20th November 2021 Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session	23rd November 2021 How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session	30th November 2021 Why and how should we tell others?
Tenth Session	7th December 2021 What about the Church?
Eleventh Session	14th December 2021 What about the rest of my life?

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