



# 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

## Our Lady, Queen of Peace

In the cloister of the English College villa at Palazzola there is a statue of Our Lady of Peace. She stands with her eyes downcast, and a look of sorrow on her face, clasping the dove of the Holy Spirit to her chest, and with ivy growing up around her.

Pope Sixtus IV commissioned the building of a church under the patronage of “Our Lady of Peace” in 1482. He was a firm supporter of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady long before this was proclaimed as official teaching of the Church, and it was he who commissioned the Sistine Chapel, which takes its name from him. He was a great patron of the arts, and much of Renaissance Rome is his legacy. While the time of Sixtus IV was far from a time of peace, it was a time in which art was able to flourish, and it was a time of building rather than a time of destruction. How different from our own times!



Our Lady weeps over the land where her feet once trod as the ivy grows to cover her image and hide her sorrow.

All people of goodwill must seek peace in the Middle East, in Ukraine and throughout the world. The question is how this will be accomplished, and it is a tragedy that people of goodwill who all want the same outcome fall out over the means to achieve peace.

There can be no argument that the attack by Hamas on civilians and the taking of hostages cannot be justified or defended. Equally, while recognising the right of every country to defend itself, the bombing and shelling of civilian dwellings and the denial of humanitarian aid cannot be justified or defended.

It seems that the supporters of both sides in this conflict demand condemnation of the other side while refusing to accept any share of the guilt. Even the word ‘ceasefire’ has become weaponised.

There is such a long legacy of ill-will and bitterness and such a long list of

There is a hymn written by Lewis Hensley containing the lines:

*Where is thy reign of peace  
and purity and love?*

*When shall all hatred cease,  
as in the realms above?*

*When comes the promised time  
when wars shall be no more.  
When lust, oppression, crime  
shall free thy face before*

The author lived through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and died at Walsingham in 1905. He had seen the horror for the Boer Wars, although this hymn had been written some years earlier, at a time when he had been the Anglican Vicar of Hitchin in Hertfordshire. We in our times may well echo the prayer of this hymn in our hearts.

atrocities, and many seek revenge for past misdeeds.

The ancient ‘Lex Talionis’, expressed by Jesus as ‘Eye for eye, tooth for tooth’ derived from ancient Babylon, and is designed to act as a limit on retaliation. That law seems to have been replaced by a principle of the ‘pre-emptive strike’, and each atrocity is given as justifying a greater atrocity.

“If you want to go to there, I wouldn’t start from here” is an old saying and has some resonance today. Yet here we are, and we must pray and work that we may get to that place of peace. Jesus teaches us a ‘more excellent way’, that of love (see *John 13:34* and *1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13*), and changed the ‘Lex Talionis’ into a law of non-violence (see *Matthew 5:38-42*). The experience of Ireland since the ‘Good Friday Agreement’ in 1998, while it has not totally removed hostility, shows that with goodwill on both sides, things can get better. We pray that God’s way and people of goodwill may prevail.



# Notices of Interest

**New Office Email Address With Immediate Effect:** Due to circumstances beyond our control, I can no longer access ANY emails sent to [secretary@stgregory.org.uk](mailto:secretary@stgregory.org.uk) or [caryll.comley@ntlworld.com](mailto:caryll.comley@ntlworld.com). Any emails should therefore, from now on, be directed to [parish.stgregory@northamptondiocese.org](mailto:parish.stgregory@northamptondiocese.org).



We welcome into the family of the Church  
Bridget Martina Violette Leah Mary Ward  
who received Christian Baptism recently.  
Please pray for her and her family.

**Car Park Safety:** Neither the Parish nor the Diocese are responsible for the safety of persons (adults or children), cars or their contents while in the car-park.

**Repository:** From Sunday Nov 5<sup>th</sup> there will be a small display of cards & mementoes for Confirmation. From Sunday Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> Christmas cards, books & items will be on sale. Catholic diaries with the order of the Mass are already available. **PLEASE** can anyone help with sales to help my loyal, but small group of helpers. Anyone with a calculator can do it - all items are priced! *Contact Kath.healey.789@gmail.com.*

**Bible Alive** for October & November is now available - only £3.00! If you wish to purchase a copy, they are in the narthex as you come into church.

**Thursday Holy Hour & Adoration:** Holy Hour remains as Holy Two Hours, from 9am until 11am. It is important that at least two people are present throughout the time of adoration. During cold weather, Adoration will be in the Sacristy.

**Tots @ St Gregory's:** St Greg's Tiny Tots runs each Tuesday in term time from 9:30-11:30 in the church hall. We charge £1 per group which includes snacks & coffee! If you have care of a pre-school child, please join us!!

**Food Parcels:** Please contact Gregory Care (07434 669011) if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel.

**Choir Notes:** our next practice will be on Saturday November 11 from 11:00 till 12:30. The main focus will be on our Christmas music and preparing for Remembrance Day. After that we will practice at the same times on Saturdays Nov 18 and 25 and Dec 9 and 16. Come and join us and get in the Christmas spirit. *Alec (also known to some as Father Christmas)*

**Thomas Becket School** are hoping to achieve the 'Live Simply Award' from CAFOD. The three strands of this award come under the headings of 'living simply', 'in solidarity' and 'sustainably. Everything they do will be founded in prayer. This has led a group of students to identify a small area of the school to create a small garden of reflection and prayer and another area at the front of the school to create planters to make the environment more beautiful to welcome everyone to the school. They are appealing to the parishes to join with them in their first project by donating a bag of bulbs or if possible, some gardening expertise to assist them. The bulb planting will take place in November when every member of Thomas Becket Community will plant one bulb each.

**Helpers Needed to clean the Church** on the last Saturday of every month, after the morning Mass. All welcome, especially the younger, more energetic ones!

**Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group** continues to pray together online via Skype and by telephone and on the first Saturday of the month, here in the Church, from 10am-12pm.

**URGENT NOTE ON FINANCES** If you have transferred to standing orders and pay income tax please contact Fr Andrew (preferably by email) so that the Gift Aid can be linked to your donation. Claims can only be made for up to three years, so there is some urgency about this.

**Fewer Electrical Hazards:** There are still a few small jobs needing to be done, but mostly we have put right things that were required. Part of safeguarding is to ensure that in every respect the church is as safe as possible for all who come here.

**Missio Matters:** Anyone wishing to become a supporter of missionary work over the year – no matter how small the donation – should contact Dorothy (9) or Alec (11) after Mass or phone/email: 01604 622153 [a.unsworth@ntlworld.com](mailto:a.unsworth@ntlworld.com).

**Fire Safety – Important notice.** We have had trays made to go under the racks where candles burn to prevent the possibility of a naked flame falling on unlit candles below. Unlit candles **must not** be placed on these trays & must not be stacked one on top of another.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

**Baptism Preparation:** The next session will be on Monday evening, 6<sup>th</sup> Nov. at 7pm. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book a place.

**First Holy Communion 2023:** There will be a welcome to the children who are registered & their parents at the 11am Mass on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. All sessions will be on Saturday afternoons at Sacred Heart, Weston Favell. Details, dates, times will be available at registration. Because of the large number of children, there will be separate sessions for the oldest. All the families concerned have been notified

**Confirmation in 2023:** Confirmation sessions have resumed, and those enrolled should have received an email with details.

**Alpha in the Autumn:** Alpha is now running weekly on-line, Tuesday evenings. For more info visit [www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha](http://www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha)

**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)**

## Refreshment Donations:

Below is the schedule for refreshment donations through the year:

From the first Sunday in Advent	<b>The Hope Centre</b>
to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:	
From the Second Sunday in ordinary time	<b>Gregory Care</b>
to the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday:	
Through Lent and Eastertide:	<b>CAFOD</b>
Ordinary Time until the end of August:	<b>Refreshment Fund</b>
September until the Harvest collection:	<b>CAFOD</b>
<i>After harvest until the beginning of Advent:</i>	<i><b>The Bible Society</b></i>

**An Advent Journey with John the Baptist:** 4 Monday evenings, 7.30-8.30pm, from 27<sup>th</sup> Nov, with Fr John Udriş & Avril Baigent. Available on YouTube so does not require zoom & can be played via smart TVs. Here is last year's series to give a flavour of what to expect: [https://pastoralministryoffice.org/walking\\_by\\_starlight-2/](https://pastoralministryoffice.org/walking_by_starlight-2/)

## Mission Prayer

Heavenly Father  
it is your will that we should make disciples of all nations.  
We ask you to bless the mission of our Diocese of Northampton  
and guide our hearts and minds  
so that your will might be done  
and your kingdom be build up here on earth.  
We pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit,  
without which our work is in vain,  
and we entrust ourselves to your beloved Son,  
for we know that he is with us for all time, now and for ever.  
Amen

## Prayer 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

# 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 30<sup>th</sup> 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)

*Chris Oliver*

## Gaudium et Spes — Joy and Hope

This was the last of the major documents of the Second Vatican Council, and is a wide-ranging study of the state of the world in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and the role and place of the Church in that context. For all that it was written nearly 60 years ago, the message remains equally relevant to our present society.

The document calls itself a "Pastoral Constitution" rather than a "Dogmatic Constitution", and that is because much of it is dealing with the pastoral implications of Church teaching in the current circumstances, and while the teaching will remain, the pastoral implications may be different in a different age.

The Church affirms complete solidarity with all mankind, and sees itself as being at the service of all mankind. However, this is not an unquestioning service. For example the Church values the God-given life of everyone as infinitely precious, and no one has the right to take that gift, whether it be from an unborn child, a person with a terminal illness, a criminal in prison or a civilian in warfare. That humanity is created 'in the image of God' gives the human person a value which exceeds anything that is purely earthly and secular.

In a short article it is impossible to touch on every issue covered in this lengthy document. However, here are a few of the points covered:

### **Interdependence**

None of us exists on our own, we exist within society. This can help us to thrive, but also has its dangers in that social pressures can lead us into sin or weaken our determination to do good.

### **The Common Good**

No individual should put his/her aspirations as of greater importance than the rightful aspirations of the people as a whole, and no group within society should put their collective aspirations above those of other groups within the society.

### **Respect for the Human Person**

This is the working out of Jesus' teaching that we should love others as we love ourselves. We should not do to others what we would not wish done to us and should behave to others as we would wish them to behave to us.

### **Respect and love for enemies**

This is not dealing with countries at war but with those with whom we disagree. It affirms the old saying of 'love the sinner while hating the sin'. We must accord human dignity to those with whom we disagree, and when we disagree we must not demean the person.

### **Essential equality of all people: Social Justice**

This is at the heart of what we now call Catholic Social Teaching. No individual, group or nation has a right to a greater share of the world's resources than any other, and there needs to be a radical re-sharing of the wealth of the earth.

### **Need to transcend individualistic morality**

No one has the right to devise a moral code which advances them over others.

### **Responsibility and Participation**

Following from our interdependence, we have a responsibility not only towards others, but to actively participate in society for its betterment and the betterment of all its members. In a democratic society, voting is a positive duty. There is also a duty to educate the young to understand their duties and responsibilities.

### **The Word made Flesh and Human Solidarity**

Jesus came into the world that we might be saved, and this is not simply as individuals, but in community, just as in forming the Twelve, he formed a community. We are called not just to personal holiness, but to proclaim the Gospel and try to bring others to a life of holiness.

### **Marriage and Family Life**

The Church recognises that a stable marriage between man and woman provides the best environment in which to bring up children. Christian marriage is blessed with a special Sacrament by which God blesses the union. While the secular world acknowledges other lifestyles, the Church holds out the Christian family as being specially blessed by God.

### **Economic Development**

The vast difference in wealth and the economies of different countries add to the deprivation of poorer nations while the richer ones gain in wealth. The richer nations have a responsibility to help the economic development of the poorer ones.

### **The Church and Politics**

It is good that Christians should engage in the political life of their community and nation, and should seek to guide their nation towards the common good.

### **The Avoidance of War**

War represents failure, and politicians and statesmen should do all within their power to prevent it breaking out. Modern warfare involves the use of weapons whose devastating power were beyond the imagining of those who first described a 'just war', and the risks to the world from such weapons are so great. When so many are starving, so many are homeless, there are so many migrants and refugees, warfare is a reckless waste of the world's resources.

### **International Organisations**

International co-operation should help developing nations to advance, and should help to foster peace on earth. Christians should support all efforts to further co-operation between the nations, bringing aid to places in immediate need and crisis, supporting the growth of developing nations and fostering peace and reconciliation.