



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

The Lord, the lover of life

We are approaching the month of November which begins with the twin days of All Saints and All Souls. The month of November is devoted to prayer for those who have died.

Our faith tells us that mortal death is not the end, but does speak of a ‘second death’, which comes after judgement:

“Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power”
(*Apocalypse 20:6*)

God has no desire to see anyone consigned to the second death;

“God desires everyone comes to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (*1 Timothy 2:4*).

The reality is that God is pro-life. This is revealed in the creation stories, and is the fundamental story of the whole of the Bible. He offers us life after death, and also want us to have a good life before death. He certainly does not wish for death before birth. The life and teaching of Jesus show us how we should relate to one another with the same love with which God gave us the gift of life.

There is much more than that. To be ‘pro-life’ is not just to seek to protect the unborn; it must be to protect all life. It must be to work for peace throughout the world so that mortal life is not ended through warfare. It must be to recognise the reality of climate change, and not behave in a way which might increase the risk of hurricane, flooding, drought or other ‘weather events’ which cause people to leave their homelands and seek refuge elsewhere.

To be ‘pro-life’ is to recognise that capital punishment is to sink to the level of the criminal. The executioner legally may not be a murderer, but the consequence of his action is the same. But this must extend further. The purpose of punishment for crime must not simply be as deterrent or for the protection of society, although both of these are important. It must be to seek to re-habilitate the offender into law-abiding society; to provide a good education and training for a purposeful life. This is to ‘will the good of the other’.

To be ‘pro-life’ is to recognise that nobody has an automatic right to a greater share of the world’s resources than anyone else because of where they were born, the colour of their skin, their ethnicity, race or religion. This means that we must campaign for a more equitable distribution of the resources of our planet

To be ‘pro-life’ is to realise that all peoples have a right to medical care and access to treatment. In this country there are complaints about a ‘post-code lottery’ for various treatments, but that lottery is not limited to this country. Globally, in many countries there is no lottery because the treatment is not available to anyone, or only to those who can travel to another country.

Life should not be just toil and sweat. In the creation story we read that God rested on the seventh day, and the day of rest was written into the Law of the Old Testament. In the creation covenant, mankind was given the earth, and told to be fruitful and multiply; this was also part of the covenant with Noah who discovered the joy of the fruit of the vine — somewhat to excess (*Genesis 9:21*). However the Passover ritual involved the drinking of wine and this was specially hallowed by Jesus at the Last Supper for us in the Eucharist.

God wishes us to enjoy life, and the only limit to that enjoyment is the limit imposed by love. Our enjoyment must not be at the cost of the misery or lack of enjoyment of another.

The mysteries of the Rosary begin with joy and end in glory. True, there is sorrow in between, as well as the mysteries of light. It is the mysteries of light; that is to say, the ministry and teaching of Jesus that helps us to see the sorrow in its true light.

In the Last Supper discourse, Jesus promises that our ‘sorrow will be turned into joy’ (*John 16:20*). He continues: ‘you have pain now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you’ (*John 16:22*). He concludes: ‘your joy will be complete’. (*John 16:24*)

This joy is not ‘pie in the sky when you die’; it is in the here and now. At its first level, this joy is based on the knowledge of the resurrection, and that mortal death is not the end. Looked at more deeply, it is being in the community which is centred around Jesus. This joy is not a solitary experience, it is found in the community of faith.

The love of life that is the clue to understanding God’s divine plan of salvation — “God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church §1*)

The necessary other side of this coin is that we are called to love God with all our heart and soul and strength. (*Deuteronomy 6:5*) When we pray that God’s will may be done on earth, as we do every day, we are praying that the life which God created ‘in a plan of sheer goodness’ should be respected, protected and honoured by us as his free gift to us.

That love, respect and honour does not end when mortal life has ended and our responsibility for its protection has ended, and so this coming month of November is a time to rejoice with the saints in heaven and to pray for those whose journey continues beyond this life as they await the fullness of the joys of heaven.

Notices of Interest

Fr. Ken Payne: The Diocese of Northampton are sorry to inform you that Fr Ken Payne passed away last Saturday. Please pray for the repose of his soul and for all those who mourn him. Funeral details to follow shortly.

Bible Alive for November 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 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*

Thursday Holy Hour and Adoration: A request has been made that there be more opportunity for Eucharistic Adoration. 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.

The God who Speaks: The ‘Year of the Word’ continues and the Diocesan Bible Study sessions for the Sunday Mass readings are continuing. There will be a session on ‘Preparing for Advent and Christmas’ on 23rd November and in January there will be an introduction to the Year of Matthew (Year A in the lectionary)

World Mission Sunday: Thank you very much for your donations to World Mission Sunday. Your prayers and support will help missionaries work alongside communities throughout the world that are poor or in need, regardless of their background or belief. Please pray for the work of Missio and all those working to offer the love of Jesus, that we may remain strong in our witness to Christ’s love for all peoples. To continue supporting Missio throughout the year, please go to mission.org.uk or call 020 7821 9755.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be on Monday 14th November 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 Dates for First

Communion Families: Congratulations to all children who have enrolled on the First Holy Communion programme. You will now have all the dates of sessions. Please try to attend them all, and please enjoy the course!

Confirmation in 2023: Please watch this space for information.

Choir Matters: 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*

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

Memorial Mass: On Saturday 17th December, 11am. there will be a Celebratory Mass for Philip Ndekwe RIP. All welcome.

Would You Like to Join (online) for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies or Diocesan Certificate in Religious Studies?

Both courses offer the same 8 modules in Scripture & Catholic Theology with the CCRS leading to a nationally recognised qualification. Those who follow the CCRS/DCRS say they gain a great deal from the course, deepening their knowledge & understanding of their faith.

To find out more about the course, contact Ann Collon Email: educationserviceadmin@northamptondiocese.org or visit our website: www.northamptondioceseschools.org

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.

Save the Date: Saturday 18th March 2023 Encounter Northampton, a day hosted by Mission Northampton in St Gregory’s Hall from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. More details later!

Church Heating: 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 heat the church and hall on Sundays, but the extra cost of this will be more than the saving on weekdays.

Job vacancy: Lay Chaplain for St. Gregory’s & St. Mary’s Catholic Primary Schools - a dedicated & highly motivated Lay Chaplain required to work in a high quality, vibrant & caring environment where we share a rich vision for our pupils & for the communities in which we work. Post is 22.5 hours pw, working 4 days across both schools. Deadline is midday on Wed. 9th Nov. Further info: <https://www.stgregoryscatholicprimaryschool.org.uk/page/?title=Vacancies&pid=31>

Flame 2023: The theme of Flame 2023 – which is exactly 150 days before World Youth Day in Lisbon – takes the WYD Scripture “Mary arose and went with haste” and crystallises it into the theme, “Rise Up!” Rise up after the pandemic, Rise up as young Catholics, Rise up – as Mary did – for the surprising and beautiful adventure that is our Catholic faith. **Sat 4th March 23 - book the date - more details soon**

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. There is a course in preparation on the history of the Church seen through the lives of saints in the Church calendar, which will run after Christmas

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
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 30th October 2022, 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

The Book of Wisdom has been describing ways in which Wisdom guided the patriarchs and took special care of Israel during their Exodus wanderings in the desert. God's mercy extends to all creation, even men's sins. The logic is impeccable: "you love all that exists", "for had you hated anything, you would not have formed it." Offenders are encouraged to trust in God by gentle reminders of their sins.

The psalm praises God's sovereign majesty and loving providence.

For the next three weeks we have readings from Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians. After his opening greeting, Paul thanks God for the strength of the Thessalonians' faith, which he boasts about to other churches, and promises that those persecuting them will be punished. The Thessalonians are always in Paul's prayers, and should not be misled by false information about the second coming. Much has to happen before the end time.

In the Gospel Luke graphically describes the rich tax collector, Zacchaeus. Curious to see Jesus, Zacchaeus immediately follows Jesus and promises to give half his wealth to the poor. A contrast to the rich official who could not detach himself from his material possessions to follow Jesus. Though excluded from the Jewish community by his occupation, Zacchaeus receives salvation as a true son of Abraham.

Psalm Response:

**I will bless your name for ever,
O God my King.**

(Wisdom 11:22-12:2 Ps 144(145) 2 Thess 1:11-2:2 Luke 19:1-10)

Chris Oliver

Ooops — missed the bus!

Never mind, there will be another! The plan is to run Alpha twice a year, once in the autumn, once in the spring. This is a key part of the strategy for evangelisation. Alpha does not teach or cover the whole of the Catholic Faith. It would not be reasonable to expect that it could in just eleven weeks. It seeks to bring people into a closer and personal relationship with Jesus, from which point, within the Catholic community which runs the course, and with whom they have built up a relationship of trust and friendship, they can go on to discover more of the riches of our Faith. If you have missed this one, please think about coming in the spring, 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. Many people have found this valuable for themselves, but this is also an easy way for anyone to fulfil the wish of Pope Francis that we all become Missionary Disciples. Just come and bring a friend!

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?

What is Love? (Continued)

The word 'charity' is used as a translation of 'love', but has also come to have a different meaning as organisations which seek to bring relief to people in need.

'Willing the good of the other' is the definition of love that derives from St Thomas Aquinas and appears in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. To fully explore this, we need to have an understanding of 'the good'.

'Good' must have a long-term meaning, not momentary or transient. 'Good' must endure. The ultimate endurance is eternal life in heaven, which is why the proclamation of the Gospel is a manifestation of love. 'Good' is also has a material aspect; 'goods' are material things which are bought and sold, and the relief of poverty is an act of love. By contrast, the complacent allowing of destitution reveals a lack of love.

While the day-to-day relief of poverty is an act of love, to fully desire the 'good of the other' the charity that creates a dependency on such relief is less than perfect. To really desire the 'good of the other' is to desire that the 'other' has as much as the self.

'Good' extends beyond this; the material needs are the most basic, but physical safety, health and security follow closely behind, and our country's support for Ukraine is a good example of love in action. These are fundamental requirements of life, but to will the good of the other stretches way beyond this, and true Christian love can have no limits.