



# 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 Day of Resurrection

## Our Easter Candle

The Budded Cross is a Christian cross with three circular lobes at each end of its arms, creating a trefoil shape. The budded Cross is also known as the trefoil, botonee, or cathedral cross.

The three lobes/buds on each end of the Cross symbolise the Holy Trinity, The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and they represent new growth and the renewal of life. Another meaning is the twelve buds represent the twelve apostles.

For many Christians, the budded Cross serves as a reminder of the fundamental belief in the Trinity, the interconnectedness of all life, and a symbol of hope and renewal.

At the back of the Pascal Candle is a simplified representation of The Trinity. Inspiration was taken from a fresco called The Trinity in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Rome. It was painted in 1425 by the Florentine painter Masaccio (Tomasso de Giovanni di Simone Guidi, 1401-28) the founder of Renaissance art. It shows God the Father standing behind and above His crucified Son. He is supporting the crossbar of the crucifix thus echoing His Son's sacrifice. Between both their heads hovers The Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of the Trinity - The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit - God as three separate beings yet remaining one entity is represented by Masaccio depicting all Three as one shape. The Trinity is first mentioned in Matthew's Gospel (28:v/19) as comprising Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We pray to The Father, to The Son and to The Holy Spirit- the Trinity who hear our prayers thus renewing and strengthening our lives through faith and love.

The other images are to remind us of God's material generosity through the parable of the Loaves and Fishes and the parable of forgiveness given to the Prodigal Son by the love his father has for him no matter what he had done. Then at the very bottom of the candle is the image of praying hands to remind us that all the Trinity hears our prayers and supplication. Especially we pray to God The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit in this Year of Prayer as requested by Pope Francis.



Text supplied by Catherine Mulligan who painted the candle

## Wishing a happy and blessed Easter to you all

Happiness and blessedness are the same thing, if we accept the Jerusalem Bible translation of the Beatitudes, but later this year we will be using the English Standard Version of the Bible for our Mass readings, and we revert to the older word: 'blessed'. In modern usage, happiness is something transient, and something we can

generate from ourselves. Blessedness is different from that; it is a gift from God. Blessedness can (and normally does) bring happiness, but it is not self-generated. The blessedness of Easter is God's gift to us in the Resurrection of Our Lord from the tomb. Death has been defeated, and the victory over sin is accomplished.



# Notices of Interest

**Repository:** The Repository is open after Sunday Masses for the sale of cards and religious goods. Cards and items for First Communion and Confirmation will be available after Easter. Red Communion ties are here and will cost £6. Any queries or volunteers to 01604 629103 or [Kath.healey.789@gmail.com](mailto:Kath.healey.789@gmail.com)

## Coming Events (for your diary):

**Saturday 13th April:** Table top sale for Gregory Care  
**Tuesday 16th April:** Next Alpha course starts  
**Saturday 27th April:** Pro-Life Life Chain on St Peters Way, 11.00 – 1.00  
**Sunday 23rd June:** Parish Picnic in the Park *More details nearer the time*  
**Friday 19th to Saturday 20th July:** 40 Hours Adoration at St Gregory's

**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)**

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

**Baptism Preparation:** The next session will be on Monday 8th April at 7pm in the Sacristy. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book a place.

**First Holy Communion 2023/4:** All sessions are on Saturday afternoons at Sacred Heart, Weston Favell. Details, dates, times have been given to all those who are registered.

**Confirmation in 2024:** There will be practical sessions through February & March, & then teaching sessions from April. Email to [childrens.liturgy@stgregory.org.uk](mailto:childrens.liturgy@stgregory.org.uk) for further information.

## Next Alpha will be after Easter:

<b>First session:</b>	<b>April 16th:</b>	Is there more to life than this?
<b>Second Session:</b>	<b>April 23rd:</b>	Who is Jesus?
<b>Third Session:</b>	<b>April 30th:</b>	Why did Jesus die?
<b>Fourth Session:</b>	<b>May 7th:</b>	How can I have faith?
<b>Fifth Session:</b>	<b>May 14th:</b>	Why and how do I pray?
<b>Sixth Session:</b>	<b>May 21st:</b>	Why and how should I read the Bible?
<b>Seventh Session:</b>	<b>June 4th:</b>	How does God guide us?
<b>Away-Day:</b>	<b>June 8th:</b>	Who is the Holy Spirit?
<b>Eighth Session:</b>	<b>June 11th:</b>	How can I resist evil?
<b>Ninth Session:</b>	<b>June 18th:</b>	Why and how should I tell others?
<b>Tenth Session:</b>	<b>June 25th:</b>	Does God heal today?
<b>Eleventh Session:</b>	<b>July 2nd:</b>	What about the Church?

**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!!

**Bl. Cyprian Tansi Prayer Group** prays together online via Skype and by telephone and on the first Saturday of the month, here in the Hall: 10am-12 pm.

**Divine Mercy Sunday Holy Hour:** This will take place at Our Lady's Shrine, Great Billing on Sunday 7th April at 3pm.

**The Annunciation of the Lord: 24 Hour Adoration Monday-Tuesday 8th-9th April:** There will be Mass at on Monday 8th April at 10.30am at Our Lady's Shrine, Great Billing. This will be followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament which will continue until the 9.30am Mass at Great Billing on Tuesday 9th April.

**Church Cleaning:** Helpers needed to clean the Church on last Sat. every month (**next – 27th April**), after morning Mass. All welcome, especially younger, more energetic ones!

**Diocesan Bible Study:** The next study session will be on Wednesday 10th April on Zoom starting at 7.30 pm, and will be looking at the Eastertide Sunday Mass readings. Please email Fr Andrew for the link. Although these are regular events, each one is a free-standing session; there is no need to have done any before. They are designed to be helpful to those who proclaim the scriptures at Mass on Sundays, but are open to everyone.

**Care for our environment:** Since 2015 we have been celebrating the 'Season of Creation' from September 1st to October 4th, and this has now become a celebration shared by other Christians as well. Within our own local area, it would be good if Christians could work together to try to bring about a greater understanding and respect for God's creation. Issues like clean air, fly-tipping and care of the green spaces (Abington Park, Eastfield Park, Bradlaugh Fields, Abington Vale Park, Wilson's Orchard, Billing Road Cemetery). If anyone is interested in these, or other environmental issues, it would be good to get together. Please let Fr Andrew know if this would be of interest.

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

**Pro Life Chain - Saturday 27th April 2024:** Saturday 27th April, between 11am & 1pm, SPUC Northampton is holding a Pro-Life Chain on St Peters Way Northampton. If you can join us or want more information, then please contact William on 07393965643(text is fine) or [wpcurrie@btinternet.com](mailto:wpcurrie@btinternet.com)

**Wool for Stella Maris Woolly Hats** If you have any spare knitting wool for hats, please drop it off at the church for our knitters. Aran will make the cosiest hat! Seafarers & mariners love bright colours as well as the more traditional dark colour palette. Please avoid pastels as they get dirty quickly. If you would like more information or care to get involved, scan the QR code. Thank you, *Bob*



**Northampton Diocese** are looking for a Qualified RICS Chartered Building Surveyor to join our Property team, responsible for the portfolio of all Diocesan properties & land. Role is for 35 hrs pw. Full information and application form can be found at <https://northamptondiocese.org/jobs> All candidates should complete an application form & email it to: [hr.admin@northamptondiocese.org](mailto:hr.admin@northamptondiocese.org) The closing date for applications is 27th March. Interview dates to be confirmed.

**Diocesan Pilgrimages:** There will be a coach for the Walsingham pilgrimage from St. Gregory's on 8th June (leaving 8am sharp), and the Diocesan Lourdes pilgrimage will be from Friday 23rd Aug to Friday 30th Aug. Booking details for both will follow shortly.

**Diocesan Vacancy** for Youth Ministry Admin: general office support & admin to Youth Ministry Office. Role is for 22hrs pw. Working pattern to be agreed with candidate. Office location flexible: negotiated between Luton, Northampton, or hybrid. For full info & application visit <https://northamptondiocese.org/jobs> Candidates should complete a Diocesan application form & email to: [hr.admin@northamptondiocese.org](mailto:hr.admin@northamptondiocese.org) Closing date 5th April. Interviews 17th and 18th April.

**Fire Safety:** Please be careful with the votive candle stands, and especially please ensure that children are safe. Unlit candles **must not** be placed on the trays under the places for candles and candles must not be stacked one on top of another.

## 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:

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

## Prayer for Peace for Ukraine and the Holy Land:

Please continue to pray for an end to wars, and for all victims of war:  
**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**

# Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March: Easter Sunday, Year B

In a vision in Acts Peter is told that all animals and birds are suitable for eating: the restrictions of the Jewish Law are ending. So he can enter the house of Cornelius, a Gentile. Peter's speech is interrupted by the Holy Spirit welcoming the Gentile community into the church. Peter realises that forgiveness of sins is offered to "everyone who believes" in Jesus' name.

The vigil reading from Paul sees our baptism as joining Christ in his tomb, to rise to a new life in Christ, freed from the slavery of sin.

The dramatic Passover Psalm thanks God for repeatedly coming to our rescue and saving us.

Paul's letter to the Colossians draws attention away from earthly marks of religion: having died to things on earth, they should focus on the life to come when they "will appear with Christ in glory".

The alternative reading refers to the feast of Unleavened Bread, which followed Passover..

In the three synoptic gospels three women discover the tomb empty and run to tell the apostles. But in John's gospel Mary of Magdala is alone. Finding the stone removed from the tomb, she runs to tell Peter. Peter goes in first and sees the empty burial cloths. When the other disciple goes in, he believes.

Psalm Response:

**This day was made by the Lord:  
we rejoice and are glad.**

(Vigil/Day Acts 10:34,37-43 Psalm 117(118) Romans 6:3-11/Colossians 3:1-4/1 Corinthians 5:6-8 Matthew 28:1-10/John 20:1-9)

*Chris Oliver*

# What is Alpha?

Alpha is a series of group conversations that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. Everyone's welcome. No matter your background or beliefs, you're invited.

## Stay Curious

There is a new strapline used by Alpha, which is "Stay Curious".

We are curious creatures — it is our nature to want to discover about ourselves, our environment, nature, our family roots and so many other things. Most children go through a phase where every sentence begins with the word 'why' and a time then they cannot keep their hands off things.

It is a sad reality that for some people their natural (and therefore God-given) curiosity diminishes or even dies; for some it is knocked out of them, for others a dreariness of life swamps them.

The true scientist is always seeking for knowledge; that is what science is. It is therefore a strange irony that one of the pieces of 'fake news' that is put about by some is that science has disproved

religion. Science is always seeking new knowledge and new understanding, and the most important questions, such as 'the meaning of life, the universe and everything'.

Alpha provides an environment in which people can explore faith, and the important understanding is that we all start from where we are, not from any preconception of where we ought to be. However, it is also not an 'echo chamber' where people only hear what they already think.

There are many who did not have the experience of being brought up in a Catholic home, or even in an overtly Christian home, and may have a very distorted idea of what the Catholic Church actually believes and does.

Alpha is not just for those who are beginning their exploration of curiosity about faith, the meaning of life and everything. That curiosity remains part of our God-given nature, and we can always go deeper into our faith. Many who have been practicing Catholics for many years have found that the experience of Alpha has deepened their faith and understanding of God.

**Thursday Holy Hour & Adoration:** There will be 40 hours of continuous adoration from 7.00 am on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July until 11.00 pm on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July. This is part of the Year of Prayer leading up to the Jubilee year in 2025. 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 Hall.

**Donorbox:** St. Gregory's has signed up with Donorbox to enable people to make donations to the Church via a QR code. This is a safe & easy way of making a one-off donation without having to have cash on you!

If you have a smartphone, just point your camera at the QR code, click the link & the site will see you through the donation process. There is a larger version of this QR code in the Narthex area and in the hall for refreshment donations!



**Bishop David** is seeking experienced Directors/School Governors to represent his wishes on the Duns Scotus Trust – the diocesan body that has ultimate oversight of all diocesan schools and reports back to the Trustee. For an information pack or to discuss this volunteer position, please contact Debbie Main at [debbie.main@northamptondiocese.org](mailto:debbie.main@northamptondiocese.org)

## Caspar

This system is being rolled out across the diocese, The only essential information is your name and email address, although your home address and telephone number are useful, and a photo always helps! To comply with GDPR, each adult person must fill in their own registration form.

I hope that this will improve our communication, but that depends on our data being correct and up-to-date. Please help us to do this.



### Parish Registration

We will soon be using a new computer system to help us manage our parish better. It starts with us making sure that we have up to date contact information for all of our parishioners and so we would be grateful if you could complete the registration form by clicking on this QR code or by typing the link into your browser.

[www.caspar.church/me?ID=56067](http://www.caspar.church/me?ID=56067)



If you don't have an email address, please speak to the parish who can complete the form on your behalf.