



# 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 end of the road

Today's Gospel seems to be an odd choice. This year we are mainly reading from St Luke, and there is a pattern in the three Sundays in Lent between the Transfiguration gospel and Palm Sunday. But we have heard two from St Luke, and now we have one from St John!

This part of the Gospel of John has an interesting history. It is not found in the earliest texts of John, but does appear in some early texts of Luke, where it is set (as in John) in the temple in Jerusalem, and right at the end of the journey, and just before the account of the Last Supper. If that is indeed, the correct place for this story, then the compilers of our lectionary have got it right. Most scholars are of the opinion that the story, both stylistically and in content, are more likely to belong to Luke than to John. Our concern, in any case, is with what the story is teaching us as we prepare for Holy Week and Easter.

Last week our journey was focusing on Divine Mercy, and the Parable of the Prodigal Son was the end-point of this teaching. During the rest of the journey we have further parables and healings. The theme changes; much of the teaching of Jesus relates to the use of material possessions and wealth. The first of the parables, that of the 'dishonest manager' who is praised, apparently for his dishonesty, is one which has troubled readers for centuries.

Bible commentators and preachers have tried to give an explanation as to why the Master (God) should praise the now-dismissed manager for his dishonesty. (*Luke 16:8*) A possible explanation lies in the next parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The accumulation of wealth is not the route to heaven. It has been suggested that when the manager reduced the sums owed by the various debtors, he was in effect re-paying the sums he had extorted from them, thereby not disadvantaging the master, but like Zacchaeus, who we meet later in the journey, who paid back four times what he had made by defrauding tax-payers. If that is a right interpretation, then it chimes in well with Jesus' condemnation of Pharisees who were lovers of money. (*Luke 16:14*)

There are a number of dis-connected sayings of Jesus which Luke recounts as the journey progresses; on the danger of leading others into sin, (*Luke 17:1-2*) on dealing with the sin of others, (*Luke 17:2-4*) on faith (*Luke 17:5-6*) and on service. (*Luke 17:7-10*)

Jesus heals ten lepers, and only one returns to give thanks — a Samaritan. This reminds us of the Good Samaritan, (*Luke 10:30-37*) and a reference to the worldwide mission that Jesus would give to the Church. (*Luke 24:47*) The chapter ends with a discourse on the coming of the kingdom which requires more explanation than there is room for here.

Chapter 18 begins with two parables on prayer, the first encouraging us to pray continually, and the second to have the right disposition in our prayer. (*Luke 18:1-14*).

As the journey continues, it is clear that Jesus is being well-received in the main; children are brought to him for a blessing, (*Luke 18:15-17*) and Jesus praises child-like faith. The story of the rich young man is told in Mark (*Mark 10:17-31*) and Matthew (*Matthew 19:16-30*) as well as in Luke, (*Luke 18:18-30*) and here links in well with the teaching on material riches that we have already seen in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The well-known statement that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter heaven is a typical example of Jesus' use of statements which seem to be wild exaggeration, but which are therefore easy to remember. The warning is that if we set money as our highest good we are dethroning God in our life.

We have reached a point near Jericho in the Jordan valley, and perhaps for the first time the road up into the hills to Jerusalem comes into view, and Jesus take the twelve aside from the others who are following and tells them again about what was to happen very soon, but we are told that they did not understand.

Moving on, a blind beggar approaches Jesus asking for healing. Jesus tells him that his faith has saved him; a reflection back to the earlier teaching on faith and prayer, and this ends with the now seeing man following Jesus. Maybe he will be in the crowd as Jesus enters Jerusalem, waving a palm-branch and praising God.

The theme of money comes up again as Jesus enters Jericho, and Zacchaeus, a little man, climbs a sycamore tree to get a glimpse of Jesus, but to his surprise, is recognised, and Jesus invites himself to Zacchaeus' house. This results in the total conversion, and he volunteers to repay all that he has defrauded anyone out of, and give half his money to the poor. Jesus then tells the parables of the pounds, very similar to the parable of the talents in Matthew's gospel (*Matthew 25:14-30*), and this again relates to the theme of the right use of material possessions.

The journey takes us up the hill to Jerusalem, and into the city where Jesus first ejects the money-changers and merchants from the temple (misuse of money), and then teaches there. It is in this context that we find the Gospel for today.

The real challenge for us in this story comes in the last line. In his mercy, Jesus forgives the woman, but then tells her: "do not sin again". This is a hard command. Divine Mercy requires a change of life. That is our challenge.



# Notices of Interest

**The Crucifix facing the road:** this should now be in place. Many thanks for the financial contribution to pay for the repair.



We welcome into the family of the Church  
Ayanna Aiko Alexis,  
And Cairo Zachary Alexis  
who received Christian Baptism recently.  
Please pray for them and their family.

**Bible Alive** for Lent and Easter 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 and there is a small supply of Easter cards together with a display of First Communion and Confirmation cards and mementoes. 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](mailto:Kath.healey.789@gmail.com)

**Easter Flowers:** Envelopes are available for donations for Easter flowers on the table in the narthex. If you wish your flowers to be in memory of a particular person, please write their name on the envelope. This will appear in the Easter newsletter.

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

**Baptism Preparation:** Next date to be in the Sacristy on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

**First Holy Communion 2022:** Congratulations to those who have celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time during the past week. The preparation now turns to the receiving of Holy Communion for the first time, and we look forward to this in May. Thanks also to the parents in providing support and becoming catechists for their own children.

**Confirmation in 2022:** Registration for confirmation preparation and for confirmation this year is now closed, no further applications can be accepted. The sessions will run on a Sunday morning from 10.15 am - 11.30 am. Please join us for 9.00 am Mass as part of this course. Confirmation Mass is on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July at midday.

**Courses for Readers:** The Bible Timeline course on Wednesdays has nearly ended, with just two more sessions. There will be a break for Easter, but there is the possibility of running a short course after Easter and before the summer holiday season.

**Pro Life Chain - Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April:** On Sat. 30<sup>th</sup> April SPUC Northampton is holding a Pro-Life Chain on St Peters Way Northampton. This act of silent witness is to remember the millions of lives lost to abortion since the Abortion Act 1967. It will take place between 11am & 1pm. Please consider joining us at this important event. Last year twelve pro-life supporters stood together in order to proclaim the pro-life message. Abortion is a tragedy for babies, Mothers, Fathers, & society as whole. We have a moral duty to speak out against the horror of abortion. If you can join us or want more information, please contact William on 07393965643(text is fine) or [wpcurrie@btinternet.com](mailto:wpcurrie@btinternet.com). Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.

**Ukrainian Refugees:** Anyone interested in helping, contact Caritas [caritas@northamptondiocese.org](mailto:caritas@northamptondiocese.org) - Deacon Jim Hannigan. Address: Director of Caritas Northampton, Northampton Roman Catholic Diocese, St Thomas Centre, Primrose Hill, Northampton, NN2 6AG. Tel: (01604) 434362 Mob: 07756 685220

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

**Choir Practice in Lent:** Practices on Friday 1:45-3pm Apr 1 and 8. Alec

**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)**

**Gregory Care Update on Toiletry Donations:** Continued thanks to all who have donated toiletries & hygiene products to the Cathedral Food Store. There is a need for shampoo & washing up liquid. If you are aware of anyone who would benefit from this please get in contact with Gregory Care through Fr Andrew.

**Woolly Hats for seafarers: Calling all Knitters!** Seafarers are often ill equipped to deal with the cold conditions they find on board ship. Our volunteer knitters provide invaluable support for seafarers by helping them to keep warm. If you are interested in knitting a woolly hat for a seafarer, please speak to or get in touch with Bob Maine at [robertcmaine@gmail.com](mailto:robertcmaine@gmail.com). Knitting patterns are available. Gifts of wool are also appreciated.

**Seder Meal for Christians** Tickets are now available for the Seder (Passover) meal in the hall this Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> starting at 7.00 pm, priced at £10 for adults. Passover is a joyful and powerful celebration filled with symbolism, teaching and participation. The evening should take approximately 2½ hours including a meal, music and full commentary through a 'Passover for Christians' booklet. There will also be a number of genuine artefacts to help illustrate the Passover and its meaning. The first part of the evening is the retelling of the Exodus story which includes a good deal of explanation of the symbolism as understood by Jewish people both through antiquity and today. There will then be some explanation of how this story has been fulfilled completely in and through Jesus Christ our Messiah. This is a truly fascinating look into the Passover Supper that Jesus would have celebrated with his friends the night before he died and how dramatic and extraordinary it was in the light of what was to follow. We share the meal together, and after this, there are some final comments and areas of explanation, followed by closing prayers and songs. Don't miss it!

**Food Parcels:** Please get in touch with Gregory Care (07434669011) if you or anyone you know would benefit from receiving a food parcel.

**Tots @ St Gregory's:** TINY TOTS look forward to seeing you: if you have charge of a pre-school child, from 9:30- 11:30 on a Tuesday morning, you are most welcome!

**Parish and Diocesan Finances:** We have drawn up a budget for the coming year and submitted it to the Diocese. We are hoping for an increase in giving as more people come back to Mass week by week. If this materialises, we forecast a very small surplus. One significant help would be to make your giving through standing order; the details of our account are above, and if you pay income tax, please ask for a Gift Aid form.

**Pivotal Players:** This series of videos has been really interesting, but is now drawing to a close. This Monday we shall look again at St Ignatius of Loyola led by Bishop Robert Barron. Please email Fr Andrew for the Zoom links for this session.

**NYMO invite you to a Brunch** event at the NYMO Offices in Luton on Saturday, 9th April, for a morning of food, faith formation, prayer and worship. The event is starts at 11.30 and will finish at 13.30. For ages 18-35. See [nymo.org/brunch](http://nymo.org/brunch) for more details

# Scripture Readings 3rd April 2022, 5th Sunday of Lent, Year C

Second Isaiah describes the new Exodus, the return from exile in Babylon. God shows who he is by his preparations and care for their return. These are so wonderful that his servant Israel, his chosen witnesses, will no longer need to remember their Exodus from Egypt. Exodus is a repeatable pattern. The Lord even forgives Israel's many sins, which led to their exile, and will continue to do so, because "I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine".

The Psalm celebrates the Israelites' joy after their return from exile in Babylon.

Writing from prison, Paul shares his hopes, fears and convictions with the Philippians. The great gift of knowing Jesus Christ as Lord makes his previous righteousness under the Law seem

worthless. He is possessed by Christ but not yet arrived, keeping his eye on the final goal of living in God's new world.

The story of the woman caught in adultery is found in different places in various manuscripts: it fits better with Luke's gospel, but here in John's gospel it matches the changing mood. This chapter opens with a woman about to be stoned, then freed from death. But it ends with people seeking to stone Jesus. Jesus has shown them God's wisdom, different from men's.

Psalm Response: **What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad.**

(Isaiah 43: 16-21; Psalm 125(126); Phil 3: 8-14; John 8: 1-11)

Chris Oliver

**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

## LIFETEEN SUMMER CAMP 2022

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022  
Alton Castle: For more information and to go to the bookings page visit  
<https://nymo.org/summercamp/>

## 40 Hours Adoration

There will be our annual 40 hours Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for 2022, from 7.00 am on June 24<sup>th</sup> until 11.00 pm on Saturday June 25<sup>th</sup>. Please keep this date in your diary.

## Health and Safety

There is a concern regarding the mix of cars and people in the church car park on Sundays before and after Mass. In particular, small children cannot always be seen by drivers if they are close. Parents and Carers, please make sure children do not run round unsupervised in the car park.

**Our Lady, Queen of Peace,  
Pray for Russia and Ukraine**

## Welcoming and Inviting . . .

### The Ministry of welcome

It is very important that the church is a place of welcome. In ancient times the church was more than just a place of welcome, it was a place of sanctuary. As we are facing much higher heating and food bills in our homes, there is a strong case for returning to this idea as a place of sanctuary from freezing or starving by having the hall open and heated and simple food available during the day-time. To do this would require a large team of volunteers. In the meanwhile, our volunteer welcoming team are doing a great job at Mass, but more members would be most appreciated. If you are able to come to Mass (Sundays or weekdays) 15 minutes early to help and would like to get involved, please contact Ro Sefton via the church office, email [parish.stgregory@northamptondiocese.org](mailto:parish.stgregory@northamptondiocese.org) or catch her on the organ stool after the 9.00 am Mass on Sunday.

### St Gregory's next Alpha:

To the right are the dates of the next Alpha course which will 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. 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](http://www.stgregory.org.uk/alpha)

### The Ministry of Inviting

There is an important difference between welcoming and inviting. Both are important, but without inviting, there could be no one to welcome! Welcoming is the second part; inviting must come first.

The invitation can be made in a number of ways. It can be delivered through letter-boxes or distributed as fliers; it can be on notice-boards or through advertisements in newspapers or even on television. But much the best way is by a personal invitation. The words of the psalm give inspiration: "I rejoiced when they said to me: 'We will go to the house of the Lord'." (*Psalm 122:1*)

Another invitation is to come to Alpha. It is much better to invite someone to come with you: "We will go"! We have had a good number of bookings for the next Alpha starting on 26<sup>th</sup> April, but there are still some places left. Could you invite someone — friend, relative, neighbour?

First session:	April 26 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	Is there more to life than this?
Second Session:	May 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2022:	Who is Jesus?
Third Session:	May 10 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	Why did Jesus die?
Fourth Session:	May 17 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	How can I be sure of my faith?
Fifth Session:	May 24 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session:	June 7 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	How does God guide us?
Seventh Session:	June 14 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Away-Day:	June 16 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session:	June 21 <sup>st</sup> 2022:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	June 28 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	Why and how should we tell others?
Tenth Session:	July 5 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	What about the Church?
Eleventh Session:	July 12 <sup>th</sup> 2022:	What about the rest of my life?

# How Alpha Works — and Why

Alpha works because it uses the same methods that Jesus himself used. It uses personal contacts. Jesus said to Andrew: “Come and see” (*John 1:39*), and it is the same invitation that we make. Like Jesus, who so often in the Gospels is seen at a meal with others, Alpha is set in the context of a meal. It is not Mass, but could be seen as looking forward to when everyone at Alpha can share in the Eucharistic meal — what theologians call an ‘allegory’ of the Mass. St Paul speaks of ‘children in the faith’ not being ready for solid food (*1 Corinthians 3:1-2*), and Alpha is like coming to see Jesus in the person of some of his disciples. Having ‘come and seen’, people are free to make their own decision. Thankfully, many decide to get to know Jesus better. Alpha is also ideal for the Church community as it uses so many different talents and skills, and does not force people out of their ‘comfort zones’. It needs the talents of the cooking team; the team who prepare the room, the table hosts and table leaders. It needs the skill of the technicians, and of musicians. Above all, it needs the support of prayer, and it needs people to invite others to ‘come and see’.

DIocese of Northampton Liturgy Commission- Liturgical Formation

## The God Who Speaks - Our Liturgy of the Word



*A Series of online Zoom Sessions exploring the upcoming Lectionary Readings and Seasons of the Liturgical Year. A valuable opportunity to develop our engagement with the Scriptures that we hear proclaimed at the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.*

**Led by the Liturgical Formation Team with presentations by Liz Clark, Fr Allan Jones CRIC, Mgr Kevin McGinnell & Fr Andrew Behrens**

**Wednesday 23 February 2022, (7.30-8.30pm)**

*Preparing for Lent*

**Wednesday 6 April 2022, (7.30-8.30pm)**

*Preparing for the Triduum*

**Wednesday 20 April 2022, (7.30-8.30pm)**

*Celebrating Eastertide*

*Each session will include input, prayer and the opportunity to make comments and ask questions.*

**Cost: No charge but there will be the opportunity to make a donation**

Please register in advance to secure a place by e mail or phone: email [admin@nores.org.uk](mailto:admin@nores.org.uk) or phone: 01582 723312 (ext 1)

Once your booking is received you will be sent details of how to join the online Zoom sessions. Thank you.

*(Photo from [www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com))*

## 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

Recently, Revolution Zero have opened a community food larder (social supermarket) in the former UCR Church, The Headlands. Their aim is to make food accessible to everyone & reduce the amount of food going to landfill. 15 items of choice for £5. Please take a look at the link-<http://www.revolutionzero.org/> They have a Facebook page & are open Tues 1-3pm, Wed 1-4pm, Thurs 1-3pm & Sat 11-12 noon.

Thank you again for amazing contributions and please keep this initiative in your prayers.

### An act of Spiritual Communion

I prostrate myself at your feet, O my Jesus,  
and I offer you the repentance of my heart,  
which abases itself in its nothingness  
and in your Holy Presence.

I adore You in the Sacrament of your Love;  
I desire to receive You in the poor abode  
that my heart offers You.

in life and in death.  
Jesus, I believe in You, I hope in You,  
I love You. Amen. *Pope Francis [20 March 2020]*

While awaiting the happiness of Sacramental Communion, I wish to possess you in spirit.  
Come to me, O my Jesus, that I may come to You. May your Love inflame my whole being

**Repainting in the church:** If you can help, please can you contact Cliff Snelling at [cliff.snelling@btinternet.com](mailto:cliff.snelling@btinternet.com), indicating which weeks (when weather is warmer) you would be available to help.

