



The Catholic Parish of Saint Gregory the Great Northampton



PART OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NORTHAMPTON, REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 244091

OUR
VISION

**“A truly thriving Catholic community
confidently and humbly proclaiming the
Good News of Jesus Christ.”**

OUR
VISION

Peace, like a river

All three of our reading this Sunday speak of peace. The second reading follows on from last week when Paul warns:

“If you go snapping at each other and tearing each other to pieces, you had better watch out or you will destroy the whole community” (*Galatians 5:15*)

He then tells us that if we are guided by the Holy Spirit we will be able to resist the temptation which leads to such behaviour. He then speaks of the fruits of the Holy Spirit before the passage that we read today, in which he speaks of how in Church we have become ‘a new creature’, and how if we follow this ‘rule’ we will find peace and mercy.

The Greek word which is translated as ‘rule’ is ‘κανον’ (canon), which is not so much something you find in a rule-book, but rather means the standard of excellence, or a yard-stick by which something is measured. The word has come into Church use when we talk of the ‘canonical’ books of the Bible. Its original use was to describe a straight rod or bar. Paul is not giving us a commandment but rather something to aim for; and that is to be guided by the Holy Spirit and not by self-interest. The peace of which he speaks flows from this. In the verses in between last week and this week’s reading from Galatians, we find that peace is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. (*Galatians 5:22*)

The image of the river which we find in Isaiah today is repeated several times in the Bible. We find:

“O that you had paid attention to my commandments! Then your prosperity would have been like a river”.

(*Isaiah 48:18*)

At the end of the chapter he concludes with the oft-quoted saying:

“There is no peace for the wicked” (*Isaiah 48:22*)

Ezekiel also has a vision of a river which flows from the Temple, and although he does not use the word ‘peace’, how he describes the path of the river is clearly one of peace. He speaks of many fish, and trees producing fruit every month (not once a year).

(*Ezekiel 47:1-12*)

This image is revisited in the book of the Apocalypse where again we read of the river with trees producing fruit every month, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. Although the word ‘peace’ is not used, nevertheless, the image is one of peace under the guidance of God.

The Gospel tells of Jesus’ instructions to the seventy-two who are sent out ahead of him to the places where he was to visit. They were to greet people with the word ‘Peace’.

The image is a little complicated. The disciple greets the householder: “Peace to this house”, and if the householder is a man of peace, the disciple’s peace will rest upon him. Christ’s peace required reciprocity. It is not simply a one-way virtue.

In this respect it is not like a river: a river can only flow in one direction. Rivers also can have many different characters. There are the headwaters, high up on the hills and moors, tiny brooks, easy to jump over, being little more than streams running through grasslands. They are inoffensive and docile, posing no serious threat to anyone and having little power.

As these gather together, for the first time they form something recognisable as a river. Some rivers have carved out great gorges through the surrounding rocks, showing their strength and power. When forced through narrow gaps they can become raging torrents, offering white-water; white-knuckle rides to the brave and the foolhardy.

They can widen out into great expanses of water which seem hardly to be moving at all. There may be fish a-plenty (and plenty of anglers), insects hovering over the surface of the water; apparently a perfect eco-system.

There may be industry on the river; sadly all too often discharging pollutants into the water as it flows past. In another place there may be a big drop, with a waterfall, and maybe a water mill; or if the drop is very deep, a hydro-electric plant.

Eventually the river will reach the sea, broadening out into an estuary and perhaps with a fishing port, or maybe a ferry to some other land.

But nothing will stop the river. A dam may be built, but while it will hold back water for a time, unless it can find a way out, the dam will be over-topped.

A river can be a great place of recreation and a support to industry, commerce and transport. Likewise, peace in a community or a country allows for recreation and the increase of prosperity.

In Ukraine the great river Dnipro serves all these purposes, but in the present war, there is no recreation there, and the entire wealth of the nation is being swallowed up in weapons to defend the country.

There can be no true peace until there is the reciprocity of Christ’s peace. The messenger of peace comes with the good news, not with heavy artillery. (*cf Isaiah 52:7*) The river of peace has become a raging torrent passing through dangerous rapids. In the midst of this, scripture says: “If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me. Whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you”. (*Isaiah 54:15*)

Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for July 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. 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



We welcome into the family of the Church
Giulia Florence Simone
who received Christian Baptism recently.
Please pray for her and her family.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: Next date to be announced here shortly. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

First Holy Communion 2022: 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: Sessions will run on Sunday mornings from 10.15 - 11.30. Please join us for 9am Mass as part of this course. Confirmation Mass is Saturday 2nd July at midday.

Support for the Foreign Missions through Missio and the Red

Box giving: I am sad to report the death of **Desmond Keohane**. He & his wife Mary, organised St Gregory's substantial financial contributions to the Foreign Missions from about 2014 to 2019. He had things very well organised & tutored me in taking on the same task. I am certain that the Lord will reward him in a special way for his effective work to help the Church worldwide. Missio Summer magazine is now available & ready for collection. If you are part of the scheme, your addressed envelope is in a box as you come into church, on a table on your left. It may find its way to the exit door at the end of Mass – you know the power of prayer! The envelopes are in alphabetical order by surname. Alternatively, I will arrange for someone (possibly my dog, Luna) to put the envelope through your letter box. Thanks for your prayers & financial support (via the Box or electronically, etc.) to help spread the Gospel and to give support to those who are in need even more than we are. A number of our contributors have died in recent years. Others do come forward to take up helping this good cause. More are needed. Anyone who would like to join in please contact Dorothy at the 9 o'clock Sunday Mass or me at 11. God bless you & reward your generosity as I know He will. *Alec*

Vocations to Priesthood: Vocations weekends are planned three times a year. These are weekends for men who are discerning priesthood. You may be in the very early stages of discernment & don't worry - you don't have to sign anything! You can take your time & meet priests who can share more about this incredible life. Priesthood is a gift to our diocese, & we would love to connect with you as you continue your journey with God. At any point you can contact the Diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Andy Richardson – (01582 502400) or vocationsdirector@northamptondiocese.org.

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)**

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

Pilgrimage of Reparation & Prayer for the Sanctity of

Life: Walsingham National Catholic Shrine, Saturday 6th August, 12pm. Please see poster for details or contact Christopher & Margaret on (01858) 571242.

Pro-life Sunday, 10th July, Parish Hall: What is abortion? Who is being aborted? What is partial birth abortion? What affect does abortion have on women & their families? Do women suffer from post abortion grief & trauma? What can we do to help expectant mothers in difficult circumstances? As a Catholic do I need to care about abortion if it does not affect me? These & many more questions can be answered on **Sunday 10th July in the parish hall after 9.00am & 11am Mass**. Please join us for a coffee & chat about this important subject. For further info, please contact William at wpcurrie@btinternet.com

Unholy Mathematics: We now have the full figures for the last financial year. Leaving aside the one-off expenditure on the kitchen, we have made a small surplus over the year. However, the energy bills for the coming year will be a problem. There is more information on our financial situation opposite. 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.

Planned Giving Envelopes: If you use envelopes, please take your new box from beside the confessionals. Standing orders are managed by the Diocesan Finance Office, and the parish does not always have full details.

Wednesday evening Bible Study by Zoom: 8 week course on Romans led by Andrew Swafford and Jeff Cavins, subtitled "The Gospel of Salvation".

No session on 6th July

Session 7, 13th July Chapters 12-13:

Session 8, 20th July Chapters 14-16: The End of the Story.

Please email to Fr Andrew for the Zoom link.

Choir Matters: Practices start after evening Mass, 1st Thursday each month: 7:45-9pm. Dates are July 7, Aug 4, Sep 1, Oct 6. Old age & infirmity are catching up with some familiar voices - including myself - & new members are needed... the view from the Gallery is great. *Alec*.

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!

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 3rd July 2022, 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Third Isaiah wrote this beautiful imagery of a compassionate God to encourage the Jews returning from exile in Babylon to rebuild the Temple. The Lord sends his peace to Jerusalem through which he will give peace and nourishment to those who recognise the new creation coming with Jesus' resurrection.

The Psalm praises God's power as revealed throughout history but especially during the Exodus.

This fond farewell concludes our readings from Paul's letter to the Galatians. Human distinctions and marks on our flesh like circumcision no longer signify. We have become a new Spirit-filled creation, the "Israel of God" – God's chosen family to carry God's message to the world. The new Mass translation, "**and with your spirit**", picks up Paul's final phrase. God's grace is to be deep and personal, affecting our whole lives.

In the reading from Luke's gospel last week, Jesus "set himself to travel to Jerusalem". For the rest of Ordinary Time, the "ordinally numbered weeks", all our gospel readings are from his journey, as Jesus; consciously focussed on his coming suffering in Jerusalem. Today we hear of Jesus sending 70 disciples on mission ahead of him, like the 70 elders chosen by Moses to lead the Exodus. But Jesus' disciples are offering Israel a last chance to change her mind about Jesus.

Psalm Response: **Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.**

(Is 66:10-14; Ps 65(66):1-20; Gal 6:14-18; Lk 10:1-12, 17-20)

Chris Oliver

Repainting the Church

Fortunately, not the whole church, just the North aisle, where the wall has become discoloured due to water penetration when the roof gutter had become blocked. This was last done in 2011, and only took a week with a team of about a dozen people. Much fun was had in the process!

This will begin on Monday 11th July, after the 9.00 Mass, and will continue throughout the week. Some have already volunteered their help; but anyone is welcome — just come! However it is

best to contact Cliff Snelling at cliff.snelling@btinternet.com, to make sure that there is work progressing. There will be no painting on Wednesday morning.

We also need more people to join the rota for refreshments after the Sunday Masses, especially after 11.00. The hope is to have sufficient people so that it will come round not more frequently than one week in five. Please see one of the people with badges on to find out more!

Alpha in the Autumn

To the right are the dates of the next Alpha course which is 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. 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 be sure of my faith?
Fifth Session:	October 18th 2022:	Why and how do I pray?
Sixth Session:	October 25th 2022:	How does God guide us?
Seventh Session:	November 8th 2022:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Away-Day:	November 11th - 12th:	Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session:	November 15th 2022:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	November 22nd 2022:	Why and how should we tell others?
Tenth Session:	November 29th 2022:	What about the Church?
Eleventh Session:	December 6th 2022:	What about the rest of my life?

A message from Pope Francis

Last week Pope Francis wrote a letter to the clergy and this is a short passage from it:

“As the time made new by the mystery of His Death and Resurrection flows on, every eighth day the Church celebrates in the Lord's day the event of our salvation. Sunday, before being a precept, is a gift that God makes for his people; and for this reason the Church safeguards it with a precept. The Sunday celebration offers to the Christian community the possibility of

being formed by the Eucharist. From Sunday to Sunday the word of the Risen Lord illuminates our existence, wanting to achieve in us the end for which it was sent. (Cf. Is 55:10-11) From Sunday to Sunday communion in the Body and Blood of Christ wants to make also of our lives a sacrifice pleasing to the Father, in the fraternal communion of sharing, of hospitality, of service. From Sunday to Sunday the energy of the Bread broken sustains us in announcing the Gospel in which the authenticity of our celebration shows itself.”

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’.