



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

“Where did the man get all this”

It is a sad fact of human nature that whenever someone has success, it will attract jealousy and attacks. This was as true in the 1st century as it is in the 21st.

The Gospel for today tells of the visit that Jesus made to Nazareth, having been travelling through Galilee, where he had cured a man with leprosy, healed a paralytic, a man with a withered hand, a man with mental health issues, a woman with a haemorrhage; he had restored a girl to life and stilled a storm; he had gathered his closest disciples and began to teach them, and together they arrive back in his home-town.

We are not given detailed statistics, but we are told that ‘many’ were astonished (and this appears to be a negative reaction), and would not accept him. This in spite of their recognition of his wisdom and of the miracles worked through him. While ‘many’ rejected him, we may presume that some did not; perhaps the ‘few sick people’ that he cured. Mary would not have been among those who rejected him, but Jesus observes that ‘a prophet is only despised in his own country’.

Their rejection of Jesus is entirely irrational; they can see the wisdom in him and the good he is doing; they just don’t like it. When the Temple authorities reject Jesus, they have a reason for it — he is threatening their livelihood. Many of the Pharisees have a theological argument with him. But the people of Nazareth are simply displaying fallen human nature. We see the same today when people refuse to accept what they can see around them, but prefer to follow their prejudices. How foolish of the people of Nazareth; had it not been for Jesus, who would have heard of Nazareth? It was hardly the great metropolis of Galilee. (See *John 1:46*)

However, their question deserves an answer, even though it was intended to be purely rhetorical. “Where did the man get all this?”

Our first clue is given right at the beginning of St Mark’s Gospel. “The beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

St John, writing later and having had longer of the guidance of the Holy Spirit is able to recognise Jesus as the Word of God who has existed from the beginning, and St Paul recognises Jesus as ‘the

wisdom of God’ (*1 Corinthians 1:24*). So the obvious answer to the question, ‘where did he get this wisdom?’ is ‘he is wisdom!’

The Jewish people had a long tradition of the prophets, many of whom worked miracles: Elijah and Elisha come to mind as obvious examples. Both are described as being a ‘man of God’ in the context of healing miracles. (See *1 Kings 17:18, 2 Kings 5:8* for example.) Elijah had restored a boy to life; Elisha had cured a man with leprosy. Jesus, at the very least must be recognised as ‘a man of God’.

We must not forget that the great works of God are, in the main, done by human co-operation with the Divine Will, so we must remember the human education that Jesus received.

The statue of St Joseph that we have at St Gregory’s is deeply symbolic. We see Joseph with his hand on the shoulder of Jesus, at what we may take to be a carpenter’s bench.

Jesus is learning to use a plane; a basic tool of carpentry. Mary and Joseph were the first teachers of the human Jesus, and today it is the parents of children who must be their first teachers. It would be to seriously undervalue Joseph to assume that it was Our Lady alone who taught the child Jesus the basics of human life.

At the Baptism of children we pray that the parents, who will be the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith, may also be the best of teachers. Tragically and inexcusably, until recently we have recited this prayer but done virtually nothing to help parents to fulfil this prayer, even though we know that it is by human co-operation with the Divine Will that prayers are answered.

This year our First Holy Communion programme has had to be delivered by a ‘home-schooling’ format, due to lockdown and the pandemic. While no one wanted the frightfulness of what we have endured over the past fifteen months, it has allowed parents to come into their own as teachers. Some parents have even admitted that they have learned a lot themselves!

Today we celebrate with those who receive Holy Communion for the first time, and celebrate the fact that what brings them to this day is the co-operation of the human with the Divine Will.



Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for July & August 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: There is a display of cards & items for First Communion in the Foyer. If you wish to buy anything, please come to the Church on Mon, Wed or Friday mornings & speak to the Secretary who will show you what to do & where to go.



We welcome into the family of the Church
Catalina Paulet and Patryk Boni
who received Christian Baptism last weekend.
Please pray for them and their families.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: Please note that you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place. The next preparation will be Monday 5th July, 7pm, in the Sacristy.

First Holy Communion 2021: The programme is running through 'Loom', an on line platform used by many schools. Parents need to 'home-school' children. The programme is called "Growing Up Catholic", and there are 6 sessions preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, followed by six sessions preparing for First Holy Communion.

Confirmation: At last we have a date: 1st October; feast of St Thérèse of Lisieux! The Confirmation will be at St Gregory's.

Readers at Mass: If anyone wishes to become a reader at Mass (Sundays and Weekdays), please contact Deacon Michael, which will enable us to prepare rotas for when some sort of normality returns!

Gregory Care Toiletries appeal update: Thank you for your continued support & for your generosity. We will keep you updated!

Bishop David has produced a series of short talks focussed on 'The Church'. These videos can be viewed on the Northampton Diocese YouTube channel. Simply type 'Northampton Diocese' into the search bar on YouTube and click on 'The Church' playlist. All the videos in this series so far will be displayed.

Mission Northampton: Mission Northampton will be based at the new St Thomas Centre at Northampton Cathedral, but be a town-wide project involving all the parishes & Catholic schools in the town. It is being led by Fr David Donaghue, & there will be a variety of initiatives to seek to proclaim the Gospel, & make us all better missionary disciples. Please keep praying for it, & for our own parish, that we may become all that God wishes us to be, & that, like the first Christians, we may be devoted to the teaching of the apostles, to the fellowship, to the Breaking of Bread & to the prayers. May we all be truly missionary disciples, & this a missionary parish.

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

Tots @St Gregory's: As with other meetings, Tots has been cancelled until further notice.

Vianney Mission Prayer Group will not meet during this time.

Track and Trace: The government have now released their app to support track & trace & we have a QR code which can be scanned to record your presence at church. This is not obligatory, but should help in the important task of controlling the spread of the virus. As responsible members of society, we should comply with this request.

Re-Envisioning Catechesis: The Church has recently produced a new version of the "Directory for Catechesis", which makes clear the link between evangelisation & the teaching of the Faith. One fruit of this is that the diocesan department for catechesis has been moved from NORES to the new department for Mission. To help those engaged in Sacramental preparation, there will be an on line course over 5 consecutive Thursday evenings, starting 17th June 7.30 pm (ending at 8.45 pm) on Zoom. If anyone would like to take part, please let Fr Andrew know (by email, please), and the parish will make the booking. NORES provides various opportunities for Adult Education; the course for catechists started last week, and there will be a webinar on "Mark and John and the Word of Life — The Church draws her life from the Eucharist" on Tuesday 13th July 2021, 7.30 pm – 8.30. To register please email admin@nores.org.uk.

Right to Life: The abortion lobby, led by the UK's largest abortion provider, BPAS, has worked with Diana Johnson MP to bring forward an amendment to hijack the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill to introduce abortion on demand, for any reason, up to birth to England and Wales. We are expecting that this radical proposal will be voted on by MPs this Monday. Right To Life UK has launched an easy-to-use tool that makes it simple for you to send an email to your MP asking them to vote against the motion.

Please use the link below to contact your MP now. It only takes 30 seconds!

www.righttolife.org.uk/StopAbortionUpToBirth

Parish Finances: We have received the return from the Diocese showing our parish account in full. There has not been time to prepare a full statement of accounts yet, but we have benefitted from a substantial legacy from Violette Caillebotte, which will go a long way to pay for the building of the parish office when the diocese eventually gives permission for this. This must wait until the diocesan finances have recovered from COVID. St Gregory's has weathered this storm thanks to your wonderful generosity. The diocesan office does not have a parish to support it, but its essential work has to continue in supporting the parishes, schools and chaplaincies.

Standing Order via Donor's Own Bank. You can set up a standing order for donations to your parish using either your on line bank account or in branch. The information required to make the donation 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)**

The Catholicism Course: Following on from the Alpha course which has just finished, the "Catholicism" course will be run on Tuesday evenings through the summer, starting at 7.30. While it does form a continuous course, each session does stand alone, so if you have to miss one or more, you can dip in to those you can. It will run on Zoom to start with, and depending on changes to regulations and if the participants would prefer, could change to 'face to face' later. There are ten sessions:

- 1 July 6th The revelation of God become Man
- 2 July 20th The Teaching of Jesus
- 3 July 27th God, than whom nothing greater can be thought
- 4 August 3rd Mary, Mother of God
- 5 August 10th Peter and Paul; the first Missions
- 6 August 17th Christ and the Church
- 7 August 24th The Eucharist
- 8 August 31st The Communion of Saints
- 9 September 7th Prayer and the Life of the Spirit
- 10 September 14th The Last Things

First session this Tuesday — please email to Fr Andrew for the Zoom link

Scripture Readings 4th July 2021, 14th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B

Ezekiel was a priest in the Jewish exile to Babylon in 597 BC. Like all prophets, including Christ and Paul, Ezekiel suffered for speaking truth to those who did not want to hear it. Here he is commissioned to speak the Lord's words to Israel – "whether they listen or not".

The Psalm begs the Lord to have mercy on the people, who are suffering humiliating contempt by others.

The last three chapters of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, perhaps a separate letter, contains an impassioned defence against allegations that he was weak, and less committed because he earned his own living. Paul compares his suffering to Christ's, whose sufferings bring believers to accept suffering as the way to the Kingdom.

We can only speculate about Paul's "stake in the flesh". But it clearly caused bodily pain, sometimes, as in Galatia, keeping him from his work of spreading the gospel. And it brought humility instead of the pride he might have had from his successful work. But this very weakness was a continual reminder of his apostolic task.

In Mark's Gospel Jesus, too, finds his words are not listened to, even "among his own relations" and family. Although the later Gospels soften this rejection, it is clear Jesus found it painful.

Psalm Response: **Our eyes are on the Lord till he shows us his mercy.**

(Ezekiel 2: 2-5; Psalm 122(123); 2 Cor 12: 7-10; Mark 6: 1-6)

Chris Oliver

Kitchen & Rose Garden Makeover Update

Kitchen: It's been a long hard slog but the end is in sight. With two major jobs to be done - plumbing in the hand wash basin and connecting the new cooker, plus a number of smaller jobs on the list and with some of the equipment now back in place, the kitchen is looking like a smart, modern kitchen. Do have look next time you are at the church to see what our hard working volunteers have done – many thanks to them all. Soon the work will be finished and the kitchen can be used but it will need regular cleaning and maintenance, so if you can volunteer for this please let either myself or Catherine Mulligan know.

Rose Garden: While at the church please do take the opportunity to see the new rose garden next to the main road. The garden was planted last autumn and is now in bloom and doing quite well for its first year and considering the unusual spring weather. The two main varieties are Thomas à Becket, named after one of our diocesan saints, and Boscobel. These are planted in groups of three with Thomas à Becket the deeper of the two reds. There are also two roses, Proper Job (deep crimson), adjacent to the Crucifix spotlights. In due course the roses will be labelled. The garden fence is looking very sad but there are plans in hand to replace it with a new wrought iron fence.

Cliff Snelling

Sea (next) Sunday

Next week is Sea Sunday, when the Church prays for all those who live and work at sea. There will be a second collection for Stella Maris (the Apostleship of the Sea), the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church. For an appeal talk from Bishop Paul Mason, and a video showing some of what Stella Maris does, please visit www.stellamaris.org.uk/SeaSunday. There will be a special collection at the end of Mass next week, but for those unable to get to church, please visit: www.stellamaris.org.uk/donate or text 'SEA' to 70460 to donate £5. Stella Maris is dependent on voluntary donations, so please give generously. Thank you.

Tony Bull has been our parish representative for Stella Maris for many years, but now wishes to hand over to someone younger. Many thanks to Tony for the years of service he has given, and for encouraging the team of knitters who have produced hundreds of warm hats for seafarers over the years.

Bob Maine has kindly agreed to become the parish representative for Stella Maris (Apostleship of the Sea). Bob has lived in Northampton for 27 years but recently moved to the Abington area in late 2018. Bob, a dual US/British national, served in the United States Navy for 22 years. He travelled extensively throughout his time in the military



(Apostleship of the Sea), please see Bob.

and spent many years in Europe and the Middle East. Married for 32 years, he has a wife, two adult children and one grandchild. He is keen to continue the excellent work Tony Bull has done and asks for your prayers and to pray for the thousands of seafarers around the world. If you would like to know more about Stella Maris

First Holy Communion celebrations this week.

We welcome the seven young people who will be receiving Holy Communion for the first time at the 11.00 Mass this Sunday. It is a wonderful thing to have Jesus living in you in this great Sacrament. God gives us himself as our food to give us strength throughout our life.

*Eleanor
Caisey
Gino
Evie
Benjamin
Olíwier
Sandra*

He also gives us his Spirit; his inspiration to guide us in our life; we think of this particularly in relation to the Sacrament of Confirmation.

First Holy Communion is a particular milestone on a journey, not the end-point of the journey. Once we have discovered the strength given through this Sacrament, we can begin to discover the ways in which we can use that strength — in the service of God; in the service of the Church; in the service of the community. Today is the beginning of a wonderful experience of growing in relationship with God.



Pregnancy Matters –

for confidential counselling, helpline: 0808 802 5433 or text Pregnancy Matters on: 07860 077 339.

Online and Text-to-Talk services can also be found via the [Life website](#).

Life: has been speaking out against abortion and offering a positive alternative to it since 1970.

[Using the Life website](#) you can find information and advice on: pregnancy-related problems; unexpected pregnancies; housing support; help and healing after abortion; pregnancy loss; helping someone else; resources and research; their campaigns; testimonials and blogs.



SECOND COLLECTIONS 2021



28th February	CAFOD (Lenten Fast Day 26th Feb)
2nd April	Good Friday Collection for the Holy Places
25th April	Diocesan Priests' Training Fund
16th May	Mass Media
20th June	Day for Life
27th June	Peter's Pence
11th July	Apostleship of the Sea
19th September	Home Mission Sunday
3rd October	CAFOD (Harvest Fast Day 1st October)
24th October	Mission Sunday
7th November	Bishop's Maintenance Fund
14th November	Sick & Retired Priests' Fund