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

On Pilgrimage

The Magi, the 'Wise Men', the 'Three Kings', in making their journey to Bethlehem, could be called the first pilgrims of the Christian era.

They made a difficult journey from far away — actually we don't know exactly where they came from or how long their journey was — the details are not recorded.

The poet T. S. Eliot, in 'The Journey of the Magi' describes some of the hardships he imagined they experienced, but also speaks of the very nature of pilgrimage. At the end of the poem he reflects on the change that was brought about in the pilgrims themselves.

"We returned to our places, these kingdoms, but no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation, with an alien people clutching their gods."

Like Peter, James and John who accompanied Jesus up the mount of transfiguration, after their experience there, they had to come down. Immediately they are met with the problems of the world in the form of sickness. (*see Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9*) Eliot sees the return from pilgrimage as an experience of frustration: "I should be glad of another death."

We are called on a 'Pilgrimage of Hope', and that means that we cannot fall back into despair over the state of the world. If we have seen a vision of the 'promised land', a Transfiguration experience, we must seek to share that vision, communicate that experience. For the 'hope' to be realised, it must bear fruit in mission. The 'hope' is not just for ourselves to get to heaven, but that 'the world might be saved'. (*John 3:17*) We are all called to be part of that great work of Christ which was begun in the Incarnation, fulfilled in the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus, and the ongoing task is left to the Church. (*Matthew 28:19-20*)

One way of understanding pilgrimage is that it is a parable of our life on earth, and the destination of our journey is heaven. However, in the case of a religious pilgrimage, we then undergo a 'Lazarus experience'. We are returned to life, to continue our human pilgrimage towards the real heaven — not some geographical destination, some holy place, some shrine, but the real presence of God.

Rather than return to frustration and discontent like Eliot's Magus, we should return to a renewed determination to fulfil the command of Christ to 'make disciples', to be 'Missionary Disciples', as Pope Francis is encouraging us to be.

A real pilgrimage is not a holiday in a holy place; indeed, the real part of the pilgrimage is the journey there. There is a growing interest in walking pilgrimages; the 'Camino' to Santiago is famous and well-known. In England there are now established walking routes to Walsingham, there is the Via Francigena', a walking route from Canterbury to Rome. Unfortunately that takes about 100 days; an air flight only take a bit over 100 minutes, but with a much higher environmental impact, and a seriously lower spiritual impact.

That is not to condemn religious tourism. Our rich legacy of art, music and architecture within the Church is of immense value, both aesthetically and spiritually, and many holy places and shrines are places of great beauty. However, simply visiting them is not the same as making a pilgrimage.

The Church encourages us to make the 'Roman Pilgrimage' during the Holy Year, and there is a Diocesan Pilgrimage to Rome from March 27th to April 3rd (Please see the Diocesan website for further information) and there are many other organised pilgrimages being advertised.

However, getting to Rome is expensive, and during the summer we hope to organise a walking pilgrimage to the Cathedral. There will be no financial cost to this, but, as a parable of life, it will not just be a gentle stroll, but will reflect the hardships of life as well as the achievements and successes we may achieve. There will be more information later.

The holiness of the Jubilee Year is only made real if we, the people of God, use this year to grow in our own holiness. May that happen!

22 Park Avenue North
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Website: www.stgregory.org.uk

5th January 2025
The Epiphany of the Lord
CTS New Sunday Missal - Year C
Page 125

Priest:
Fr Andrew Behrens ☎ 713015
E-mail: frandrew.behrens@northamptondiocese.org
Deacon:
Rev Michael Fleming ☎ 647750
E-mail: mvf@btinternet.com
Parish Secretary:
Caryll Comley ☎ 713015
Email: parish.stgregory@northamptondiocese.org
Safeguarding representative
Carol McNeil ☎ 07906802615

Sunday ***The Epiphany of the Lord***	9.00 am 11.00 am 1.00 pm 4.45 pm	Mass Mass Mass in Shona Mass (Syro Malabar Rite)	The Parish Julia & Vitorio Ruocco
Monday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Holy Souls in Purgatory
Tuesday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Janet Hayes's Intentions
Wednesday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Fr. Andrew's Intentions
Thursday Feria	9-11.00 am 7.00 pm	Holy Hours of Adoration Mass	 Thanksgiving & Forgiveness of Sins
Friday Feria	9.00 am 12.30 pm	Mass Funeral Mass	Frances Taylor's Intentions Bridget Ryan RIP
Saturday Feria	9.00 am 9.45 am	Mass Confessions	The Pike Family
Sunday ***The Baptism of the Lord***	9.00 am 11.00 am 4.45 pm	Mass Mass Mass (Syro-Malabar Rite)	Monica Swallow's Intentions The Parish

Your Offering to the Parish: Last Week Was £418.81: Thank you!
Standing Order gifts to the Parish: Each week £580 is given through standing orders.
Donations through the Diocese: An average of £90 is given each week.
Gift Aid benefits to the parish: The value of Gift Aid averages £136 per week.
Cleaners This Week: The Church is cleaned and sanitised on a regular basis.
Counters this Week: CC & MS.

Readings for this Sunday:
— see inside for details

Isaiah 60: 1-6: *The glory of the Lord has risen upon you.*
Ephesians 3: 2-3a, 5-6: *It has now been revealed that the Gentiles are fellow heirs of the promise.*
Matthew 2: 1-12: *We have come from the east to worship the king*

Readings for next Sunday (*CTS New Sunday Missal Page 139*)

Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11; Titus 2: 11-14, 3: 4-7; Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22.

During This Season Of Christmastide, We Are Asked to Pray For: Migrants & Refugees; Openness to God's word; The Bishop, Clergy and People of the Diocese; Expectant Mothers.

The old database is no longer active

We have reached 170 (on Thursday). Of those, 56 have opted to receive the newsletter through CASPAR. Of course, because the Newsletter is also available through our parish website, it may be that those who have not opted for it are using the website, but if we can reduce the print run, there will be a saving in our carbon footprint as well as a financial saving.

However, the more serious issue is that those who have not signed in to CASPAR are no longer registered with the parish. The importance of this cannot be under-estimated,

Please register as soon as you can, and include your home address, telephone number and email address in the 'About You' tab and ask for the newsletter in the 'Your Church' tab. Over the coming weeks there will be tutorials in the newsletter demonstrating other benefits of the system.

www.caspar.church/me?ID=56067

You will need internet access for a security code which will be sent to you by email. (Check junk/spam!)

Please Pray for the Sick:

Anniversaries:

May they Rest in Peace

Charlotte Glibbery	Lucy Duke
Patrick Greene	Arnold Darby
Victoria Habib	Heather Peterson
Michael McCrossan	Jean Evans
Diane Murphy	John McDonald
Nancy Smith	Patrick Cawley
Elizabeth Halton	Josephine Scott
Adrian Williams	Agnes Parsons
Cicely Chapman	Elsie Coleman
Michael Murphy	Hannah McAdam
Jeremiah Hartigan	Eileen Davis
Constantino Perrine	Thomas Mann
William Blundell	Edward Dagg
Michael Murray	Eosalie Muddiman
Cornelius O'Donoghue	Rachel Curran
Irfonwy Tyrrell	Patrick Ryan
Margaret Doherty	Ethel Holt
William Wright	Francis Corcoran
Mary Bosworth	Elizabeth Farrugia

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY

Let us pray for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.

Jean O'Neill
With sorrow we record that Jean O'Neill died on Thursday evening, 19th December.
May she rest in peace

Notices of Interest

Repository: As the repository returns to normal working I would like to express an enormous thank you to the small but loyal team of helpers for all their dedication now and throughout the year. Thank you as well to members of the congregation for their custom and support. We have made a fair profit which means good contributions to our charities, the Hope Centre (£1000) and our own Gregory care (£500), which does so much good work in the Parish, most, of necessity, confidential in nature. *Kathleen Healey*

New Sunday Missals: The repository has copies of the new Sunday Missal at £19.95. There is now the option of a different edition at £17.50 (with the new readings). There will also be a new weekday Missal available in the New Year.

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

Congratulations to St Gregory's parishioners! The level of donations in support of Missio's work worldwide has again been impressive & is, we hope accompanied by prayers for missionary priests, nuns and others. There are three ways that Missio benefits from our offerings: (a) donations handed in at church, (b) offerings made directly to Missio – especially SO's etc – and (c), where applicable, Gift Aid. Missio's financial year coincides with the calendar one. Regarding (a): £3358 has been banked. This is an increase of 16.4% compared to 2023, 34.5% compared to 2022. Such generosity is staggering in these difficult times – long may it continue & even increase. I am sure God will bless you and yours handsomely. Our total over all will be greater than £3358 and we may again top the list of all parishes in the diocese! I am grateful for the administrative support given by Dorothy, my co-leader, and to Jim and Clare who distribute envelopes. I do not forget that the foundations of all we do lie with my predecessors Des and Mary Keohane who had Paul Sefton, John Brennan and Pru Hill as energetic assistants. *Alec*

Church Cleaning: Helpers needed to clean the Church on last Sat. every month (**next – 25th January**), after morning Mass. All welcome, especially younger, more energetic ones!

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.

Divine Will Prayer Group: The Divine Will prayer group will take place via zoom on the first Thursday of every month at 7pm. The remaining Thursdays of the month it will be at Our Lady's in Great Billing at 7pm. All welcome. Those wanting to join the zoom meeting please message Mark on 07724 337196.

To say "Thank you" to all those who have worked so hard over the year in so many different ways in the support of the parish, a CAFOD World Gift of fresh water for 10 families has been given in recognition of your generosity.

CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS

In Memory of & Thanksgiving For:

Derek Rumsey	**Brendan Moen**	**Angela McCrarren**
Louie Short	**Kitty Traynor**	**Audrey O'Connor**
James Donnely	**The Ogbata Family**	**Alive & Deceaced**
The Puthus Family	**Paddy Barry**	**Eve Perkins**
Tim Perkins	**John Perkins**	**Malcolm Allen**
Fred Jones	**Barbara Jones**	**The Tyrrell Family**
The Aneke Family, Alive and Deceased		**The Emanuel Family**
The Pallett Family	**The Liebe Family**	

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)**

Parking around St Gregory's: Maintaining good relations with our neighbours does mean parking legally and considerately. If you come by car, please give yourself enough time to be sure of finding a parking place. Do not park across people's driveways. If you use the car park, please don't block the entrance when there are still empty spaces further in, and be careful of people walking through the parked cars. ***This relates to all days/times, not just Sunday mornings!***

Called by Pope Francis to Celebrate the Place of the Sacred Scriptures in the Life of the Church: On Sunday 26th January at 3pm, Bishop David will celebrate a Liturgy in the Cathedral, and by live streaming, when he will invite all those who proclaim and/or teach the scriptures to pray together and be commissioned for this ministry.

Choir Notes: Next practice: Saturday 8 February 11-12. *Alec*

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: 10.00 am-12.00 pm.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: The next session will be announced here shortly. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book a place.

First Holy Communion 2024/5: First Holy Communion 2025 Registration is now complete, and there is no more space this year.

Confirmation in 2025: January 5th after the 9am Mass is the enrolment date for the next Confirmation. The Confirmation will be in the afternoon of Sunday September 7th 2025, 5.30 pm

Second Collections for 2025:

26th January	Lepra
16th March	CAFOD (Family Fast Day 14th March)
18th April	Holy Places
1st June	World Communications
15th June	Day for Life
29th June	Peter's Pence
13th July	Stella Maris (Sea Sunday)
21st September	Evangelii Gaudium
5th October	CAFOD (Family Fast Day 3rd October)
19th October	World Mission

Tots @ St Gregory's: If you have the care of a baby or pre-school child on Tuesday mornings join us in the church hall from 9.30-11.30 - charge just £1 for you & any number of children & includes snacks for the children & yourself - excellent value for money! We run throughout term time. Looking forward to seeing you!

Ceili Dancing is ongoing in the Church Hall every Wednesday evening, 7.30-8.45pm. Everyone welcome to join our friendly group. To find out more phone Pat on 07710624921, or just turn up!

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

Prayer for Peace for Ukraine, the Holy Land and all places of strife

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.

Scripture Readings the Feast of the Epiphany, Year C, 5th January 2025

Third Isaiah was writing just after the Israelites had returned from exile in Babylon. After God promises to punish those who fail to keep his covenant, he offers participation in the future messianic salvation to all who believe in the Lord and keep his commandments. Isaiah visualises the new Jerusalem, illuminated by God, to which all peoples will stream, and a time when their offerings will be acceptable.

The Psalm prays that the king's reign will be just, long, prosperous and glorious, with support for the poor.

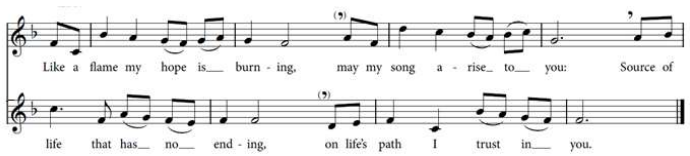
Paul sees the Church, Christ's body, as the new Jerusalem, part of God's plan for the whole of creation. Paul joyfully tells the Ephesians that God's plan was always to take the gospel message to all: Gentiles as well as Jews are to share equally in the inheritance promised by God.

In Luke's Gospel an angel announced Jesus' birth to poor Jewish shepherds, excluded from Temple worship by their occupation. Today Matthew describes Gentile scholars travelling from afar to bring kingly offerings to the new-born child. God's plan is already becoming known beyond Israel. But the scholars needed the Jewish scriptures to help find Jesus. We too need the Old Testament to help us understand God's plan and what he has done in Jesus for our salvation.

Psalm Response: **All the nations on earth shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.**

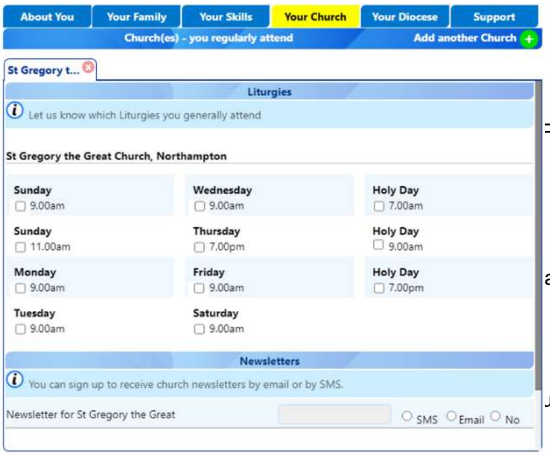
(Isaiah 60: 1-6; Ps 71(72); Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6; Matthew 2:1–12)

Chris Oliver

Chant used for the Communion procession at 11.00

PLEASE NOTE TWO IMPORTANT MEETINGS

Caritas Northampton is holding meetings for conversation about social outreach and social needs in our area on: Monday 20th January and Monday 17th February, both at 7.30 pm

Please make a note of these dates and come if you can.



CASPAR

"Your Church" tab. Please sign up to receive the newsletter at home; choose the 'email' box at the bottom of the window. You can also indicate which Mass you usually come to.

Gregory Care - The year of pilgrimage

As part of our Church's Jubilee Year of Pilgrimage and in the spirit of love and service, we are exploring the possibility of supporting a young person or nurse to facilitate a pilgrim with longstanding illness or disability to experience the grace and healing of Lourdes whilst taking part in the pilgrimage themselves.

As part of this visit to Lourdes on the Jumbulance you would also be taking with you the prayers and partitions of people from St Gregory's who are unable to make a pilgrimage this year. For more information visit: https://www.across.org.uk/our-jumbulance/

If this is something you might be interested in, please make your interest known to someone from Gregory Care and an evening of information will be arranged for you to explore more fully what would be required of you. Nurses in particular are needed. This would be a great opportunity for the right person so please think and pray about it, your only commitment at this time would be attending the information meeting.

A huge thank you from Gregory Care for your incredible generosity, compassion, and dedication in making this past Christmas a truly joyful season for so many families. Your donations of money, time, skills, and prayers were the embodiment of Christ's love and the true spirit of the season.

Sunday of the Word of God

Sunday 26th January is the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, the day which has been designated as the 'Sunday of the Word of God', and on this day each year those who proclaim the Scriptures at Mass are commissioned for the coming year. All who fulfil this ministry are invited to share in a liturgy at the Cathedral led by Bishop David at 3.00 in the afternoon. Others will also be welcome. Further training in proclaiming the Scriptures will be offered later in the year (when the church is warmer in the evenings!)

Warm Welcome

With the news that fuel bills are due to rise from 1st January and a marked drop in the temperature this week, this week we are re-starting the 'Warm Welcome' initiative that we ran last year.

The take-up last year was quite small, and it would be good to be able to welcome more people. However, we also need more helpers, and if anyone is able to offer time on Monday or Wednesday mornings from after Mass until midday, not necessarily every week; it would be good to have a rota of helpers. Ideally there should be at least two helpers for each session.

The refreshments on Mondays and Wednesdays have become increasingly popular, and grateful thanks must go to Bridget and Jehanne; however it is unfair and unrealistic to leave this all to them. If you are able, please support this initiative, and invite any friends, especially non-Catholics to join us for the refreshments, if not for Mass.

On some Mondays there is live piano music (thanks to Hugh Lazarus) and other entertainments would be welcome. Children are also welcome, and there are some toys available.

The Hope Centre Collection

Throughout Advent and Christmastide our refreshment donations on Sundays, Mondays and Wednesdays are added to the gifts given at the crib for the Hope Centre who care for the homeless of Northampton, and in these cold weeks, their work is especially important. We have collected just over £600, and Christmastide ends on Monday 13th January. It would be wonderful to exceed our giving of last year, which was £836.46.

Thanks to the hard work of Kathleen Healey and her loyal helpers, £1,000 has also been given to the Hope Centre from the repository fund.