



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

Platinum Pentecost

There is an important early Christian document entitled ‘The Letter to Diognetus’. Exactly who Diognetus was, and exactly who wrote it is unknown, although the author describes himself as a ‘disciple of the Apostles’. The date of the letter (around 130 AD) makes this entirely possible.

Part of the letter describes how Christians live in the world:

Christians cannot be distinguished by their nationality, language or by the customs that they observe. They do not live in separate cities nor do they speak a different dialect. . . With regard to dress, they follow the customs of whatever city they happen to be living in.

Later in the letter the author speaks of Christians being scattered throughout the world; in all the cities of the world. Christianity is not ethnically-based, and there can be no place for any sort of racism or nationalism in Christianity.

Having written of how Christians live among others and follow the local traditions of dress and speech, he goes on to say:

And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their full role as citizens, but labour under all the disabilities of aliens. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it may be, is a foreign country. Like others, they marry and have children, but they do not destroy them. They share their meals, but not their wives.

We live as citizens of the country in which we live, and play our full part in the life of that country, but recognise that our true citizenship is in heaven. (*Philippians 3:20*) We live in the flesh, but are not ruled by the flesh. (*Romans 8:5*)

The affirmation that we do not destroy our children was in marked contrast with the morals of the Roman Empire. Abortion was common; indeed, the emperor Augustus, realising from his census that the population of the empire was decreasing, introduced benefits to those who had children. (*Lex Julia et Papia Poppaea*) Tertullian describes the gruesome process of abortion; no less gruesome in our own day. (*Tertullian; A Treatise on the Soul, 25*)

The main point is that, whatever the laws of the country in which we live may be, we are answerable to God for our conduct. As St Thomas More observed: “I die the King’s good servant, but God’s first”.

Mercifully for us, we live in more gentle times, and we do not risk execution for the practice of our faith in this country. Indeed, as we celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of our Queen, we have much to celebrate in the life of the Church in England during her reign.

The reign began with re-building after the destruction of the Second World War, as it began with the building of St Gregory’s which was

opened on February 11th 1954, less than a year after the Coronation. The story of our church charts the story of the reign of our Queen.

By a very long way, the most significant event for the Catholic Church during the last 70 years was the Second Vatican Council, which brought about many changes in the life of the Church, both locally and globally. It was not only the Church that was to go through seismic change; our country has also changed out of all recognition. As in the changes in the Church, some may be seen as for the good; others less so. And, as in the changes in the Church, people will disagree about which changes are for the good.

There have been set-backs for both the Church and the nation; the worst have been self-inflicted. It is important to learn from one’s experience, and especially from one’s mistakes. The Church has established a large infrastructure in safeguarding as one example of this.

One change which cannot be denied is that we see fewer people at Mass and that there are fewer priests. This is part of a change that is seen throughout Western Europe, and, together with the large number of those who have made their homes here from other parts of the world, has brought about a much more international flavour to the Church in England. Just as the country has been enriched by immigration, so too has the Church.

The ‘Letter to Diognetus’ is a good guide to how we respond to events on our national life. We live in this country and share in the national celebration. We live in this country and share in its national problems, and we live in this country and seek to solve the problems, together with those with whom we share our country.

Whether we are ardent monarchists or not, we have seen 70 years of faithful service from our Queen; service that has been guided by her sense of duty before God, and for this we must give thanks to God.

This Jubilee cannot just be a time of looking backwards. Pentecost was a ‘launch-pad’ for the Church, and we are (as always) on a launch-pad into the future.

The beginning of the reign of Elizabeth II was a time in which the re-building of Britain was not just a re-building of structures. It was a re-building of confidence and of stability. For the Church, it has also been a time of growing confidence. ‘Divine Renovation’ is one example of this, and the manner in which the Church has (at last) embraced the command of Jesus to evangelise. Today’s feast of Pentecost is a reminder of the courage with which the first Apostles proclaimed the Gospel, and, as the story of the events of that day conclude, three thousand were added to the number of those who believed. In the power of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles proclaimed the Gospel. The same Spirit gives us the same gift. In the power of the same Spirit, may the Church grow in our day.

Notices of Interest

Bible Alive for June & 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 and there is a display of 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*



We welcome into the family of the Church
Oliver Burca
who received Christian Baptism recently.
Please pray for him and his family.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism Preparation: Next date to be advertised 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.

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.

Lifeteen Summer Camp 2022: Sun 24th to Thurs. 28th July 2022: Alton Castle. For more information and to go to the bookings page visit <https://nymo.org/summercamp/>

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!

40 Hours Adoration

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

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)**

Parish and Diocesan Finances: A new financial year has begun, and as soon as we have the complete accounts from the Diocese, they will be published. 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.

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

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

Session 4, 8th June	Chapters 5-6:
Session 5, 15th June	Chapters 7-8:
Session 6, 22nd June	Chapters 9-11:
No session on June 29th	Feast of SS Peter and Paul, Mass at 7.00 pm
No session on 6th July	Diocesan 'Year of the Word' Webinar on the Sunday readings through the summer
Session 7, 13 th July	Chapters 12-13:
Session 8, 20 th July	Chapters 14-16: The End of the Story.

Please email to Fr Andrew for the Zoom link.

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

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.*

Monday evening Zoom session: This is taking a break for the summer. New courses will start in the autumn.

Children's Liturgy student helpers! We are very lucky to have several young people helping at Children's Liturgy who are moving into years 5 and 6 at school. You will notice they are wearing lanyards and often supporting the little ones in the group. A big well done to these faithful servants of God!

The Rose Garden and CAFOD: When the re-planting of the rose garden was being planned, it was hoped that this would be a help in raising funds for CAFOD. Our Lent giving from the Family Fast Day onwards has been accumulating, with the money given as donations for refreshments. After Pentecost the total will be sent to CAFOD. If you are inspired by the improved garden (and new fence in memory of Amelia Woolmore), please add your donation!

Refreshment Donations: This is the last day of the Lent and Eastertide giving for CAFOD. You will see on this newsletter that the total stands at £1,210.79. Any donations for refreshments given today will be added to this, and the total sent to CAFOD. Below is the schedule for refreshment donations through the year:

From the first Sunday in Advent	The Hope Centre
to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:	
From the Second Sunday in ordinary time	Gregory Care
to the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday	
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 5th June 2022, Pentecost, Year C

The Jewish feast of Pentecost, 50 days after Passover, was less well known than the other two pilgrimage feasts. Passover was linked to the nomadic sacrifice of lambs and the barley harvest in the Spring. Tabernacles after the grape harvest was associated with the wanderings in the desert. Recently it was realised that Pentecost was associated with God giving the Covenant on Sinai. So the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles at Pentecost fits neatly with this Covenant feast: the formal birth of the Christian Church. Acts lists the regions where the Church was to grow.

The Psalm calls us to praise God's creative wisdom. Filled with wonder at the details of God's glorious works, this psalm is well worth reading in full.

Paul urges the Romans to live by the Spirit who, with Christ, has made his home in us. We are now Sons of God. If we are led by

the Spirit within us to follow God's laws, we will have confidence that the Father will "give life to our mortal bodies", just as Jesus was raised.

In John's Gospel we hear from Jesus' long Last Supper talk, promising that his Father would send the Advocate, through whom he and the Father would be with his church for all time.

Psalm Response: Send forth your Spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.

(Acts 2: 1-11; Psalm 103(104); Romans 8: 8-17; John 14: 15-16, 23-26)

Chris Oliver

An invitation from the Bishops of England and Wales

This is the bread come down from heaven (John 6:58)

A beautiful hallmark of the Catholic faith is the profound desire to participate in the Holy Mass and share in the Eucharist. We do so with deep gratitude and joy. The Eucharist gives the Church her identity – "The Eucharist makes the Church, and the Church makes the Eucharist." It enables us to worship Almighty God, to support each other on our journey of faith, and to be a visible sign of faith in the world. This hallmark is supported and strengthened by the precept that our fundamental Christian duty is to worship God by participating in the celebration of Mass. Attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is the greatest of all privileges, sometimes referred to as "the Sunday Obligation." Since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, until the present time, we have shared with you our judgment that the situation of the last two years has meant that the Sunday Obligation has been impeded and has needed to be fulfilled in other ways. We thank God that this situation has now changed. The pressing challenges of the pandemic have lessened significantly. Most people have resumed the wide range of normal activities, no longer restricted by the previous Covid measures. We therefore believe that the reasons which have prevented Catholics from attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation no longer apply. We understand there will still be some members of our congregations who, for reasons of health, do not feel safe enough to return to Mass. It has always been the understanding of the Church that when the freedom of any Catholic to attend Mass in person is impeded for a serious reason, because of situations such as ill health,

care for the sick or legitimate fear, this is not a breach of the Sunday Obligation. Our Catholic people and parishes have benefitted during these difficult times from the online streaming of Mass and other services. "Virtual viewing" of Mass online does not fulfil the Sunday Obligation. It may, however, be a source of continual spiritual comfort to those who cannot attend Mass in person, for example those who are elderly and sick, for whom the obligation does not apply. In this context, we recognise gratefully the ministry of those who administer Holy Communion to the elderly, sick and housebound. We are grateful to our clergy, religious and lay faithful who have served our parishes, schools and communities with dedication and distinction throughout this pandemic. Now we look forward with renewed faith and confidence. In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Lord's Supper, the Lord Jesus entrusted to us the precious gift of Himself. With humility, we glory in being a Eucharistic people for whom attendance at Mass is essential. Looking forward to the forthcoming feast of Pentecost, we now invite all Catholics who have not yet done so to return to attending Mass in person. As the Church needs the witness of the presence of each person, so too each believer needs to journey in faith and worship with their fellow disciples. Nourished by our encounter with the Risen Lord Jesus, fed with His Word and His Body and Blood in Holy Communion, and supported by the presence of each other, we receive strength week by week, to serve the Lord and glorify Him with our lives.

Volunteers needed — please help

Recently the Diocesan Surveyor inspected the church for any major repairs that may be needed. Fortunately there was nothing really serious, but he has asked that two bits of maintenance be carried out this year. Neither are difficult, and both can be undertaken by volunteer labour. Both are painting jobs; one of them is already spoken for, but the other will require a team of helpers.

The task is repainting 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!

We cannot schedule when this is to be done until we know that there will be people to help. We will need painters, including people willing to work up the scaffold tower, but also labourers at ground level, and, of course, tea and coffee-makers. Please email to cliff.snelling@btinternet.com if you can help, please can you contact Cliff Snelling at cliff.snelling@btinternet.com, indicating which weeks you would be available to help.

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!

DID YOU KNOW?

Everyone is surely aware that the country; indeed most of the world is facing a financial crisis. At the domestic level, this is acutely felt by every household. Of course, it is also felt by the Church.

One of the characteristics of the Church is that we are committed to giving to other needy causes, and every year it is our aim that we will give away at least 10% of the total money that we are given.

St Gregory's parish is recognised as a significant giver to both CAFOD and to Missio. CAFOD is the Catholic Church's chief initiative for providing aid and development for overseas countries. We have been supporting the international and multi-agency project which is seeking to ensure that every person has access to clean and safe drinking water, as well as the particular aid projects that are the focus of the Lent and Harvest collections. CAFOD is part of the international agency called 'Caritas', which is one of the biggest aid agencies in the world.

Missio is the Catholic Church's international missionary organisation. While it is primarily concerned with the proclamation of the Gospel, it is also inevitably concerned for the material wellbeing of the communities in which it works, and partners with Caritas wherever there is need.

We are not only concerned with overseas aid; we support local aid organisations. It was a parishioner of St Gregory's, Val Hanson who was instrumental in starting what is now the Hope Centre, and from the beginning, St Gregory's has been a weekly and generous supporter of their work in feeding the homeless in Northampton.

Our regular gifts of food are much appreciated, together with the financial help that is given.

More recently the Cathedral Foodstore has been established. This began as a means of supporting needy families during the pandemic; initially for families with children in the Catholic schools of our town, but now extended. St Gregory's made a commitment to provide toiletries, a frequently forgotten domestic necessity.

This is undertaken by Gregory Care, who also support those who live in the parish and are in material need, not simply by giving money, but by helping individuals and families to manage financially.

When we started to provide refreshments after the 9.00 Sunday Mass and on Wednesdays, it was decided that **ALL** the takings should be allocated to charitable concerns, with the exception of through the summer when we would use the money to buy the tea and coffee and other necessities and stock up.

This is how it works:

Now that we are offering refreshments after the 11.00 Mass every Sunday, we hope that this form of giving will grow. Following popular request, we are only serving ground coffee, and are committed to fair trade. When you come in for refreshments, please remember the good causes that we are supporting.

Alpha in the Autumn *(Provisional Dates)*

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

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:	June 14th 2022:	Why and how should I read the Bible?
Away-Day:	June 17th – 18th 2022:	Who is the Holy Spirit?
Eighth Session:	June 21st 2022:	How can I resist evil?
Ninth Session:	June 28th 2022:	Why and how should we tell others?
Tenth Session:	July 5th 2022:	What about the Church?
Eleventh Session:	July 12th 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'.

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 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 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)

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.

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
in life and in death.

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

Repainting in the church: