



# 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

## Behold, the Lamb

### The Baptism of the Lord in St John's Gospel

We do not read from the Gospel of John on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord; this year we are reading St Luke, last year we read St Mark and next year we will read from Matthew. Such is the three-year cycle of the lectionary. Yet although he does not describe the Baptism itself, the account in John is helpful for us in understanding the significance of the event.

The events are told over a three-day period. The first, described in John 1:19-28 makes plain that John is not the Messiah, but that he comes in the prophetic tradition to announce the coming of the Christ.

Here it is useful to turn to St Luke, who sets this in its historical context. Not only does he tell us that it was in the fifteenth year of Tiberias as Emperor, but that the land was divided, with different rulers in Galilee, Judea, Abilene, Ituraea and Trachonitis. The great kingdom of David lies divided; in ruins, under foreign domination.

“We see no sign, nor is there a prophet; we have no one to tell us how long it will last” (*Psalms 74:9 or 73:9*)

On this first day, John is not only telling the people (and us) that the time is at hand:

“When the fulness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman.” (*Galatians 4:4*)

He is both prophet and herald of the Messiah!

On the second day (*John 1:29-34*) the expected one, who, on the first had been “among you, but whom you do not know” (*John 1:26*) is revealed as Jesus, whom we know to be in the royal descent of David (*Luke 3:23-38*), and in whom “all things will be gathered up, things in heaven and things on earth” (*Ephesians 1:10*), not just the Kingdom of David, but the entire universe. He is revealed as “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (*John 1:29*). This is the day of the Baptism itself, which John describes only by saying: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.” (*John 1:32*).

The third day, (*John 1:35-42*) Jesus is still in the area in which John is baptising, and John points him out again: “Look, here is the Lamb of God” (*John 1:36*), and John is inviting those who are his disciples to become disciples of Jesus. The exchange is interesting:

“Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” 39 He said to them, “Come and you will see.” (*John 1:38-39*)

Jesus asks Andrew: “What are you seeking?”, and the reply is not really an answer to the question, but rather as further question: “Where are you staying?”. Jesus says: “Come and see.”

The third day, then points us to the mission of Jesus, which is a mission to the ends of the earth (*see Acts 1:8*) entrusted to Peter and the other apostles and through them, to the Church down succeeding generations. So it is on the third day that we are introduced to Peter, who is the ‘rock’ on which the Church will be built. (*See Matthew 16:18*)

The chronology continues in St John, with a fourth day when two more disciples are called, Philip and Nathaniel, and then on the Cana where the first sign is given, and then to Capernaum where he stays with the disciples and Our Lady for a few days. The sign of turning water into wine is important on several levels; at this moment it is sufficient to say that Jesus is in the business of changing things. It is important to keep the connection between this and Baptism. In both cases water is involved, in Baptism the water effects the change, at Cana the water itself is changed. But the change that Jesus really seeks is the change in the life of the disciple, and by the water of Baptism the person becomes a child of God by adoption (*see Romans 6:3-4*). In the wine of Cana we can also see a foreshadowing of the Last Supper and of the Wine of the Eucharist.

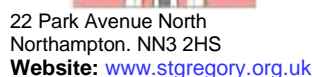
We should not read the three days of John the Baptist in St John's Gospel as linked to the three days in the tomb, but the description of Jesus as the ‘Lamb of God’ is certainly a link to the Passover Lamb, and, in fact after the stay in Capernaum, the next event in John's Gospel is Jesus visiting Jerusalem for the Passover; the first of three such visits, the last of which was for Holy Week; for his death and resurrection.

The symbolism of Baptism is of death and resurrection. Water has clearly a message of danger, which goes back to the story of Noah and the flood in Genesis chapters 6-9. It also links this danger to sinfulness, and so this death through water is a dying to sin (*see Romans 6:3-8*).

However, it is also the entry into new life. St Peter speaks of this in his first letter, when he says:

In the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And Baptism, which this pre-figured now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities and powers made subject to him” (*1 Peter 3:20-22*)

“Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptising” (*John 1:28*) is the very place where Joshua led the Israelites into the promised land (*see Joshua 3:14-17*). Baptism, for us, opens the door to the promised land and life in Christ. It is not yet heaven; and for the Israelites, as for Jesus, and for us, temptations will follow.



9<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
Baptism of the Lord  
Parish Mass Book - Year C  
Page 50

Priest:  
Fr Andrew Behrens      ☎ 713015  
E-mail: priest@stgregory.org.uk  
Deacon:  
Rev Michael Fleming      ☎ 647750  
E-mail: mvf@btinternet.com  
Pastoral Assistant:  
Maria Heath  
E-mail: maria.heath@yahoo.co.uk  
Safeguarding representative  
Carol McNeil      ☎ 621807

Sunday <i>Baptism of the Lord</i>	9.00 am 11.00 am 12.15 pm 5.00 pm	Mass Mass Mass Mass (Syro-Malabar Rite)	Hilary Green's Intentions The Parish Mick McLennon
Monday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Angela & Anthony Cotton RIP
Tuesday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Lena Gallagher RIP
Wednesday St Aelred of Rievaulx	9.00 am	Mass	Louis Prada
Thursday St. Hilary	9-10am 7.00 pm	Holy Hour of Adoration Mass	John Keen RIP
Friday Feria	9.00 am	Mass	Agnes McLoughlin RIP
Saturday Feria	9.00 am 9.45 am	Mass Confessions	Gabriel Foley RIP
Sunday <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Year</i>	9.00 am 11.00 am 12.15 pm  5.00 pm	Mass Mass Mass  Mass (Syro-Malabar Rite)	Agnes McLoughlin RIP The Parish Michael Fleming's Intentions

**Normal opening times:** Due to the relaxation in restrictions, the Church will be open every day from 8.45 am until 5.00 pm, except on Thursdays when it remains open until 7.45 pm

<b><u>Your Offering to the Parish:</u></b>	Last Sunday's collection was £253.02. Thank you!
<b><u>Standing Order gifts to the Parish:</u></b>	Each week £486 is given through standing orders.
<b><u>Donations through the Diocese:</u></b>	An average of £77 is given each week.
<b><u>Gift Aid benefits to the parish:</u></b>	The value of Gift Aid averages £88 per week
<b><u>Second Collection Next Week:</u></b>	Life House
<b><u>Cleaners This Week:</u></b>	The Church is cleaned and sanitised daily by the stewards.
<b><u>Counters This Week:</u></b>	CC & CP.

**Readings for this Sunday** (Readers 9am: Cliff Snelling, 11am: Mike Gibson)

<b>Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11:</b>	<i>The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it</i>
<b>Titus 2: 11-14, 3: 4-7:</b>	<i>He saved us by the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit.</i>
<b>Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22:</b>	<i>While Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened.</i>

**Readings for next Sunday** (Readers 9am: Lorna Heron, 11am: Mila Mazur)

Isaiah 62: 1-5; 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11; John 2: 1-11. (Page 53)

<b><u>During this season</u></b>	Peace on Earth; Christian Unity;
<b><u>Of Ordinary Time, Winter.</u></b>	Victims of Trafficking; The Sick & their Carers;
<b><u>We are asked to pray for:</u></b>	Racial Justice; The Unemployed.

## Into the New Year, so far, no new rules!

This last week has seen a vast increase in the rates of infection in Northampton, and the hospital has declared a 'Major Incident'. This is clearly not the time to relax our vigilance. Time will tell whether the rules in place for England or those for the devolved nations were the better, and whether the coming week will change the situation. We continue to maintain caution in church through offering sanitiser, mask wearing and operating social distancing, as well as regular cleaning of the church. We are experiencing a greater number of people at the 9am Mass on Sundays, and while this is very welcome, it does present a problem. Please note that the 12 noon Mass is still quite sparsely attended. The additional 12 noon Mass on Sundays continues while we keep social distancing, & good warning will be given about when this will end. The toilets can be used if necessary, but please will users apply sanitiser as necessary.

While we will continue to offer refreshments after the 9am Mass on Sundays and Wednesdays, it is understood that there will be some who would prefer not to come, and although masks should be worn as far as is possible, clearly while eating and drinking this cannot be done. However, please will everyone think of the well-being of others. **If you feel unwell, DO NOT COME!**

**Please pray for the sick:**

[illegible]

**Anniversaries:**

**May they Rest in Peace**

Cicely Chapman	Elsie Coleman
Michael Murphy	Hannah McAdam
Jeremiah Hartigan	Eileen Davis
Constantino Perrina	Thomas Mann
William Blundell	Edward Dagg
Michael Murray	Patrick Ryan
Rachel Curran	Irfonwy Tyrrell
Cornelius O'Donoghue	Margaret Doherty
Ethel Holt	William Wright
Francis Corcoran	Mary Bosworth
Elizabeth Farrugia	Sarah Carter
Ronald Harding	Norman Clarke
Betty O'Grady-Marshall	Edith Alexander
Joseph Murtagh	Regina Dickson
Margaret Partridge	Edward Daly
Agnes Branson	John Cawley
Maurice Oakley	Kay Paige
Patrick Donohoe	Veronica Brennan
Patrick Fagan	Victor Brugger
Ellen Higginbottom	Agnes Sharp
Larry West	Phyllis Saunders
Guglielmo Apicella	William Treacy
Josephine McGoff	Joan Duggan
Veronica Wrighton	Colin Chisholm
Andrew Cooke	Mary Grant
Daniel Whitworth	Mark Ventour
Berta Pumroy	Gorda Hamilton
Maureen Cumberbatch	

## POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY

We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

# Notices of Interest

**Bible Alive** for January & February 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.



We welcome into the family of the Church  
Mary Aimee Binil Abraham  
Who received Christian Baptism recently.  
Please pray for her and her family.

**Repository:** The Repository is now open after every Sunday Mass. We really need a few more helpers prepared to stand for a few minutes after Mass – all stock is marked, so quite an easy task! A small display of Confirmation cards and mementoes is on display. Contact Kath.healey.789@ gmail.com

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

**Baptism Preparation:** The next preparation will be in the Sacristy on Mon. 10<sup>th</sup> Jan, 7pm. Please note you will need to phone Deacon Michael on 07999808997 before you attend, to book your place.

**First Holy Communion 2022:** There will be six 'in-person' sessions preparing for first Reconciliation, both at Sacred Heart church, Weston Favell from 3.00 pm until 5.00 pm on Saturdays, 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December before the Christmas break. Those preparing on-line will receive emails with what they need. After Christmas there will be sessions on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> and on February 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Confirmation in 2022:** The next Confirmation programme will be announced soon, but there will be a time of reflection before any definite plans are made. Please keep looking at this space where information will appear.

**Parish Finances:** Continued thanks for the wonderful generosity that you are showing to the parish.

**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)

**Courses for Readers:** The Bible Timeline course has broken for the Christmas break, but continues on Wednesdays, starting at 7.30 pm. on Zoom. We will be moving to the Books of the Kings. Please email to Fr Andrew for further details. New people are welcome to join!

**Tots @ St Gregory's:** TINY TOTS will re start on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year, if you have charge of a pre school child, from 9:30- 11:30 on a Tuesday morning!

## 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]

**We Now Have Heating Again!** Please, please, please can we all help to keep the heat in by closing the outside doors, and not leaving them open.

**LUX.Pilgrimage:** A fun residential weekend for young Catholics aged 11 (Year 7) -18 years from 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk (transportation included from Luton & Northampton). Please contact Fiona at [fiona@nymo.org](mailto:fiona@nymo.org) or visit [www.nymo.org/lux](http://www.nymo.org/lux) for more information and to book your place.

**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 are on Fridays 1:45 – 3:00 pm starting Feb 4. (Ash Wed is Mar 2): Mar 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, April 1 and 8 as we prepare for Easter (Apr 17). Alec

**Gregory Care update on toiletry donations:** Thank you to everyone who has donated toiletries to be sent out with food bags from the cathedral.

## For your Diary — Moveable Feasts this year:

Ash Wednesday	2 <sup>nd</sup> March
Good Friday	15 <sup>th</sup> April
Easter Day	17 <sup>th</sup> April
Ascension Day	Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> May
Pentecost Sunday	5 <sup>th</sup> June
Corpus Christi	19 <sup>th</sup> June
40 Hours Devotion	24 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> June

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

**The Net Charismatic Prayer Group.** A new prayer group will commence meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7.30pm to 9pm in the prayer room of The Sacred Heart Church Hall, Weston Favell. The Net will meet every first and third Wednesday of the month. Everyone is welcome!

**Northampton Diocese Vacancy:** Safeguarding Administrator, 4 hours per week, start ASAP. The Diocese is currently recruiting for a Safeguarding Admin to provide admin support to the Safeguarding Office. For info & to receive an application form, please go to [northamptondiocese.org/jobs/](http://northamptondiocese.org/jobs/) or email [hadmin@northamptondiocese.com](mailto:hadmin@northamptondiocese.com). Closing date 28<sup>th</sup> January.

**Pivotal Players:** Last Monday we began the series of sessions on 'Pivotal Players' with St Francis of Assisi. This week the session will look at St Thomas Aquinas, who was foundational in the development of Christian theology as well as in the development of Western philosophy. The Acts course will be delayed until the state of the pandemic is clearer as it is not easy to socially distance in the Sacristy. It will be on Tuesday mornings after Mass beginning when it is safe to do so. On Tuesday evenings, starting on 11<sup>th</sup> January, there will be training for Alpha leaders and on Wednesday evenings the Zoom Bible Timeline is continuing. Please email Fr Andrew for the Zoom links.

**Seeking Assistance:** Lady in Abington, new to our parish looking for persons to help her get to either 11.00 or 12.00 Mass and/or social occasions at St Gregory's. She uses a small wheeled wheelchair. Assistance required to collect her from her door & help her to a car, have room for her chair in car boot & take her to church & return her home on a regular or occasional basis. If you can offer help now & again, please contact Brigid on 07971713727 who can put you in touch with this lady. (DBS check required) Thank you.

# Scripture Readings 13th January 2019, Baptism of the Lord, Year C

Writing in Babylon about 540 BC, second Isaiah majestically consoles Israel in its exile. God tenderly commands his attendants to comfort Israel and to prepare a sacred way for them to return to Jerusalem. He will lead his people to freedom across the desert in a new Exodus. The coming of God's rule should be announced to the whole world, shouted from the mountain-tops.

The psalm magnificently praises and celebrates God's creative wisdom and power.

Titus worked with Paul and later administered the church in Crete. In this pastoral letter Paul advises Titus on setting up church structures and choosing suitable presbyters for each local church. All Christians, and especially Church leaders, are urged to lead godly lives. We should reveal God's love to others in our good behaviour, while not disrupting the lives of others, in confident expectation of our redemption.

Luke saw us as living in a time of waiting, one of three phases he saw in salvation history. Luke's time of promise, the period of Israel, ended when John was put in prison by Herod, after John the Baptist's prediction that Jesus would baptise with the Holy Spirit. Jesus' baptism begins the period when this promise is fulfilled. Luke's Book of Acts describes his third phase, the beginning of the church.

Psalm Response: **Bless the Lord, my soul! Lord God, how great you are.**

(Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 103(104); Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7; Luke 3:15-16, 21-22)

Chris Oliver

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**

**Tuesday 18 January 2022, (7.30-8.30pm)**

*An Introduction to Luke*

**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

*It's a huge undertaking,  
but the Synod is getting  
underway in our diocese.*

## Synod 2021-23

- How we will manage our conversations in the parish will be announced soon. Pope Francis is clear that the voices of the loud and powerful and those with an axe to grind or a bee in their bonnet should not drown out the voice of the quiet and the marginalised.

# The End of Christmastide

This week the crib will be put away, the liturgical colour returns to green and normal programmes resume. This is the last day for making donations to the Hope Centre through the crib — it looks as though we may break our record. Thank you.

Bishop David will preside at a Service of the Word in the Cathedral at **3pm on Sunday 23rd January**. As a part of this Service Bishop David will bless all readers who proclaim the Word of God in their parishes. All readers are invited to attend.

## **St Gregory's next Alpha:**

To the right are the dates of the next Alpha course which we are hoping will be able to 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. It is good to have established believers as well as potential converts and those who simply want to know more about our faith. 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)

<b>First session:</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> Is there more to life than this?
<b>Second Session:</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> Who is Jesus?
<b>Third Session:</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> Why did Jesus die?
<b>Fourth Session</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> How can I be sure of my faith?
<b>Fifth Session</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> Why and how do I pray?
<b>Sixth Session</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> How does God guide us?
<b>Seventh Session</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> Why and how should I read the Bible?
<b>Away-Day</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> Who is the Holy Spirit?
<b>Eighth Session</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> How can I resist evil?
<b>Ninth Session</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> Why and how should we tell others?
<b>Tenth Session</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> What about the Church?
<b>Eleventh Session</b>	<b>After Easter 2022:</b> What about the rest of my life?