

# St. Gregory The Great

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THE MOTHER CHURCH OF DURHAM



## OFFICE:

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**Administrator:** Fr. Marijan Sisko

**Deacon:** David MacInnis

**Administrative Assistant:** Jacqueline Martin

## Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Friday 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## Sunday Mass

Saturday 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 8:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. & Noon

## Weekday Masses:

Tuesday and Thursday 12:10 p.m.

Wednesday and Friday 7:00 p.m.

## Sacrament of Penance

Thursday 11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Saturday 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

## Baptism

Please contact the parish office for more information.

## Marriage

One year notice (Archdiocesan guideline)

Marriage Preparation required

Please contact the parish priest

## Visits To The Sick

Please contact the parish office for more information.

## Parish Organizations and Ministries

For information 905-723-8141

or [www.stgregorythegreat.ca](http://www.stgregorythegreat.ca)

## Archdiocese of Toronto

1-416-934-0606

or: [www.archtoronto.org](http://www.archtoronto.org)

## Catholic Cemeteries

St. Gregory's & Resurrection

905-668-8912

or: [www.catholic-cemeteries.com](http://www.catholic-cemeteries.com)

## Durham Catholic District School Board

905-576-6150 or [www.dcdsb.ca](http://www.dcdsb.ca)

## Society of St. Vincent De Paul- Help Line

905-720-0003

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

### MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

<b>TUESDAY</b>	FEBRUARY 8 <sup>th</sup> - 12:10 P.M. <i>Saint Jerome Emilani, Saint Josephine Bakhita</i> + Giuseppe Guarini
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	FEBRUARY 9 - 7:00 P.M. For the sick of the parish
<b>THURSDAY</b>	FEBRUARY 10 + Alberto Iezzi, req. his Wife
<b>FRIDAY</b>	FEBRUARY 11 - 7:00 P.M. (up to 5 intentions) 5:00 PM + John Baranowski, req. Dave & Pat Mitchell + Fr. Guenter Petricek
<b>SATURDAY</b>	FEBRUARY 12 5:00 P.M. + Deceased parents of Manuel & Gloria Desousa
<b>SUNDAY</b>	FEBRUARY 13 - 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time
8:00AM	+ Imelda Jones, req. a parishioner
9:30 AM	Dorothy Helen Robb, req. Chris Robb
12:00PM	For the parishioners ( <i>pro populo</i> )

Please pre-register for all weekday and Sunday Masses via **Eventbrite** (<https://stgregoryvoshawa.eventbrite.ca>), or call the office during the week so to reserve your ticket for one person up to five persons in the same social bubble and avoid crowding at the door. A social bubble is a group of people, members of the same household, or people who are not keeping 6 feet physical distancing.

### Catholic Family Services 17th Annual Heart to Heart Gala Saturday, February 26, 2022 -Online event

In light of the Province's current plans for re-opening, our Heart to Heart Gala will once again be presented through a virtual platform. There will be guest speakers, entertainment and an online auction! Tickets are \$20.00 per person. The online auction will be available from February 16 until February 26. <https://trellis.org/heart-to-heart-gala> or contact Tania - [t.mcclean@cfsdurham.com](mailto:t.mcclean@cfsdurham.com) or 905-725-3513 x 121

### Can You Help?

We are looking to make a team of volunteers to help with live streaming and also a Webmaster. If you would like to help, please call the Parish

For February 2022, we join the Holy Father in praying for:  
**Religious sisters and consecrated women**  
We pray for religious sisters and consecrated women;  
thanking them for their mission and their courage; may they continue to find new responses to the challenges of our times.

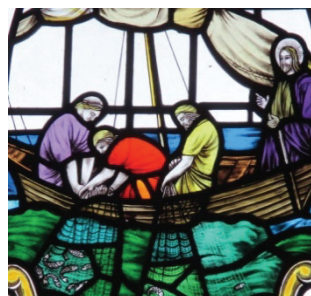
At this time, we pray especially for:

**The sick: Greg Martin**  
**For the recently departed: Barbara Hickey**

### Feb. 6, 2022: Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jan 6, 2022

by Sister [Mary M. McGlone](#)



Luke throws us into the middle of contrasts in today's Gospel. Having been roundly rejected at home in the hills of Nazareth, Jesus went down to Capernaum, about 20 miles away and with an "elevation" of about 560 feet

below sea level. There, as the crowds thronged around him, Jesus must have been at least a little disconcerted that the people with whom he grew up had tried to throw him off a cliff, while he was celebrated among folks who had only recently met him.

Today's Gospel reminds of what Isaiah says: The Lord of hosts calls us, not because we are like the glorious seraphim, but because we recognize our inadequacies. Let us pray for the blessing to acknowledge the great contrast between our hopes and our behavior. Then, like Peter, we can humbly appreciate the fact that we are invited into a love that will transform us into all that we can be — as long as we are willing to abandon whatever prevents us from walking humbly with our God.

As we move toward that, we will be able to say with Paul, "I am what I am by the grace of God that is with me."

### First Holy Communion & Confirmation

Contact the office to preregister and to get the zoom link. Our next First Holy Communion online class will be February 13, and our Confirmation online class will be February 6.



### Prayer Corner

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

### Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

Learn it by heart, so that we may pray it together at the end of the Mass:

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



Please remember St. Gregory's Parish in your will.

FEBRUARY 6, 2022

**Is Funeral a Celebration of Life or Celebration of God?**

At funerals often we may hear the phrase, 'we have come to celebrate the life of...'. I wish to reflect with you that as the priest is celebrating the funeral Mass, we are invited to celebrate God, and pray for our deceased, for the repose of the soul at the funeral Mass or a funeral service outside of the Mass.

In regards to the Catholic funeral, the Mother Church teaches us in the Catechism, "In the Eucharist, the Church expresses her efficacious communion with the departed: offering to the Father in the Holy Spirit the sacrifice of the death and resurrection of Christ, she asks to purify his child of his sins and their consequences, and to admit him to the Paschal fullness of the table of the Kingdom" (CCC, 1689). That is, through the funeral Mass we pray that God may purify the soul of the deceased from all venial sins and the consequences, the attachments to sins, and so enter into God's Kingdom. So, we celebrate God by praying for the deceased to be freed from the attachments of the soul to sins. We pray that the soul may be freed from whatever is an obstacle to the deceased to have the fullness of joy in 'the Kingdom,' Heaven, which is the primary vocation and ultimate goal for every person, especially the Catholic Christian. We are invited to celebrate God rather than people, particularly at Mass in the Church.

But what is 'celebration of life?' It is basically praising the deceased at the funeral ceremonies. A celebration of life could be a phrase that has crept in the Christian culture in general, and Catholic worship and culture in particular from atheism, from the non-believers, agnostics, or from Christians who do not believe in the existence of Hell, or Purgatory, or elsewhere. The atheists believe that God doesn't exist. Therefore, in their view, there is no need to celebrate God or to pray for the deceased, for, 'to whom should I pray when no God or soul exists,' in their belief?

On the other side, some Christians, Catholics included, are scandalized with the possibility of the existence of Hell and they deny its existence. Then, 'I believe that there is no Hell, and all go to Heaven, so why should I pray?' The Church, however, believes that Hell is unfortunately real, and it will exist for eternity (CCC, 1035). If some angels have freely, knowingly, and irrevocably separated themselves from God, then this has also been a possibility for rational material beings, us, humans. God doesn't want anyone in Hell, in a tragically sad state of total and perpetual separation from God, but He in His great love doesn't want to go against our freedom and force us to be with Him in Heaven.

Many Protestant Christians and some Catholics apparently, don't believe either in Purgatory, or in a possibility of their deceased relatives, friends, or even them going there. Rather, they would like that their relatives go straight to Heaven, whether they practiced their faith seriously, little, or not at all. But wishful thinking doesn't make things real. Purgatory is also a part of the Church's belief (CCC, 1030ff). Despite its reputation, it is a temporary, second-best option after death. It is only for those who will go to Heaven. St. Cardinal Newman said that if there would be a sin or attachment to sin in a deceased, they would not be happy in Heaven (<https://www.newmanreader.org/works/parochial/volume1/sermon1.html>). So, to come to Heaven, in order to be fully happy, the Christian needs to be completely purified, either here on Earth or after death. In Purgatory one's soul is being 'purged', cleansed, washed clean from evils, or attachments to whatever is evil. Purgatory, then, is like a hospital, a 'spiritual rehab' where you go to get better. Imagine you break your arm. To heal it, you need to go to the hospital. At times a cast is enough, while sometimes you need surgery and time to recover. After that, you can use well your arm again. Hospital is similar to Purgatory since the purpose of Purgatory is to heal, restore the soul of the deceased so that after they have been healed from any sin or attachment to evil, they can go joyfully to Heaven. Purgatory, then, is good news.

Still, it is better to be purified from sin while here on Earth. We Catholics ordinarily can be purified from our sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation where we intentionally seek to be reconciled to God and His Church, our neighbour, and all creation. We are also spiritually cleansed when by the grace of God, we carry our Crosses, seek to love God and our neighbour, even our enemies.

We can pray to be purified ourselves but also show our love for our neighbour by praying for them at Mass or otherwise, especially for our beloved deceased. That is why we participate at funeral Mass, offer Mass intentions, pray for the deceased, to help them, if they need, to be purified. It doesn't mean that when we pray for our deceased, we judge them unworthy of the Kingdom, condemn them, or not love them. On the contrary, since we don't know where they are after death, but in case they are on the way to Heaven, we love them through our prayer and participation at Mass, which are the 'celebrations of God.' If our loved ones don't need our prayers anymore since they are in Heaven, our prayers will not be wasted since God will direct our prayers to someone else.

But you might tell me, 'Father, you don't want me then to talk about my deceased family member.' At the beginning of the Funeral Mass, the Church in the Archdiocese of Toronto permits some short 'words of remembrance,' where we may succinctly summarize the life of the deceased, even with a short story. But the Church avoids using the term 'eulogy', (Gr. 'to speak well'), in order to avoid praising our deceased, which might distract us from praying for them. They really need our prayers. We may share our stories about the deceased at the funeral homes and in our interactions, at best remembering the events where we recognize God who worked in their life. In this way, the stories about our deceased became a celebration of God in the life of that person, in our life, and not a mere 'celebration of life' of the deceased.

If on the other hand, we would insist on the 'celebration of life,' or Mass being there to 'celebrate the life of the deceased,' this could signal that we are not considering God in His temple, and are perceiving someone else as being more important than God, as if God doesn't exist. Couldn't that be an expression of idolatry? In praising the deceased, we would not pray for their soul, and would not really help them.

So, as we gather at Funeral Mass, rather than to celebrate a life of our deceased family members and friends, let us celebrate God who calls us into His life, praying that our beloved deceased may be quickly purified and so enter into the joy of the Lord's Kingdom. Let us help them with our prayers at Mass, always and everywhere. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. – And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. – Amen. May their soul and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. – Amen.



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