

Saint Gregory the Great
(Pope, Doctor)
3 September



About Saint Gregory the Great (540 - 604)

Saint Gregory the Great was born in Rome in about the year 540 and took up a career in the public service as was customary for a son of an aristocratic family in his day. His career in the public service culminated with being the Prefect of the City of Rome, a post he held for some time.

He founded a monastery in Rome and others in Sicily and then became a monk himself. He was then ordained a deacon and sent as envoy to Constantinople on a mission that lasted five years.

He was elected Pope on 3 September 590 and was the first monk to take up this office. **Saint Gregory was a great reformer and his work here included the administration of the Church's estates, whereby he donated the surplus from these reforms to assisting the poor and in the ransom of prisoners.**

He negotiated treaties with the Lombard tribes who were ravaging northern Italy at that time, and by forging a good relationship with these and other barbarian groups he was able to secure the **Church's position in places where Roman rule had broken down.**

He also worked to spread the Gospel or what we might call the Propagation of the Faith, where he sent Augustine (of Canterbury) and his monks as missionaries to England in the year 596. Gregory not only sent these men there, but he continued to provide them with advice and support and in the year 601 sent reinforcements.

Gregory wrote extensively on the topics of pastoral care, spirituality, and morals, and became the **first pope to use the title "servant of the servants of God".**

He is the father of Gregorian Chant and died on 12 March in the year 604. Since this day always falls during Lent, his feast day is celebrated on the anniversary of him being elected pope.

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What can we learn from Saint Gregory's life?

Saint Gregory realized that money is not everything in life. He knew that whilst it is necessary, it also needs to be shared around. He put his money and the Church's money to good use, by using what the Church needed for the Church and the extra to help the poor.

It is interesting to note that he wrote extensively on pastoral care. "Pastoral care" is one of those undervalued and underestimated resources. It can come in a variety of forms, but perhaps it is best summed up by lending a helping hand to someone when they are in need.

Gregory sent Saint Augustine of Canterbury and other monks to evangelize the English people. However, Gregory did not just send them there and leave them to their own devices. He communicated with them at a time when it would have taken a long time for a message to reach its intended destination. He also sent reinforcements to them. All of Saint Gregory's actions illustrate two things: firstly, he cared about people, he realized people are not machines. Secondly, he was a true leader, because he didn't ask of others what he wasn't prepared to do himself.

Quote

"These are not Angles, they are angels."

Collect

O God, who care for your people with gentleness
and rule them in love,
through the intercession of Pope Saint Gregory,
endow, we pray, with a spirit of wisdom
those to whom you have given authority to govern,
that the flourishing of a holy flock
may become the eternal joy of the shepherds.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

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Gospel

Luke 22:24-30

I confer a kingdom on you, just as the Father conferred one on me

A dispute arose between the disciples about which should be reckoned the greatest, but Jesus said to them:

'Among pagans it is the kings who lord it over them,
and those who have authority over them are given the title Benefactor.
This must not happen with you.

No; the greatest among you must behave as if he were the youngest,
the leader as if he were the one who serves.

For who is the greater: the one at table or the one who serves?
The one at table, surely?

Yet here am I among you as one who serves!

'You are the men who have stood by me faithfully in my trials;
and now I confer a kingdom on you,
just as my Father conferred one on me:
you will eat and drink at my table in my kingdom,
and you will sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.'

Antiphon

This is the steward, faithful and prudent,
whom the Lord set over his household
to give them their allowance of food at the proper time.

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Hymn for the Feast of Saint Gregory

1. **Gregory had wealth and pow'r, he served in ancient Rome.**

Prefect of the city where he had his home.

He became unhappy with the things he saw

so he chose that he__ would live that way no more.

2. He renounced everything- his wealth and his power

deciding that He__ would serve the Lord each hour.

All his wealth he spent_ to help those most in need,

servng them with kind-ness, was his every deed.

3. **As shepherd of God's flock, here on earth below,**

he would serve them humb-_ly, his example show,

servant of__ the ser-_vants, by which he was known,

he served people on earth and God on His throne.

4. **Like you Gregory may we sing God's praise each day**

and care for the poor in things we do and say.

So that our faith may grow and our love as well

to give glory to__ God and His wonders tell.

11.11.11.11

Other Music Suggestion

[Servant Song](#)

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