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First Sunday of Lent. Year A:

Prayers and Readings are from page 153 in the missal

Entrance Antiphon:

When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

Responsorial Psalm:

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Gospel Acclamation:

Glory and praise to you, O Christ. One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

Glory and praise to you, O Christ.

Communion Antiphone

One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

Readings:

Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7. Ps 51(50). Romans 5:12-19. Matthew 4:1-11.

Divine Office:

Week 1, 1st Week of Lent

Daily Readings:

1st Week of Lent

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH THETFORD

Celebrating 200 years proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ

Sunday 22nd February 2026

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday 21st		1730	<i>Private intention</i>
Sunday 22nd		0800	<i>Mgr Peter Leeming ✠</i>
		1000	<i>Pro Populo</i>
Monday 23rd	<i>Lent Feria</i>	1000	
Tuesday 24th	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>	0930	
	<i>Lent Feria</i>	1000	
	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>	1900	
Wednesday 25th	<i>Lent Feria</i>	NO MASS	
Thursday 26th	<i>Lent Feria</i>	1830	
Friday 27th	<i>Lent Feria</i>	1000	

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday 28th		1730	<i>Pro Populo</i>
Sunday 1st		0800	
		1000	<i>Delfim Bonfim ✠</i>

Confessions on Saturday at 4 pm, or by appointment after any Mass.
Don't forget to make your Confession during Lent!

Lent Programme:

Each Tuesday there will be Stations of the Cross at 9.30am and at 7pm.

Confessions are available on Saturday at 4 pm and by appointment after any Mass: please just ask!

Fr Andrew will be giving a series of Lent talks, 'The Desert Heart'. These will take place on Thursday 26th February, 12th March and 26th March: Mass at 6.30 pm and talk at 7 pm. All welcome!

Dates for your diary

- 26th February Lent talk: Mass at 6.30 pm, talk at 7 pm
10th March: Lenten Station Mass – St Edmund's, Bury at 7pm
Adoration & Confessions from 6pm, supper after Mass
12th March: Lent talk: Mass at 6.30 pm, talk at 7 pm
21st March: Parish Quiz Night – parish hall, after 5.30pm Mass
26th March: Lent talk: Mass at 6.30 pm, talk at 7 pm
27th March: Jubilee Station Mass – St Edmund's, Bury at 7pm
Adoration & Confessions from 6pm, supper after Mass
1st May: Induction of Fr Andrew as Parish Priest, 7pm Mass

Prayer Requests We pray for the sick: Fatima Anja, Patricia & Vittorio Cocuccio, Alicya Frydryk, Hazel Fullbrook, Albert and Maureen Huggett, Theresa Lescott, Sheila Sheppard, Madeline Tanner, and Clive Townsend.

We remember in our prayers those who have died recently and their families and friends: Mgr Peter Leeming, Greg Warwick, Luna Freitas, Tessa Trappes-Lomax, Olga Devonish, Mavis Bassett, Anna Manning, Thomas Collins, Delfim Bonfim.

Collections Sunday 15th February: £497.30 (of which £130 is gift aided) plus £316 in direct-to-bank contributions (average weekly figure). Many thanks for your financial support, which is much needed and much appreciated!

Pastoral Letter This weekend there is a Pastoral Letter from Bishop Peter on the 1st Sunday of Lent and the Diocesan Jubilee. Copies are available at the back of the church and on the website.

Mgr Peter Leeming, whom many of you will remember from his time here as Parish Priest, died this week: may he rest in peace and rise in glory! Details of his funeral will be announced in due course.

Explaining the teaching of the Church...

Fasting during Lent. The Church's teaching is that, during Lent, we "voluntarily abstain from something that is licit for and pleasing to them, in a spirit of penance." That is to say (1) we do it *voluntarily* – no-one's forcing us to do it; (2) what we give up is *licit* (ie legal) *for us* - we don't just give up bad things; and (3) *pleasing to us* – it is a genuine sacrifice for us; and finally (4) we do it in *a spirit of penance*: it is part of our Lenten repentance, whereby we turn our hearts back to God, and away from all the distractions, anxieties, and sins that separate us from Him. Whatever sacrifice we make enables us to share in Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, and thus enables us to share in the many graces that come from His great sacrifice for us.

What to do in Lent... With this newsletter you will a list of suggestions of 'What to do in Lent...' Have a prayer and a think about what God is asking you to do in this holy season.

Rachel's Vineyard is a healing ministry for those who are suffering from the trauma of abortion. The next Rachel's Vineyard retreat weekend in our diocese will take place on **March 6th–8th 2026**. For more information about this retreat or to have a chat call Helen on 0772 118 2521; or email suffolk@rachelsvineyard.org.uk; or visit: www.rachelsvineyard.org.uk

Parish Mission in Bury St Edmund's: 22nd February - 1st March Some of the sisters from the Community of Our Lady of Walsingham are running a parish mission at St Edmund's in Bury, which all those in the vicinity are also welcome to attend. For full programme and further information see: www.walsinghamcommunity.org/stedmunds

Parish Quiz Night – 21st March Although a little after his feast day, we'll be holding a St Patrick's Day Quiz Night for the parish on Saturday 21st March at 7pm in the parish hall. Bring your own food and drink. £5 per person as well as a raffle to raise funds for the parish. See Mary Patrick or Paul Gilbert for details.

Collection for Fr Mike Anyone who still wishes to make a contribution in gratitude for Fr Mike's time with us this last five months, please pass this on to Deacon Justin by Sunday 8th March at the latest.