



ST FRANCIS PARISH NEWSLETTER



Mass @ 11.00 am St Francis of Assisi – Before Mass each Saturday @ 5.15 pm The Sacrament of Reconciliation – Parish Rosary at 5:30, (Please contact Fr Felix directly to book a date/time for reconciliation)
(Tel 01787 472477 / halstead@brcdt.org).

Date	Time & Location	Intentions
Saturday 21st February St Peter Damian	6pm Vigil Mass	Health and wellbeing of all
Sunday 22nd February First Sunday in Lent	9am Mass St Nicholas	Health and healing of Rudo Mapanka and all in the parish
Sunday 22nd February First Sunday in Lent	11am Mass Halstead	Health and wellbeing of all
Monday 23rd February St Polycarp, Bishop	Mass @ 6pm	The sanctuary light prayer intention is for the repose of Eunice Gardener RIP
Tuesday 24th February	No Mass	
Wednesday 25th February	No Mass Bible Study	
Thursday 26th February	No Mass	
Friday 27th February St Gabriel & St Gregory of Narek	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction @ 8.30am and Mass @ 9.30am Stations of the Cross @ 18:30	<i>First reading: genesis 2: 7-9, 3: 1-17</i>

Second reading: Romans 5: 12-19

Gospel: Matthew 4: 1-11



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

- Our children liturgy restarts on the First Sunday of Lent 22nd of February. We thank Jacinta who has accepted to undertake this role.
 - There is an Easter Youth Club event involving the Sisihi Debate Club in St Francis Church hall on Sunday the 22 March 2026 immediately after I lam Mass. The topic will be “Easter is more important than Christmas”. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to attend.
 - Our Parish Youth Club takes place on the last Saturday of the month. It is open to ages 5-18.
 - We are calling for sponsorship for the sanctuary lights for 2026. Write your intention and “we would like to have your name registered in our records. Please pick up a form at the back, fill it and return it to me or drop it at the back of the church.
 - It will be beneficial for you to identify with an aspect of our parish life by committing your time and resources to the good of our parish. We need reinforcements on our volunteer team. If you would like to join our Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Eucharist, please speak to Fr. Felix.
 - It is a wholesome thought to pray for the dead (2 Maccabees 12:46). Consider offering a Mass for your departed loved ones and also for the living. Pick a form at the church's back and fill out your intentions.
 - There is a chance for communion of the sick at homes for the housebound. Please let me know if any parishioners require a visit.
 - It costs approximately £4,000 monthly to run our parish. Please consider sending an offering or a standing order to the parish. You can also make a donation to St. Francis of Assisi Church. Sort code: 40-13-22. Account Number: 71387014
 - Everyone is welcome to participate in the Sanctuary Light sponsorship for 2026. You have the option to contribute £5.00 towards our weekly prayers for your specific intentions. Many thanks to those who signed up last year.
 - Candles/ votive: £19.21
 - Weekend collection: £327.08
 - Many thanks for your generosity to the parish.
 - The Holy Water font is now available for us to use. From the tap, take some home for your use. Before using, please let Fr. Felix know. Feel free to bless yourself with the Holy Water font; however, sanitise your hands before use to minimise the risk of possible infection
- For your diaries:**
- Youth Club: Every Last Saturday of the Month. Next one is coming up on Saturday 28th February 2026
 - Coffee morning on Friday from 10am to midday



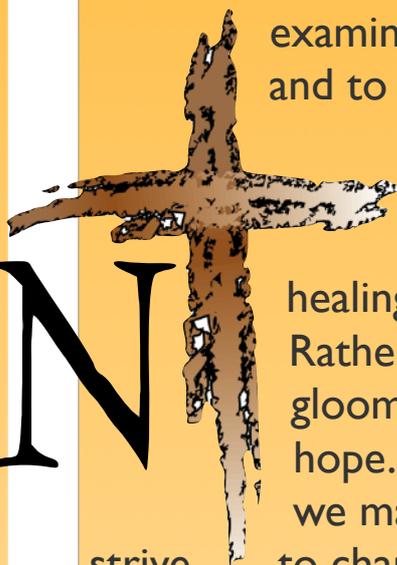
Father Felix

Lent is a sacred season in the life of the Roman Catholic Church, a forty-day journey of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that prepares us for the celebration of Easter. Rooted in Scripture, Lent recalls the forty days Jesus spent in the desert, where He fasted and prayed in preparation for His public ministry. In the same spirit, the Church invites us each year to enter into a time of spiritual renewal, reflection, and conversion.

The purpose of Lent is not merely self-denial, but transformation. Through prayer, we deepen our relationship with God. By setting aside extra time for Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, the Rosary, or personal reflection on Scripture, we open our hearts to hear the Lord more clearly. Fasting teaches us discipline and detachment from the comforts that can distract us from what truly matters. It reminds us of our dependence on God and unites us spiritually with those who suffer or go without. Almsgiving moves us outward in love, calling us to acts of charity, generosity, and justice toward our neighbours.

Lent is also a season of repentance and grace. It is a privileged time to

LENT



examine our consciences and to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, experiencing the healing mercy of God. Rather than a season of gloom, Lent is filled with hope. The small sacrifices we make, the habits we strive to change, and the prayers we offer are steps toward greater freedom in Christ.

As a parish community, we walk this journey together. Encouraging one another in faith, we prepare our hearts to celebrate the joy of the Resurrection. Lent reminds us that through sacrifice comes new life, and through the Cross comes the promise of Easter.

A novice came to the priest on the first day of Lent.

“Father, what should I give up?”

The pastor handed him a small mirror.

“Give up what you see.”

The novice frowned. “My face?”

The pastor shook his head. “Look again.”

The novice stared. He saw hunger for praise, fear of silence, impatience with weakness, a thousand small demands.

“How do I give this up?” he asked.

Continued

Bible study group are meeting
Wednesday
25th

February 2pm at
35 Potter St,

Sible Hedingham

New members
welcome to join
us to discuss

our faith, call if you need
more information.

07702 244880

Easter Lilies

It has been a regular invitation in
Halstead church to pay £5, to
remember a loved one. To fill the
church with the beautiful flowers at
Easter.



Hiring the church hall...

Please contact Lynda Jackson on
07855464876 - go straight to Lynda
and not through Father Felix please!



Medjugorje Web

The priest blew out the candle between
them.

“In the dark,” he said, “what remains of
your face?”

“Nothing,” said the novice.

“And yet you are still here.”

The pastor relit the candle.

“Lent is not losing yourself,” he said. “It
is losing what you are not.”

The novice left the room quietly.

That evening, he skipped supper and
felt proud.

He told no one—and felt prouder still.
He knelt to pray and thought of his
holiness.

Then he remembered the mirror.

The next day he returned it, unopened.

“Father,” he said, “I have given up giving
up.”

The priest smiled.

“Good,” he said. “Now keep Lent.”

