



The Bishops of Grantham and Grimsby

Pastoral Letter to the Diocese of Lincoln The First Sunday of Lent 2026

Dear Friends,

We wanted to write to you as soon as we could after the announcement of Bishop Stephen's suspension on Friday 20th February 2026.

We both wish to assure you of our commitment to you over the next weeks and months, as your bishops.

We cannot say any more about the circumstances of Bishop Stephen's suspension, but we are able to say that he is being pastorally supported.

We are committed to the pastoral care and support of victims and complainants when safeguarding allegations are brought forward. Such support is being given by the National Safeguarding Team in connection with the allegation against Bishop Stephen.

With the Archdeacons of Lincoln and Stow & Lindsey, Gavin Kirk and Eleanor Robertshaw, and the Dean of Lincoln, Simon Jones, alongside our Assistant Bishops, we will work to serve you, God's people in Greater Lincolnshire, and the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, with our utmost commitment and to the best of our ability.

Today we gather for worship. It is the first Sunday of Lent. These forty days are days for reflection, fasting, penitence and service. During Lent it is the Christian's faith that we will be restored, ultimately through the sacrificial grace that is found in the events of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day. There is always hope.

Lent can be a hard time, during which we are tested, and it seems that for God's people in the Diocese of Lincoln this year that will indeed be the case. But, together, as we love and serve, we believe that God will not abandon us. Indeed, it is perhaps in the most difficult of times that we will most assuredly find His mercy and His strength.

So, dear friends, may we all pray for each other, stand alongside each other, and embody, therefore, the compassionate heart of Christ for the communities that we love and serve in this beautiful Diocese of Lincoln.

With our prayers and best wishes,

+ Nicholas Grantham

The Rt Revd Dr Nicholas Chamberlain
Bishop of Grantham
Acting Bishop of Lincoln

+ Jean Grimsby

The Rt Revd Jean Burgess
Bishop of Grimsby