



Parish of St Peter & The Good Shepherd Bearsted & Harrietsham

A Member of Bearsted Area Churches Together



Newsletter

St Peter's Church, Button Lane, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8NJ

Church of The Good Shepherd, Rectory Lane (off East Street), Harrietsham, ME17 1HS

Contact us:

Parish Priest: Father Geoffrey Pointer: 01622 736100, email: parishpriest@catholic-bearsted.org.uk

Parish Deacon: Reverend Cyril Durbin: 01622 630055, email: cyrildurbin@btinternet.com

St Peter's Hall Bookings: 07919 084730

More information:

Parish Website: www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk

Diocesan Website: www.rcsouthwark.co.uk

The Catholic Church in England and Wales: www.catholicchurch.org.uk

Prayer: www.life4seekers.co.uk; www.holyspiritinteractive.net

Catholic Schools in our local area:

St Francis' Primary, Queen's Road, Maidstone ME16 0LB (Telephone: 771540)

The Holy Family Primary, Bicknor Road, Park Wood, Maidstone ME15 9PS (Telephone: 756778)

St Simon Stock Catholic Secondary, Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP (Telephone: 754551)

The PRESENTATION of The LORD



2nd February 2014

Candlemas

FAITH IN FOCUS: WORTH WAITING FOR

Certain moments in history call for a collective sigh of relief: the abolition of slavery, the end of the two World Wars, the pulling down of the Berlin wall, the fall of a corrupt dictator etc.

The feast of the Presentation is one such moment. In the Temple Jesus is presented to God by his parents in a religious ceremony. As it happens there are two elderly people nearby who catch a glimpse of the baby being brought in. They are Simeon and Anna. They have known hard times under the Roman occupation and they sense that somehow Jesus is God's answer to their many years of prayer. In fact, Simeon's name means "God has heard" and Anna's name means "grace and favour".

At last they can go in peace because they have seen God's promise become a reality. God really has heard and answered their prayers, showing them grace and favour in the form of the little child. They can give their sigh of relief.

What is it that you have been yearning for? What would have to happen for you to breathe a sigh of relief and gratitude? What's been at the heart of your prayers and your longing? For today, 40 days on from Christmas, we recognise that God is not deaf, not blind to our plight, but has heard our cries, our requests and our pleas. His answer is that Jesus points the way to real life, to fulfilment and to ultimate happiness.

Simeon and Anna represent all those men and women over the centuries who have yearned for more than the outward trappings of life, for something deeper. And God's answer to them and to us is the gift of his Son, a gift that can save the world. God does not hand us down an ideology, a set of religious policies or any other "-ology". He sends us a person and tells us to look at him, for he is the Light that can enlighten all people. Something worth waiting for?

(Author unknown)

TODAY is the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord; candles will be blessed at all the Masses. **The candles are extinguished before the readings.**

CONGRATULATIONS! Janet O'Neill and Mike and Angela Trigg were commissioned as Extraordinary Ministers of Communion at St George's Cathedral last Saturday. Our thanks to them for offering their services in this way and our congratulations, prayers and best wishes go with them.

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE Thanks to everyone who has responded - we now have 26 pilgrims from the parish signed up to join our Lourdes Pilgrimage, flying from Stansted, from 1st to 5th September, 2014. Please would you all join us for a brief initial meeting about the Pilgrimage at St Peter's immediately after **Sunday Mass today?** It's not too late for anyone else to join us - if you are interested come along to the meeting, or give Terry Kinsman a call (01622 730119).

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Please remember the children and their families in your prayers, especially as they prepare for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation in March.

CHURCHES TOGETHER Coming up: Bearsted Churches Together Friday Lent Lunches, between 14th March and 11th April, beginning at Methodist Church (St Peter's, 28th March). More information soon.



DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 2nd FEBRUARY 2014
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **The PRESENTATION of The LORD** ✕
Candlemas

Sun 2nd February	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Eustacia Iloenyosi, wellbeing
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: John Ratcliffe RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Mon 3rd	St Blaise	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 4th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 5th	St Agatha	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Truda Ryans RIP
Thu 6th	St Paul Miki and Companions	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 7th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass (usually followed by Exposition)
Sat 8th	Our Lady	<i>5:00-5:30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A)** ✕

Sun 9th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Len Richardson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Bob O'Donoghue RIP
		12noon	Baptism of William John Massey

YOUTH GROUP Monday evenings, 7 - 8.30pm. This week: **pizza making. Please bring your favourite topping, thank you.** Open to young people aged 10 - 15 years; older teenagers welcome to join in as young leaders. New members welcome!

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for February:** *That the Church and society may respect the wisdom and experience of older people; and that priests, religious, and lay people may work together with generosity for evangelization.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes, especially, Cyril Adam, Barbara Casey, Gretel Bignel and Mornington Hale; for those recently dead; and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now. For all our relatives and friends.
- **For clergy, religious, and an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life:** *We pray for all the religious congregations serving the needs of the Church in our Archdiocese. We pray especially for the Benedictine nuns at Minster Abbey and we ask God to bless all our congregations with new vocations.*

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£399.29** (Gift Aided, **£185.31**. Weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£121.00**).

A CALL TO ACTION (ACTA) in Southwark Diocese invites you to an Open Meeting **next Saturday** (8th February) at Amigo Hall, next to St George's Cathedral, from 10.30am (registration) to 3.30pm. The guest speaker will be Canon Michael Cooley MA STL PhL. The main theme of the day will be on building collegiality in "missionary communities" across the Southwark diocese. Please bring a packed lunch. There will be a collection on the day to help cover costs. Please visit www.acalltoaction.org.uk to find out more details about ACTA and its objectives and register in advance at www.sites.google.com/site/actasouthwark.

SOCIAL CONCERNS All interested are welcome to join the next informal Kent gathering of people concerned for issues of Justice and Peace, which will take place from 2.00 to 4.00pm on Sunday 9th February at The Hermitage, West Malling.

NATIONAL DAY of PRAYER and FASTING FOR LIFE Monday 10th February, the Vigil of the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The Good Counsel Network invites us to join them in a day of prayer and fasting for the end of abortion and the threat of euthanasia in this country. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed. See www.goodcounselnet.co.uk for more information.

SPECIAL DEANERY DAY Saturday 15th February from 10.30am to 1.00pm, Holy Family Parish Hall, Park Wood ME15 9PS. This is a follow up to the very successful Deanery Day of last year. It is hoped that all who attended the meeting last year will come and bring more of their parish teams with them to share good practice and experience within our deanery.