

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

Parish Priest: Father Geoffrey Pointer: 01622 736100, email: bearsted@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Deacon: Reverend Cyril Durbin: 01622 630055

St Peter's Hall Bookings: 07919 084730

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)

Parish Website and YouTube:

www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk

(Year A)

THE PRESENTATION of THE LORD

2nd FEBRUARY 2020

FAITH in FOCUS: WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? If you were told you were going to die tomorrow, would you be ready to go? Young and old alike, the answer to this question is probably "no"! Being ready to leave this world demands tremendous clarity, and whilst some of us have achieved clarity in our lives, the rest stumble around confused and overly burdened. We go through the motions of living but all too easily we are living out a 'ground-hog-day' existence... running on the spot and repeating the same old mistakes. What we need is someone to tell us where we are going wrong, and gently put us on the right track. In short, what we need is someone to light our way.

In today's gospel reading, Mary and Joseph present the Baby Jesus at the temple as Jewish law required. Here they meet the elderly Simeon and Anna. Simeon and Anna have been waiting for the promise written in scripture that a Saviour would come to give light to the world and bring salvation to the ends of the earth. Despite their great age, Simeon and Anna were living and praying in hope that they would see the fulfilment of God's promise. When Simeon sees the Baby Jesus and recognizes him as the Messiah, he is ready to die in peace because the fulfilment of scripture was his own personal fulfilment too.

So what are we waiting for in our lives today? Are we able to recognize Jesus and the opportunities he gives us as Simeon did, or are we too busy running around like headless chickens looking for happiness and reassurances in all the wrong places? How are we waiting? Are we waiting like the proverbial rabbit mesmerised by the fast approaching headlights, or are we waiting in constant preparation?

The time has come to stop flitting from one ambition to another and from one hollow goal to the next. The time has come to look for a genuinely important goal of God's floodlit making. *Chapel Bell*

CANDLEMAS The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is called 'Candlemas' because traditionally this is the day on which the year's supply of candles for the church is blessed. By the fifth century we were lighting candles on this day to symbolize that Jesus Christ was the light, the truth and the way. Today's Mass will begin with the blessing and distribution of candles. ✠ In the early church calendar today marked the close of the Christmas season. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, **26th February**; Lent Fast Day is Friday **6th March**.

TUESDAY ADORATION What is Eucharistic Adoration? Coming to pray before Jesus who is present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is solemnly exposed on the altar at St Peter's most **Tuesdays** of the year. Why not join us, whether for the entire 2 hours, including Mass, or for just 5 minutes?

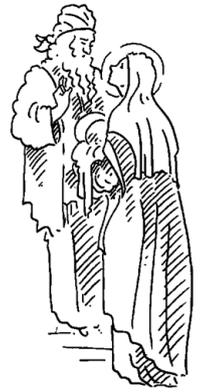
JUSTICE and PEACE Meeting this Tuesday at St Peter's.

FRIDAY COFFEE After Mass (on **Fridays**) at St Peter's.

FIRST COMMUNION MEETING The final meeting before half-term is **this Friday** at 4.15pm at St Peter's. Classes resume on 28th February.

IMPORTANT – CANDLE SAFETY Following an incident in a parish in the diocese shortly before Christmas during which a child's costume caught fire, the Archbishop has mandated "an immediate ban on the use of all traditional lighted candles by any external body on Church premises". See the briefing on the notice board along with [common sense] guidelines on the lighting of votive candles.

DIOCESAN CHOIR The Diocesan Choir is seeking singers for the Rite of Election (**15th February**), and the Chrism Mass (**28th March**) in St George's Cathedral this year. These are significant events in the life of the Diocese and are both joyous occasions. Singers will need to register in advance and must be able to make the rehearsal ahead of the service. For full details, see the poster and booking form on the noticeboard.



**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 2nd FEBRUARY 2020
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

✠ **THE PRESENTATION of THE LORD** ✠
Candlemas

Sun 2nd	Saturday	6.00pm	✠ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✠ Mass: Canon Brendan MacCarthy RIP
		10.30am	✠ Mass: Rita Kimber RIP
Mon 3rd	Feria	7.00pm	✠ Mass
Tue 4th	Feria	10.00am	✠ Mass Followed by Adoration until 12noon
Wed 5th	St Agatha	(H) 10.00am	✠ Mass: Truda Ryans RIP
Thu 6th	St Paul Miki and Companions	<i>No Mass; Church open as usual</i>	
Fri 7th	Feria	10.00am	✠ Mass: Pro Populo Coffee after Mass
Sat 8th	Our Lady <i>Day for Victims of Trafficking</i>	<i>5-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✠ FIFTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) ✠ <i>Racial Justice Sunday</i>			
Sun 9th	Saturday	6.00pm	✠ Vigil Mass: Len Richardson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✠ Mass: John Welchman RIP
		10.30am	✠ Mass: Tom and Joan Lawson RIP

MAIDSTONE DAY CENTRE ♦ Throughout **February** we will be collecting new and good used clothing for men and women.

BEARSTED CHURCHES TOGETHER: LENT LUNCHESES The very popular local churches' Lent Lunches are arranged for this year. They are on Fridays, lunch from 12.15pm (please don't arrive before that time), talk 1pm, questions 1.20 and finish around 1.30pm.

- **6th March:** Holy Cross - Speaker from MADM, 'Making A Difference Maidstone', which works with homeless, those in addiction, socially isolated, disadvantaged and in crisis in the Maidstone area.
- **13th March:** Methodist Church - Speaker from the chaplaincy at Maidstone Prison.
- **20th March:** Langley - Speaker from Choices, which works with those suffering domestic abuse.
- **27th March:** Thurnham - Speaker from the Fremlin Walk Chaplaincy.
- **3rd April:** St Peter's Church - Speaker about being an 'Eco-Church'.

(Please note that the churches are in a slightly different sequence this year.)

PLEASE PRAY...

- **For those infected with the corona virus, and especially for those who have returned home with the virus.** We pray that this virus may be controlled and contained swiftly before it can pose a greater threat.
- **With the Holy Father for February:** "Listen to the migrants' cries". We pray that the cries of our migrant brothers and sisters, victims of criminal trafficking, may be heard and considered.
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes,** for those who have died recently especially Nelly Marshall whose funeral is at Vinters this Wednesday; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now (see below); and for all our relatives and friends and those who have asked for prayers.
- **Anniversaries (St Peter's Chapel memorial):** ✠ Annie McCarthy, Edna Macklin, Truda Ryans, Peter Ahearne, Leonard Richardson, Barbara Casey, Trixie (Lily) Stewart-Day, Joan Lawson and Murray Fraser. ✠

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£462.53** (of which, **£228.53** was **Gift Aided**; in addition, weekly standing orders paid direct into our bank amount to **£185.00**). ♦ Next Sunday is **Racial Justice Day**; the theme this year is "You are the heart of the Church" and celebrates the contribution Travelling Communities make to the Church in England and Wales. A collection will be taken: contributions, however great or small, will help support the Church in its work with Travellers.

CAFOD Envelopes are, as always, available for you to make a donation: the needs are many and constant.

THE YEAR OF THE WORD In partnership with Bible Society, the Year of the Word focuses on celebrating, living and sharing God's word throughout the Catholic Church in England and Wales until the end of December 2020. Pick up a booklet 'The God who Speaks' for more information, or visit: <http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/>.

BITESIZE We are each gifted in a unique and important way. It is our privilege and our adventure to discover our own special light.

Evelyn Dunbar