

OUR LADY of GILLINGHAM



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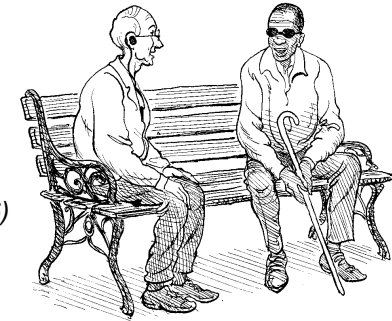
6th September 2009

✕ TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY ✕

WORD of GOD

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
 and the ears of the deaf unsealed;
 then the lame shall leap like a deer
 and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy.

(Isaiah 35:5-6)



WORD for TODAY

People knew that when the Messiah came he would be accompanied by wonderful things happening in the world. Christians accept Jesus as the Messiah. As a Christian what positive signs do you see around you that point to the Messiah?

SOMETHING TO PRAY ABOUT...

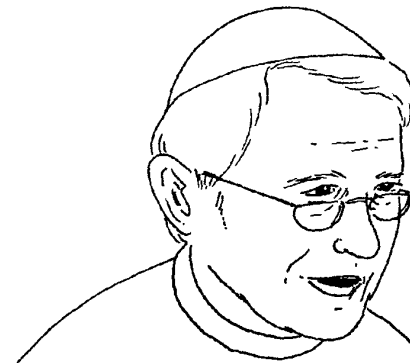
We can join Pope Benedict in his prayer intentions for the month of September:

General:

That the word of God may be better known, welcomed and lived as the source of freedom and joy.

Missionary:

That Christians in Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar, who often meet with great difficulties, may not be discouraged from announcing the Gospel to their brothers and sisters, trusting in the strength of the Holy Spirit.



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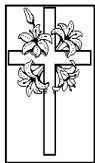
DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 6th SEPTEMBER 2009

✕ TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY ✕

Sun 6	Saturday	6.30pm	✕ Vigil Mass: William Perkins RIP
	Sunday	9.30am	✕ Mass: Lucy Singh (in thanksgiving)
		11.00am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		12noon	<i>Baptism of Macie Campbell</i>
		12.30pm	<i>Baptism of Christopher Laphorn</i>
Mon 7	Feria	7.00PM	✕ Mass: Fr Gerald Quinn
Tue 8	The Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary	9.15am	✕ Mass: Wellbeing of Greta Hyde
Wed 9	Feria	8.00am	✕ Mass: Rebecca Cannavina
Thu 10	Feria		NO MASS
Fri 11	Feria		NO MASS
Sat 12	The Holy Name of Mary	10.00am	✕ Mass: Franco Verdolini RIP
		10.30am	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY ✕			
Sun 13	Saturday	6.30pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Dec'd members of Lee Family
	Sunday	9.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		11.00am	✕ Mass: Eugenio Grosso RIP

Please pray for the following, whose anniversaries occur this week:

Salvatore Formosa, Ernest Cragan, Kenneth Almond, Matteo Rocco,
 Betty O'Connel, Alice Wills, Iris Appleton, Fedor Yarmak,
 Stuart Hills, Philip Dunford, Tony Collins, Marjorie Shea,
 Joyce Guscott, Hilda Mason and Lisette Cathan.



May their souls and the souls of all the ✕ faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

AROUND the PARISH

THE BEST LAID PLANS For various personal reasons Fr Paul has asked to be excused his commitment to supply here this summer. This has meant an 11th hour search for replacements while Fr Geoffrey takes his summer break. Very fortunately Fr James Clark and Fr Kevin Fitzgerald are able to supply during Fr Geoffrey's absence and we are very grateful to them both. Please note that as a result our daily liturgical timetable has had to be adjusted to fit in with Fr James' and Fr Kevin's other commitments; Sunday Mass times remain the same. Please consult the newsletter and keep an eye on the website. There will be no Mass on Thursday for the next two weeks, and other weekday Mass times may have to be changed or cancelled altogether. Sorry for any inconvenience.

SCHOOLS St Mary's, our parish school, re-opens this week and we pray for all the staff and children starting the new school year, especially the little ones going to school for the first time. Our thoughts are also with our young people starting, or returning to their secondary schools and to those who are off to college shortly or venturing into the world of work. We all know from the media that it is not an easy year for youngsters, and we hope that all those in our parish will be able to make a successful transition to adult life.

JEWELLERY COLLECTION If you have not been able to bring in your unwanted or broken items of old jewellery for the collection this weekend, please give them to the Priest, or any of the Church helpers at any time during the next two weeks. Thank you assisting the building fund in this way.

PARISH LUNCH As Fr Paul's visit to England is delayed the Parish lunch for 20th September is postponed. More information later.

VISITS to the RELICS of St THERESE

Several parishioners would like to visit the relics at some time across the three days they are at Aylesford Priory (9th to 11th October), but have problems getting there. If you are intending to attend any of the celebrations by car and could offer a lift to one or two other parishioners, please put your name and phone number on the list in the porch. Thank you.

CONCERT 10th October: Please keep the evening of 10th October free in your diary. The Siskin Singers will be giving a concert in the church at 7.45pm, followed by cheese and wine in the hall. This will be easy listening music, both classical and popular, and should be a very enjoyable event. £5 entrance and all proceeds to go to the Building Fund.

AROUND the DIOCESE and BEYOND

ANNUS SACERDOTALIS Pope Benedict XVI has asked that the year commemorating the centenary of the death of St Jean Marie Vianney be observed as a Year of Priesthood. There is a prayer calendar of all the priests of the Diocese available in the porch, and we are asked to pray for them daily by name.

A DAY WITH MARY Our Lady Help of Christians, Guildhall Street, Folkestone, Saturday 19th September, 10.15am. Details on the poster in the porch.

BARN DANCE At the Millennium Centre Rainham on 19th September in aid of the Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust. 7.30pm to 10.30pm, tickets £7. Contact Olwen O'Dowd on 263622.

HOPE FOR A NEW BEGINNING A beginning experience weekend for the widowed, separated and divorced at Aylesford Priory 25-27 September. Beginning Experience is a ministry led by a trained team of volunteers. Their work is carried out at special weekend gatherings which encourage participants to share their need and deal with the natural process of

grief and loneliness. Contacts: Ruth, 0208 8679 7157, Sandra, 01293 783965 or Susan, 01227 264961. For further details please see the poster in the porch.

CHURCHES TOGETHER A meeting will be held to sample local views about Churches Together in Kent, at The Vines Church, Victoria Street, Gillingham on Monday 28th September at 8pm. Bishop John has encouraged attendance from the Catholic community. The meeting will last less than an hour.

St THERESE of LISIEUX The relics of St Thérèse will be visiting Aylesford Priory from 9th to 11th October. The relics will be placed in the Relic Chapel and people are invited to process past the casket. They may reverently touch the casket if they wish, and bring to God through the intercession of St Thérèse whatever intentions they have. Although the accent is on enabling people to spend time in silent prayer, drawing closer to God through this unique opportunity, there will also be liturgies and times of guided prayer. For full details of events pick up a brochure.

FAITH IN FOCUS: HAPPY DAYS The Jewish people couldn't wait for the Messiah to come. The prophets had promised that when he did arrive, things would be very different and it would be a time of great rejoicing. Isaiah paints a picture of blind people seeing once more, deaf people hearing again and disabled people jumping like deer. There was a tremendous feeling of longing and yearning for the Messiah, especially since the land was currently occupied by a foreign army. So when Jesus appears on the scene people begin to wonder whether or not he might be the Messiah they were expecting. By the end of today's gospel they have made their minds up. "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak", they say, quoting what Isaiah had predicted

would happen. Jesus hasn't gone away. He's still with us till the end of time through the Spirit. So what about these "happy days", these Messianic signs? Have they disappeared? Or is Jesus still doing "all things well"? To have faith means to see and hear things differently. We often speak about people having the eyes of faith. It doesn't mean that they see different things but that they are able to see things in a different perspective, from God's perspective. That's why when they see grief and suffering they feel the same pity as an atheist but they are able to see beyond the grave. When they walk in the countryside and listen to the singing of the birds they are aware of nature but they know that there is someone who created our natural world around us. Faith in Jesus the Messiah opens our eyes to what lies beyond physical sight; it opens our ears to hear good news in the midst of the world's troubles; it provides us with a cause for joy because it reminds us that God will not abandon us. The Jewish people did not fear the coming of the Messiah, because they had an expectant hope that he would set them free from all that prevented them from living the life that their God had promised them. Christians too welcome Jesus as Messiah, for he comes to set us free, to release us from a blurred vision of our world, from being deaf to the voice of God in our surroundings. He invites us to sing for joy!

ATTENDANCE 380 people attended Mass here last weekend; we received **£579.54** in the offertory. Next weekend is Racial Justice Sunday and there will be a retiring collection for the Catholic Association for Racial Justice. Football parking yielded **£93** and we received a donation of **£20** for the building fund. Thank you. We have also received **£31.20** from Smurfit for the last load of waste paper and cardboard.