



# 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:

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**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)

**Year A**

**THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

**12th January 2014**

### **FAITH IN FOCUS: WATER LEVEL**

Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan by his cousin, and a voice from heaven pointed him out as the Son of God. Listen to him, it said. There's a River Jordan that runs past each of our doors. We know it's there and we can choose whether to step into it whenever we go out, or else side-step around it. For to step into the river means to immerse ourselves in the business of baptism. That's not babies and christening shawls, but the nuts and bolts of what makes us tick, how we relate to each other. Baptism commits us to a way of living and breathing. We say that Jesus's baptism marked him out in three ways. He was shown to be a priest, a prophet and a king. And each time we baptise a new Christian we tell them that they too are to live as priests, prophets and kings. To be baptised as priests, as we all are, means to offer God a life that is pleasing. It means to present God with a sacrifice of praise. We are called to make the most of all we do, to use our skills, to bring our needs and those of others to God in prayer, to make our lives acceptable to God. Some deep water here.



Perhaps we would not normally think of ourselves as prophets, but that's what the baptism rite tells us we are. It's easy to see how Jesus was a prophet, for prophets tell people what God wishes them to know and act on. By baptism we have become prophets of the Good News whose job it is to proclaim our faith to the world, to say what God has told us whether it's welcome or not. The temptation, of course, is to stay out of the wet and leave it to those who seem keener than us.

To be thought of as kings (monarchs) sounds strange these days. In the days of Christ a king had a kingdom and was responsible for the citizens of that kingdom. As members of the kingdom of God we are called to rule by protecting the weak and vulnerable, serving the cause of right and creating an environment where all can prosper and grow. It means getting involved at the deep end.

To be a priest, prophet and king means to get into that River Jordan each day. Next time you go out, ask yourself how wet your feet are. *(Author unknown)*

**ADVENT APPEAL 2013** The Advent Appeal this year was for the **Maidstone Churches' Winter Shelter**. They are aiming to provide shelter for homeless people in Maidstone from 30th December until 23rd February. They are using seven churches in Maidstone between 7pm and 8am. They hope to support homeless people to move on to appropriate accommodation. They also hope they can continue this project in future years. **So far we have managed to forward £876 (£303.50 from the pre-Christmas Quiz and £573 from the Appeal itself) to those promoting the fund.** It's not too late to donate given that the provision continues through to next month.

**CHRISTMAS** The Church's liturgical celebration of Christmas concludes this Sunday, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Ordinary Time before Lent begins this Monday, 13th January, the First Week in Ordinary Time, ferial cycle 2 (weekday readings at Mass), psalter week 1 (Divine Office). Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 5th March.

**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 6th JANUARY 2014**  
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **The BAPTISM of the LORD (A)** ✕

Sun 12th	Saturday	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Peter Fraser RIP
			<b>10.30am</b>
Mon 13th	Feria	<b>7.00pm</b>	✕ Mass
Tues 14th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Wed 15th	Feria	<b>(H) 10.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Thu 16th	Feria	<b>7.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Fri 17th	St Anthony	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass (usually followed by Exposition)
Sat 18th	Feria	<i>5:00-5:30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **SECOND SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) Peace Sunday** ✕

Sun 19th	Saturday	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Stephanie Cuming RIP
	Sunday	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Anne Love RIP
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		<i>2.00pm</i>	<i>Unity Service at Bearsted Methodist Church</i>

**CHRISTMAS RAFFLE** The net profit to the parish from the Christmas Draw was **£808.66**. Thank you to those who promoted the raffle and organized the selling of the tickets, and to those who bought and sold tickets; well done if you won a prize!

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2014** Our children began their preparations for First Holy Communion last Friday; sessions will continue at St Peter's during term time. Please remember the children and their families in your prayers, especially as they prepare for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation in March.

**UNITY OCTAVE** From 18th until 25th January the Church observes eight days' prayer for Christian Unity. The theme this year asks: Is Christ divided? Or is it something we have grown accustomed to, as though it were a creaky door that we never seem to get around to fixing? ✕ **Coming up:** Bearsted Churches Together Lent Lunches, 14th March to 11th April, beginning at Bearsted Methodist Church. (St Peter's, 28th March.) More information soon.

**PLEASE PRAY...**

- **With the Holy Father for January:** *That all may promote authentic economic development that respects the dignity of all peoples; and that Christians of diverse denominations may walk toward the unity desired by Christ.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes, especially, Cyril Adam, Barbara Casey and Nellie Marshall; for those recently dead; and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now. For all our relatives and friends.
- **For all migrants**, who travel to find work or to find refuge: may we welcome them into our communities, and value the many gifts that they bring.

**Thank you** for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£404.89** (Gift Aided, **£212.50**. Weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£121.00**). ♦ We banked **£42** for the Cabrini Children's Society from the crib offerings. ♦ Next Sunday is **Peace Sunday**, a day of prayer for Peace on Earth. There is no official collection for this, but if you wish to contribute to the work of *Pax Christi*, the International Catholic Movement for Peace, envelopes are available.

**CHURCHES TOGETHER** There is to be a service for Christian Unity at the Methodist Church in Bearsted at 2pm next Sunday, 19th January (during the Church Unity Octave of Prayer). It is preceded by a soup lunch. © *Sorry for the misinformation in last week's newsletter.*

**CHANGING TIMES** Bishop John, who was founder Parish Priest here at Bearsted and Harrietsham, has relinquished his special responsibility as Area Bishop for Kent. In his place we welcome Fr Paul Mason who as Episcopal Vicar for Kent has taken over these responsibilities until a new Area Bishop is appointed. Bishop John is not moving far: he has taken over as Parish Priest of Tenterden following the retirement of Mgr Edward Hill. Our good wishes to Bishop John, Mgr Ted and Fr Paul!