



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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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

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

20th July 2014

FAITH IN FOCUS: IS GOD ASLEEP?

People have wondered over the centuries how it is that we call God almighty and powerful, yet things happen in our world that he seems powerless to do anything about. Leaving aside sickness and disease, slavery, Hitler and Stalin, drugs crime etc., what about September 11th, suicide bombers, political murders and continental famine? If we were God we'd surely be out there in the thick of it, sorting things out and making sure some people got their just deserts for what they've been up to. But God doesn't stir. It's as if he's asleep like the farmer in today's gospel.



Philosophers say that God does not intervene because this would interrupt the laws of nature. Theologians say that God has given us total freedom to behave in any way we choose and this free will would be contradicted if God kept treating us like puppets or robots. What matters, they say, is that we should be prepared to accept ultimate responsibility for our actions - both sides of the grave.

The writer of the Book of Wisdom gives us a clue. In the face of evil God watches from afar, but he always steps in to offer people the gift of repentance. In other words, God is hoping that even the most sinister (and that of course includes us) will seize the chance of mending their ways. God is mild in judgement and governs with lenience, Wisdom says, and even after sin he holds out the olive branch if only the sinner is prepared to repent.

God's perspective is different from ours. The kingdom of God is still at the growing stage. He sees things over a lifetime and he judges in eternity's seconds. He is not a God who nips in the bud, but one who is always prepared to wait until the eleventh hour - just in case. At times this may seem frustrating to us when we would like some sort of dramatic intervention as God stoops to give someone their comeuppance. But there again, when he allows us to make slow progress in the hope that one day we might repent, then we're quite glad that he seems to be sleeping. *(Author unknown)*

DAY FOR LIFE *Next Sunday* – the day in the Church's year dedicated to celebrating the dignity of life. This year the Church calls upon young people in particular to protect and cherish life from conception to natural death. *This is particularly relevant in the light of the current debate in parliament on so-called assisted dying.* www.dayforlife.org.

FLOWER FESTIVAL St Peter's 30th anniversary festival of flower, **26th – 28th September**. Please sign up if you would like to be involved in any way leading up to and during the three days.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE Meeting this Tuesday, 8pm, usual venue.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 20th JULY 2014
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **SIXTEENTH SUNDAY (A)** ✕

Sun 20th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Truda and Joseph Ryans RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Dominick Fanning RIP
Mon 21st	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Therese Sophie Weedon RIP
Tues 22nd	St Mary Magdalene	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 23rd	St Bridget	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: James Hamilton RIP
Thu 24th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 25th	St James	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 26th	SS Joachim and Anne	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY (A)** ✕

Day for Life

Sun 27th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Jim Nolan RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Trixie Hall RIP

CHOIR NEWS Rehearsal **today**, after our 10.30am Mass; sung Mass next **Sunday, 27th July**. *All are welcome!*

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for July:** *that sports may always be occasions of human fraternity and growth; and that the Holy Spirit may support the work of the laity who proclaim the Gospel in the poorest countries.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes, especially Pierre Niebergall, Cyril and Jean Adam and Barbara Casey; for those recently dead especially Kate Ann Knight; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; and for all our relatives and friends.
- **For those murdered in the Malaysian aircraft** brought down over Ukraine; and for the victims of the indiscriminate bombing in Gaza, especially the little children.
- **That God will call from among us** more men and women who will serve as religious brothers or sisters or as consecrated lay people living in the middle of the world. *May the witness they give remind us of God's love.*

<p>Thank you: the sum received last weekend at Mass was £358.68 (of which £105.12 was Gift Aided). ♦ The retiring collection for the Apostleship of the Sea amounted to £179.33. ♦ Next Sunday there will be a retiring collection to support Life (see above). The proceeds of the collection will go to the Anscombe Bioethics Centre and other life-related activities supported by the Church.</p>

CHILDREN'S LITURGY The last session before the school holidays is at St Peter's this Sunday; we resume in September. Our thanks and love to Therese Hammond who has been running the programme for the last few years and is now stepping down.

CONGRATULATIONS Our congratulations and best wishes to Ian Black from St Francis', ordained to the Permanent Diaconate yesterday (Saturday) by Bishop John; we keep him and his family in our prayers.