



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

SECOND SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

19th January 2014

Peace Sunday

FAITH IN FOCUS: NO ONE QUITE LIKE YOU

When a man and woman fall in love strange things happen. Each becomes absorbed in the other. They constantly think about each other. They want to know all about their partner and they find each other fascinating. There is nothing ordinary about your girlfriend or boyfriend because they seem special to you. So special, in fact, that you can't understand why everyone else doesn't see it. And you would do anything for them. You really love them. Is it possible, or even decent, that God should have this sort of love for us? So often when we say that God loves us we mean it in a distant sense. It's like saying that we love French people.

What we really mean is that we find them pleasant and we would do nothing to harm them. But there's a very different type of love between us and the French than that which exists between lovers.

Today Isaiah reminds us of how exactly God loves us. Not in some remote and general way, but in an intimate and deep sense. God has loved each one of us since the moment he allowed us to start forming in the womb. And God is fascinated with us not just as members of the human race but as individual persons.

That's because God made us and wants us to be happy and prosper. Each of us is special to God because God is not some sort of principle but is a person. As a person he craves a personal relationship with us. Not a hair on our head is lost without God noticing it and being concerned for us. For he loves everything that he has made. Part of the greatness of God is his ability to stoop down to our level and our petty concerns and worries. As a lover he is bothered about what bothers us. He knows and loves us so much that there is something he has entrusted to us that is unique. And if we are to respond to God's amorous overtures then we have to be prepared to use that uniqueness in his service. When God proposes, our response can only be that of the psalmist: Here I am, Lord. I come to do your will! (Author unknown)



PEACE SUNDAY Pope Francis' message for World Peace Sunday is: 'Living as one family is the foundation and pathway to peace'. How far do we really live as brothers and sisters? How indeed do we treat our own brothers and sisters? Peace begins in the family, in the home, in the here and now. ✦ The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. – *Mohandas Gandhi*.

CHURCHES TOGETHER There is to be a service for Christian Unity at the Methodist Church in Bearsted at 2pm this 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.

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.

ADVENT APPEAL 2013 The Advent Appeal this year was for the **Maidstone Churches' Winter Shelter**. It's not too late to donate given that the provision continues through to next month.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 19th JANUARY 2014
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

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

Sun 19th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Stephanie Cuming RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Anne Love RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		<i>2.00pm</i>	<i>Unity Service at Bearsted Methodist Church</i>
Mon 20th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 21st	St Agnes	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 22nd	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 23rd	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 24th	St Francis de Sales	10.00am	✕ Mass (usually followed by Exposition)
Sat 25th	The Conversion of St Paul the Apostle	<i>5:00-5:30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ THIRD SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) ✕			
Sun 26th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Rita d'Incoronato RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Noel Millbrook RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2014 Please remember the children and their families in your prayers, especially as they prepare for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation in March.

CHOIR NEWS Thank you for all the lovely singing over Christmas - especially the Midnight Mass! Next rehearsals: Sunday 19th January, after our 10.30am Mass; Tuesday 28th January, 8 - 9pm; Sung Mass Sunday 26th January. All are welcome!

YOUTH GROUP is back! Monday evenings 7 - 8.30pm. This week: uni hockey and darts! 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 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 especially Peggy Cropper, Marie Quarman's mother; and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now. For all our relatives and friends. For those being commissioned as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion next Saturday at the Cathedral.
- **For those preparing to be ordained to the priesthood** this year, that they may grow in intimacy with Christ and foster in their hearts a desire to serve his people.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£414.17** (Gift Aided, **£292.04**. Weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£121.00**). ♦ We banked a further **£16.05** for the Cabrini Children's Society from the Good Shepherd crib offerings. ♦ **Today 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.

St VINCENT DE PAUL The SVP have thanked us for our parish donation to the Society of **£237.03**. It will be used in our local area. ★ Oasis have also thanked us for our tithed donation of **£885.08** to the refuge for women victims of domestic abuse.

TAIZÉ "Lenten Prayer around the Cross" is being held on Friday 14th March, 7:45pm (song practice from 7:15pm) at St George's Cathedral, Southwark. See poster for more information.

JOYCE'S CHRISTMAS CARD Further to the theft of the monies donated in lieu of Christmas Cards in December, I have received some very generous donations. After counting the signatures on the poster and making a "questimation" as to the amount of the donated money stolen together with the subsequent donations, I have donated £200 to the project providing the homeless of Maidstone overnight shelter during the winter months. My thanks to all who supported my initiative; it was, in the end, worthwhile. *Joyce Gibson*