

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:

Parish Priest: Father Geoffrey Pointer: 01622 736100, email: parishpriest@catholic-bearsted.org.uk

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)

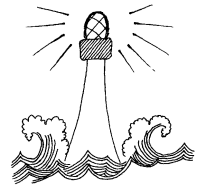
Year A

FIFTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

9th February 2014

FAITH IN FOCUS: A PRIVATE DO

There's nothing more ludicrous than to hear the newscaster say, "The couple plan a private ceremony". By definition you can't really have a private wedding because the very marriage ceremony implies a social contract that is publicly ratified and witnessed. In a similar vein private baptisms miss the point that the child is being incorporated into a believing community, and private funerals are just extremely sad affairs that take little account of the fact that the deceased was a member of the wider Body of Christ. Yet we can easily fall into the same trap ourselves. Often we come to church and think of it as a time for me and God, forgetting that we come to form part of a worshipping body, a community gathered together with a common purpose: to praise God in word and song. And in our prayer too, it's tempting to close in on ourselves and God, to talk to God just about what bothers me, what I want, how I feel.



But Christians are supposed to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. And salt and light are social, public images. When Jesus uses them he is emphasising the missionary, evangelising role that we all have. For we don't hide lights away; we put them where everyone can see and benefit from them. And when we put salt in food it flavours the whole dish, not just the part of the pan that we dropped it into. Being salt means not keeping things to ourselves. It's not about leaving a bitter taste in the mouth of those we meet, but adding a flavour to their day. And in the same way light is about being witnesses to the one true light which darkness can never blot out: Jesus Christ. To be the light of the world is to show the world that there is a way to live which can bring ultimate fulfilment. It's about pointing the way forward when all seems gloom and doom.

Our religion, then, is not hole-in-the-wall, private affair. It's a call to be the universal flavouring which entices the hungry and the global light which prevents the world from stumbling.

(Author unknown)

NEXT SUNDAY is Education Sunday. It offers an opportunity for schools and parishes to work together to promote Catholic education in the local community. The relationship between parish and Catholic school has been central in preserving the Catholic ethos of the education. Following the re-establishment of the Catholic hierarchy in 1850 the building of schools was often prioritised over the building of Churches, a clear indication of the Church's commitment to education and its role in the formation and development of the whole person. These schools were often used as the main place of worship with the whole Catholic community gathering together to support each other. A collection will be taken after Mass next weekend for the Catholic Education Service.

MARIST MISSIONS Advanced notice that our annual diocesan appeal this year will be given by the Society of Mary (Marist Fathers) the weekend 22nd and 23rd February. Fr Reginald Riley will give the appeal.

CHURCH DOORS at St PETER'S We have had both the church and hall main doors repaired recently, but both doors have warped over the years and they are a bit bent in the middle. This week a 'ball catch' was added near the church door handle to hold the door closed, but this may need a firmer pull to open the door until the new rubber draught proofing squashes down a bit. At the hall the warping means that the key seems difficult to turn in the lock. Just push a little on the wood near the lock and it will turn easily.

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE Thank you to those who turned up last Sunday. We will hold 2 further meetings on **11th May and 6th July** at St Peter's, both on Sundays at 3.30pm for Benediction in the church followed by tea / coffee and discussion in the Church Hall.

PARISH CaFE Wednesday evenings during Lent: another series of DVDs, talks and discussions on aspects of our Faith in an informal atmosphere. More information soon.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 9th FEBRUARY 2014
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A)** ✕

Sun 9th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Len Richardson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Bob O'Donoghue RIP
		12noon	Baptism of William John Massey
Mon 10th	St Scholastica	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 11th	Our Lady of Lourdes	10.00am	✕ Mass: For our Parish Pilgrimage
Wed 12th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 13th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 14th	Ss Cyril and Methodius	10.00am	✕ Mass (usually followed by Exposition)
Sat 15th	Our Lady	5:00-5:30pm	Confessions

✕ **SIXTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A)** ✕
Education Sunday

Sun 16th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Donald Scully RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Eric Smith RIP

YOUTH GROUP Monday 10th February: 7 - 8.30pm. This week: Have you ever wanted to **make your own volcano, lava lamp** or even **slime**? It's **science night** this Monday! New members welcome! Open to young people aged 10 - 15 years; older teenagers welcome to join in as young leaders.

CHOIR NEWS Next rehearsals: Tuesday 25th February: 8-9pm; Sunday practice and Sung Mass: dates TBC. All are welcome!

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for February:** *That the Church and society may respect the wisdom and experience of older people; and that priests, religious, and lay people may work together with generosity for evangelization..*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes, especially, Cyril Adam, Barbara Casey and Mornington Hale; for those recently dead, especially Monsignor Canon Jeff Scott; and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now. For all our relatives and friends.
- **We pray for parents**, especially the parents of our parish: may they be strengthened by God's grace to form their children in the knowledge and love of God, and foster within them a desire to serve both God and neighbour. We pray for our children preparing for First Reconciliation in March.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£511.15** (Gift Aided, **£292.20**. Weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£121.00**). ♦ **Next weekend** there will be a retiring collection after all Sunday Masses for the **Catholic Education Service**.

NATIONAL DAY of PRAYER and FASTING FOR LIFE On Monday 10th February, the Vigil of the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The Good Counsel Network invites us to join them in a day of prayer and fasting for the end of abortion and the threat of euthanasia in this country. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed. See www.goodcounselnet.co.uk for more information.

SPECIAL DEANERY DAY Next Saturday **15th February** from **10.30am to 1.00pm**, Holy Family Parish Hall, Park Wood ME15 9PS. This is a follow up to the very successful Deanery Day of last year. It is hoped that all who attended the meeting last year will come and bring more of their parish teams with them to share good practice and experience within our deanery.

WILLING TO SERVE as a SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEAL PANEL MEMBER? On behalf of the governing bodies of Catholic Schools in the Diocese, the Education Commission is currently seeking volunteers to sit on Appeal Panels, which hear appeals from parents who have not been offered places for their children at their preferred school. Please contact the Commission for an application form and further information as soon as possible either by phone: (01689) 829331 or email: office@educationcommission.org.uk. Completed application forms should be sent back to the Commission by 7th March 2014.

CHANGES to KENT FREEDOM PASS allowing children free public transport to and from their chosen Catholic School: Please sign the petition at the back of the church to oppose the £350 proposed cap, or do it online at: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?Id=253>.