



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

SEVENTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

23rd February 2014

FAITH IN FOCUS: GET YOUR OWN BACK?

One of the most misquoted phrases from the bible is "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth". People use it to justify revenge. They think that it means you can get your own back on those who do wrong to you. What they don't understand is that this phrase in the Old Testament was used to ensure that people did not retaliate wildly against each other. It was intended to set the limits, to stop people looking for a payback that was out of proportion to the offence. So if someone cheats you out of your car, you shouldn't try and have their home taken away from them. If someone defrauds you of a thousand pounds you shouldn't try and sue them for a million. Our response should be proportionate. This is not a response favoured by the "no-win-no-fee" lawyers!



Christianity invites us always to be more generous in our response than we need to be. A Roman soldier could demand by law that a Jew must carry his load for approximately one mile. Carry it two, says Jesus. You must forgive your enemies, says the law. Don't just forgive them, says Jesus: love them and pray for them.

Of course, Christians are mocked for following this teaching of Jesus. It doesn't rank among the streetwise skills. In fact it runs contrary to a society that prizes assertion, aggressiveness and getting a "piece of the action". But there's one obvious ingredient missing from the commonly agreed way of behaving: God. When it comes to loving your enemies, the idea that Christianity is simply nothing more than good manners breaks down. For the teaching of Jesus is not only revolutionary but also subversive. It challenges society's commonly accepted ideas about how we should deal with those who break the law, those who threaten our security or those who offer us the chance of making a fortune at the expense of others. This is because if we model ourselves on God then we are signing up to values that put others first, especially the weak and vulnerable. And if God, who created us in his own image of goodness and holiness, chooses not to obliterate us when we deface his image in our world, then how can we possibly claim vengeance for the paltry complaints that we have against others?

Anyone can love those who are good to them. It takes a special kind of person to be able to love their enemies. And it's the minimum requirement for a Christian. *(Author unknown)*

MARIST MISSIONS This weekend our annual diocesan appeal this year will be given by the Society of Mary (Marist Fathers). Fr Reginald Riley will give the appeal. Please give him a warm welcome.

SPECIAL MESSAGE While Fr Geoffrey is away on his pre-Lent break to focus on preparing the 2015 diocesan calendar, there will be no weekday Masses. As mentioned above, this weekend's Masses will be said by Fr Reginald Riley who is also giving the annual appeal.

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE The next meetings will be on Sundays **11th May** and **6th July** at St Peter's at 3.30pm for Benediction in the church followed by tea / coffee and discussion in the church hall.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 23rd FEBRUARY 2014
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

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

Sun 23rd	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Crispin Champion RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Sara Western's Recovery
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Mon 24th	Feria	Monday - Friday Sorry, no parish Masses	
Tues 25th	Feria		
Wed 26th	Feria		
Thu 27th	Feria		
Fri 28th	Feria		
Sat 1st March	St David	5.00-5.30pm	Confessions
✕ EIGHTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) ✕			
Sun 2nd	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Charles Ryan RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Mary Garnett RIP

DOORS at St PETER'S We have had both the church and hall main doors repaired recently, but they have warped over the years and they are a bit bent in the middle. The church door needs a bit more of a pull, while 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.

CHOIR NEWS Sung Mass today. Tuesday practice: TBC. All are welcome!

YOUTH GROUP Tomorrow, **Monday 24th February**: 7 - 8.30pm. **Table tennis and football.** New members welcome! Open to young people aged 10 - 15 years; older teenagers welcome to join in as young leaders.

MURDER in the 'CAFÉ RESISTANCE' 'Allo, 'Allo! In 1945, a murder most foul was committed in Rene's Café. This dreadful event will be re-enacted in St Peter's Hall on Saturday 15th March at 7.30 pm. Will the murderer be brought to book this time? See poster for full details including prices.

PARISH CaFE Three Wednesday evenings during Lent: 19th, 26th March and 2nd April, another series of DVDs, talks and discussions on aspects of our faith in an informal atmosphere. More information soon.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for March:** *That all cultures may respect the rights and dignity of women; and that many young people may accept the Lord's invitation to consecrate their lives to proclaiming the Gospel.*
- **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 Fathers Cyril Williams, David Rhys and Alphonsus Brennan; and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now. For all our relatives and friends.**
- **For those who teach in or schools:** *may they take seriously their responsibility to give an example of Christian life to the children and young people they teach.*

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: £###.## (Gift Aided, £###.##. Weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£121.00**). Last weekend's collection for the Catholic Education Service raised £###.##. ♦ **This weekend** our retiring collection will be for our annual appeal (see above).

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 Kent County Council has revised its plans and now intends to remove the £350 cap on the Freedom Pass, limit its usage and raise the initial charge from £100 to £200.

CAFOD UPDATE See the poster in the narthex for an update on what CAFOD have been doing recently, and their plans for the future. Watch out for **Fairtrade Fortnight** (24th February - 9th March).