



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

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 B

THIRD SUNDAY

25th January 2015

FAITH IN FOCUS: THE NET RESULT Today's gospel is crafted on the image of nets. Andrew and Simon were casting their nets; James and John were mending theirs. Jesus promises them that if they follow him they will net men and women. Taken in one way, this can be seen as a call to evangelization, to go out and catch as many people as possible for Christ. It was no doubt in this way that the great missionaries over the years saw their work. They travelled to the ends of the earth to win souls for Jesus. Others spent, and still spend, many cold hours on street corners preaching to passing shoppers. Even though these groups sometimes seemed to equate the work of God with the number of converts, they were responding to a valid reading of today's gospel.



Other people see in today's gospel the fact that we are all sinners who deserve death by drowning, and the nets are safety nets which prevent us from sinking to the depths of the sea. In fact, sinking beneath the waves has long been a religious way of describing what happens when we lose all sight of God and goodness. So the nets not only catch people, they save them and bring them together.

In fact, the Church, and that means us, is both the fishermen and the catch. We are called to be so imbued and on fire with what Jesus promises, that we are the "bait" which attracts others to him. And yet we are also the catch. We have ourselves been caught. We know what it would be like to live a life without faith, without the hope held out to us by Jesus' death and resurrection. And we are happy to be in the net.

Today, of course, we also use "net" in another way. We speak of the Internet, the network of modern technology which brings people from all over the world together in communication. The net is really millions of people engaged on a common enterprise. Just like the Church. *Author unknown*

SPECIAL MESSAGE While Fr Geoffrey is away on his pre-Lent break to focus on preparing the 2016 diocesan calendar, there will be no weekday Masses. However, he is very grateful to Fr Michael Woodgate who will be celebrating next weekend's Masses. ☺ We wish **Fr Joseph** a safe onward journey and success in his ministry in Germany. We look forward to seeing him again in the summer!

YOUTH GROUP is back! Monday, **26th January**, 7 - 8.30pm, in the church hall. This week: board games. Have you got a favourite game? Let us know or feel free to bring it along. Thank you! Open to any young people aged 10 - 15 years old, older teenagers welcome to help as young leaders. **NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!**

CHOIR NEWS Next rehearsal Tuesday **27th January**, 8 -9pm. The next sung Mass is to be confirmed. **All are welcome!**

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2015 The programme has now commenced and we are not taking any further applications for this year. Please remember the children and their families in your prayers, especially as they prepare for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation in March.

DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 25th JANUARY 2015
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **THIRD SUNDAY (B)** ✕

Sun 25th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: George and Mary Combes RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Ray Smith RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Mon 26th	SS Timothy and Titus		Monday - Friday Sorry, no parish Masses
Tues 27th	Feria		
Wed 28th	St Thomas Aquinas		
Thu 29th	Feria		
Fri 30th	Feria		
Sat 31st	St John Bosco	5:00-5:30pm	Confessions
✕ FOURTH SUNDAY (B) ✕			
Sun 1st February	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Barbara Amos RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Marie Dolke RIP

COMING UP Bearsted Churches Together Lent Lunches: **27th February to 27th March**, beginning at Holy Cross Church (St Peter's, **13th March**). More information soon.

PARISH DAY FOR READERS Saturday **21st March** in the hall at St Peter's. Please keep this day free. More information soon.

FUNDRAISING FOR RETIRED CLERGY Archbishop Peter has asked every parish to have two representatives to help with fundraising for the retired and sick clergy of the dioceses (. If you would like to help in this vital work please speak to Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril. southwarkclergysupportfundcampaign.org/

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for January:** that in this year dedicated to consecrated life, religious men and women may rediscover the joy of following Christ and strive to serve the poor with zeal. We pray for the Pope as he travels to visit his flock in distant places: may they hear God's message through him; and may he stay safe and well as he journeys.
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those recently dead; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends and the intentions on the notice board.
- **As we come to the end of this Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity**, we pray for all Christian people: may the Lord draw us ever more closely into union with God and with each other.
- **For those parts of the world where there is conflict and violence;** especially for Syria and Ukraine, for Niger, South Sudan and Nigeria: may the leaders of the nations be led in the ways of peace, justice and reconciliation.
- **For an increase in vocations** to the priesthood and consecrated life and for a deeper gratitude for the priests and religious now serving our diocese by proclaiming the kingdom of heaven among us.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£408.85** (Gift Aided, **£284.50**). ♦ The **Peace Sunday** collection came to **£164.67**. ♦ **Next weekend** there will be a retiring collection after all Sunday Masses for the **Catholic Education Service** which negotiates with the government.

CATECHISTS The Centre for Catholic Formation is organising an evening on Reconciliation for the Maidstone Deanery at St Peter's (Bearsted) on **Tuesday 3rd March** from 7.30 to 9pm. Catechists are invited to bring the programmes they use (including First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Baptism etc.). Each session will feature a discussion on the theme of reconciliation and a time of prayer.

FROM THE CENTRE FOR CATHOLIC FORMATION Pope Francis has requested that all parishes observe a **24 Hours for the Lord** to take place on **Friday 13th** and **Saturday 14th March**. The Theme is **God rich in mercy** (*Ephesians 2:4*). He is asking that churches be open on those days, and make Confessions and Eucharistic Adoration available. See the poster.

PILGRIMAGE to Medjugorje. Departing **1st April** with British Airways, 7 nights, half board accommodation, guide and transfers for £499. Or join 50,000 young people for the Medjugorje Youth Festival departing **30th July**. Contact Jonathan on 020 3289 2627.