



# 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](http://www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk)

Diocesan Website: [www.rcsouthwark.co.uk](http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk)

The Catholic Church in England and Wales: [www.catholicchurch.org.uk](http://www.catholicchurch.org.uk)

Prayer: [www.life4seekers.co.uk](http://www.life4seekers.co.uk); [www.holyspiritinteractive.net](http://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**

**SECOND SUNDAY of LENT**

**1st March 2015**

**FAITH IN FOCUS: CHANGE IS HERE TO STAY** It seems a contradiction in terms, of course, but "Change is Here to Stay" is almost the motto of the present age. We have grown used to built-in obsolescence, to computers whose memory can only run programmes that are now out of date, to quantum leaps in technology, to new frontiers in medical science, and even, alarmingly, to genetically manipulated 'three-parent' offspring. Nothing seems built to last. As with life, so with faith. It must have seemed very inconsiderate to Abraham when God called him in his old age to leave the comfort of his home surroundings and to embark on a journey of a lifetime across the desert. It must have been even more confusing when his elderly wife, Sarah, conceived and gave birth to Isaac. The last straw must have been when God told Abraham to stab and then burn his only son in a sacrifice to show his faith. Surely they were entitled to a bit of peace and quiet? That's all Peter wanted after the Transfiguration. He'd enjoyed it so much that he wanted to put up three tents. They could return there and re-experience over and over again the joy of seeing Jesus with Moses and Elijah. Not only did Jesus deny his request, but he ruined the joy of the occasion by saying that he would have to suffer grievously, and by talking about his own death.



Some religious people suffer from the same complaint as Peter. They see their faith as a gift which was given them by God, perhaps in childhood, and they want to preserve it all costs. There is nothing wrong with this, of course, but the problem comes when we see faith as preservation rather than growth. Difficulties arise when we forget that faith means embarking on a journey whose destination we know, but whose route is known to God alone. For some people this means clinging on to the outward trappings and customs. For others it means doing things only in the way we always have done previously. For many, the security they look for in faith seems to be threatened by change. Yet an organism dies if it does not change. It must change if it is to develop. Not all change is progress, but there can be no progress without change. For Christians change comes through grace, the particular grace we call repentance. If God gave us an acorn of faith at our birth, then he expects not an acorn but a forest in return at our death. Our Lenten journey is a movement towards change, towards the unknown, towards God.

Lent means throwing off what weighs us down, changing from the old person into the new creation. The Lenten call to faith is not towards an armchair, but towards an adventure. *Author unknown*

**RECOMMENDED FOR LENT ("PRAYER : FASTING : ALMSGIVING")** ✘ Try to get to Mass at least **once during the week**. ✘ Attend Stations of the Cross at St Peter's on **Friday evenings**. ✘ Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. ✘ Contribute to CAFOD: *envelopes for your savings are available*. This Lent, every pound you give will be increased to £2 by the UK government up to the value of £3.5M. ✘ Contribute to our parish Lenten Appeal for MIS-SIO: the Society of St Peter the Apostle (SPA). This appeal supports the vocations of seminarians and religious brothers and sisters in the Church overseas. These men and women will bring the light of Christ into their communities. ✘ Give up a favourite luxury *but keep it between you and the Lord (don't tell people what you have 'given up' for Lent)*! ✘ Try to get to the Lent Lunches in Bearsted, continuing at Bearsted Methodist Church this Friday, **6th March** at 12.30pm (lunch) followed by speaker: "Tools With A Mission". ✘ Pick up a copy of *Walk With Me* (prefaced by our Archbishop) which has a scripture reading and meditation for each day of Lent.

**GENERAL ELECTION** The Bishops have written a joint letter to all Catholics in England and Wales encouraging us to participate and vote in the election and offering some key issues and questions for reflection on where candidates stand. A copy is attached and is available online: <http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/>. **Please read this letter** and encourage others to do the same.

**DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 1st MARCH 2015**  
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **SECOND SUNDAY of LENT (B)** ✕

Sun 1st March	Saturday	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Peter Gollop RIP
	Sunday	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Ray Smith RIP
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: Adriana and Ted Bullock RIP
Mon 2nd	Feria	<b>7.00pm</b>	✕ Mass
Tues 3rd	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Wed 4th	Feria	<b>(H) 10.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Thu 5th	Feria	<b>7.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Fri 6th	Feria <i>Women's Word Day of Prayer</i>	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass
		<b>7.30pm</b>	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Sat 7th	Feria	<i>5:00-5:30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **THIRD SUNDAY of LENT (B)** ✕

Sun 8th March	Saturday	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: Eric Smith RIP
		<b>(H) 12noon</b>	<i>Baptism: Laurence Emsley</i>

**CHOIR NEWS** There will be a rehearsal **this Sunday (1st March)** after Mass when we will start looking at our music for Holy Week and Easter. Do join us, even if for the first time!

**St PETER'S YOUTH GROUP** Mondays, 7 - 8.30pm, in the church hall. **This Monday:** Quizzes and Challenges! Open to any young people aged 10 - 15 years old, older teenagers welcome to help as young leaders. **NEW MEMBERS WELCOME.**

**PASTORAL COMMITTEE** Meeting this Wednesday in the presbytery, 7.30pm.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2015** Please remember the children and their families in your prayers, especially as they prepare for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation **this Saturday, 7th March.**

**HAVE YOU GOT YOUR TICKETS YET?** Our 'Lent Lite Quiz Night' is only two weeks away, on **Saturday 14th March**, so now is the time to get your tickets! You don't have to be Brain of Britain or Mastermind! It's not going to be University Challenge! It's just an evening of fun so do come along, either with a team of your own or we can make up teams on the night. The cost is just £5 for adults and nothing at all for school-age children. Please bring your own food and drink - and may the best team win!

**PLEASE PRAY...**

- **With the Holy Father for March:** *that the unique contribution of women to the life of the Church may always be acknowledged and valued.*
- **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. For those who are to be received into the Church at Easter.
- **For all our priests** who bring us the mountain of Christ at every Mass, and feed us with his transforming love in the sacraments.
- **For peace in a world torn apart by violence** and bloodshed that families may live together in security and happiness, confident in the loving support of those around them.

**Thank you** for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£448.34** Gift Aided, **£310.50**). ♦ This week please **hand in your CAFOD envelopes**; throughout Lent we are encouraged to contribute to CAFOD: HM Revenue and Customs will match every £1 we save.

**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**. ✕ A full programme of events will be offered at St Francis' in Maidstone: <http://www.stfrancisparish.org.uk/pdfnewsletters/2015/150215.pdf>.

**FUNDRAISING FOR RETIRED CLERGY** Please speak to Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril. See the article on the diocesan website: [southwarkclergy-supportfundcampaign.org/](http://southwarkclergy-supportfundcampaign.org/).

**BEARSTED CHURCHES TOGETHER** Easter Egg Hunt, **Saturday, 4th April**, 12 – 1 at the Memorial Hall, Bearsted with clues on the Woodland Trust Land. Free entry, refreshments in the Memorial Hall. Donations of eggs needed; please leave them in the office at St Peter's.