



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

FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER

26th April 2015

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

FAITH IN FOCUS: EASILY LED? It was much easier in Jesus' day to know which sheep belonged to your flock. Until quite recently sheep were earmarked with incisions on the ear that showed their farm of origin. But with the advent of the motor vehicle and the practice of selling on young lambs, farmers have had to rely on paint marks. Sheep that have been around a bit can sometimes look like a psychedelic rug! Most sheep run away from humans, unless they were hand-reared at birth. In this case they come close in the hope of being fed. But the real problem is that they rarely know what's best for them. Left to their own devices they go to dangerous and inaccessible places where there is little food, to wet places where they pick up a fungus on their feet, or to infested parts where they are plagued by ticks. A practised shepherd needs to know what he's doing and where he's leading them.



When Jesus speaks about himself as the good shepherd he had all of this in mind. He knew that left to ourselves we are very similar to sheep. We think that the grass is greener on the other side. We end up in situations that are unproductive. We manoeuvre ourselves into circumstances that do us no good. We get cut off and render ourselves inaccessible. In short, we are easily led. But Jesus doesn't call us sheep in order to demean us. He speaks of us as his flock because he wants to underline the dedication and concern that he has for each of us. He is no hired man, no farming mercenary who looks only to his pay packet. The pastures that Jesus offers to guide us into are pastures which make sense of life. The message of the gospel is something which we can feed on daily.

Jesus is the good shepherd, the one who knows each one of us by name and he is so bothered about our wellbeing that he even gave his life for us. If we follow him, he leads us in choices which make better sense of our lives; he offers us the food and water of a belief that satisfies our deepest hunger and thirst; when we approach danger he reminds us that there are better places to be; and if we are tempted to wander off, he is always there to welcome us back to the fold. He knows us. And we know we are his.

Author unknown

CLERGY SUPPORT FUND CAMPAIGN Still no volunteers. Each parish is asked to have **two volunteers** to assist in the campaign. A meeting for volunteers is to be held at The Hermitage, West Malling, at 7.30pm on **Monday 11th May**. Please, if anyone is able to attend this meeting let Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril know. There is no commitment; all we need is for our parish to be represented.

CHOIR NEWS Sung Mass this Sunday, **26th April**, 10.30am at St Peter's. Next rehearsal: Tuesday **28th April**, 8 - 9pm. **ALL ARE WELCOME**

YOUTH GROUP Monday **27th April**, rounders at the park: 7 - 8.30pm (meet at 7 at the church hall, come back to the hall again for 8.30). Parents: consent forms needed, please. For young people be-

tween 10 - 15 years of age. Older teenagers welcome to help as young leaders. New members welcome!

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 26th APRIL 2015 (Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✕ FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER (B) ✕			
Sun 26th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Margaret Richardson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Alfredo Cannavina RIP
Mon 27th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 28th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 29th	St Catherine of Siena	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 30th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 1st May	St Joseph the Worker	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 2nd	St Athanasius	5.00-5.30pm	Confessions
✕ FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER (B) ✕			
Sun 3rd	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Eliza Martin RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Sirpa and Dennis Edwards
		3.00pm	Baptism: Niamh and Orla Bratt

PARISH SOCIAL St Peter's Hall, next Saturday, **2nd May**. We are still taking bookings.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION MASS Sunday **7th June** (Corpus Christi), 10.30am.

CONFIRMATIONS Maidstone area Confirmations will take place on Sunday **11th October**, with a retreat at Whitstable on **11th and 12th July**. The preparation day will be on Sunday **4th October**. As before we are inviting those who are not confirmed (School Year 9 or above) to apply and we shall be joining the course at St Francis' parish. The programme will begin at the 6pm Mass at St Francis' on Sunday **7th June** finishing at 8.15pm. Application forms are available and details of the course will follow.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for May:** that Mary's intercession may help Christians in secularised cultures to be ready to proclaim Jesus.
- **For all the sick** especially Alan Flynn and Graham Gibson and all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those recently dead especially Daphne Copp (used to attended Mass at Good Shepherd); for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends and the intentions on the notice board. For those who were received into the Church this Easter.
- **For an increased in vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life** especially for our diocese, that God will raise up good shepherds in our midst.
- **For those who have died at sea during the past week**, for the survivors, their rescuers and for the families and friends who might never know what happened to their loved ones. We pray for an end to the fighting, poverty and people trafficking which forces desperate people to take desperate measures in their search for security.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£373.16** (Gift Aided, **£203.50**). ♦ The retiring collection for the **maintenance of St George's Cathedral**, the mother church of the diocese, fetched in **£128.59**. ♦ There is a further retiring collection this Sunday for **Ecclesiastical Education**, which helps to meet the costs of training students for the priesthood and permanent diaconate. It also supports certain forms of ongoing formation of the clergy.

GIFT AID SCHEME Thank you to all donors for your continued support of the Gift Aid Scheme. The annual Gift Aid tax reclaim will be submitted soon and if any donor has not paid sufficient tax to cover the amount being reclaimed can they please advise myself or Fr Geoff. We always welcome new donors

and if any parishioner who is a tax payer would like to join the scheme please see myself or Fr Geoff. *Mark Smith, Gift Aid Organiser.*

47th ANNIVERSARY of the ABORTION ACT coming into force in England and Wales is this Monday, **27th April**. Please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia. **Pray especially that 'bubble zones' will not be introduced around abortion 'clinics'**. With over 190,000 abortions each year, your prayer and fasting is urgently needed: www.goodcounselnetwork.com.

DEANERY MASS for the SICK The annual Deanery Mass for the sick, with a celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, will take place at Aylesford Priory next Sunday, **3rd May** at 3pm. Please make a special effort to enable sick or housebound members of your family or of the parish to attend. Canon Luke Smith of Maidstone will preside and Fr Damian Cassidy O. Carm., the Prior at Aylesford will preach.

ALTAR SERVERS' RALLY Aylesford Priory, Spring Bank Holiday, Monday **4th May**. See poster.

ANNUAL MASS for MIGRANTS in honour of St Joseph the Worker: Bank Holiday Monday, **4th May**, at St George's Cathedral, with Archbishop Peter Smith and Cardinal Vincent Nichols con-celebrating. There will be a banner procession of representatives from London's diverse communities from the Amigo Hall at 10.30 and Mass at 11am. All are most welcome to attend this vibrant event.

DEANERY FAMILY DAY At Holy Family School on Saturday **23rd May** from 2 to 9pm, with activities for children, a crèche and barbecue. Booking is required (tel: 01622 752637).

DEANERY DAY St Francis' School in Maidstone on Saturday **30th May**, beginning with Mass at 9.30am and ending at 2pm. Items to be discussed will be evangelization, with parishes working together, and the effects of any parish re-organization in the deanery. Fr Paul Mason and Mr Mark Strong will lead the day. Open to all parishioners.

PAX CHRISTI AGM Saturday **6th June**, Holy Apostles Church Hall, Pimlico. See notice.

MARRIAGE MASS at St GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL Saturday **20th June**, 3pm. If you are celebrating your 1st / 10th / 25th / 40th / 50th / 60th + wedding anniversary this year, please give in your names to the parish priest **this weekend** if you wish to attend so you can receive an invitation from the Archbishop (booking is essential). This annual event fills the cathedral and is a great affirmation of the value of marriage. All are welcome to attend.

YOUTH FESTIVAL Aylesford Priory, years 7 – 11, **20th June**.

25th ANNIVERSARY St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Headcorn will be celebrating its 25th anniversary on **25th June** at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

GRANDPARENTS' PILGRIMAGE Saturday **11th July**, 11am - 4.30pm, Aylesford Priory.

ROSARIES ABROAD Please search your cupboards and drawers for surplus rosaries and help the Catenians to get them into the hands of those who will love, cherish and pray them in countries where they are hard to find. A collection box will be available at the back of the church.