



# 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**

**THE ASCENSION of THE LORD**

**17th May 2015**

**FAITH IN FOCUS: PARTING GIFTS** When Jesus left this earth by ascending into heaven he did not leave his disciples empty-handed. He left them some parting gifts. The first parting gift was unfinished business. Ascension is not the end but the beginning for the Church. Jesus did not tell his disciples to sit and reminisce but to go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News to all peoples.

And so it is with the Church today: we do not exist for ourselves but for others. Christians are not simply called to become holy; they are called to tell others about the holiness of God so that they too may come to wholeness and holiness. In a recession the first thing that goes is the advertising budget and the next thing is the business itself.

We need to remind ourselves that we exist to make Jesus Christ known and loved. And this proclaiming business is always unfinished.

The second gift that Jesus left at the ascension was an unfathomable love. Many religions and philosophies are a catalogue of thoughts and ideas. They exist by rules and codes of practice. But Jesus never left us any long lists of dogmas or regulations. What he did leave us was an example. At the heart of Jesus' every word and action is love. He tells us that our God is a lover, that he loves us infinitely more than we can ever imagine or comprehend. And ascension is not God's departure from our world but his continued presence in an even deeper way. For we are not left like orphans; we have the gift of God's daily love in the person of the Holy Spirit. In this way God is with us till the end of the world and certainly till the end of our days. Jesus' final ascension gift to us was an unfailing promise. For this feast is a feast of hope. Jesus promises us that where he has gone we too can follow, and this is both our glory and our hope. Although he has passed beyond our sight we know that one day we will see him in glory and this promise supports and sustains all our Christian activity and faith. Unfinished business, unfathomable love and an unfailing promise: all of these await us if we dare to celebrate the Ascension of the Lord.

*Author unknown*



**WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY** is celebrated **today**, Ascension Sunday. The theme is *Communicating the Family: A Privileged Place of Encounter with the Gift of Love*. On this day we are encouraged to pray for communications professionals, especially those who work in the media. Please support the second collection which provides the funding for the Catholic Communications Network (CCN). The Network provides support for the bishops of England and Wales and the Church more widely in promoting the Gospel through the media on current issues. The office is the central point for media enquiries and plays a key role in developing the public profile of the Church. It is possible to donate online at: [www.catholicnews.org.uk/donations](http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/donations). Some commemorative prayer cards for this day have been printed and are available to take away. Please support the CCN through your prayers and generosity.

**CHOIR NEWS** Next rehearsals: Sunday **17th May** after Mass at St Peter's; Tuesday **26th May**, 8 - 9pm at St Peter's. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 17th MAY 2015 (Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✕ THE ASCENSION of THE LORD (B) ✕			
Sun 17th May	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Mary Jenner RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Margaret Moses RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Mon 18th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 19th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Christine Thompson RIP
Wed 20th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 21st	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 22nd	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 23rd	Our Lady	5.00-5.30pm	Confessions
✕ PENTECOST SUNDAY, WHITSUN (B) ✕			
Sun 24th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: May Walsh RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: G. Parecky RIP

**YOUTH GROUP** Monday 18th May, 7 - 8.30pm: making and decorating cupcakes. For young people 10 - 15 years of age. Older teenagers welcome to help as young leaders. New members welcome!

**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 along with details of the course.

**St PETER'S ROOF** is leaking over the sanctuary, the result of damaged or missing lead. It may or may not be serious but we are having it checked out.

**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 Barbara Casey and all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those recently dead especially Margaret Moses; 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.*
- *That seated at the right hand of His Father in heaven, the Lord will generously share His spirit of wisdom with all those now discerning their vocation and open the eyes of their hearts in faithfulness.*
- *That the Spirit promised by Jesus will bring healing and consolation to all those who suffer. We remember especially the boat people and all victims of trafficking, that a just solution may be found which will enable them to find peace and happiness.*

**Thank you** for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£419.75** (Gift Aided, **£256.33**). ♦ This week there is a retiring collection for **World Communications** which supports the work of the Catholic Communications Network, the media office of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. See note above.

**MAY DAY** Our May Social evening on 2nd May made a profit for Demelza House Children's Hospice of **£138**. Many thanks to our performers and our audience!

**FOR LIFE** National Day of Prayer and Fasting, Thursday 21st May, the Vigil of St Rita. Please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed so that the women helped by The Good Counsel Network will receive the Grace from God to continue their pregnancies. For information on the days of Prayer and Fasting contact The Good Counsel Network on 020 7723 1740 or see [www.goodcounselnetwork.com](http://www.goodcounselnetwork.com).



**MESSAGE FROM CAFOD** Since the terrible earthquake hit Nepal on 25th April, we have been working hard, with our local Caritas partners, to get aid to devastated communities. Thanks to your generosity, we reached over 31,000 people in need. *"It feels like God has come to help us"*, said Tilaka Adhikari when our partners arrived in Panchkahl and distributed shelter kits.

All this work is possible thanks to the generosity of CAFOD supporters like you. A phenomenal **£1 million** has been raised for our appeal so far, and another £47 million has come flooding in to the DEC joint appeal. [You can still donate to our Nepal Earthquake Appeal](#) and enable us to keep supporting people rebuilding their lives in the long term. Please keep praying for those affected by the Nepal earthquake. ♦ As we near the end of our Lent Appeal, we have wonderful news: you have raised over **£4.5 million** for communities living in poverty. Thank you so much. Thanks to matched funding from the government, this will be doubled to **£9 million!** An amazing amount that will support those most in need around the world. Our Lent Appeal **ends today**, so if you've been counting the funds you've raised, or want to set up a direct debit there is still time to have your donation doubled. [Donate now](#).

**DEANERY FAMILY DAY** At Holy Family School on Saturday **23rd May** from 2 to 9pm. The theme is *Pentecost: Build a Church* and will include activities for children, workshops for parents, games and activities for families, a barbecue and Mass (hopefully outdoors!). £10 per family. Booking is required (tel: 01622 752637).

**DEANERY EVANGELISATION DAY** Saturday **30th May** at St Francis Primary School, Queen's Road, Maidstone and will begin with Mass at 9:30, running until 2pm. There will be a very short break for a packed lunch to be eaten and refreshments and cakes, etc., will be available. The day will be led jointly by Mark Nash of the Diocesan Education Centre and Fr Paul Mason. **It is very important that as many parishioners and members of parish teams attend as possible**, as Fr Paul will be discussing the shortage of priests and how this can be managed positively. A full programme for this day will be available next week.

**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. ♦ Pick up a copy of Fr Michael Woodgate's book *A Rabbit's Eye View*. £4.50 – funds to Aid to the Church in Need.

**CATECHISTS** The Diocesan Day for Catechists is Saturday **27th June** at St George's Cathedral and runs from 11am till Mass at 4pm. Registration forms are available.

**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 is available at the back of the church.