



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

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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

SIXTH SUNDAY

15th February 2015

FAITH IN FOCUS: You could argue that in Christ's time people shunned lepers and sought Jesus. Now there's a sort of role reversal in which we are much more tolerant and understanding of sickness, disease and disorder, but less inclined to public statements about religion. In a certain sense Christians are the ones who are shunned by a world and society that feels uncomfortable with professions of faith. We only need to look at all the place of Christianity in the European constitution to see it plainly. If Jesus were walking the streets today, people would praise him for his humanitarianism but not for his divine connections. So when Jesus came across the leper he came across a man who was living life on the edge of society, shunned by most people and condemned to a life on the fringe. And the effect of the cure was not simply that the man's disease was lifted, but that he was restored to society, to mainstream life, to the swing of things.



Christ came to restore us to wholeness. He was much more than a super-doctor. He came to make us one with the goodness of creation, to make us complete. And the same is true in the way we proclaim our faith in him. It is not part of Christ's plans that Christians should live semi-apologetic lives, hiding on the fringes of society because we don't want to make too much of a fuss about our beliefs. It is quite incompatible with the gospel that we should take a back seat about announcing our religion just because there are those in society who are embarrassed by the teaching we espouse. We may once have been lepers, but we are no longer unclean. Baptism has cured us of our leprosy and invited us to be seen on the street of society, in the market place of debate and discussion, on the platform of publicity. Christ no longer does the rounds of Galilee asking people not to enrage the religious officials by telling them what he has done. Christ is now risen and ascended on high, and with us till the end of time. And as he walks by our side he does not expect us to tread timidly when we speak about the wonders God can perform. He expects us to be seen at the centre of our world and society and to be living witnesses of his power. *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 (especially of Lent Fast Day, **27th February**) or our parish Lenten Appeal for **MISSIO**. ✕ 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: beginning at Holy Cross, 1pm, **27th February**.

LENT FAST DAY Friday 27th February. This Lent, every pound you give will be increased to £2 by the UK government up to the value of £3.5M. CAFOD has asked that this year we join the global movement to stop climate change pushing people into poverty. For more information see cafod.org.uk/oneclimate.

LENTEN APPEAL FOR MISSIO 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.

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 next month.

CHOIR NEWS Next rehearsals: this Sunday, **15th February**, after 10.30am Mass; Tuesday **24th February** in the evening. Sung Mass on Sunday **22nd February**. **All are welcome!**

DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 15th FEBRUARY 2015
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **SIXTH SUNDAY (B)** ✕
Day for the Unemployed

Sun 15th February	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Irene and Newport Horne RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Mary Garnett RIP
Mon 16th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Charles Ryan RIP
Tues 17th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 18th	✕ Ash Wednesday ✕ <i>Day of Fasting and Abstinence</i>	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass:
		7.30pm	✕ Mass:
Thu 19th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 20th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
		7.30pm	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Sat 21st	Feria	<i>5:00-5:30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ FIRST SUNDAY of LENT (B) ✕			
Sun 22nd February	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass:
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo

YOUTH GROUP No meeting this Monday (half term). Monday **23rd February**, 7 - 8.30pm, in the church hall: **Marie's drama games and a badminton match**. Please bring a badminton racket if you have one, thank you. Open to any young people aged 10 - 15 years old, older teenagers welcome to help as young leaders.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME.

LENT 'LITE' A Date for your Diary! Laetare Sunday in the middle of Lent, gives us all the opportunity to take a break from the rigours of Lent and have a little fun! So we will be marking this weekend by having a 'Lent-Lite Quiz Night' on Saturday **14th March** in St Peter's Hall. Tickets are now on sale, and, as usual, you can bring your own team of 6-8 people or we will make up teams on the night. Please, also, bring your own food and drink. The cost will be £5 for adults, but there will be no charge for school-children.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for February:** *that married people who are separated may find welcome and support in the Christian community.*
- **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 unable to find work.
- **That all Catholics** will recognize that they are entrusted with the commission to pray for vocations and so beg the Holy Spirit to guide those who are discerning their vocation in Christ.
- **For true and lasting peace** between Russia and Ukraine.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£442.13** Gift Aided, **£305.70**). ♦ This Sunday there is a collection for **Poor Parishes** (formerly *Needs of the Diocese*). This collection enables the Archbishop to make grants to some of the smaller parishes in the Diocese. ♦ 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**. 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. ✕ A full programme of events will be offered at St Francis' in Maidstone: <http://www.stfrancisparish.org.uk/pdfnewsletters/2015/150215.pdf>.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND We received a letter thanking us for our Crib Offerings which came to **£79.19**. "This will make a difference to the lives of the most needy Christians in the Holy Land."

PREVENTION of YOUNG SUICIDE An event to provide an introduction to the charity, Papyrus, and to save young lives: behind Westminster Cathedral on **19th March**. Donation of £10.

CATHOLIC DIRECTORY A mobile version www.CatholicDirectory.org helps people find the nearest Church or the nearest Mass at the click of a button.