



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 LENT

15th March 2015

FAITH IN FOCUS: ANY TWO WISHES When the genie appeared, he granted the man any two wishes. The man's first wish was for an everlasting glass of beer. The beer magically appeared, the man drank it, and it refilled itself automatically. When the genie asked him for his second wish, he said, "I'll have another one of those, please." It hurts just to think about it, doesn't it? We find it hard to comprehend that something so good could be everlasting that it would never run out. When Jesus talked to Nicodemus, he told him that if he was prepared to give up the darkness and "walk in the light", then he would enjoy a life which is everlasting. Walking in the light means recognizing our sinfulness and our constant need of God's supporting grace, and living with the promise of eternal life. Even armed with this knowledge, we still tend to put limits on God's goodness. Like the man with the genie, we wonder whether God's store of patience and mercy might soon be exhausted. Can it really be true that God will never ever give up on us? Part of our problem is that we are brought up to learn that there's no such thing as a free lunch. Society tells us that you only get what you pay for. We cannot easily accept the something-for-nothing idea.



Yet scripture tells us the opposite. The people of Ephesus were reminded by Paul that God is so generous with his mercy that he has reserved a place in heaven even for the worst sinner who repents. He speaks of God as being "infinitely rich in grace." Like the genie, God's riches can never be exhausted. On "Laetare Sunday" we rejoice not just because God offers us so much, but because if we accept our true human condition, if we come out of the dark and walk in the light, then God's grace is free. *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 (as Lenten Alms) for MISSIO: the Society of St Peter the Apostle (SPA): **envelopes are now available**. 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 St Mary's Thurnham this Friday, **20th March** at 12.30pm (lunch) followed by speaker: a representative from our own CAFOD continues our theme "Mission Around the World". ✘ Pick up a copy of *Walk With Me* (prefaced by our Archbishop) which has a scripture reading and meditation for each day of Lent.

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

CHOIR NEWS Next rehearsals for Holy Week and Easter music: this Tuesday, **17th March**, 8 - 9pm; Sunday **22nd March**, after our 10.30am Mass. **All are welcome!**

PARISH READERS An informal gathering for readers this **Saturday, 21st March** in St Peter's Hall, 10.30am - 2pm, finishing with light lunch.

HELP WITH CLEANING Volunteers please, for help with the cleaning at the Good Shepherd. Our numbers have recently been reduced. Our beautiful chapel is always clean and welcoming; please help keep it that way!

EASTER COFFEE Back by popular demand yet again: coffee after Mass at Good Shepherd **Easter Sunday**.

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

✕ **FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT (B)** ✕

Sun 15th <i>Laetare and Mothering Sunday</i>	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Luis and Conchita Vecino RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: John and Elizabeth Drummy RIP
Mon 16th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 17th	St PATRICK	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 18th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 19th	St JOSEPH	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>
✕ FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT (B) ✕			
Sun 22nd	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass:
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Tom Lawson RIP

PARISH FINANCES According to the recent independent examiner's report for last year our 'accounting function is continuing to be maintained to a very high standard'. We are grateful to Mr Ian Fraser for this. Ian will be presenting these accounts to the parish at the Masses on **11th and 12th April**.

A REQUEST If you happen to have borrowed any hymn books from St Peter's, please let us have them back: we are running low. Thank you!

BEARSTED CHURCHES TOGETHER Holy Week and Easter Service times will need to be delivered as usual. Please pick up a set for a road near you. 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. † **PRAYER VISITING** in BEARSTED: There will be a meeting on **Tuesday 14th April** (location to be confirmed) to discuss the future organisation of Prayer Visiting in Bearsted.

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.
- **That God, who is rich in mercy,** will bless those called by Jesus to serve him and his Church as priests, deacons and in the consecrated life with faithfulness to their vocations.
- **For those killed and injured** in the recent cyclone devastation in the Pacific Islands.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£746.18** (Gift Aided, **£555.00**). ♦ Please continue to hand in your CAFOD envelopes throughout Lent: HM Revenue and Customs will match every £1 we save **only if gift-aided**.

FUNDRAISING FOR RETIRED CLERGY Please speak to Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril. See the article on the diocesan website: southwarkclergysupportfundcampaign.org/.

JUSTICE AND PEACE Coming up: **21st March:** Annual Romero Ecumenical Memorial Service at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London. Preacher: Cardinal Vincent Nichols. Details: Contact Archbishop Romero Trust at info@romerotrue.org.uk, 8 Dean Mews, London W1G 9EE.

ABORTION and EUTHANASIA On **Tuesday 24th March**, the Vigil of The Annunciation, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia. **Pray especially that 'bubble zones' will not be introduced around abortion 'clinics'**. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed. www.goodcounselnetwork.com.

FROM THE CENTRE FOR CATHOLIC FORMATION ♦ **Church and State** - A conference to mark the 800th anniversary of *Magna Carta*: Friday **27th March**, 11:00am - 3:20pm, at the Centre for Catholic Formation, Tooting Bec Road, SW17 8BS. Cost: £5 to include Lunch. Booking is required (ring the CCF on 020 8672 7684). ♦ **Common Objections to Catholicism:** A series of talks on Thursdays in Eastertide addressing popular objections to and misconceptions about the Catholic faith, and how to answer them. At the Amigo Hall, Lambeth Road, SE1 7HR, 7:30 - 9:00pm. The first talk is on Thursday **16th April:** Bishop Paul Hendricks will talk on the question "*Doesn't science disprove religion?*"