



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

FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER

3rd May 2015

FAITH IN FOCUS: WHITHER THE WITHERED? It's only a month ago that we celebrated Easter and yet it quickly seems to recede into the past. Although we know it is the greatest feast of the Christian year we soon let it go and pass on to new things. But the seven or eight weeks that follow Easter is the Church's annual "back to basics" course. It was originally a time of in-depth teaching for those who were newly baptised at Easter, and it has become a period of catechesis for the whole Church as the Sunday readings call us back to the fundamentals of our faith. So, not unnaturally, we find ourselves reminded that to be a Christian means to be rooted in that soil which is Christ. To bear fruit we have to be grafted onto the vine which his Father tends. For cut off from that vine we wither.



Someone once pointed out that all of God's big promises in the bible were intended for a people, not just for individuals. And Christianity is certainly a community religion, not a private faith. Of its essence it is lived out with others. When we try to go it alone, we lose the sap that comes from being grafted onto the Church.

If Christians are supposed to be "other Christs", then it goes without saying that they need to be close to Christ. In fact, our own efforts are of limited value unless they spring from a closeness to Christ. It is the grace of the Father working in Jesus that gives worth to our efforts. If we are to follow Jesus, then we must know and love him. However, it is not enough to carry the name of Christian around with us. We have to bear fruit. Our lives must reflect in action the words that we loudly shout in our Creed. For if we claim to be part of the vine of Christ but produce no fruit, then we are merely deadwood. And the deadwood is pruned to see if it will produce; and if it doesn't it is burned.

The story of the vine is fundamental to understanding Christianity. It is about an interior, spiritual life of prayer. It is about a sense of belonging as part of the roots and branches of something much larger than ourselves; about being nourished by God through the Church; about bearing fruit; about occasional experiences which prune us and cut us down to size so that we may profit from re-growth. But most of all it is about being part of something that is wholesome, life-giving and productive that is tended by a Father who glories in the vine he so lovingly cares for. *Author unknown*

NEPAL EARTHQUAKE APPEAL CAFOD has launched a £3m emergency appeal following the earthquake in Nepal. Thousands of people in this already impoverished country have been killed and many thousands more are in urgent need of food, water, shelter and emergency supplies. 8 million people are affected. CAFOD is responding with Church partners and has deployed a team to provide specialist support. **Our customary 'Red Bucket' collection will be held after all Masses this weekend in support of CAFOD's appeal.**

CLERGY SUPPORT FUND CAMPAIGN Thank you to the two volunteers who came forward. (Each parish is asked to have **two volunteers** to assist in the campaign.) The meeting is at The Hermitage, West Malling, at 7.30pm on **Monday 11th May**.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 3rd MAY 2015 (Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✕ FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER (B) ✕			
Sun 3rd May	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Eliza Martin RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Sirpa and Dennis Edwards
		3.00pm	Baptisms: Niamh and Orla Bratt
Mon 4th	The English Martyrs	<u>10.00am</u>	✕ Mass: Celebrant's Intention
Tues 5th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Private Intention
Wed 6th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Deacon Reg Grimmette RIP
Thu 7th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 8th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 9th	Our Lady	5.00-5.30pm	Confessions
✕ SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER (B) ✕			
Sun 10th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass
		12noon	Baptism: Samuel Mickleburgh

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 this 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.

YOUTH GROUP Monday 4th May - no meeting (bank holiday); Monday **11th May**, rounders at the park and chips. Usual times 7 - 8.30pm, meet at 7 at the church hall, and come back to the hall again for 8.30. Parents: consent forms needed, please. For young people between 10 - 15 years of age. Older teenagers welcome to help as young leaders. New members welcome!

CHOIR NEWS Next rehearsal: Tuesday **26th May**, 8 - 9pm at St Peter's (Sunday rehearsal to be confirmed). **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

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

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, Barbara Casey and Graham Gibson and 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 were received into the Church this Easter.
- **That Catholic mothers will abide in the Lord as branches on His vine**, cultivating in their children the desire to love him in truth and action, especially should he honour them with vocations to the priesthood or religious life.
- **For the victims of the Nepal earthquake**, for the survivors, their rescuers and for the families and friends.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£457.25** (Gift Aided, **£293.70**). ♦ The retiring collection for **Ecclesiastical Education**, realized **£225.15**.

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.* ♦ Our thanks to Mark for all the hard work involved in running this scheme for us. **The new envelopes for those in the scheme are available this weekend.**

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

ANNUAL MASS for MIGRANTS in honour of St Joseph the Worker, Spring Bank Holiday, this Monday, **4th May**, at St George's Cathedral, with Archbishop Peter Smith and Cardinal Vincent Nichols concelebrating. 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.

SOCIAL JUSTICE People in Kent concerned about issues of social justice get together from time to time at The Hermitage, More Park, West Malling ME19 6HN. The next such gathering is scheduled to run from 2 till 4 pm on Sunday **10th May**. All are welcome to attend. *Phil Kerton, 01474 873802*.

CONCERT at St MARY'S, THURNHAM: Saturday, **16th May**, 7.30pm. Two local parishioners will be giving a concert at St Mary's, Thurnham: John Hayden, the son of Anne Hayden, will be joined by Rachel Lloyd, the daughter of Beth Lloyd, who has won international acclaim. Tickets are available from the newsagents on Bearsted Green at £10 each, to include a drink for a varied programme.

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.**

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.

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

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.

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.

St SIMON STOCK SCHOOL See the poster about Year 5 taster days coming up in June. (Pick up a prospectus.)

EASTER DUTIES The last day for fulfilling the precept of Easter Communion is the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, **31st May**. Canon 2042 of *The Catechism* states: The third precept ('You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season') guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal feasts, the origin and centre of the Christian liturgy.

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.