



Parish of St Peter, Bearsted
and
The Good Shepherd, Harrietsham
Newsletter



St Peter's Church, Button Lane, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8NJ

Church of The Good Shepherd, Rectory Lane (off East Street), Harrietsham, ME17 1HS

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

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)

Parish Website and YouTube:

www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk

Year C

THIRD SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

24th JANUARY 2016

FAITH IN FOCUS: ABOUT TO START In some of our cities we have a church on almost every street corner. But in the whole of Israel there was only one Temple and that was in Jerusalem. The priests went there to offer sacrifices for people's sins and needs. But in every place where at least ten men could meet, no matter how small a village it might be, there was a synagogue. Every Sabbath there was a simple liturgical service that took place there and was led by the local community members. It was a plain affair with readings from the Jewish scriptures followed by a commentary on them in the form of a homily or sermon. It was to one of these places that Jesus went when he returned to his hometown of Nazareth. He read a text from Isaiah about being anointed to bring freedom to those who were oppressed in different ways. Then he made the incredible claim that this text was being fulfilled here and now as his audience listened. Even though Jesus had gathered a reputation already as something of a preacher, this proved too much for his listeners and next Sunday we'll see what happened. But for today, what was Jesus really claiming? In a nutshell he was claiming that a new age was beginning. In the Old Testament people had been waiting for "eschatological" times, times that would usher in a new age when God's kingdom would hold sway. There would be signs that this new age was about to begin: prisoners would be set free, the lame would walk, the deaf hear and the blind see again. Every fifty years the Jews held an amnesty year in which the slate was wiped clean, debts were settled and property returned to rightful owners. Jesus tells his audience that here and now one of these amnesties is about to start; it will be the Lord's year of favour. Over the next few weeks, and throughout the gospel of Luke, we will see that Jesus has inaugurated this new age of favour between God and his people. And we'll discover that it was to last more than a year. Today as the gospel is proclaimed in our churches God still offers this favour. If you want to, you can make it happen for you even as you listen to God's word. Or you can wait and see how the people responded next week in Luke's gospel. *Author unknown*



RACIAL JUSTICE For more information see: <http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/RJS16>.

CHRISTIAN UNITY The theme for the Annual Octave of Prayer is *Salt of the Earth*: <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2016/>. (The octave ends on **25th January**, but prayer continues!)

HOMELESS SUNDAY As well as Racial Justice Sunday, today is **Homeless Sunday**. For more information, visit: <http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/>. Cardinal Vincent Nichols is President. ☹ It is unfortunate that there is a clash, but the logic is that Racial Justice Day is always three Sundays before the first Sunday of Lent, which is moveable... while Homeless Sunday is always the fourth Sunday in January, which isn't.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY If you are interested in helping our children to get more out of the Liturgy of the Word at Sunday Mass at St Peter's, please have a word with Fr Geoffrey, Deacon Cyril or Angela Dixon. Angela coordinates the programme which helps take it in turn to lead. We are always in need of additional leaders/helpers to join our team.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Preparations continue **this Friday** afternoon at St Peter's.

DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 24th JANUARY 2016
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **THIRD SUNDAY (C)** ✕

Sun 24th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: George and Mary Combes RIP
Racial Justice Sunday	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Archibald Dunbar RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Mon 25th	The Conversion of St Paul	Monday - Friday Sorry, no parish Masses	
Tues 26th	SS Timothy and Titus		
Wed 27th	Feria		
Thu 28th	St Thomas Aquinas		
Friday 29th	Feria		
Sat 30th	Our Lady	5:00-5:30pm	Confessions
✕ FOURTH SUNDAY (C) ✕			
Sun 31st	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Wellbeing of Steven Coleman
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Christina Rapinet RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo

St PETER'S CHOIR PRACTICE Wednesday 3rd February, 8pm - 9pm. New singers welcome - no audition! Contact Mary Hannant (07792 321215) for further details or information.

COFFEE at ST PETER'S Please, if you are able to spare time to help with the coffee after Mass on Sundays this would be much appreciated. Have a word with Joyce.

LENT Stations of the Cross on the Friday evenings of Lent this year will alternate between St Peter's and Good Shepherd. Lent Fast Day is Friday 19th February; gift-aided donations to CAFOD will again be doubled this year: the government has agreed match each £1 given. ♦ Bearsted Churches Together Lent Lunches: 19th February to 18th March, beginning at Holy Cross Church (St Peter's, 4th March). More information soon.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for January:** that through dialogue, fraternal charity and with the grace of the Holy Spirit, Christians may overcome divisions.
- **For those who live in the darkness of mental illness** and depression, that in their pain and isolation they may never lose hope in the Lord's care for them.
- **In this Holy Year of Mercy,** that in this coming year we may better reflect the love of God for our world, and open our hearts to show God's mercy towards all people.
- **For all the sick** especially Barbara Casey 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 for the intentions on the notice board.

Thank you for your offerings last weekend which amounted to **£461.37** (Gift Aided, **£330.50**). ♦ The **Peace Sunday** collection amounted to **£133.49**. ♦ This Sunday is **Racial Justice Day**, focusing this year on the refugee crisis in Europe: a collection will be taken to support the work of the Church to promote racial justice in our schools, parishes and in wider society.

JUSTICE AND PEACE This Bearsted group consists of members from the Methodist Church, Holy Cross and St Peter's. They promote much of our ecumenical outreach on matters of justice and peace. New members are always welcome. We meet monthly at St Peter's on the first Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is **2nd February** at 7.30pm.

MISSIO Red Box holders are invited to a talk given by Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo, Sri Lanka, followed by Mass, on Thursday **4th February** at the cathedral. See poster.

MASS OF HEALING Maidstone Deanery, Holy Year of Mercy: Mass of Healing and Anointing of the Sick Aylesford Priory, **Saturday 6th February** at 2pm. Principal Celebrant: Canon Luke Smith, Dean of Maidstone; homily: Rev. Fr Victor McClean Parish Priest of Goudhurst.

SPECIAL MESSAGE While Fr Geoffrey is away on his pre-Lent break to focus on preparing the 2017 diocesan calendar, there will be no weekday Masses. However, he is very grateful to Fr John Roche who will be celebrating next weekend's Masses.