



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

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

FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER

17th April 2016

FAITH IN FOCUS: HIS MASTER'S VOICE Two men were sitting on a bench chatting. One said, "I think my wife is crazy. She talks to herself all the time." The other man said, "Oh, my wife talks to herself all the time, too. Only she doesn't know it. She thinks I'm listening."

Sometimes in our religious practice we seem to have all the symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). We become distracted easily, we find it hard to concentrate, we allow ourselves to go off at a tangent and, most of all, we think we are listening when really we're not. In his gospel John quotes Jesus as saying that he is the Good Shepherd whose sheep listen to his voice. And, clearly, if the sheep are to benefit from the shepherd's experience then they have to listen to where he is directing them. Most of us would accept that what God is trying to say to us can be found in the bible. Some might go further and say that when the bible is proclaimed in our liturgy then God is actually speaking to us here and now. We would probably accept too that the teaching of the Church is another way of knowing what God wants to communicate to us. But are there other ways of listening out for the shepherd's voice? Christ, the Good Shepherd, speaks to us through other people. When we come across others we see the face of Jesus reflected in them, for they like us are made in God's image and likeness. Yet sometimes we see them only as physical beings rather than as mini-words of God, as glimpses into the divine. Do we hear the voice of God in other people? What about the events of our daily lives? If we are finding things hard financially, it may be because of the recession. But do we ever think that God's voice may be prompting us to ask about whether we're in the right job, using our talents to the full, managing our lives and money properly? Conversely, if we are doing really well, do we consider that we deserve a good pat on the back or do we instinctively bless God for our prosperity? And when we hear of natural disasters such as recent earthquakes do we jump on the bandwagon of "How can a loving God allow such a thing?" or do we learn anything about our own lives and those of others by looking deeper at the consequences of what has happened? How do we listen for the shepherd's voice? *(Author unknown.)*



WORLD DAY of PRAYER for VOCATIONS: today 2016 marks the 53rd Anniversary of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Also known as "Good Shepherd Sunday" the purpose of this day is to publically fulfil the Lord's instruction to, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2). Please pray that young men and women hear and respond generously to the Lord's call to the priesthood, diaconate, religious life, societies of apostolic life or secular institutes. Visit: www.ukreligiouslife.org/, a great starting point.

RED BOXES Would all Red Box holders please bring them in to church: it's time for them to be emptied again. Thank you.

SPRING CONCERT Valley Park School, Maidstone, will be holding a 'concert' in St Peter's on **Wednesday 27th April** in the evening. The programme will include some sacred pieces.

DELICES de FRANCE 7pm, Saturday **30th April** in St Peter's Hall. Tickets for this extravaganza of French wine, food and song (with a very easy quiz, too!) will be available after Masses or can be obtained from Ian Bruce-Russell on 736811 or Jenny Lovelock on 734908. A family ticket, including food and wine or soft drink, will cost £20 (2 adults and 2 children), adults £8 and children £4. Please see the poster on the noticeboard for all other details.

THE NEEDY of UKRAINE Pope Francis asked that all Catholic Church in Europe take up a special collection for those who are suffering the consequences of violence in Ukraine. Archbishop Peter asks that all parishes take a second collection at Masses on the Sixth Sunday of Easter, **30th April and 1st May**.

HEART of KENT HOSPICE See the notice board for details of the annual Bluebell Walk around Harrietsham and the North Downs in aid of our local hospice on **Sunday 1st May** (<https://www.hokh.org/>).

**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 17th APRIL 2016
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

✕ **FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER (C)** ✕

Sun 17th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Luis and Conchita Vecino RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Patrick Dempsey RIP
Mon 18th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 19th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 20th	Feria	12.00noon	✕ Requiem Mass: Thomas Finbarr Egan
Thu 21st	St Anselm	7.00am	✕ Mass: Her Majesty the Queen
Fri 22nd	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 23rd	St GEORGE	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER (C)** ✕

Sun 24th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Margaret Richardson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Fr Bart's Intentions
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		12noon	Baptism: Sofie Lea Zatyrcz

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION MASS Sunday 22nd May, 10.30am (The Most Holy Trinity).

CHOIR PRACTICE Second Tuesday of each month, 8pm to 9pm, at St Peter's. Next practice, **Tuesday 10th May**. All are welcome.

CHRISTIAN AID Next month (**15th-21st May**) there will be a house to house collection in Bearsted and Thurnham asking people to make donations to Christian Aid's work. If anyone can help, please give your contact details to Father Geoffrey who will pass them on to the organizer. There will also be an ecumenical Christian Aid Week Service on **Sunday 22nd May** at 5pm at Holy Cross Church to which all are warmly invited.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for April:** *that amid political and religious conflicts, Christians in Africa may give witness to love and faith in Jesus Christ.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes, especially Baby Fergus Ainsworth (now home) and Feline Maes; for those recently dead especially Olivia May Venner; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends and the intentions on the notice board.
- **For God's protection for the abducted Nigerian schoolgirls** and pray that they will be able to return to their families safe and sound; and we pray for anyone held against their will or kept in slavery.
- **For vocations** to the priesthood, the diaconate and the religious life.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£336.93 (Gift Aided, £188.00)**. ♦ This Sunday is World Day of Prayer for Vocations and there is a collection for **Ecclesiastical Education**; this collection helps to meet the cost of training students for the priesthood and the permanent diaconate. It also supports certain forms of ongoing formation of the clergy. ♦ There will be a retiring collection next weekend for the **maintenance of St George's Cathedral**, the mother church of the diocese. This collection helps with the upkeep of the cathedral.

SOCIAL JUSTICE People in Kent concerned about issues of social justice get together to discuss these matters from time to time at the area bishop's house (The Hermitage, More Park, West Malling ME19 6HN). The next such gathering is scheduled to run from 2 till 4 pm **this Sunday, 17th April**. All are welcome to join us then, or to contact Phil Kerton on 01474 873802 to get informed about future events. [*Our Concerns: Prayer, Peace, Poverty, Prisoners, Persecution, Pollution.*]

I BELIEVE Archbishop Peter invites those recently confirmed or to be confirmed to an afternoon of catechesis, testimony, prayer and music at The Amigo Hall, next to the cathedral, on **Sunday 24th April** between 3 and 5pm, followed by refreshments. Visit <http://scys.org.uk/mercy> for more information.

ALTAR SERVERS' RALLY Aylesford Priory, **Monday 2nd May**. See poster.

MERCIFUL MINISTRY A day for the people of the diocese: **Sunday 8th May**, 2.30 – 5pm (afternoon tea provided), Little Sisters of the Poor, 2a Meadow Road, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1QH; parking available. To Book, email: father.john@finance-rcdsouthwark.org by 30th April. See poster.

MARRIAGE MASS at St GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL Saturday **18th June**, 3pm. If you are celebrating a significant wedding anniversary this year, **please give in your names by the end of April** so you can receive an invitation from the Archbishop. This annual event fills the cathedral and is well received; all are welcome to attend.