



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



Church of St Peter, 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](http://www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk)

Year C

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

10th JANUARY 2016

**FAITH IN FOCUS: EMPOWERED** The baptism of Jesus marks the beginning of his formal mission on earth. It's the moment when he takes his first steps in response to his Father's commission and begins to preach about the kingdom that God wants to establish here on earth and for all eternity. In future times of hesitation and difficulty Jesus would look back at his baptism and see it as the moment he was anointed to bring comfort to the afflicted and challenge to the affluent. It was the touchstone of his ministry.



It's easy for us to make the mistake of looking at our own baptism as simply a past event. We can imagine that it's something over and done with, something that was done to us as a child. This is because we tend to view baptism as being officially enrolled in the Church, as having our name written among those who are Christians. Baptism does indeed enrol; but more than that: it empowers. Because we are baptised we have certain rights as Christians; we can take part fully in all that the Church celebrates, we can be baptised, married, buried etc. Along with these rights go certain responsibilities. We agree to live as members of God's people, to support each other and all those who are in need, to deepen our relationship with God and to become mouth-pieces for the Good News of Jesus Christ. As one of the sacraments, baptism needs to be lived out each day or else it will wither. It's a dynamic thing. The grace of baptism empowers us to become witnesses. We claim that Christ's message offers us the chance of living life to the full, of getting the most out of life, and our baptism fires us up to spread the news to others rather than keeping it to ourselves. It makes us official spokesmen and women.

So if you're tempted to think that spreading the Good News is something for the professionals, for catechists and missionaries, then think again. You've been empowered by the grace of your baptism to be an effective witness to the force of God in your life. Make sure you do your baptism proud!

*Author unknown*

**CHRISTMAS** The Church's liturgical celebration of Christmas (the Nativity of the Lord) concludes today, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Ordinary Time before Lent begins on **Monday 11th January**, the First Week in Ordinary Time, ferial cycle 2 (weekday readings at Mass), psalter week 1 (Divine Office). The lectionary cycle for Sundays is C with the gospel according to St Luke. Lent, early this year, begins on Ash Wednesday, **10th February**.

**Fr JOSEPH KELLY O. CARM** Parishioners will remember Fr Joe from his time at Allington Castle when it was in the hands of the Carmelites. He died Wednesday 6th January and his funeral will be at the Friars on Tuesday **12th January** at 11.30am. ✕ May he rest in peace.

**PEACE SUNDAY** is **next week**. The work of *Pax Christi* is based on the gospel and inspired by faith. The vision of *Pax Christi* is of a world where people can live in peace, without fear of violence in all its forms. Rooted in Catholic Christianity, *Pax Christi* work with all who share their values to abolish war and create communities of peace and justice. In tribute to those innocent ones whose lives have been violently cut short in recent days please pick up an envelope and use it to put towards next week's collection.

**DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 10th JANUARY 2016**  
**(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

✕ **THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (C)** ✕

Sun 10th	Saturday	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Wellbeing of Canon John Gunn
	Sunday	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: William Watts RIP
Mon 11th	Feria	<b>7.00pm</b>	✕ Mass: McDaniel family
Tues 12th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Fr Joseph Kelly O Carm RIP
Wed 13th	Feria	<b>(H) 10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Peter Fraser RIP
Thu 14th	Feria	<b>7.00am</b>	✕ Mass: For James and Sebastian
Friday 15th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Sat 16th	Our Lady	<i>5:00-5:30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ <b>SECOND SUNDAY (C)</b> ✕			
Sun 17th	Saturday	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Anne Hamilton, Foundation Mass
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: Michael Ashdowne RIP
		<b>3.00pm</b>	United Service at Bearsted Methodist Church

**SOCIAL COMMITTEE** meets this Tuesday at the usual time and venue.

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

**CHRISTIAN UNITY** There will be a service at Bearsted Methodist Church next Sunday, **17th January** at 3pm in advance of the Church Unity Octave (**18th to 25th January**). It will be followed by tea and cakes. A warm welcome is, as always, assured. ♦ The theme for this annual Octave of Prayer is *Salt of the Earth*: <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2016/>.

**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 helpers take it in turn to lead. We are always in need of additional leaders/helpers to join our team.

**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 innocent Syrian citizens left starving as a result of the conflict in that area;** *may the United Nations not be hampered as it struggles to assist 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 Lawrence Miller and all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those recently dead especially Fr Joseph Kelly O. Carm, for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends; and for the intentions on the notice board.*

Thank you in addition for your offerings last weekend which amounted to **£401.62** (Gift Aided, **£265.00**). ♦ **Crib offerings** throughout the season this year were split between the "**Friends of the Holy Land**", offering help to the poorest families in Bethlehem, and "**Crisis Fund in Southwark**" to help support children, young people and families in immediate need. ♦ Next Sunday is **Peace Sunday**, a day of prayer for Peace on Earth. There is no official collection for this, but if you wish to contribute to the work of *Pax Christi*, the International Catholic Movement for Peace (see above), envelopes are available next to the newsletters.

**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 (More Park, West Malling ME19 6HN). The next such gathering is scheduled to run from 2 till 4pm next Sunday, **17th January**. All are welcome, or contact Phil Kerton on 01474 873802 to get informed about future events. *[The group's concerns: Prayer, Peace, Poverty, Prisoners, Persecution, Pollution.]*