



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

FIRST SUNDAY of LENT

14th February 2016

FAITH IN FOCUS: JUST TESTING We tend to think of temptation in terms of a sin magnet. It's the opposite pole to where we should be and like all magnetic opposites we're attracted to it even though we know it's wrong. The cake on the plate just seems to have a power that draws us; it attracts us because that's what temptation does. It surprises a lot of people that this is not really the meaning of temptation in the scriptures. The Greek word that we call temptation means something rather different. It means a "testing" or a "proving" of a person's fidelity, integrity, virtue or constancy. So if I tempt you, I'm not simply trying to get you to eat the cake; what I am really doing is measuring your ability to remain faithful to your principles, seeing whether you really are the person you claim to be. That's what the devil did with Jesus in the desert. He put him to the test by first getting him to doubt himself (offering him greater status and power) and then getting him to be over-confident (jumping off the roof of the temple, sure that the angels would catch him). The point of this episode is not that Jesus didn't fancy jumping off. It's that he didn't allow himself to be deflected from being the person he knew he was. The devil tested him but Jesus didn't budge. In a strange way temptations can be constructive things because they can become growth points in our relationship with God and other people. I can "prove" my true qualities when I am offered the choice to reject God. Of course, it's important to remember that no temptation, however repulsive to us, is ever a sin. In order to redeem us, as a human being Jesus was tempted at the roots of our human nature and yet he never sinned. Temptation strengthened Jesus' resolve to carry out the mission he received from the Father. As we begin our Lenten journey this week can see temptations either as a threat to us or else as moments when we can reaffirm our commitment to following Christ. Why not put it to the test? *Author unknown*



RECOMMENDED FOR LENT ("PRAYER : FASTING : ALMSGIVING") It was encouraging to see so many at Mass on Ash Wednesday. ✘ Try to get to Mass during Lent **at least once** during the week. ✘ Attend Stations of the Cross either at St Peter's or Good Shepherd on **Friday evenings**. ✘ Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. ✘ Contribute to CAFOD (especially on Lent Fast Day this week, **19th February**) or our parish Lenten Appeal for CAFOD. ✘ 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: beginning at Bearsted Methodists, 12.30 this Friday, **19th February**: the new Minister there, Bonni-Belle Pickard, will be speaking on her work in India. We host the lunch here at St Peter's on **4th March**.*

LENT FAST DAY CAFOD Lent Fast Day is this **Friday, 19th February**. This year we have an opportunity to come together as a Catholic community to ensure girls living in the world's poorest countries are free to change their lives by getting an education. CAFOD is working with local expert organizations around the world to bring water to family homes, so girls who used to spend hours collecting it every day, now have time for school, study and to play with their friends. Fast Days are our opportunity to support that vital work. Please use the envelope attached for your savings, and remember to fast on Lent Fast Day. And there is very good news: the UK government has promised to **match every pound and penny you give this Lent**. Please give as much as you can so that more girls around the world are able to live lives free from the burden of the long walk for water. For details, visit cafod.org.uk/privacy.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Please remember the children and their families in your prayers, especially as they prepare for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation on **26th February**.

DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 14th FEBRUARY 2016
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **FIRST SUNDAY of LENT (C)** ✕

Sun 14th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Elizabeth White RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Rita Kimber
Mon 15th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Maria Rouse RIP
Tues 16th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Fr James Maguire RIP
Wed 17th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Ellen Fitzpatrick RIP
Thu 18th	Feria	Sorry: NO MASS	
Fri 19th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Paul Beattie RIP
		(H) 7.30pm	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Sat 20th	Feria	<i>5:00-5:30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ SECOND SUNDAY of LENT (C) ✕			
Sun 21st	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Noel Millbrook RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Vera Seager RIP

PASTORAL TEAM The meeting scheduled for last week has been rescheduled for **Wednesday 4th March** at 7.30pm at St Peter's.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for February:** *that opportunities may increase for dialogue and encounter between the Christian faith and the peoples of Asia. We pray for Bishops Patrick Lynch and Paul Hendricks, ordained as our auxiliary bishops on this day in 2006.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes, especially Baby Fergus Ainsworth; for those recently dead, especially Tom Husband, Maria Rouse and Fr James Maguire; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends and the intentions on the notice board. For those at the rite of election this weekend and who are to be received into the Church at Easter.
- **We pray for all those affected by the earthquake in Taiwan**, for those who have lost loved ones, homes or livelihood: we ask that God's sustaining love will enfold them in these difficult times
- **We pray for all those killed or injured in the railway accident in Germany:** may God's healing love sustain them in their time of grief and pain.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£391.93** (Gift Aided, **£267.50**). ♦ The collection for **Poor Parishes** (formerly *Needs of the Diocese*) amounted to **£308.72**. ♦ Throughout Lent we are encouraged to contribute to CAFOD: HM Revenue and Customs will match **every £1 we save**.

WALK WITH ME This pocket size publication is once again available and is a good source of devotion for each day of Lent. There is a preface by our Archbishop.

24 HOURS FOR THE LORD **Friday 4th** and **Saturday 5th March** at St Francis'. More information soon.

JUSTICE AND PEACE Please see the annual report attached. It is a blessing to have this inter-church outreach in our area. This is largely thanks to the dedication of Joan Brown RIP, and we are grateful to Marie Quarman and members of the team who meet faithfully every month. New members are always welcome to join the meetings which are usually held on the first Monday or Tuesday of the month here at St Peter's. ✕ **JOAN BROWN RIP** We have received, at the request of the family, a legacy of £400 from Joan Brown's estate.

BEARSTED AREA CHURCHES TOGETHER As usual we are looking for donations of Easter Eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt, which will take place *before* Easter on Holy Saturday, **26th March**. It seems that St Peter's share is in the region of 82 eggs. Thank you.

BBC RADIO 4 LENT TALKS Starting Wednesday **17th February** 8.45-9.00pm. The Christian season of Lent is traditionally a time for self-examination and reflection on the events leading up to Jesus' cruci-

fiction. Throughout Lent, six writers will reflect on these events through a variety of locations as they explore the theme of “**Lent in the Landscape**”. The first of six episodes.