



# 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](mailto: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**

**FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT**

**13th MARCH 2016**

**FAITH IN FOCUS: FAULTY JUDGMENT** If you commit the crime you should do the time. This is something we hear a lot today, along with suggestions that some people should be locked up and the key thrown away. For all our pretence at civilisation and sophistication, we find ourselves in a society that is very far from the values of Jesus and particularly the core Christian value of forgiveness. Side-lining forgiveness allows us to be judgmental. It allows us to make comments about other people as if we were better than them, as if we were never guilty of sin ourselves; yet all our judgment is faulty, for we have all sinned. This is the pitiful scene that Jesus faced when they brought a woman who had been caught committing adultery. Jesus seems not to be dismayed by the woman's sin (and her partner whom we never meet). What does dismay him is the arrogance of the scribes and Pharisees who presume a "holier than thou" attitude towards the woman. And so, despite the carefully prepared trap to get him to be at odds with the Law, Jesus first sets about dismantling the judgmental hypocrisy of the accusers rather than tackling what the woman has done. It's worth noting that forgiveness is not ours to give. Forgiveness comes from God and all we can do is to pass it on, just like love. God is love and our love is merely a sharing in his perfect love. God is forgiveness and when we forgive we are simply holding up a mirror to the God who has first forgiven each of us. "Our" forgiveness is simply a reflection. Of course, if we refuse to forgive then we cannot expect forgiveness for our trespasses. This has always been the simple message of the Our Father. Very often when we judge others it is because we see the same fault in ourselves, and condemning the other person allows us to expiate our own frailty. Of course, Jesus did not praise the woman for what she had done; he told her to go away and sin no more. But what he did do is to prevent her from being judged by people who were as weak as she was but pretended to be better. Ring any bells? *Author unknown*



**RECOMMENDED FOR LENT ("PRAYER : FASTING : ALMSGIVING")** ✘ Try to get to Mass during Lent **at least once** during the week. ✘ Attend Stations of the Cross at Good Shepherd this **Friday evening**. ✘ Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. ✘ Contribute to CAFOD, which is our parish Lenten Appeal this year. ✘ 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: concluding at Langley, 12.30 this Friday, **18th March** with Rev. Stephen Hughes speaking about his work in Romania.

**NEXT SUNDAY** is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. Morning Mass at St Peter's will **begin in the parish hall** with the blessing of palms and the Gospel concerning the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem. This will be followed by the procession to church for the Mass. ✘ The **Chrism Mass** on Wednesday **23rd March** means that there will be no Mass at Good Shepherd that day. ✘ **Maundy Thursday Liturgy:** If you are willing and able to take part in the feet washing part of the liturgy please give your name to Deacon Cyril or Fr Geoff as soon as possible. N.B. According to a recent ruling from Pope Francis "This group may consist of men and women, and ideally of the young and the old, healthy and sick, clerics, consecrated persons and laypeople."

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS** Please remember the children and their families in your prayers: the children recently celebrated the sacrament of reconciliation and are now preparing for their First Eucharist on **Sunday 22nd May**.

**DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 13th MARCH 2016**  
**(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT (C)** ✕

Sun 13th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Peter Downing RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Tom Lawson RIP
Mon 14th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 15th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 16th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 17th	St PATRICK	7.00am	✕ Mass: Margaret Mason RIP
Fri 18th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
		(H) 7.30pm	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Sat 19th	St JOSEPH	5:00-5:30pm	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **PALM SUNDAY of THE PASSION of THE LORD (C)** ✕

Sun 20th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Luis and Conchita Vecino RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass ( <i>starts in the hall</i> ): John and Elizabeth Drummy RIP
		12noon	Baptism: Amber Tuyet Anh Nguyen

**SOCIAL COMMITTEE** There is a meeting **this Tuesday** at the usual place and time.

**St PETER'S CHOIR** Our next choir rehearsal is this **Wednesday, 16th March**, 8pm to 9pm, practising for Holy Week and Easter.

**EASTER COFFEE** Back yet again (by popular demand): coffee and tea after Mass at Good Shepherd on Easter Sunday morning, **27th March**. Many thanks to our organizers!

**PLEASE PRAY...**

- ***With the Holy Father for March:*** *that those Christians who are discriminated against or are being persecuted on account of their faith, may remain strong and faithful to the Gospel, thanks to the incessant prayer of the whole Church.*
- ***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 Catherine O'Donnell and Margaret Mason; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends and the intentions on the notice board.
- ***For all those who are unemployed*** or facing redundancy, with worries of how they will support their families: may God's love be shown to them from unexpected sources, as they look to rebuild their lives.
- ***For all children and young people with mental health problems:*** may they receive the help and treatment they need to live happy and fulfilled lives.

**Thank you** for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£491.50** (Gift Aided, **£295.80**). ♦ Throughout Lent we are encouraged to contribute to CAFOD: HM Revenue and Customs will match **every £1 we save but only if you are a taxpayer and provide your name and address** (use the 'Give Today' slip in the CAFOD envelope). ♦ **This Sunday** there is a retiring collection to help with the **cost of flowers** for Holy Week and Easter.

**PARISH GIFT AID SCHEME** New Gift Aid envelopes are now ready for collection. The Diocese Gift Aid Office have requested that we change the start date for the new envelopes to April instead of June. Please start using these envelopes from the indicated date, 10th April, discarding any leftovers you may have from previous sets to avoid any confusion. Thank you.

**LENT REFLECTIONS** The Southwark Stewardship Team is offering 'online' daily meditations. Simply log on and sign up at <http://eepurl.com/bF0b6P>.

**BBC RADIO 4 LENT TALKS** Wednesdays in Lent 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' crucifixion. 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 fifth of six episodes.