



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

PALM SUNDAY of THE PASSION of THE LORD

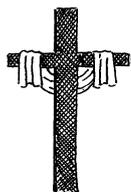
20th MARCH 2016

FAITH in FOCUS: GOING WITH THE FLOW? When the word "crowd" is used in the gospels it's almost as if it is some sort of audience. The crowd follows Jesus here and there wanting to relish the cut and thrust of the arguments between him and the authorities; it's there for something to eat in the desert, to see the scribes and the Pharisees put in their place or to enjoy a good miracle. Jesus says it's like sheep without a shepherd. And most of all it's fickle. It can change allegiance as quickly as the wind can change direction. So on **Palm Sunday** we see the crowd gathering to watch its hero as he approaches Jerusalem. The people even spread their coats on the floor in front of him and cheer him as their great white hope in shining armour, even though he is unarmed and riding on donkey. But by Friday the mood changes and the crowd bays for his blood. Offered the chance of releasing a prisoner they choose Barabbas, a well-known criminal. Never trust a cheering crowd. But before we get on our high horses and throw scorn at the crowd, let's admit that we're just the same. We have our moments of great faith and devotion and then the next minute we behave in ways that are far from the gospel. During this Holy Week we are inevitably going to be in the crowd, but we are offered the opportunity of standing out from it, of not simply going with the flow. On **Maundy Thursday** we are given the chance of pledging ourselves once more to service of each other, symbolised by the Washing of the Feet, a service that culminates in eucharist. On **Good Friday** we praise God for the victory of the cross and offer ourselves to be taken, broken and used in whatever way God chooses to use us. And on **Holy Saturday**, as the Easter event becomes clear, we celebrate the core of our faith that Jesus has conquered all evil and that he invites us to share life to the full. Singing our alleluias means that we are signing on the dotted line to be permanent witnesses of this by our lives. So let's take our place in the crowd. But let's not simply go with the flow.



(Author unknown.)

THIS SUNDAY is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. Morning Mass at St Peter's **begins in the parish hall** with the blessing of palms and the Gospel concerning the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem. This is followed by the procession to church for the Mass. ✘ The Chrism Mass this 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 [taking part in the foot washing ceremony] may consist of men and women, and ideally of the young and the old, healthy and sick, clerics, consecrated persons and laypeople."



THE GREAT WEEK ✘ **Please take a Holy Week poster and display it in a prominent window.**

✘ **Holy Week**, the seven days before Easter, comes as the climax of the 40 days of Lent which began on Ash Wednesday. Those who took the ashes on their foreheads agreed to spend six weeks trying to deepen their relationship with God by prayer, fasting and good works. When the ashes are washed off the commitment remains. Christians are called to a daily conversion. We never fully finish our work of overcoming sin within us. Lent recalls us to our task of becoming the baptized people that we really are, and it comes to an end when we baptize new members into our community at Easter. The Thursday, Friday and Saturday which come immediately before Easter are called the Triduum, from the Latin word for "three days". It is not really three separate feasts, but more of a "three-day" feast, - an extended preparation for the great event of Easter. That's why, wherever possible, Christians try to be present on each day, taking up where they left off the day before. It is like the three acts of a single play. In our celebration of these three days which changed the world we use symbols which both remind us of what happened at the first Easter and help us to understand how they affect our lives today. With these symbols we remember, re-enact and recommit ourselves.

DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 20th MARCH 2016
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✧ **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
		12.30pm	Baptism: Amber Tuyet Anh Nguyen
Mon 21st	Monday of Holy Week	7.00pm	✧ Mass: Marion Walsh RIP
Tues 22nd	Tuesday of Holy Week	10.00am	✧ Mass
Wed 23rd	Wednesday of Holy Week	NO MASS	(<i>Chrism Mass, 11.30am at the Cathedral</i>)
Thu 24th	Maundy Thursday	8.00pm	✧ Mass of The Lord's Supper: Joyce Gibson's private intention (<i>followed by watching until 11pm</i>)
Fri 25th	Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday) (<i>Day of Fasting and Abstinence</i>)	11.00am	Stations of the Cross (especially for children)
		(H) 12noon	Stations of the Cross
		3.00pm	✧ Solemn Liturgy of The Passion of The Lord (<i>followed by Confessions</i>)
Sat 26th	Holy Saturday	5-6.00pm	Confessions

✧ **EASTER SUNDAY of THE RESURRECTION of the LORD (C)** ✧

Sun 27th	Saturday	7.30pm	✧ Easter Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✧ Mass:
		10.30am	✧ Mass: Colin Otterson RIP

DEANERY PENANCE A Penitential Service, with celebration of individual confessions, will be held at St Francis' this **Monday, 21st March** at 7.30pm.

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...

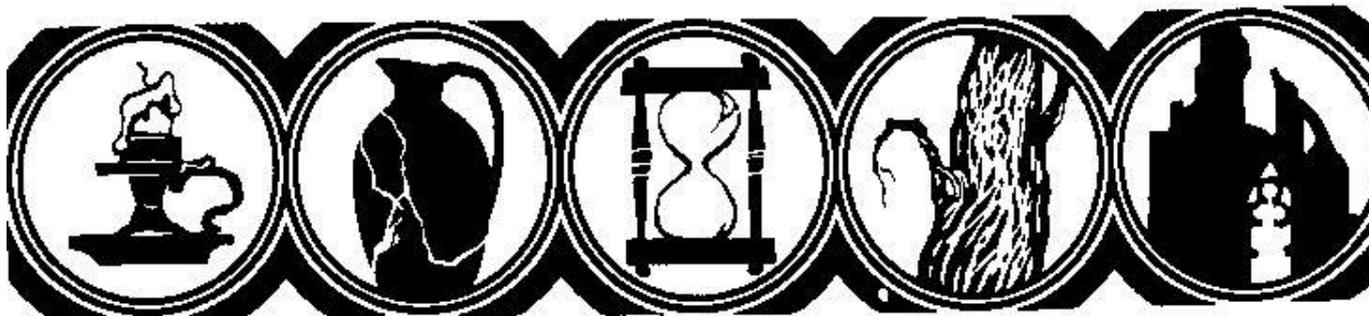
- **With the Holy Father for March:** that those Christians who are discriminated against or are being persecuted on account of their faith, may remain strong and faithful to the Gospel, thanks to the incessant prayer of the whole Church.
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes, especially Baby Fergus Ainsworth (doing well) and Finbarr Egan; for Amber, being baptized this Sunday, and for her parents and godparents; for those recently dead; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends and the intentions on the notice board.
- **For the people of Syria;** that peace, forgiveness and reconciliation will replace the fighting and violence that has destroyed people's lives and devastated their land.
- **For the Church and her leaders,** that by walking in the footsteps of our Lord this Holy Week, we may increase in faith and hope and in the love of God for those who suffer.

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£509.23** (Gift Aided, **£279.00**). ♦ The retiring collection to help with the **cost of flowers** for Holy Week and Easter amounted to **£223.77**. • Please continue to hand in your CAFOD envelopes: 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). • On **Good Friday** there will be a **papal collection for the Holy Places** (see below). • The **Easter Collection** next Sunday is your **personal offering to the priest** (it is not for parish expenses). *Envelopes are available for your convenience.* Along with the Christmas Collection this is the principal way you provide your priest with any income. Thank you.

THE GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION for the Holy Places is used to maintain 74 churches and shrines associated with the life of Jesus. It also helps the work of the Church in the holy Land and neighbouring countries by the relief of poverty and suffering. Parishes, schools, orphanages and medical centres there rely very much on assistance from the Collection, especially at this difficult time. Gift Aid Donors are asked to place their contribution in one of the spare envelopes supplied in your box (writing 'Holy Places' on front) thereby boosting their donation by an additional 25% tax relief.

BEARSTED AREA CHURCHES TOGETHER Thank you to those who supported our Lent Lunches and Talks: it's always a joy to share our faith, our ambitions and outreach in this way. ♦
Easter Egg Hunt: Holy Saturday, **26th March**– see poster.

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.



COMING UP:

THE ANNUNCIATION Since 25th March is in Holy Week (Good Friday), the solemnity of the Annunciation is transferred this year to Monday **4th April**.

READERS and COMMUNION MINISTERS There will be a day of recollection at Tenterden on **Saturday 9th April**.

MARMALADE MORNING at St Nicholas' Church, Otham, from 9.30, **Saturday 16th April**. Probably the best marmalade and chutney in Kent! For more information, contact Joan Palmer, 202239.

SAMARA AID APPEAL for Syria and Iraq Update (*from Jacqui Elliott from Holy Cross*) Thank you to everyone who has donated clothes, shoes or bedding or Care Pack items to the Samara Aid Appeal so far. Volunteers from Holy Cross helped box 52 banana boxes full of donations sorted into Winter and Summer boxes on Saturday 12th March with plenty more still to sort through. We are extending the donations deadline to **Sat 16th April** so there is time to find good quality clothes or shoes to donate that your family may have grown out of. Due to the sheer quantity of donations coming in, we would appreciate more volunteers to help with a 2nd sorting and boxing donations day on **Sat 16th April at Holy Cross Church**. The more volunteers to sort and box donations the easier the job is. We now have more storage areas for the donations and we also have some volunteers to transport boxed donations to Samara's warehouses in the last 2 weeks of April. We can make a difference by working together – we know that donations get to the refugees in need in Syria and Iraq. Please contact Jacqui Elliott to volunteer to help sort and box donations **on 16th April either 10am to 1pm or 1.30pm to 4.30pm at Holy Cross Church** or any other questions about the Appeal on 01622 736 887 / 07770 329834 or visit www.samarasaidappeal.org.

PARISH SOCIAL Saturday **30th April**. See reverse.

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

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

MARRIAGE MASS at St GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL Saturday **18th June**, 3pm. If you are celebrating your 1st / 10th / 25th / 40th / 50th / 60th + wedding anniversary this year, please give in your names as soon as possible so you can receive an invitation from the Archbishop. This annual event fills the cathedral and is a great affirmation of the value of marriage. All are welcome to attend.