



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 A

SECOND SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

15th January 2017

Peace Sunday

FAITH IN FOCUS: THE SIN OF THE WORLD Previous generations of Christians had a more lively sense of sin than we have today. Perhaps it was due to the vigorous style of preaching that reminded people of their lowliness and their propensity for doing wrong. In Catholic circles this showed itself in long queues each week outside the confessional, and on the Protestant and Free Church circuits sin was the stuff of many a mission or revival meeting. John the Baptist proclaims that Jesus is sent from God to take away the sin of the world. What exactly is this sin? It is clearly more than the pettiness of being nasty to your brother or sister, shoplifting from the supermarket, telling lies to your teacher or selling black market goods at knock-down prices.



The sin of the world is a disease that has infected all of us. We live with it, often without realising it. It is endemic; it affects the very structures of our society and our world. It's often more about what we don't do than what we do. We find it in institutions just as much as in individual people. When a public body is accused of being institutionally racist we are beginning to scratch the surface of what the sin of the world is. It is an atmosphere that we breathe and take for granted but do nothing about, sometimes claiming that the problem is too big for us to make any impression on alone. Hence, we become reconciled to the fact that farmers in poor countries receive low payments for their products so that we can buy them cheaply here. We watch as our neighbours become embroiled in a life of drug dependency but claim that we are powerless to tackle the pushers. We see international pharmaceutical companies charge prices for AIDS medicines that prevent millions in Africa from getting relief. We continue to trade with repressive regimes, to stand by while armies commit genocide, to presume that all asylum seekers are scroungers, to ignore the polluting of the environment, to take as our standard whatever false gods our government or the media decide to put before us...Of course, we reply by saying that it's not us who do these things; it's just "how the world is these days". This is the sin of the world that Jesus came to take away. Do we have a role to play? *Author unknown*)

PEACE SUNDAY Today. See <http://paxchristi.org.uk/news-and-events/peace-sunday/> for more information. Pope Francis is calling on political and religious leaders, on the heads of international institutions, on business and media executives and on all men and women of goodwill to become instruments of reconciliation and adopt nonviolence as a style of politics for peace.

PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY From 18th until 25th January the Church observes eight days' prayer for Christian Unity. The theme this year, developed by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, is *Crossing Barriers* – see <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2017/> for more information. A votive Mass for Christian Unity will be celebrated during the octave. There is to be a service for Christian Unity at Holy Cross Church, Bearsted, at 3pm next **Sunday, 22nd January**. Please make every effort to attend.

St PETER'S TREES Work on the trees at St Peter's was completed last week, just before the snow came. The chain-post fencing will be extended this week.

BEARSTED CHURCHES TOGETHER Committee meeting, 7.30pm **this Tuesday** at St Peter's.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2017 Applications have now closed. Preparations for those parents who have enrolled their children have now begun; we have a group of 11 this year. We will continue to be in

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 15th JANUARY 2017 (Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✕ SECOND SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) ✕			
Sun 15th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Bridie Leaman RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Michael Ashdowne RIP
Mon 16th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Tues 17th	St Anthony	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 18th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Anne Hamilton RIP (FM)
Thu 19th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass: For the unity of all Christians
Fri 20th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Donor's Intention
Sat 21st	St Agnes	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ THIRD SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) ✕			
Sun 22nd	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Peter Capon RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Tim O'Shea RIP
		10.30am	✕ Sung Mass: Rita Kimber
		At Holy Cross:	3.00pm

touch with parents by email.

ADVENT APPEAL 2016 Last year's appeal was in aid of The Maidstone Churches' Winter Shelter. To date the Advent Appeal has raised a total of **£472.55**. To this has been added the contents of the St Anthony poor box for 2016: **£209.60**. Thank you to those who have made contributions. **Maidstone Day Care Centre** would be very grateful if you could donate any of the following to help the homeless in Maidstone, mainly for men but also some women: • winter clothes, including shoes and boots, coats, pants and socks, gloves, scarves, hats; • sleeping bags and blankets; • toiletries. Please leave any donations, clearly marked, in the parish room at St Peter's; Marie Quarman will continue to collect until week ending **29th January**. Thank you.

CAFOD Thank you for all your support for CAFOD's campaigns during 2016. During the year we received over 24,000 messages of hope, inspired by the Lampedusa Cross, which were dedicated at a special service in Salford. These messages are now being given to refugees, and we still welcome your messages during the new year. Last year we also celebrated the UK's ratification of the Paris climate treaty and between us, held hundreds of conversations with MPs about climate change and renewable energy during 2016. Thank you. • Homeless Sunday is on **22nd January** (<http://homeless-sunday.uk/>).

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for January:** *that all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving to restore ecclesial communion through prayer and fraternal charity by working together to overcome the challenges facing humanity.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those who have died recently, and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends, and the intentions on the notice board.
- **For all those affected by strike action** on our transport systems and that agreement will be found to resolve the differences.

<p>Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: £450.77 (Gift Aided, £240.50; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to £134.00).</p>

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM In Bearsted and Thurnham we are marking the centenaries of those from our villages who died in World War One. Wherever possible we meet outside their home on the anniversary of their death and hold a short act of remembrance and lay a wreath. All are invited to join us. We next meet to commemorate and pray for JOHN ALBERT WISDOM: A naval rating on HMS Laurentic who died at sea, his ship having been hit by an enemy mine off Co Donegal. He was the second naval

teenager to die from our community and the third man from Acacia Villas. We will meet on **Wednesday 25th January** at 12noon at Acacia Villas, Willington Street, opposite the entrance to Park and Ride.

A LIFETIME OF LOVING A day exploring spouses' relationships in the light of Pope Francis's Apostolic Exhortation 'The Joy of Love', **Saturday 4th March** at St Teresa's, Ashford. See poster or contact Carole: 07983 525727, or email mflkent@gmail.com.