



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

FOURTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

29th January 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: SELF-MADE PEOPLE? The 1980s were known as the "me" years. We were encouraged to take care of ourselves by sharing in an economy that was supposed to make us all richer and give us a greater share in the wealth of our nation. A booming financial market, wider ownership of shares due to privatisation, champagne in the city and a "loads o' money" culture ensued. For some. Yet we were all enticed by the philosophy of getting out there and grabbing what was ours.

The pundits of the 80s would have found it hard to make any sense of Jesus's words in today's gospel. They are counter-cultural: they fly in the face of the accepted standards of society. In fact, they say that to be a Christian is to put yourself not in the front line when it comes to receiving, but to stand in second place and allow those more needy than you to come forward. What lies behind the teaching from the Sermon on the Mount is the fact that none of us is a self-made man or woman. The world belongs to God not to the rich, and whatever skills and talents we might have are not the result of our own greatness but of God's generosity. Success is not measured by bank balances or public adulation, by civic honours and titles or by column inches in the national newspapers. Success is measured by our ability to espouse the values of God's kingdom, values which do not draw attention to ourselves but point us in the direction of God.

People who are selfish, or self-absorbed, lack integrity. They lack integrity because humility is missing from their make-up. And humility does not mean that they pretend to be less than they are; it means that they acknowledge where their strengths come from. Jesus urges us to go beyond the world's definition of strength, success and happiness, for seen through the lens of eternity they are shallow. Instead, he invites us to rejoice in true poverty of spirit and boast of the values of the kingdom, which are our wisdom, our strength, our holiness and our freedom.

(Author unknown)



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 who meet on Friday afternoons at St Peter's. We will continue to be in touch with parents by email. Please remember the children in your prayers and they prepare for their First Confessions next **Saturday, 4th February.**

COMING UP We look forward to welcoming and introducing **Fergus Ainsworth** to the parish next week. Fergus, son of Sinead and Julius, was baptized in emergency in hospital, and we are introducing him to the parish, clothing him in his 'christening shawl' and presenting him with his baptismal candle **next Sunday** at Mass at St Peter's. ♦ We also look forward to the wedding of **Stewart Anandappa** and **Rachel Meathrel** at St Peter's on **Friday 10th February.** Our congratulations, love, prayers and best wishes to them all, and to their families.

✘ **ASH WEDNESDAY** ✘ the start of Lent, is on **1st March.**

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 29th JANUARY 2017 (Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✕ FOURTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) ✕			
Sun 29th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: George and Mary Combes RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Barbara Amos RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: James McMahon RIP
Mon 30th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Tues 31st	St John Bosco	10.00am	✕ Mass: Patricia Curtis RIP
Wed 1st Feb	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Alan and Monica Flynn RIP
Thu 2nd	Presentation of the Lord	7.00am	✕ Mass: Fr Andrew Fernandes RIP
Fri 3rd	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Canon Charles Walker RIP
Sat 4th	Our Lady	5.00-5.30pm	Confessions
✕ FIFTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) ✕			
Sun 5th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Len Richardson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Truda Ryans RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: (Pro Populo) Introducing Fergus

ADVENT APPEAL 2016 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 this week ending, **29th January**. Thank you.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for February – comfort for the afflicted:** *that all those who are afflicted. Especially the poor, refugees and marginalised may find welcome and comfort in our communities.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes especially Brian Smith (slightly better); for those who have died recently especially Fr Andrew Fernandes and Canon Charles Walker, and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now (see below); for the happy repose of Alan and Monica Flynn and Patricia Curtis, whose ashes are to be interred locally this week; for all our relatives and friends, for Fergus Ainsworth, being introduced to the parish next Sunday; for Stewart and Rachel, preparing for their wedding at St Peter's on 10th February; and the intentions on the notice board.
- **For all migrants who are far away from their homes** and loved ones; that they will receive food and shelter during the cold winter months, given with compassion.
- **Anniversaries this week** (from the Lady Chapel memorial): ✕ Arthur Wood, James Holland, Murray Fraser, Theresa Hamilton, Trixie Day-Stewart, Annie McCarthy and Edna Macklin. ✕

<p>Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: £418.57 (Gift Aided, £250.30; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to £134.00).</p>

CRIB OFFERING See the thank you letter from the Friends of the Holy Land for the **£110.68** raised by parishioners in support of fellow Christians in the Holy Land.

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.

MASS FOR THE SICK A Mass for the sick for the Maidstone area parishes will be at St Francis' at 10am on **Saturday 11th February**, World Day of Prayer for the Sick, and will include the rite of Anointing of the Sick. There will also be a Mass for the Sick at Aylesford Priory at 12noon.

MEDJUGORJE PILGRIMAGE 7 nights half board, flight and airport transfers 22nd - 29th April and 13th - 20th May, Gatwick to Dubrovnik, €459 per person. Email jackiemulort@btinternet.com or call on 020 3239 8662.