



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 of LENT

26th March 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: SIGHT FOR SORE EYES Three great gifts are on offer during Lent: water, light and life. It's the second of these gifts, light, that we hear about today in the gospel. It's the account of Jesus' miracle worked for the man born blind. And he brings light to the man's eyes in more ways than one. There's none so blind as those who will not see, so the phrase goes.

People who are physically blind have eyes that do not react to the light. Of course, there are people who not only cannot see, but also refuse to see.

Some just refuse to open their eyes and see what's staring them in the face. They don't want to believe. They think that they can escape reality by ignoring it. Such people are found inside and outside the Church. But the gift that

Jesus offered the blind man and which he promises to us, is not just that we will see, but that we will have a new vision of reality. Life would never be the same again for the man born blind;

Jesus helped him to see things clearly. To see with eyes of faith does not mean that everything looks rosy, but that we can see beyond the immediate, and appreciate life in all its multi-coloured forms. It gives us a fresh set of priorities, different goals, and a new way of looking at things. We need no longer be afraid of the dark.

In Lent we realise once again that we have been "enlightened" by Christ and that we have a creed, a set of values and beliefs, that allows us to see things differently. Our eyes react to the Light of the World. *(Author unknown)*

IMPORTANT NEWS Clergy Support Fund Campaign. There will be a short, informal, presentation about this fund after the 10.30 Mass at St Peter's next **Sunday, 2nd April**. All parishioners, who were unable to attend the formal presentation, are welcome to come and learn a little more about this fund and its importance.

FOR LENT ("PRAYER : FASTING : ALMSGIVING") ✕ Try to get to Mass at least once during the week. ✕ Attend Stations of the Cross either at St Peter's (this week) or Good Shepherd on **Friday evenings**. ✕ Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. ✕ Contribute to CAFOD, which is our parish Lenten Appeal (<http://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-CAFOD/Lent>)*. ✕ 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 (see below).

*Envelopes are available for your savings; they can be placed in the weekly offertory.

LENT LUNCHES Venues and bookings as follows: **31st March** at St Mary's, Thurnham (Emma on the work of the Princess Organisation); **7th April** at St Mary's, Langley (*speaker to be announced*). • As before, we meet for lunch (provided) at 12.30 followed by the talk, which lasts half an hour including questions.

St FRANCIS' See the poster giving details of the Lenten Retreat Programme at St Francis' (<http://stfrancisparish.org.uk>). All are welcome.

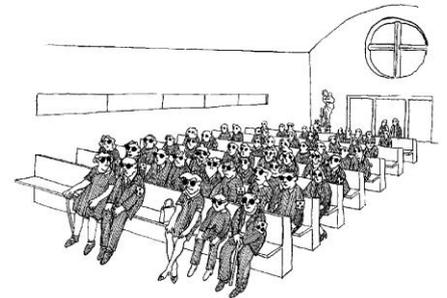
St PETER'S CHOIR Wednesday **29th March** and **Tuesday 11th April**, 8pm - 9pm: practising for Holy Week and Easter. All welcome.

MAUNDY THURSDAY Volunteers are required to have their feet washed at the evening liturgy; there are no age (provided individuals are able to remove their own shoes and socks!) or gender limits. Names to Deacon Cyril as soon as possible please.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Please remember the children and their families in your prayers; the children are now preparing for their First Eucharist on **Sunday 21st May**.

FLOWER FESTIVAL at GOOD SHEPHERD To celebrate Good Shepherd Sunday (**7th May**) we are pleased to announce that we are holding a Flower Festival at Harrietsham. It will run from Friday **5th** to Sunday **7th May** from 10am to 4pm each day.

PRE-SCHOOL TABLES We have just replaced our pre-school tables in St Peter's hall and are disposing of the 10 old ones. They have gone on eBay (bidding closes next Wednesday). If they don't go then, they will go to the Hospice Shop or tip - does anyone want one or more of these (no charge)? If so, please ask Terry Kinsman asap (01622 730119). Tables are green Formica on chipboard, steel leg base, 110cm x 55cm x 55cm.



**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 26th MARCH 2017
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

✕ **FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT (A)** ✕

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|-----------|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| Sun 26th | Saturday | 6.00pm | ✕ Vigil Mass: Golden Wedding (J & C) |
| | Sunday | (H) 8.45am | ✕ Mass: Pro Populo |
| | | 10.30am | ✕ Mass: In thanksgiving |
| Mon 27th | Feria | 7.00pm | ✕ Mass: for Paula Taylor |
| Tues 28th | Feria | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Hilda Gibson RIP |
| Wed 29th | Feria | (H) 10.00am | ✕ Mass: for the victims of the Westminster attack |
| Thu 30th | Feria | 7.00am | ✕ Mass: |
| Fri 31st | Feria | 10.00am | ✕ Funeral Mass: Edward James Harmon |
| | | 7.30pm | <i>Stations of the Cross</i> |
| Sat 1st | Feria | <i>5.00-5.30pm</i> | <i>Confessions</i> |

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT (A)** ✕

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|---------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sun 2nd | Saturday | 6.00pm | ✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo |
| | Sunday | (H) 8.45am | ✕ Mass: Michael Curtin RIP |
| | | 10.30am | ✕ Mass: John and Elizabeth Drummy RIP |

BEARSTED AREA CHURCHES TOGETHER EASTER EGG APPEAL Churches Together will be holding their Easter Egg Hunt as usual on Holy Saturday (15th April) and as before the churches in Bearsted are providing the eggs. Each has a set number (ours is around 80) to donate and they are given as a gift to all the children that take part (200-300). The clues are all based around the Passion and Jesus's message, so for many it will be the only contact they have with the Christian message over the weekend. Oh, and it's fun! If you wish to donate, please leave your eggs (no small 'creme' type eggs please) in the outer sacristy and Bob Piggott will collect. ♦ Holy Week and Easter Service times will need to be delivered as usual. Please pick up a set for a road near you.

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 CHARLES CROUCHER, aged 18, 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Meet for 12noon on **Saturday 8th April** on Thurnham Lane at entrance to church before proceeding to his home.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for March – support for persecuted Christians:** *that persecuted Christians may be comforted by the prayers and material help of the whole Church.*
- **For those killed and injured in the terrorist attack in Westminster last week;** *for those traumatised by the events: the grieving relatives and friends, and the good souls, especially PC Keith Palmer, who put themselves in harm's way for the sake of others.*
- **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 (see below); for all our relatives and friends; and the intentions on the notice board.*
- **Anniversaries this week (from St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial):** ✕ Ann Keegan, John McCarthy, Hilda Gibson, Madeleine Worsley, Joseph Ryans, Lars Hakansson and Kathleen O'Keeffe. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£418.97** (Gift Aided, **£252.50**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£134.00**) ♦ Next Sunday there will be a retiring collection to help with the **cost of flowers** for Holy Week and Easter.

LENT TALKS: *BBC Radio.* Six people well known in their fields reflect on the story of Jesus' ministry and Passion from the perspective of their own personal and professional experience. Tune in on Wednesday evenings to BBC Radio 4 at 8.45.

STATIONS of the CROSS PODCAST by Fr Nicholas King SJ can be found at <http://scys.org.uk/stations>. These can be listened to online or downloaded onto your smart phone for Lenten reflections 'on the go'.

CHRISM MASS Wednesday 12th April, 11.30am at St George's Cathedral, Southwark.

SAMARA'S AID APPEAL In Bearsted, from **April** until **13th May**, clothes, shoes, bedding, new hygiene care items and medical equipment are being collected for refugees in Syria and Iraq. Please see the notice on the notice board for more information or see website www.samarasaidappeal.org. Thank you.

MARRIAGE MASS at St GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL Saturday 17th June, 3pm. If you are celebrating a significant wedding anniversary this year, **please give in your names by the end of April** so you can receive an invitation from the Archbishop. This annual event fills the cathedral and is well received; all are welcome to attend.