



# 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](http://www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk)

**Year A**

**FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT**

**2nd April 2017**

**FAITH IN FOCUS: TAKE OFF YOUR SHROUD** There's a lovely theme that runs through the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments. It's about binding and being unbound. We meet it when Abraham ties up his son Isaac to sacrifice him. Then God tells Abraham to undo the boy. His faith has won the day. We hear from the prophets of a mysterious "suffering servant" who will be bound and led to the slaughter for the sake of the nation, but whose death will bring victory to the people. And today we meet the dead Lazarus, bound in his shroud, whom Jesus unties and restores to life. Some people call this story the "unbinding" of Lazarus.

What Jesus did for Lazarus was not only to raise him from the dead, but to loosen all that held him captive. He untied him so that he could get on with life. "Take off your shroud and live" might have been the message. When St John tells us this story it's so that we might know that Jesus offers us this same chance of life. Faith in Jesus is not a bind. It's a release. It sets us free from all that ties us down, limits us, makes us less than whole.

Christian life is something that enables us to enjoy things to the full. It lets us value the gifts God has endowed us with and encourages to develop our talents. Nothing truly human is abhorrent to God. Nothing that promotes life is forbidden to Christians. The story of Lazarus is that in Christ we have been set free from bondage, from the limits that our faltering imaginations put on reality. In Christ the possibilities are endless and energising. The climax of "unbinding" will come at our Easter Vigil when the grave clothes which bound Christ will be found neatly folded up in the corner of the tomb, while Christ will rise to a life of glory. And we who have followed him through this Lent will have been offered water of faith, light for our eyes, and life to live to the full.

So whatever your shroud is, take it off and live!

*(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 this **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 or (this week) 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** Final venue: this Friday, **7th April**, at St Mary's, Langley (*speaker to be announced*). • We meet for lunch (provided) at 12.30 followed by the talk, which lasts half an hour, including questions.

**St FRANCIS'** See the poster with details of the Lenten Retreat Programme (<http://stfrancisparish.org.uk>).

**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 **12th April**, 11.30am at St George's Cathedral, Southwark. 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 as soon as possible.

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

**EASTER COFFEE** Back yet again (by popular demand): coffee and tea after Mass at Good Shepherd on the **Second Sunday of Easter, 23rd April**. Many thanks to our organizers!

**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.



**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 2nd APRIL 2017**  
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT (A)** ✕

Sun 2nd	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Michael Curtin RIP
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: John and Elizabeth Drummy RIP
Mon 3rd	Feria	<b>7.00pm</b>	✕ Mass
Tues 4th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Thomas Finbarr (Finn) Egan RIP
Wed 5th	Feria	<b>(H) 10.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Thu 6th	Feria	<b>7.00am</b>	✕ Mass
		<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Fri 7th	Feria	<b>(H) 7.30pm</b>	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
		<b>5.00-5.30pm</b>	<i>Confessions</i>
Sat 8th	Feria		

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

Sun 9th	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Finn Egan RIP, and in appreciation
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass ( <b>starting in hall</b> ): Colin Otterson 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: **a few left. 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.

**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**.

**PLEASE PRAY...**

- **With the Holy Father for April – that young people may respond generously to the vocational call, and may also seriously consider offering themselves to God through the Priesthood or Religious life.**
- **For aid agencies working to alleviate famine in East Africa: that their resources may match the enormous challenges facing that region.**
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for Amelia Lamb, being baptized in Poland today; for those who have died recently, especially Elizabeth Cooper of Senacre, 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):** ✕ Robert Dring, Francis Iloenyasi, Ginetta Bellini, Tom Moses, Margaret Richardson, John Byrne, Carl Bramwell and Caroline Macklin. ✕

**Thank you** for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£414.05** (Gift Aided, **£205.50**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£134.00**) ♦ This Sunday there is 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.

**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](http://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.

**BEAN BAG** We have a 'beanbag' which is now surplus to our needs - would anyone in the parish want it? It is in very good condition, about 2 feet wide and made of imitation soft leather. Call Terry Kinsman on 01622 730119.