



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 of EASTER (or of Divine Mercy)

23rd April 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: WHAT THOMAS NEVER DID

Did you know that Thomas never actually put his hands and fingers into Jesus' side? We all seem to have grown up with the idea that once he had done that, then he believed. But in fact he didn't need to. We can't really blame Thomas for insisting on some evidence when the others told him that they had seen the risen Jesus. Unless I can... I refuse to believe. Yet when Jesus appears a second time to them eight days later, and Thomas is with them this time, Jesus almost teases him. Come and feel the holes in my hands. Thomas doesn't bother to do that. He immediately says, "My Lord and my God!" 2,000 years later we know that there can be no physical proof for our faith. How can an empty grave be evidence? We do not see ghosts and no one whispers into our ears. So why do we believe that Jesus is risen from the dead? Because scripture, tradition and our own experience tells us so.



We believe because God's word tells us that Jesus triumphed over death and returned with a risen life, a glorious body and a sure hope for us. St Peter tells us that this promise and hope is something that can never be spoilt or soiled, can never vanish or fade away. Because it has been sealed by God. No doubt most of us believe because our parents believed. The constant faith of the Church over the years has handed down from the apostles the fact that Jesus rose and appeared after his death. The wonders worked by the disciples at the outset of the Church were attributed to the power of the risen Lord. Our faith in the resurrection makes us living voices of tradition, an unbroken shout of victory.

Perhaps the most vital proof of Christ's resurrection comes through the lives of those whose faith sparks our own. Maybe the faith of a slowly dying pope, of a Mother Teresa, a faithful partner, a tireless parent, a devoted carer, an energetic parish worker or... Christ appears to us daily in disguise. The resurrection is the central tenet of our faith. If it didn't happen then we can all pack up. But it did happen and it challenges us to look for the risen Christ in whatever shape he appears to us in daily life, so that when we meet him we may have no need of physical evidence but, like Thomas, simply acknowledge, "My Lord and my God!"
(Author unknown)

FIFTY DAYS Easter Sunday is certainly the most important day of the church year, but the Easter celebration lasts a full 50 days, until Pentecost. Pleasant as it is, asking each other if we 'had a good Easter' *just at the moment* is slightly premature. For families with young children, now is a good time to talk about the symbolism of candles and why we light the Paschal Candle at every Mass. Dig out, and chat about all those photos of the family Christening (Baptism). Are the family Baptism photos still on your memory stick? Why not print them off and put them on show?

Fr JOSEPH ADUSE POKU Fr Joe has been in touch and sends love and prayers for Easter. We hope it will not be too long before he pays us another visit.

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

St GEORGE This feast of the Patron of England is transferred to this **Monday** as 23rd April fell in Easter Week. As usual for a Monday there will be Mass at 7pm. ✳ **Please try to join us to mark this significant celebration.**

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. (Also, as it is Our Lady's month, we will be crowning her statue on the Sunday after Mass.)

SHOWDOWN at the Last Chance Saloon! (A message from the Social Committee.) Take cover, because this is *gonna* happen on Saturday **20th May**. There will be a barbecue and beans. There will be Ma's Apple Pie. There will be Home-made Entertainment, the likes of which you could not buy in the Wild West End! Tickets are available after all Masses, or contact Ian on 736811 or Jenny on 734908. See Noticeboards for further details.'

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**. (After a false restart, sessions resume **this Friday**.)

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 23rd APRIL 2017
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **SECOND SUNDAY of EASTER** (or of Divine Mercy) **(A)** ✕

Sun 23rd	Saturday	8.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Margaret Richardson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Mon 24th	St GEORGE (transferred)	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Win Grimmette RIP
Tues 25th	St Mark	10.00am	✕ Mass: Fr Patrick Kenny RIP
Wed 26th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Fr Walter Walsh, jubilee
Thu 27th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 28th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 29th	St Catherine of Siena	5.00-5.30pm	Confessions

✕ **THIRD SUNDAY of EASTER (A)** ✕

Sun 30th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Dan Murphy RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass
		2.00pm	Baptism: Robyn Elizabeth Trigg Gilderthorp

GIFT AID SCHEME Thank you to all donors for your continued support of the Gift Aid Scheme. The tax reclaim will be submitted soon and if any donor has not paid sufficient tax to cover the amount being reclaimed can they please advise myself or Fr Geoff. We always welcome new donors and if any parishioner who is a tax payer would like to join the scheme please see myself or Fr Geoff. *Mark Smith, Gift Aid Organiser.*

CAFOD has been our parish Lenten Appeal (<http://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-CAFOD/Lent>). Envelopes are still available for your savings; they can be placed in the weekly offertory.

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 those baptized and received into the Church this Easter.**
- **For our Coptic brothers and sisters in Egypt and all who endure persecution for their faith: that divine light and truth may triumph over the evil they face.**
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those who have died recently, especially Christiane Houbert; 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):** ✕ Margaret Richardson, Sylvia Clifton and Ursula Schreiber. ✕

Thank you: the sum received on Good Friday for the Holy Places was **£207.30**. • Fr Geoffrey is very grateful for the offerings last Sunday which amounted to slightly less than **£2,000**. He also thanks people for their cards and gifts. • The Lent Appeal brought in another **£120** for CAFOD. • There will be a retiring collection next weekend for the **maintenance of St George's Cathedral**, the mother church of the diocese. This collection helps with the up-keep of the cathedral.

RED BOXES Box holders, please bring them in to church: it's time for them to be emptied again. Thank you.

SAMARA'S AID APPEAL In Bearsted, from **now** until **13th May**. Please see the notice for more information, or the website: www.samarasaidappeal.org. It would be helpful if the following collection points could be used: **Holy Cross Church** and **New Way Service at the Memorial Hall (9.45am Sunday)**. Thank you.

YOUNG PERSONS' RETREAT This **May** (12th – 14th) there will be another retreat at Worth Abbey for young people in school years 7-9. INSPIRE is part of the youth retreat programme at The Open Cloister, which has been running successfully for a few years. The retreats are run by an experienced team, with the support of the monastic community at Worth, The Wellspring Community and the Diocese. They give young people a chance to meet other young Catholics and to explore their faith in the beautiful atmosphere of Worth Abbey. There are also games, sports, social activities and much more. The weekend costs £84, but bursaries are available. Email toc@worthabbey.net - bookings close 1st May or when the retreat is full. Contact the Diocesan Youth Officer, Jack Regan – Jack.Regan@dabnet.org

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.