



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

FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER

14th May 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: ALL RELIGIONS EQUAL?

A public figure, interviewed recently, said that if he carried rune stones around people would be interested to talk about them. If he meditated under a pyramidal dome in his dining room, practised an obscure form of Himalayan exercises, took regular colonic irrigation or sang American Indian chants under a dream-catcher whilst bathing himself in aroma-therapy oils, people would be equally tolerant. But if he were to tell them that he believed Jesus Christ was the Son of God and the saviour of the world, then they would run a mile and refuse to interview him about it.

Christianity has become the new taboo. Pop singers who make no secret of their Christian faith are rubbished as "squeaky-clean", and public figures whose faith motivates them are dismissed as "do-gooders". It's almost as if there is something dangerous about being a follower of Jesus. At the other end of the scale it's become politically correct to be tolerant of all beliefs, no matter how implausible they may appear. Of course, there's a good side to this. No one should be mocked for what he believes or persecuted for his faith. But acceptance of every set of teachings that claims to be a religion simply means that you don't have to deal with any of them.

So it's not uncommon to hear people say that since there's only one God all religions must be equal because all people are trying to approach the same God. Or alternatively, all religions are to be shunned because there has been an element of religion in many of the major wars throughout history. The problem is that once you stop believing in God, you don't start believing in nothing. You start believing in anything.

Today Jesus claims that there is only one way of attaining union with God and that is through him. *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life: no one can come to the Father except through me.* He's either telling the truth or he's a liar. The choice is yours. (Author unknown)



FLOWER FESTIVAL at GOOD SHEPHERD We had some wonderful comments from our visitors to our flower festival last weekend! Our thanks to all the contributors and organizers (including longsuffering *chauffeurs!*) and those who welcomed our visitors and provided the refreshments. We took nearly £450 in donations, but this hardly compares with the goodwill generated – well done everyone! And it was nice to sing an old favourite as we crowned the statue of Our Lady after Mass last Sunday; there are some good singers at Harrietsham!

PAM GOLLOP RIP ✕ Please pray for the repose of the soul of Pam, who died on 1st May in Pembury hospital following a battle with cancer. Remember too Pam's family and all who knew and loved her. Her funeral will be this Wednesday, **17th May**, at St Peter's at midday, followed by interment at Holy Cross. All are welcome, of course, at the Requiem for Pam, and afterwards at the White Horse for refreshments.

FINANCE COMMITTEE Meeting this **Monday** evening at the presbytery.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Please remember the children (Niamh, Oliver, Haydn, Gabriella, Sophia, Thomas, Luke, Stanley, Bella, Connor and Scarlett) and their families in your prayers; the children are busy preparing for their First Eucharist next **Sunday, 21st May** during 10.30 Mass at St Peter's. As always, especially this year when there are a good number, consider attending another Mass next weekend if you don't like crowds! ★ The will be a rehearsal for the children and their parents **next Saturday** morning at 10.

SHOWDOWN at the Last Chance Saloon (parish social, next Saturday, **20th May**)! Tickets are available after all Masses, or contact Ian on 736811 or Jenny on 734908. See noticeboards for further details.

WELCOMERS at St PETER'S Please pick up a new rota; Debbie sends her love to everyone.

COUNTERS (weekly offerings cashiers) With the imminent closure of NatWest at Bearsted new arrangements for banking with the Post Office will need to be implemented. Please pick up an information sheet from the usual place.

**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 14th MAY 2017
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER (A)** ✕

Sun 14th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Celebrant's Intention
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Mary Jenner RIP
Mon 15th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 16th	St Simon Stock	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 17th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion
		12noon	✕ Requiem Mass: Pam Gollop
Thu 18th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 19th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Sat 20th	Our Lady	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER (A)** ✕

Sun 21st	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Christine Thompson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ First Communion Mass: For the children

JUSTICE & PEACE GROUP *Second hand book sale.* All donations will be given to the Justice and Peace Group. Money will be used to promote justice and peace issues, and to support local and national charities in that valuable work. There is no 'suggested' donation. We ask that you enjoy the opportunity to read these books and to be as generous as possible.

MISSIONAL APPEAL Each year the archbishop asks us to host a missionary society to give an appeal. This year we will be welcoming a priest from the Missionary Society of St Columban the week ending **17th and 18th June.**

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for May – that by imitating the merciful Jesus, Christians in Africa** may be prophetic witnesses of reconciliation, justice and peace.
- **For our newly elected local government councillors:** that they will have the wisdom to make the very best of the resources allocated to them, keeping those who are disadvantaged especially in mind.
- **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 for the intentions on the notice board.
- **Anniversaries this week** (from St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial): ✕ James Mahon, Charlotte Button, Douglas Tozer and Antonella Bellini. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£358.63** (Gift Aided, **£198.50**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£134.00**). ♦ The retiring collection for **Ecclesiastical Education** amounted to **£148.63**.

BEARSTED CHURCHES Meeting this **Thursday**, 7.30pm, Holy Cross.

CLERGY SUPPORT FUND Pick up a leaflet outlining the result of the recent appeal.

LIFE *From Good Counsel Network:* This year sees the 50th anniversary of abortion being legalised in Great Britain; over 8 million babies' lives have been lost since 1967. We all need to make some extra sacrifice this year. Please attend the "March for Life" in Birmingham on **Saturday 20th May**. Going to Birmingham may involve a sacrifice for those who live some distance away, but the day is a great witness to our society and is also both informative and encouraging. Three English Bishops will be attending the march – come and support their witness. For coaches from London and elsewhere please see; www.goodcounselnetwork.com or phone 020 7723 1740.

NATIONAL SHRINE of St JUDE Summer Celebration at the Shrine of St Jude, Faversham, Saturday **27th May**. See poster.

MASS for MIGRANTS This annual joint celebration of the three London Catholic Dioceses takes place next **Saturday, 20th May**, 11am, at St Anthony of Padua Church, Forest Gate, E7 9QB.

SUMMER YOUTH DAY See the poster if you are interested in this event at Aylesford **next month**.

SUMMER ACCOMMODATION in LONDON Allen Hall Seminary in Chelsea offer comfortable rooms in central London in July and August. Beautiful gardens and chapel. Rooms from £50 per night (including breakfast). Website: www.allenhall.org.uk; Email: allenhall@rcdow.org.uk; Telephone: 020 7349 5600 (option 0).