

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)

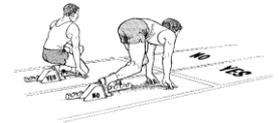
The Holy Family Primary, Bicknor Road, Park Wood, Maidstone ME15 9PS (Telephone: 756778)

St Simon Stock Catholic Secondary, Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP (Telephone: 754551)

Parish Website and YouTube:
www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk

Year A TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY ✕ ORDINARY TIME 1st October 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: CHOICES Repentance is a real religious word, almost to the point of being jargon. In fact, it's very rare to hear it used in normal conversation except perhaps if someone is repenting of having eaten too much or having bought some useless gadget. What they really mean is that they regret doing something. When Latin speakers talked about repentance they used a word similar to our word "conversion". What they were talking about was the need to exchange one thing for another, to take one thing away and replace it with something else. To repent means to start again with some other way of going about things. The writers of the New Testament (in Greek) had different ideas. For them, repentance was about changing your mind or heart. It was about reaching the point where you had second thoughts. So you began to think things through, had a change of heart and behaved differently. The Hebrew writers of the Bible had a very graphic idea of repentance. It was like going along the road and realising you were travelling in the wrong direction. So you do a U-turn and start again on another route. All of these three words convey the same idea: repentance is about choices. We decide to do something stupid and then we come to our senses. That's what the son in today's parable did. He first refused to work in the vineyard but then thought better of it. And the point of the parable is not simply to show that the son was obedient, but to show that repentance is always an option open to us.



Not only is repentance always possible, but it's a constant need. Our lives are full of "yes" and "no" decisions, paths which we take, tracks which we follow and then regret. Accepting Jesus is not just something for our minds. It demands action, not just saying "yes" and then coasting along idly. The good news is that although we wander far from God, God is always one step away from us. Repentance is always a choice open to us. Not simply words and good intentions, but consistent and faithful proof by the way we live. It's never too late for repentance. Just ask the tax-collectors and the prostitutes. (*Author unknown*)

MASS COUNT This Sunday there takes place the first of four national Mass counts (at each Mass); **collectors, please note.**

THE ROSARY in OCTOBER (From the directory) Those who recite five decades of the Rosary in church, or as a family, a religious community, or as a group of the faithful, may gain a plenary indulgence daily; in other circumstances a partial indulgence. A partial indulgence may be obtained daily by reciting the Litany of Loreto and the Prayer to Saint Joseph.

CHURCH PILGRIMAGE 2018: Thank you to those who attended Benediction last Sunday and the meeting that followed. It was lovely to pray together as a parish. Those who were at the meeting will have received an email regarding confirmation of their desire to take part in the pilgrimage. **Please respond by today** so that Terry can take arrangements further.

CONFIRMATION Please pray for our deanery confirmation candidates. ✕ The Confirmation Mass is here at St Peter's next Sunday, **8th October** at 3pm; parishioners are welcome. There will be a preparation day for all candidates at St Thomas More, West Malling this **Sunday, 1st October** at 3pm and finishing with Mass at 5.30pm and a short rehearsal.

HARVEST FAST DAY This year CAFOD and CAFOD partners are working in El Salvador to provide training and to re-introduce native seeds that were used generations ago. These seeds are strong and able to grow in the warm, rainy climate, ensuring that farmers are able to harvest crops, and with that, the surety that they will be able to provide for their families. This **Friday, 6th October**, we are asked to fast, and to put the proceeds of our fast in the donation envelopes provided at the back of church. If you are a UK tax payer, don't forget to fill out the gift aid section. Bring your donation envelope back next Sunday or soon after.

PARISH SOCIAL Next **Saturday**: see poster.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 1st OCTOBER 2017
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY ✕ ORDINARY TIME (A)

Sun 1st October <i>Rosary Sunday</i>	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Peter Stevens' wellbeing
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Nicol family, in thanksgiving
Mon 2nd	The Holy Guardian Angels	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Clergy and people of the Deanery
Tues 3rd	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 4th	St Francis of Assisi	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 5th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 6th	Feria – <i>Harvest Fast Day</i>	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 7th	Our Lady of the Rosary	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY ✕ ORDINARY TIME (A)

Sun 8th <i>Prisoners' Sunday</i>	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Donor's Intention
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Prisoners and their dependants
		3.00pm	✕ Confirmation Mass

HEALTH and SAFETY Parishioners will be pleased to know that we were given a good report following our annual inspection at both St Peter's and Good Shepherd last Monday.

DEANERY PASTORAL COUNCIL This **Monday, 2nd October** here at St Peter's at 7.30pm (preceded by Mass).

MORNING of RECOLLECTION for Readers and Extraordinary Ministers of Communion. **The venue for this has had to change:** it will now take place at Holy Family, Park Wood, Maidstone, on **Saturday 14th October** from 10 o'clock, finishing with Mass at midday. More information later.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for October – that all workers may receive respect and protection of their rights, and that the unemployed may receive the opportunity to contribute to the common good.**
- **For all those affected by Hurricane Maria and the devastation it brought: we pray that all those made homeless or unemployed will receive support and help. We continue to pray for those still suffering in Syria as the unrest continues; we ask for peace and stability for this country and its people.**
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes especially Elsie Hampshire and Rosaleen Stephens; for those who have died recently, especially Kate Hart and Neville Leather; 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):** ✕ Joseph d'Arcy, Gerry Chapman, Jeanne Williams, Richard Sullivan, Maurice Ryan, Elizabeth O'Driscoll. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£390.99** (Gift Aided, **£175.20**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£149.00**).

A CHURCH for the POOR New Radio Series starting **1st October**. One of the first things Pope Francis said was that he wanted a Poor Church for the Poor and he has introduced an annual **World Day of the Poor** every November. Heaven's Road Catholic Radio is producing a new series of programmes to highlight the projects that various Catholic people, charities, and parishes are running to help the disadvantaged, both in the UK and overseas. See <http://www.heavensroadfm.com/listen-now/> for more information.

AUTUMN ASSEMBLY "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice." *Isaiah 42:3*. The Justice and Peace Group for the Archdiocese of Southwark will be holding their Autumn Assembly entitled: Prison Break of a Different Kind, on **Saturday 14th October** at CAFOD's Romero House, Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB. All are welcome. Entrance is free. Please bring a packed lunch. Refreshments will be provided. No need to book, just go along.

NATIONAL SHRINE of St JUDE Mass with blessing of oil, **Saturday 28th** and **Sunday 29th October**. See poster.

MASS LOBBY SPUC (Society for the Protection of Unborn Children) is organizing a Mass Constituency-based Lobby to oppose decriminalizing abortion. They are asking people to make an appointment with their MP to ask him or her to oppose any moves in parliament to decriminalize abortion. Decriminalizing abortion means removing all legal restrictions on abortion. Contact SPUC for comprehensive materials: <http://www.spuc.org.uk/>. See poster.