



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 in ORDINARY TIME

5th February 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: PASS THE SALT! In Jesus' day salt was very precious. Some people were even paid in it. (Our word "salary" is from the word for salt-payment.) Since there were no fridges or freezers people used it to preserve food as well as to flavour it. In fact, there is even today an Arabic expression of friendship that says, "There's salt between us".

The obvious thing about salt is that it pervades everything it comes into contact with. You can't just have part of your soup that is salty. The whole lot gets transformed. And today Jesus tells his disciples that they are the salt of the earth. They are to bring flavour and taste to the earth, to all the people and situations they find themselves in. So often Christians appear as killjoys whose message is one of a life of deprivation and self-denial that would appeal to no normal person. Yet Jesus is saying that our job is to bring good news to a society that is becoming increasingly fearful and feeling under threat. The message of the gospel is one that is intended to add the flavour to life, to give life some seasoning, to leave a nice taste in the mouth. And we are called to be that salt.

He also calls us the light of the world. The Jews he was speaking to had no electricity. They used oil wicks. Without matches it took an age to light these lamps and so, for safety reasons, when people went out of their homes for a while, they put the lamp under a container where it could burn without danger of catching fire. As soon as they came back in they took it from under the pot and put it on a stand.

As our world comes under the grip of real or imagined terrorist threats, as conflicts break out here and there, and as once more we hear of countries suffering famine and disaster, where can we look to shed some light on the situation? The only true source of light is God since there is no darkness in God. Jesus today tells us that we are to be the light of the world. By living his life, by witnessing to him, to the power his gospel has to transform, we reflect not our own light but God's.

You are the salt of the earth, but what happens if the salt loses its flavour? You are the light of the world, but what happens if the light grows dim? Pass the salt! *(Author unknown)*

BRIAN SMITH RIP ✕ Please pray for the repose of the soul of Brian Smith of Mallings Drive, Bearsted, who died peacefully on Tuesday with his devoted wife Anne at his side after a short illness. We keep Anne and the family in our prayers. ✕ *May he rest in peace.*

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Please remember the children and their families in your prayers; the children celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation yesterday (Saturday) and are now preparing for their First Eucharist on **Sunday 21st May**.

THIS WEEK We are welcoming and introducing **Fergus Ainsworth** to the parish at the 10.30 Mass. Fergus, son of Sinead and Julius, was baptized in emergency in hospital, and we are introducing him to the parish, clothing him in his 'christening shawl' and presenting him with his baptismal candle. ♦ We also look forward to the wedding of **Stewart Anandappa** and **Rachel Meathrel** at St Peter's this **Friday, 10th February**. Our congratulations, love, prayers and best wishes to them all, and to their families.

ADVENT APPEAL *Message from Marie Quarman:* A big thank you to all those who donated goods for the homeless. There was a magnificent response and Alan and I delivered over twenty bags to the Maidstone Day Care Centre who were very grateful indeed.

The PILGRIM The diocesan periodical is available with an article on London's Catholic past.

✕ **ASH WEDNESDAY** ✕ the start of Lent, is on **1st March**.



DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 5th FEBRUARY 2017
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A)** ✕

Sun 5th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Len Richardson RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Truda Ryans RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: (Pro Populo) Introducing Fergus
Mon 6th	St Paul Miki and Companions	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 7th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Brian Smith RIP
Wed 8th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Victims of Human Trafficking
Thu 9th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 10th	St Scholastica	10.00am	✕ Mass: Ted Bullock RIP
		1.00pm	Wedding: Stewart James Anandappa and Rachel Louise Meathrel
Sat 11th	Our Lady of Lourdes	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ SIXTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (A) ✕			
Sun 12th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Gilbert Toulemonde RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Tim O'Shea RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo

MASS FOR THE SICK A Mass for the sick for the Maidstone area parishes will be at St Francis' at 10am this **Saturday, 11th February**, World Day of Prayer for the Sick, and will include the rite of Anointing of the Sick. ♦ There will also be a Mass for the Sick at Aylesford Priory at 12noon.

St PETER'S CHOIR Next practice, **Tuesday 14th February**.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for February – comfort for the afflicted:** *that all those who are afflicted. Especially the poor, refugees and marginalised may find welcome and comfort in our communities.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those who have died recently especially Brian Smith and Edna Margaret Tree, and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now (see below); for all our relatives and friends, for Fergus Ainsworth, being introduced to the parish this Sunday; for Stewart and Rachel, preparing for their wedding at St Peter's next Friday; and the intentions on the notice board.
- **For all those who are enslaved by trafficking.** *We also pray for all those working to rescue, protect and free victims of this crime against humanity, that their work will bear fruit.*
- **Anniversaries this week** (from St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial): ✕ Truda Ryans, Peter Ahearne, Leonard Richardson, Barbara Casey, Edward Bullock, Maurice Walsh and Peter Barratt. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£450.68** (Gift Aided, **£241.30**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£134.00**). ♦ Next Sunday is **Racial Justice Day**, focusing this year on 'Justice for All': **a collection will be taken** to support the work of the Church to promote racial justice in our schools, parishes and in wider society.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING This **Wednesday** is a day for Victims of Human Trafficking. We are asked to combat human trafficking and modern day slavery, affecting men, women and children. It is amongst the fastest growing of international crimes and one of the largest sources of income for organised crime. And yes... it's happening in the UK. Visit www.care.org.uk, an excellent website to get informed, offering starting points for practical action and advice on spotting the signs of abuse.

GOOD COUNSEL This **Friday, 10th February**, the Vigil of the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia in this country. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed. For information on the days of Prayer and Fasting: www.goodcounselnetwork.com. Join the event on Facebook; <https://www.facebook.com/events/258280601269834/>.

A LIFETIME OF LOVING A day exploring spouses' relationships in the light of Pope Francis's Apostolic Exhortation 'The Joy of Love', **Saturday 4th March** at St Teresa's, Ashford. See poster or contact Carole: 07983 525727, or email mflkent@gmail.com.

MEDJUGORJE PILGRIMAGE 7 nights half board, flight and airport transfers 22nd - 29th April and 13th - 20th May, Gatwick to Dubrovnik, €459 per person. Email jackiemulort@btinternet.com or call on 020 3239 8662.