



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

THIRD SUNDAY of LENT

19th March 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: WORKING UP A THIRST We expect to hear about water in Lent. After all, Lent is a period of preparation for baptism. Throughout the world there are many thousands of people for whom Lent is the final stage in their journey to becoming Christians. It's a 40-day retreat for them before they take the plunge. But John's account of Jesus and the woman at the well takes a different turn. Instead of talking about washing, it talks about thirst. Jesus tells the Samaritan woman what she already knows: she's had so many affairs and been through so much, but deep down she's not happy. She lacks what today we would call "fulfilment".



Drinking the well water is like dabbling in so many different interests, trying this latest fad or being part of the "in thing". We've all done it. We've searched around for something to catch our interest. We look for a "drink" that will refresh the parts that others don't reach. We make designer water our tippie. If you drink the water I give you, says Jesus, you'll never want anything else; you'll find fulfilment in God. A good test of our faith is to ask just how much we thirst for God. How much do we yearn for God? If God were to disappear from our lives, would we simply change to another philosophy of life, or would we feel spiritually parched?

Jesus' question is simple. How thirsty are you? (*Author unknown*)

SOLEMNITIES This week there are two important celebrations: **St Joseph**, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on **Monday 19th** – Mass will be celebrated as usual at St Peter's at **7pm**; and **The Annunciation of the Lord** on **Saturday 25th** – there will be an additional Mass at St Peter's at **10am**. Please make an effort to attend on both occasions.

RECOMMENDED 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* ✕ 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. For ideas of how to help see: <http://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-CAFOD/Lent>.

LENT LUNCHES Venues and bookings as follows: **24th March** at St Peter's Catholic Church (Ray Borrett on chaplaincy work at Bluewater); **31st March** at St Mary's, Thurnham (Emma on the work of the Princess Organisation); **7th April** at St Mary's, Langley (*speaker to be announced*). • As before, we meet for lunch (provided) at 12.30 followed by the talk, which lasts half an hour including questions.

St FRANCIS' See the poster giving details of the Lenten Retreat Programme at St Francis'. All are welcome to take part. **24 HOURS FOR THE LORD:** this **Friday 24th** and **Saturday 25th March** at St Francis', Maidstone. An expanded opportunity for continuous adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (apart from Mass times), devotions and extended times for Confession. There will be contributions from local deanery parishes (see poster).

St PETER'S CHOIR Wednesday **29th March** and Tuesday **11th April**, 8pm - 9pm: practising for Holy Week and Easter. All welcome.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Please remember the children and their families in your prayers; the children

| DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 19th MARCH 2017 (Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham) | | | |
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| ✕ THIRD SUNDAY of LENT (A) ✕ | | | |
| Sun 19th | Saturday | 6.00pm | ✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo |
| | Sunday | (H) 8.45am | ✕ Mass: Breda O'Malley RIP |
| | | 10.30am | ✕ Mass: Edward O'Connor RIP |
| Mon 20th | St JOSEPH | 7.00pm | ✕ Mass: Fr Barry Angus RIP |
| Tues 21st | Feria | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Deacon Michael Gould RIP |
| Wed 22nd | Feria | (H) 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Anne Barton RIP |
| Thu 23rd | Feria | 7.00am | ✕ Mass: Fr Cyril Elkington RIP |
| Fri 24th | Feria | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Special Intention |
| | | (H) 7.30pm | <i>Stations of the Cross</i> |
| Sat 25th | The ANNUNCIATION of THE LORD | 10.00am | ✕ Mass |
| | | <i>5.00-5.30pm</i> | <i>Confessions</i> |
| ✕ FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT (A) ✕ | | | |
| Sun 26th | Saturday | 6.00pm | ✕ Vigil Mass: Golden Wedding (J & C) |
| | Sunday | (H) 8.45am | ✕ Mass: Pro Populo |
| | | 10.30am | ✕ Mass: In thanksgiving |

are now preparing for their First Eucharist on **Sunday 21st May**.

GIFT AID Envelopes for the year are now available to pick up from the back of the church.

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. Please pick up a set for a road near you.

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.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for March – support for persecuted Christians:** *that persecuted Christians may be comforted by the prayers and material help of the whole Church.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those who have died recently, especially Fr Barry Angus, Deacon Michael Gould and Fr Cyril Elkington; 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): ✕ Nora Prickett, John Hooker, John Brennan and Kevin Devlin. ✕
- **For all those preparing to receive the sacrament** of baptism at Easter; may their growing faith give them the courage they need on their journey.

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| <p>Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: £472.07 (Gift Aided, £237.00; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to £134.00).</p> |
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FROM the DIOCESAN STEWARDSHIP TEAM Stewardship is a spirituality that is accessible to everyone; the concept of gratitude to God for his personal gifts to us in our lives acts as a focus and provides the right language for our people's lived faith. For parishioners it can resonate with their own lives, their responsibilities, character and experiences. Stewardship can provide the vocabulary and spiritual imagery to describe, affirm, sustain and promote much of what we already do in our parishes and in our lives; this spirituality can provide a cohesion and closeness to Our Lord that may still be lacking in our lived discipleship. See: <http://eepurl.com/bF0b6P>.

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.

STATIONS of the CROSS PODCAST by Fr Nicholas King SJ can be found at <http://scys.org.uk/stations>. These can be listened to online or downloaded onto your smart phone for Lenten reflections 'on the go'.