



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

FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER

7th May 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: KEEP ON THE GRASS

Peter was not known for being a shrinking violet. Time and time again we see him jumping in with both feet, saying the wrong thing or reacting without thinking things through. He doesn't seem to have changed much after Christ's death, for today we catch a glimpse of him in action preaching to the crowd. And he comes out with all guns firing. You backed a loser, he says, by killing Jesus of Nazareth. You killed him but God raised him up and made him Lord of all things. So now you're at odds with God. Naturally, the crowd were cut to the quick and wanted to know how to make amends. Peter tells them to repent and turn their lives over to Jesus.

In many parishes throughout the world there are people who have only been Christians for the last three weeks. They were baptised or received into the Church at Easter. During this fifty-day period until Pentecost we look each Sunday at some of the consequences of being a Christian. We tease out just some of implications of turning our lives over to Jesus and we try to enter the mystery of our faith more deeply.

And so we reflect that Jesus is the gate of the sheepfold and the shepherd of the flock. Those who are new Christians can be very good teachers of those who have been around for a while. This is because they teach us about enthusiasm for faith. They can rekindle in us the old fire that we once had but which may have dimmed a little over the years. New Christians are in no doubt that if you want to find your way into the sheepfold (if you want to be in place where life makes sense), then Jesus is the way in. To seek God with all our hearts, to live according to his teaching, to follow the shepherd to springs of water and fresh pasture . . . this is why people become Christians. Easter is a time for remembering old truths, and we're left in no doubt why people take the plunge of baptism for Christ's sake. It's because the grass is always greener on God's side.

(Author unknown)



FLOWER FESTIVAL at GOOD SHEPHERD This weekend we are celebrating Good Shepherd Sunday (**today**) with a Flower Festival at our church of the Good Shepherd Harrietsham. Our bonanza of blooms concludes this Sunday at 4pm. Come along and admire the skills of our talented arrangers whose displays reflect the history of the chapel and its charming setting: a few delightful surprises await! As it is Our Lady's month, we will be crowning her statue this Sunday after Mass.

If you have never visited our chapel at Harrietsham, now's your chance: it's a little gem! For directions see above, or there is a map on our website. May God bless and reward the skill of our flower arrangers. Through their inspired craftwork may we come to know the God of beauty, the Good Shepherd. And may he bless our visitors and all their loved ones with his infinite beauty and consolation.

WORLD DAY of PRAYER for VOCATIONS Today the Church celebrates the call to the priesthood and the consecrated life. We remember other callings at other times, but on this day we pray especially for those God is calling to be consecrated or to be ordained. Pray for the priests who have ministered to you throughout your life, both living and dead. Keep our parish priests in your prayers throughout the week. Encourage your children, grandchildren, or other young people to consider a vocation as a priest or religious brother or sister. Pray a rosary for more young men and women to respond to God's call.

PAM GOLLOP RIP ✕ Please pray for the repose of the soul of Pam, who died following a battle with cancer on 1st May in Pembury hospital. Remember too Pam's family and all who knew and loved her. Her funeral will be on Wednesday **17th May** at St Peter's.

RED BOXES A final reminder to holders, please bring your boxes in to church to be emptied. (Please remember to fill in your name on the label so we know whom to return them to.) Thank you.

THANK YOU to Pete Pinto and Paul Dixon who have managed to reroute the output to our iPad music at St Peter's for better sound quality both inhouse and, hopefully, online.

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** during 10.30 Mass at St Peter's. As always, especially this year when there are 11 children, consider attending another Mass that weekend if you don't like crowds!

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 7th MAY 2017 (Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✕ FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER (A) ✕			
Sun 7th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: For Vocations to the priesthood and religious life
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pam Gollop RIP
Mon 8th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 9th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 10th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Thu 11th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 12th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Sat 13th	Our Lady of Fatima	5.00-5.30pm	Confessions
✕ 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

St PETER'S CHOIR Our next practice is on Tuesday **9th May** 8pm - 9pm.

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.

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

SAMARA'S AID APPEAL UPDATE www.samarasaidappeal.org: A big thank you to everyone who has already donated. Eighty-two banana boxes of clothing, shoes etc. have been filled as well as twenty-three bags of bedding. It's not too late to donate: the last sorting day will be on **13th May** at 10am at Holy Cross Church. Volunteer helpers would be welcome.

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 Canon Luke and Father Peter who are to leave St Francis', Maidstone, in the summer following new appointments. May God bless them for all they have contributed to the deanery and in their future ministries.*
- *For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those who have died recently especially Pam Gollop; and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends; and for the intentions on the notice board.*

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£360.96** (Gift Aided, **£128.50**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£134.00**). ♦ The retiring collection for the **maintenance of St George's Cathedral** amounted to **£158.50**. ♦ This Sunday is World Day of Prayer for Vocations and there is a retiring collection for **Ecclesiastical Education**; this collection helps to meet the cost of training students for the priesthood and the permanent diaconate. It also supports certain forms of ongoing formation of the clergy. ♦ The total amount banked last week from the Red Boxes amounted to **£91.72**. ♦ The final amount banked for CAFOD was **£464.16**.

VACANCY: Deputy Headteacher. St Thomas' Catholic Primary School in Canterbury is looking to appoint a new Deputy Headteacher from September 2017. For further information, please contact the school on 01227 462539. Advert available on www.kent-teach.com. Closing date: **Monday 8th May** at 4pm.

JUSTICE & PEACE The 2017 Spring Assembly, entitled 'A Journey to Justice through Peace and Non-Violence', will be at Aylesford Priory on **Saturday 13th May**, 10.30am to 4pm. Registration from 10am. Speakers Pat Gaffney for Pax Christi and Michael & Patricia Pulman of Christian CND. A free event. Please bring a packed lunch.

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.