



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

SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER

21st May 2017

FAITH IN FOCUS: ON OUR SIDE

It's quite common these days to see on the TV news that someone is starting an appeal against the justice system. They believe that all the evidence did not come out, that their confession was made under duress, or that they were wrongly convicted due to a miscarriage of justice. Usually they don't understand the law well enough, so they employ an expensive high-profile lawyer to put their case. These lawyers are paid to do two things for their clients: they act as an advocate and they appeal.

An advocate is someone we call to be by our side when we are in need (Paraclete is the same word in Greek). Having an advocate simply means that by ourselves we can't cope; the situation is too complex for us to be able to deal with it alone. When a lawyer appeals, he or she acts on behalf of the client to ensure that the court sees the individual not in a biased light but in a sympathetic way. An appeal commends the person to the court, asks that any negative decision be removed and that the client be treated in a favourable way.

This is how Jesus describes the Holy Spirit. He asks the Father to send us an Advocate or Paraclete and he says that the Advocate will be with us for ever. There are many situations in life that we feel we are not up to. We are daunted by the prospect of committing ourselves to one other person in marriage, of bringing up our children, of educating our family in faith, of feeding and clothing them, etc. At the same time we find ourselves at crossroads in life when our decisions are going to have long-term implications for our future. This is when we need an Advocate. Jesus tells us that the Spirit will be by our side if we call upon him. He will defend us and direct us towards the truth, he will sustain us when things prove difficult and he will put words into our mouths when we don't know how to express ourselves. But, unlike other advocates, he won't charge a fee. (Author unknown)



We are delighted to celebrate with our children, Niamh, Oliver, Haydn, Gabriella, Sophia, Thomas, Luke, Stanley, Bella, Connor and Scarlett, who are making their First Communions at 10.30 Mass today. Congratulations and best wishes to them! Our thanks to Shelagh and Eileen, our catechists, and to the parents for all their time and support in leading our children to this special day.

✠ Truly "The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Spirit of God dwelling within us." (Romans 5:5.)

CLERGY SUPPORT FUND Thank you to all parishioners who supported the diocesan-wide campaign to raise support for or sick and retired clergy. The campaign HQ tells us that our parish has raised **£13,894** from **nine** donors (without identifying them) for this special cause. During the last few years, throughout the diocese, many parishioners expressed appreciation for particular priests who have had a positive influence in their lives, and have enquired about the possibility of leaving a gift in their Will to the campaign. If this is a cause that resonates with you and you would like to find a way of thanking our retired priests for their service to our community, please consider picking up an introductory leaflet ("A legacy of faith") as you leave church today. Thank you.

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

CONFIRMATIONS If you are in year 9 or above, and would like to be confirmed in October, please speak for Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril. If you would like to join the programme that is being launched in St Francis', you must apply before **31st May**. Pick up an information sheet after Mass.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS of the EUCHARIST Customarily, at Mass on Corpus Christi, ministers renew the commitment to their ministry. Ministers are therefore asked to renew their commitment at whatever Mass they attend on Corpus Christi, Sunday, **18th June**.

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.

**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 21st MAY 2017
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

✕ **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
Mon 22nd	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Tues 23rd	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 24th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Thu 25th	St Bede the Venerable	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 26th	St Philip Neri	10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls (<i>Pentecost Novena begins</i>)
Sat 27th	St Augustine of Canterbury	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ The ASCENSION of The LORD (A) ✕			
Sun 28th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass:
		10.30am	✕ Mass:

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 persecuted Christians in Egypt, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria, North Korea, Nigeria and other regions: may they have a ready answer for their accusers, and be able to witness to their faith by blameless lives.**
- **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):** ✕ June Locke, Winifred Hampton, Frances Connor, Brian Roycroft, Jack Hayward. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£382.07** (Gift Aided, **£192.45**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£134.00**). • **Next Sunday** there will be a retiring collection for **World Communications** which supports the work of the Catholic Communications Network, the media office of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. Donate online: <http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/donate-wcd>. *Pick up a prayer card as you leave Mass today.*

St AUGUSTINE WEEK At the shrine of St Augustine, Ramsgate, celebrate our diocesan patron (St Augustine of Canterbury) with the annual St Augustine Week Festival. There are talks, tours, music, workshops, processions, Masses and more. Highlights include the National Pilgrimage Day on **27th May** (St Augustine's feast day); the Blessing of the Sea on **29th May**; the Grand Re-opening on **3rd June** (with Archbishop Peter Smith); and the St Augustine Cross procession on 4th June. More information available on the poster, call 01843 606756, or see online at <http://augustinefriends.co.uk/?p=5121>.

SUMMER YOUTH DAY See the poster if you are interested in this event at Aylesford **next month**. • See also the poster detailing the annual St John Bosco Summer Camps in July and August.

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).

BISHOPS' MESSAGE The Bishops of England and Wales are encouraging Catholics to play an active part in the General Election. While voting for any particular political party is a matter of conscience, the bishops encourage people to use their vote at this pivotal time for our nations, as we prepare to leave the European Union. See: <http://catholicnews.org.uk/election17-bishops-message-news>.

EASTER DUTIES The last day for fulfilling the precept of Easter Communion is the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, **11th June**. Canon 2042 of *The Catechism* states: The third precept ('You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season') guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal feasts, the origin and centre of the Christian liturgy.