



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 B

FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT

18th March 2018

FAITH IN FOCUS: Unless A Grain of Wheat Falls 'Eat drink and be merryfor tomorrow we die.' In a life or death situation, human nature would always prompt us to hold on to life no matter what the consequences, but in today's gospel a grain of wheat is used to teach us a valuable lesson. The selfless grain of wheat falls and dies to enable a fresh harvest. What point is there in choosing life, if that life boils down to nothing more than self-preservation? On the other hand, what great value death, if that sacrifice gives others life. Many of us fail to understand why Jesus perceived the necessity of going to Jerusalem where he knew he would die. Wouldn't it have made more sense for him to bypass Jerusalem and carry on teaching into his dotage? Jesus however, isn't about to compromise his purpose.



Jesus determines to give his life so others can find true life. This is what Christianity is all about. Jesus teaches us that we must 'die to self' before we can be of any use to God. Letting one's own ambition die to be replaced by God's plans for us? 'Dying to self'? Could we be blamed for not feeling enthused? How many of us really see the wisdom in ditching our own exciting life plans to go around being holy? Perhaps we need to think again about how exciting our ambitions really are. Perhaps sacrificing our own agenda and recognising God's plan in our lives could be the best and most exciting thing that ever happened to us. Perhaps sacrificing something of ourselves for a greater purpose could put us in touch with who we really are.

"Eat drink and be merry for tomorrow we die." This epitomizes everything as Christians we are not! *Chapel Bell.*

PASSIONTIDE ✘ Crucifixes and images are veiled for the remaining two weeks of Lent. Crucifixes remain so until the afternoon Liturgy on Good Friday; images of the saints are unveiled before the Easter Vigil. ✘ Stations of the Cross, **this Friday** are at Good Shepherd. ✘ Penitential Service at St Francis' **next Sunday** (Palm Sunday) at 4pm ✘ **Final Lent Lunch this Fridays** at 12.30:

23rd March: St Mary's, Langley: Royal British Legion

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS The children are now preparing for their First Eucharist on **Sunday 20th May**, Pentecost Sunday.

NEXT SUNDAY is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. Morning Mass at St Peter's will **begin in the parish hall** with the blessing of palms and the Gospel concerning the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem. This will be followed by the procession to church for the Mass. ✘ The Chrism Mass on Wednesday **28th March**, 11.30am at St George's Cathedral, Southwark. means that there will be a Service of the Word and Holy Communion at Good Shepherd that day. ✘ **Maundy Thursday Liturgy:** If you are willing and able to take part in the foot washing part of the liturgy please give your name to Deacon Cyril as soon as possible.

St FRANCIS' Deanery Penance Service at St Francis', Maidstone, **Sunday 25th March** at 4pm (<http://stfrancisparish.org.uk>).

GIFT AID If you are in the scheme, please pick up your new set of envelopes and a letter from Mark Smith, our promoter. If you're not in the scheme, but pay tax, also pick up an application form: *It's a simple way to boost your giving!*

EASTER COFFEE Back yet again (by popular demand): coffee and tea after Mass at Good Shepherd on **Easter Sunday, 1st April**. Many thanks to our organizers!

GOOD SHEPHERD CLEANING We are blessed, even in the snow, with a clean church every Sunday morning, but it takes time and effort! We are short of cleaners; if you can spare the time please have a word with Fr Geoff, Deacon Cyril or Truda Fraser; the more the merrier, many hands make light work!

EASTER EGG HUNT Every **Holy Saturday** (the Saturday *before* Easter) Bearsted Area Churches Together hosts an Easter Egg Hunt at the Woodland Trust. It is free to enter, and Bearsted churches are asked to contribute the eggs that are the prizes. Could parishioners please support by buying one or two large eggs (not Creme Egg size) and leave in the sacristy. Thanks. ♦ Holy Week and Easter Service times will need to be delivered as usual. Please pick up a set for a road near you.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 18th MARCH 2018
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT (B)** ✕

Sun 18th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Special Intention
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Brian Murphy RIP
Mon 19th	St JOSEPH	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 20th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Wed 21st	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 22nd	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 23rd	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
		(H) 7.30pm	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Sat 24th	Feria	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ PALM SUNDAY of THE PASSION of THE LORD (B) ✕			
Sun 25th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: John Welchman RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: John and Elizabeth Drummy RIP

CONFIRMATIONS If you are in year 9 or above, and would like to be confirmed in October, please speak to Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril. Deanery confirmations are in **October**.

WHEELCHAIR APPEAL Our wheelchair at St Peter's, which we use to help disabled parishioners to Mass, etc., is no longer serviceable, so we need to look for a new one. Has anyone in the parish got one which they are no longer using? We are looking for one in good condition which is certified to a passenger weight of **at least 18 stones**. If you have one, please talk to Father Geoff or Terry Kinsman (01622 730119).

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM In Bearsted and Thurnham, we remember and pray for those from our villages who died 100 years ago in World War One. ♦ We next meet on **Saturday 24th March** to commemorate and pray for: ✕ **Leslie Watkins** ✕ **Frederick Wilkinson** ✕ **Reginald Allcorn**. We will begin at **Noon** outside 1 Mote Villas, The Green. This is on the east side of The Green to the north of Bearsted House and we will then proceed to the other sites.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for March** – formation in spiritual discernment: that the Church may appreciate the urgent need for formation in spiritual discernment, both on the personal and community levels.
- **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 our new Dean, Fr Peter Soper, for all our relatives and friends and for the intentions on the notice board.
- **For the children in Syria**, injured and traumatised by the ceaseless civil war that continues to rage. We pray for all those killed and injured, for grieving families and for refugees.
- **Anniversaries this week** (St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial): ✕ **Nora Prickett**, **John Hooker**, **John Brennan** and **Kevin Devlin**. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£407.97** (Gift Aided, **£225.00**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£158.00**). ♦ Please continue to hand in your CAFOD envelopes: simply drop them into the collection bag at the offertory. ♦ This Sunday there is a retiring collection to help cover the cost of **flowers for Holy Thursday and Easter**. Thank you.

SAMARA'S AID SPRING APPEAL It is proposed is to start the collection at Holy Cross Church on **1st April** (Easter Day) until **Friday 4th May**. See the notice on the board and pick up an information sheet.

BORN FOR THIS A musical and dramatised depiction of the Stations of the Cross and a great way to prepare for Easter. Young people from across the diocese will be taking part. They invite you to join them for this time of reflection and prayer, **Saturday 24th March** at Aylesford Priory (free admission).

LENT TALKS Every year, to mark the Christian season of Lent, Radio 4 invites contributors to offer a personal take on an aspect of the Passion story. Tune in on **Wednesday** evening at 8.45 or **Sunday** morning at 5.45. Catch it again on iPlayer.

MARRIAGE MASS at St GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL Saturday **16th June**, 3pm. If you are celebrating a significant wedding anniversary this year, **please give in your names by the end of April** so you can receive an invitation from the Archbishop. This annual event fills the cathedral and is well received; all are welcome to attend.