



# 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](mailto: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](http://www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk)

**Year B**

**FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER**

**22nd April 2018**

**FAITH IN FOCUS: Counting On The Shepherd** Today's gospel is for anyone who has ever felt unloved or insignificant. Today's gospel is for anyone who feels his or her life doesn't count for much. At some time or another that probably means most of us.

In biblical days shepherding was a highly dangerous business. Herds might consist of thousands of sheep, and shepherds had to be highly skilled in tending for the sheep and protecting them from wolves and robbers. The shepherd's care and courage were legendary. A good shepherd would not think twice about his own life in protecting his sheep. This is the image that Jesus chose for himself in today's gospel. He is the good shepherd. His leadership is a mixture of tenderness, strength and self-sacrifice. Jesus loves us so much that he would lay down his life. That's a powerful belief to take out into the world!



But what if we don't quite believe it? Surely there are too many of us to love and look after individually. People fall by the wayside all the time. We hear tragic stories of elderly people who die alone and are not discovered for days because no one cares enough to visit. We see down and outs sleeping in subways because their family and friends have given up on them. Can God really be looking out for each and every one of us? Surely there are too many of us to look after – to love individually. Not so! Jesus, we're told, would not let even one of his sheep stray without coming to the rescue. He knows each and every one of us by name. If we are one of his, then he will recognise us and take care of us. That's another powerful belief to wake up with. The next time you are feeling lost and forgotten, try looking for the Good Shepherd's love in your life. God's help is always there when we look to him. *Chapel Bell*

**IT'S YOUR CALL** Today: Day of Prayer for **Vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life**.

"We are not victims of chance or swept up in a series of unconnected events; on the contrary, our life and our presence in this world are the fruit of a divine vocation!" (From Pope Francis' message for today.) Today the Church throughout the world prays for vocations. On this day we are asked to make a special effort to ask the Lord for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life?

- 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.
- Pray a rosary for more young men and women in our diocese to respond to God's call.

**GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS** Parishioners may be aware there is some new data protection legislation coming into force on **25th May 2018**, which is going to impact on all of us. One of the responsibilities we will now have to undertake is to know who has access to the vast amount of personal information we hold in the parish. If you work or volunteer for the parish, or have done so in the past, and have some personal information at your home in a file and/or on a PC or laptop, please could let Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril know. The Archbishop is encouraging all of us to help implement these changes. Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

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

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

**DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 22nd APRIL 2018**  
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER (B)** ✕

Sun 22nd	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Margaret Richardson RIP
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: Rita Kimber RIP
Mon 23rd	<b>St GEORGE</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	✕ Mass: For Marie-Claire's intention
Tues 24th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Private Intention
Wed 25th	St Mark	<b>(H) 10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Fr Michael Murphy RIP
Thu 26th	Feria	<b>7.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Fri 27th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass
Sat 28th	Feria	<i>5-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ <b>FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER (B)</b> ✕			
Sun 29th	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: Patrick Dempsey RIP

**SAMARA'S AID** Please see the notice about the update to this local initiative in support of refugees in Syria. **Volunteers needed.**

**FAMILY RACE NIGHT** *Tickets now on sale!* Tickets will cost £5 for adults and £2 for children. The Race Night will be held in St Peter's Hall on **Saturday 12th May** at 7pm and it will be fun for all the family – even the youngest members can cheer their favourite horse on! Nobody is going to lose their shirt, as we bet with fun money and families or teams win prizes not cash! But we don't want to see bookie 'Honest Bob Piggott' making off with all the prizes, so come along and place your bets! Please bring your own food and drink. Tickets will be available after Sunday Masses or ring Ian on 736811.

**PLEASE PRAY...**

- **With the Holy Father for April** – for those who have responsibility in economic matters, that leaders in financial affairs may have the courage to reject economic measures that exclude people, and rather seek new inclusive approaches.
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes;** for those who have died recently especially Stephen Clark and Fr Michael Murphy, 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.
- **For vocations:** that we might be open to hear God's call and generous in our response.
- **Anniversaries this week** (St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial): ✕ Margaret Richardson, Sylvia Clifton and Ursula Schreiber. ✕

**Thank you** for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£392.91** (Gift Aided, **£157.00**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank, amount to **£165.00**). ♦ **This Sunday** is World Day of Prayer for Vocations and there is a 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. ♦ **Next Sunday** there will be a collection for **Maintenance of St George's Cathedral**: St George's is the mother church of the diocese. This collection helps meet the cost of the upkeep of the cathedral.

**CAFOD** Match Funding Deadline: **12th May**.

**St GEORGE'S DAY** Monday **23rd April**: Mass at 6.30pm in St George's Cathedral, at which Archbishop Peter will be the Principal Celebrant, followed by a reception in Amigo Hall.

**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.

**GAUDETE et EXSULTATE** A few copies of the Pope's new *Apostolic Exhortation* are available.