



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: bearsted@rcaos.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

15th MARCH 2020

FAITH in FOCUS: BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS "Are you hiding anything?" It's an uncomfortable question that probably invites a heated denial from most of us; yet most of us are probably hiding something. We might be trying to shrug off a nagging guilt, or an unforgiving sin. We might be trying to forget an episode in our lives where we behaved unwisely. We might be trying to cover up the agony of a failed relationship, or putting a brave face on a lifetime of loneliness and rejection. How many of us are covering up weaknesses and flaws in our character? Most of us are trying to hide something, yet we would all acknowledge that burying something isn't the best way to find healing or improvement.



The woman at the well in today's gospel was struggling through life with a great deal of baggage. Firstly she was a woman with a lesser role in society, not only that, but a woman without a husband and to add insult to injury, a woman with a bad reputation. Secondly the woman was a Samaritan, a foreigner, and as such, regarded by most as a person to be avoided altogether. Jesus puzzles the woman. He is a man and he is a Jew, in other words, the very last person she would have expected to strike up a conversation. Life had taught the woman to expect something very different. Life had taught her to expect contempt and rejection. Is this why we keep our own failings under wraps? Do we, like the Samaritan woman expect our friends, family and work mates to be unforgiving and uncompromising if they knew the real us?

God's love is like a sprinkler system spreading Christ's unconditional life-giving water without prejudice or judgement. Lent is the time to unravel all our hidden pain and set it before God. Lent is the time to take a leaf out of Jesus' book, to see the pain in the lives of others and break down the barriers society has built. *Chapel Bell*

ARCHBISHOP PETER SMITH RIP Our beloved Archbishop Emeritus died peacefully just before midnight on Friday 6th March at the Royal Marsden Hospital, Chelsea. His illness progressed very quickly following a cancer diagnosis just a few weeks ago. His funeral will be on **Monday 30th March at 12.30pm** at St George's Cathedral, Southwark. Please pray for the repose of his soul, and also keep his family in your prayers.

FROM THE ARCHBISHOP: CORONAVIRUS DECREE In response to the recent COVID-19 Coronavirus and in order to reduce the risks of transmission, the Archbishop has released a decree introducing special pastoral measures from now until 6th April 2020, when they will be reviewed. The points most relevant to parishioners are:

- 1: The Sign of Peace is suspended at Mass.**
- 2: Holy Communion from the chalice is suspended.**
- 3: We are encouraged to receive Holy Communion in the hand rather than on the tongue.**
- 4: Holy water stoups are to be emptied.**

The full text of the decree can be found attached, and the complete advice from the Bishops' Conference can be found in large print on the noticeboard or online: <http://bit.do/covidadvice>.

RECOMMENDED FOR LENT ("PRAYER : FASTING : ALMSGIVING") ✠ Try to get to Mass at least once during the week. ✠ Attend Stations of the Cross on **Friday evenings** (this week again at St Peter's). ✠ Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. ✠ Contribute to CAFOD or our parish Lenten Appeal. ✠ Give up a favourite luxury. ✠ Try to get to the Bearsted area **Lent Lunches** on **Fridays** from 12.15, with a talk at 1pm from the following guest speakers:

- **This Friday:** Langley - Speaker from Choices, which works with those suffering domestic abuse.
- **27th March:** Thurnham - Speaker from the Fremlin Walk Chaplaincy.
- **3rd April:** St Peter's Church - Speaker about being an 'Eco-Church'.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 15th MARCH 2020
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✠ **THIRD SUNDAY of LENT (A)** ✠

Sun 15th	Saturday	6.00pm	✠ Vigil Mass: Gertruda Rompa RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✠ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✠ Mass: John and Elizabeth Drummy RIP
Mon 16th	Feria	7.00pm	✠ Mass: Mike Connor RIP
Tue 17th	St Patrick	10.00am	✠ Mass: Patricia Blake RIP <i>Followed by Adoration until 12noon</i>
Wed 18th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✠ Mass: Archbishop Peter Smith RIP
Thu 19th	St Joseph	<i>No Mass: church open as usual</i>	
Fri 20th	Feria	10.00am	✠ Mass: Jean Hope RIP <i>Followed by coffee</i>
		7.30pm	✠ Stations of the Cross
Sat 21st	Feria	5-5.30pm	<i>Confessions</i>
✠ FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT (A) ✠ <i>Laetare (Mothering) Sunday</i>			
Sun 22nd	Saturday	6.00pm	✠ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✠ Mass: Anne Barton RIP
		10.30am	✠ Mass: Joe Stynes RIP

BEARSTED PRAYER VISITING Our group of prayer visitors is looking to increase their numbers. If you would be able to offer your support, please speak to Bob Piggott.

MARMALADE MORNING at St Nicholas' Church, Otham on Saturday **4th April from 9.30am – 12noon**. A large range of different and interesting marmalades, jams, chutneys, cakes, plants and crafts are also on sale.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for March:** for Catholics in China. We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.
- **For all those troubled by the current health situation;** and for those in isolation as a result
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes;** for those who have died recently, especially Archbishop Peter; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now (see below); and for all our relatives and friends and those who have asked for prayers.
- **Anniversaries (St Peter's Chapel memorial):** ✠ May Sanity, Allan Harrison, John Drummy and Nora Prickett. ✠

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£410.28** (of which, **£143.00** was **Gift Aided**; in addition, weekly standing orders paid direct into our bank **now amount to £200.00**). ♦ Last week, your fast day savings for CAFOD raised **£106.00**. Envelopes can be returned in the collection throughout Lent.

GIFT AID SCHEME If you are in the scheme, please pick up a new pack of envelopes.

24 HOURS for THE LORD As has become customary during Lent, there will be twenty-four hours of adoration and prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament at St Francis', Maidstone **from 7am this Friday until 10am on Saturday**. The Sacrament of Confession will be available throughout.

SECONDHAND BOOKS The next sale will be on Sunday **5th April**. Proceeds will be donated to Street Pastors, volunteers from local churches who go out at night and care, listen to and offer practical help to those in need.

BEARSTED CHURCHES' EASTER EGG HUNT As usual we are looking for donations of Easter Eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt, which will take place *before* Easter on Holy Saturday, **11th April**. It seems that St Peter's share is in the region of 55 eggs. Thank you to those who have donated in the past! ♦ Holy Week and Easter Service times will soon be available and need to be delivered as usual this year.

A DATE for YOUR DIARIES A murder mystery 'whodunnit', with 3 course meal and FREE WINE! Where? St Peter's church hall. When? **Saturday 25th April at 7pm**. What? '*Death by Paintbrush*'. Who? That's for you to decide! Tickets will be available after Masses next weekend. See posters on the board for more details.

SANTA MARTA GROUP See the notice about a training day on slavery in the agricultural sector in the Kent areas.

DIOCESAN JOB VACANCIES The diocese has vacancies for a full-time *Marriage Tribunal Administrator* and *Safeguarding Office Administrator*. For more information about either, visit www.rcsouthwark.co.uk.