



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](mailto:bearsted@rcaos.org.uk)

Parish Deacon: Reverend Cyril Durbin: 01622 630055

St Peter's Hall Bookings: 07919 084730

Webmaster: [webmaster@catholic-bearsted.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@catholic-bearsted.org.uk)

**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

✠ TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY ✠

5th SEPTEMBER 2021

**FAITH IN FOCUS: A Sign of Our Times** A 'bag lady' gets on the bus ranting and swaying. We spread ourselves out on the seat hoping against hope that she chooses to sit somewhere else. An old man stumbles in the high street and doesn't get up again. We suspect he's had too much to drink and hurry on. Perhaps someone else better qualified will lend a helping hand. We respond with fear and discrimination. It's a good job that although many of us choose to close our eyes and ears, there are equally as many people who want to help. We only have to look at the number of aid agencies, charity campaigns and caring individuals to see signs of Jesus in our midst.



This is the significance of today's gospel story. What at first seems to be a straightforward account of the healing of a deaf man turns out to be much more. The story points to the miracle as a sign that Jesus was the Messiah the Jews had been expecting. It was prophesied that the ears of the deaf would be unsealed and that the tongues of the dumb would sing for joy. The curing of the deaf man was exactly the sort of miracle the Jews would have been expecting of the awaited Messiah. What seems like a straightforward account of a miracle takes us a step further. The deaf man happened to be a Gentile. In biblical times, orthodox Jews would have considered a Gentile unclean. By choosing a Gentile as the subject of his miracle, Jesus is telling us that there is no discrimination when it comes to God's salvation.

Today we ask God to help us see and hear the needs of others. There has never been a better time to show the world that Jesus is at the heart of our teaching. The migrant crisis that is on our news on a daily basis, shows some countries acting with empathy and others with inflammatory language and high barbed fences. We are reacting with the fear and discrimination that Jesus fought against. We cannot turn a deaf ear or a blind eye; we have to act like Christians in the way we speak, in the way we give, in the way we campaign and in our prayers. *Chapel Bell*

**MESSAGE for all FLOWER ARRANGERS** (or anyone interested in joining us at St Peter's) As promised, we are having a coffee morning on **Thursday 16th September** at 10am in the parish room at St Peter's. Anyone who is interested in flower arranging is welcome to come for coffee, cake and a chat. Covid interrupted our little 'get-togethers' for a while ... but we are back ... and hopefully safer than before. No pressure - just come along and enjoy meeting up with each other again! Any queries, please phone: Beatrice. 07999 358348 : Shelagh. 07887 656421.

**SAFEGUARDING** We have for many years carried out DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks on everyone who undertakes parish activities involving children or vulnerable adults. The diocese has now asked us to carry out updating checks on all DBS members, and these will in future be repeated every 3 years. We have looked at our activities, and will be contacting everyone who is still active in these roles to arrange the updating of their check. We will only do those we currently need, and may come back a bit later if we need more people to help. Any queries, please contact me, Terry Kinsman, 01622 730119.

**NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY: 8th September** The Church has celebrated Mary's birth since at least the sixth century. A September birth was chosen because the Eastern Church begins its Church year with September. The 8th September date helped determine the date for the feast of the Immaculate Conception on 8th December (nine months earlier). Scripture does not give an account of Mary's birth; the apocryphal Protoevangelium of James fills in the gap. This work has no historical value, but it does reflect the development of Christian piety. According to this account, Anna and Joachim are infertile but pray for a child. They receive the promise of a child that will advance God's plan of salvation for the world. Such a story (like many biblical counterparts) stresses the special presence of God in Mary's life from the beginning. (*American Catholic*)



**FRIENDS of KENT CHURCHES, RIDE & STRIDE: Saturday 11th September** 50% of all sponsorship money raised can go to the church or chapel of your choice, with the other 50% going to the Friends of Kent Churches. See: <https://www.kentrideandstride.co.uk/>. Both our churches will be involved.

**SAVE THE DATE! ADVANCE NOTICE** 'Death by Paintbrush', a chilling Murder Mystery is coming to St Peter's Parish Hall on Saturday 9th October. Full details will follow in a few weeks' time – except, of course, the identities of the victim and the murderer! To find out *whodunnit*, put this date in your diary and come prepared to play detective!

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 5th SEPTEMBER 2021 (Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✠ TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (B) ✠			
Sun 5th September	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	✠ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✠ Mass: Fr Christopher O'Brien RIP
		<b>10.30am</b>	✠ Mass: John and Elizabeth Drummy RIP
		After Mass	Baptism: Percy Alfred Summers
Mon 6th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✠ Mass: Michael and Ruth Cowles RIP
Tue 7th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✠ Mass: Diana Durbin RIP <b>(followed by Adoration until 11.30am)</b>
Wed 8th	Birthday of Our Lady	<b>(H) 10.00am</b>	✠ Mass: Harry Jenkins RIP
Thu 9th	Feria		No Mass
Fri 10th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✠ Mass: Fr Christopher O'Brien RIP
Sat 11th	Feria	5-5.30pm	Confessions
✠ TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (B) ✠			
Sun 12th September	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	✠ Vigil Mass: Thomas Gerard Flynn RIP
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✠ Mass: Pro Populo
		<b>10.30am</b>	✠ Mass: Archie and Mary Cram RIP

**STAND WITH AFGHANISTAN:** Call for the UK to support the people of Afghanistan; Christian Aid Online Petition. "As the Taliban take control of Afghanistan, millions of Afghan people are seeking safe passage – fearful of what comes next. The rights of Afghan women and girls are in jeopardy. Human rights defenders and civil society actors are now at grave risk. We must take action to protect those whose lives and rights are at stake. The UK Government must take responsibility and act with compassion. Christian Aid is inviting us to use our voice to demand the UK government massively increase its response, through:

- Increasing aid to Afghanistan and to neighbouring countries.
- Providing more support for Afghans seeking refuge in the UK."

Sign the online petition at [www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/stand-afghanistan](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/stand-afghanistan).

**PLEASE PRAY...**

- **With the Holy Father for September:** That we all will make courageous choices for a simple and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, rejoicing in our young people who are resolutely committed to this.
- **For the victims of the deluge and extreme flooding in the USA, in the New York locality.**

- **For those who have asked prayers:** for Percy, being baptized this weekend and for his family; in thanksgiving that a father and son have been reconciled; for the sick; for those who have died recently; and for all those troubled in heart, mind and body.
- **Anniversaries** (St Peter's Chapel memorial): ✠ Edward (Tomo) Thompson, Frank Drennan, Sheila Dell, Winifred Moffatt, Alida Powers, Cecile Cavendish, Jeanne Adam and Alice Piddock. ✠

**BIDDING PRAYERS** As from this week you will notice that we have reintroduced the Prayer of the Faithful after the Creed.

**MASS FOR COVID-19 VICTIMS** 12 noon, Saturday 11th September at Aylesford Priory: for those who have lost a loved one, whether family or friend. Those who wish to join in praying for victims and for the consolation of those affected are also most welcome to attend.

**EDUCATION SUNDAY:** 12th September Education Sunday is marked just after the new academic year starts. The theme for 2021 is 'A word in season', taken from Isaiah 50:4. Churches Together in England (CTE) rightly describes teaching and studying as "demanding and privileged callings" and Education Sunday gives us the opportunity to give thanks to God for all who teach and all who study, for all who continually have to find the right words and deliver them with enthusiasm and graciousness. This is all the more poignant as we attempt to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers, pupils and leaders in our schools have suffered 18 months of disruption and uncertainty. For the second year in a row, GCSE and A Level students have been Centre Assessed or Teacher Assessed – a challenging situation for both teachers and pupils. Next Sunday we pray that God will fortify those working to make our schools places of learning and sanctuary – not just teachers and leaders but all the support staff whose tireless work sometimes goes unnoticed. We pray for all our primary and secondary pupils – particularly school leavers who have had such a difficult journey in recent times – not to mention students in higher education and vocational training.

**LITTLE FLOWER PILGRIMAGE** The Little Flower Pilgrimage will take place on *Sunday 26th September* at Aylesford Priory and will be led by the Grand Prior. The day will commence with a Gathering Service and Banner Blessing at 12noon. There will time for private prayer before joining together for the Blessing of the Roses on the Rosary Way. The pilgrimage will conclude with Mass at 3pm in Honour of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus. All are welcome.

**CAFOD HARVES FAST** *Friday 1st October*. Envelopes for your customary savings are available. ♦ Also information about the COP26 climate talks in November.

### **Bitesize**

Our thoughts are unseen hands shaping the people we meet. Whatever we truly think them to be, that's what they'll become for us.

*Richard Cowper*

### **SUNDAY MASS**

*The following will probably be used:*

**Preface:** V of Sundays

**Eucharistic Prayer:** I

**Mystery of Faith:** Save us, Saviour of the world . . .