



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

SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER

6th May 2018

FAITH IN FOCUS: FAVOURITE PEOPLE Religious people often see nonreligious people as outsiders. This no doubt stems from the fact that to espouse a religion is no light matter; it means taking a step that is the basis of our whole being and orientation. For religion is a life option not a leisure activity. In the Old Testament the Jewish people considered themselves to be the chosen people of God to the extent that they kept clear of all dealings with the "nations", the surrounding peoples and cultures. When prophets like Isaiah came along and in God's name foretold that all these pagan nations would be welcome to offer worship on the holy mountain of Jerusalem, it profoundly shocked the religious sensitivities of their audience.



In the New Testament Peter makes an astounding discovery: that God has no favourites and that anyone who tries to do God's will is acceptable to God. This comes after thousands of pagans have listened to his preaching and have received the same Holy Spirit with which he himself has been anointed. Things haven't changed that much. We have an inbuilt tendency to think of those who do not share our faith as being on a different plane to us. Yet one thing is clear: God gives his Spirit to anyone he thinks is striving to do his will. And this should make us stop and think: we have no monopoly on truth and goodness. While we know that our Church possesses the gifts of the Holy Spirit, it is patently obvious that the Spirit blows through Jewish people, through Muslims, through Buddhists and Hindus . . . in fact, even through those who do not even believe. For all goodness and truth comes from God. Living our faith in the power of the Spirit is a real challenge, because it dares us to look at our surroundings and discern the people and events that God is using today to speak to us. And of course sometimes these people and events are the last ones we would ever expect to be mouthpieces of God. But when it comes to choosing people, God has no favourites. Anyone who strives to do his will is acceptable. *Author unknown*

MAY: MARY'S MONTH At both of our churches this Sunday we will have a short ceremony at which we will crown Our Lady's statue. This will be at the beginning, just before Mass begins. At St Peter's would the congregation please welcome the children as they process in. Thank you.

ASCENSION In 2017, the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, with the approval of the Holy See on 4th August 2017, decreed that, with effect from the First Sunday of Advent 2017: (1) the Solemnity of the **Epiphany** of the Lord is to be observed on the date prescribed in the Roman Calendar [6th January], except when it falls on a Saturday or a Monday, when the Solemnity is to be observed and the precept [the obligation to attend Mass] discharged in England and Wales on the Sunday; (2) The Solemnity of the **Ascension** of the Lord is to be on the Thursday of the 6th Week of Easter Time. So it is that the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord will be this **Thursday 10th May** rather than on the *Sunday* as in recent years.

St PETER'S CHOIR PRACTICE This Tuesday, **8th May**, 8pm.

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

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, **3rd June**.

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.*

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS Thank you to those who got in touch regarding new data protection legislation coming into force on **25th May**. For sure, this will not be the last we hear about it!

**DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 6th MAY 2018
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

✕ **SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER (B)** ✕

Sun 6th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Luis and Conchita Vecino RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Stephen James Clarke RIP
Mon 7th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Deacon Reginald Grimmette RIP
Tues 8th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 9th	✕ The ASCENSION of The LORD ✕ <i>Holy Day of Obligation</i>	(H) 7.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass
Thu 10th		10.00am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		8.00pm	✕ Mass: Pam Gollop RIP
Fri 11th	Feria (<i>Begins Novena to the Holy Spirit</i>)	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 12th	Feria	<i>5-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ SEVENTH SUNDAY of EASTER (B) ✕			
Sun 13th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Irene and Newport Horne RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo

FAMILY RACE NIGHT This event has been **cancelled** owing to low numbers.

COFFEE and TEA Can you help us to continue providing coffee / tea and biscuits (provided by parish funds) after Sunday Mass at St Peter's? We need a few reserves to cover absences / holidays. Please speak to Joyce Gibson after Mass, or ask Fr Geoffrey / Deacon Cyril Durbin for her contact details. Thank you.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for May** – the mission of the laity; that the lay faithful may fulfil their specific mission by responding with creativity to the challenges that face the world today.
- **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.
- **For our newly elected local councillors**; that the welfare of all and the state of our roads may not be overlooked.
- **Anniversaries this week** (St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial): ✕ Marguerite Davis, Reginald Hayes and Tony Moritz. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£379.22** (Gift Aided, **£135.00**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank, amount to **£165.00**). ♦ The retiring collection for the **Maintenance of St George's Cathedral** amounted to **£142.37**. ♦ Next week 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. *Pick up a prayer card as you leave Mass today.*

ALTAR SERVERS' RALLY See the notice of this event at Aylesford this Bank Holiday Monday, **7th May**. Bishop Paul Mason will be celebrating the Mass.

MESSAGE FROM CAFOD: Thank you for your support. Donations to CAFOD until 12th May will be doubled by the UK government. We have planned a £5 million programme to combat malnutrition – and with it we hope to be able to reach 245,000 people. To donate please go to cafod.org.uk/lent. ♦ **Share the Journey:** Pope Francis launched Share the Journey as a global campaign for the rights of people on the move. This spring, CAFOD supporters are walking in solidarity with refugees. Please see the CAFOD website for more information. ♦ We also received a letter thanking us for our Lent contributions (so far) of **£397.90**.

GIFT AID SCHEME Thank you to all donors for your continued support of the Gift Aid Scheme. The Gift Aid tax reclaim will be submitted soon and if any donor has not paid sufficient tax to cover the amount being reclaimed can they please advise myself or Fr Geoff? We always welcome new donors and if any parishioner who is a taxpayer would like to join the scheme please see myself or Fr Geoff. *Mark Smith, Gift Aid Organizer*

MASS FOR NEW CATHOLICS Celebrated by Archbishop Peter Smith on **Saturday 12th May** in St George's Cathedral at 11.00am. This Mass is celebrated each year to bring together all those who were received into the Catholic Church at Easter. All are welcome.

BEREAVEMENT RETREAT A retreat for those who have lost someone close to them is being held at Minster Abbey on **1st - 3rd June**. For further information go to www.minsterabbeynuns.org or write to Minster Abbey, Church St. Minster, Ramsgate. CT12 4HF; Telephone: 01843 821254.