



# 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

### Contact us:

**Parish Priest:** Reverend 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

### More information:

**Parish Website:** www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk

**Diocesan Website:** www.rcsouthwark.co.uk

**The Catholic Church in England and Wales:** www.catholicchurch.org.uk

**Prayer:** www.life4seekers.co.uk; www.holyspiritinteractive.net

### 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)

Year B

FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT

30th November 2014

**FAITH IN FOCUS: STILL WAITING FOR ADVENT?** Ask anyone what "advent" means, and you'll get the answer "coming". In modern speech we talk of the advent of the steam engine, the advent of the single currency or the advent of the technological revolution. Ask any Christian what they understand by "advent" and they will probably reply that it refers to the "coming" of Christ, and the season in which we await his coming. If they know a little more, they may speak about the two comings.



In fact, there are THREE comings of Christ which are celebrated by the Church during the season of Advent: the PAST Advent concentrates upon the coming of Jesus as a child at Bethlehem. It is about the inn, the manger, the angels, the shepherds, the star and the wise men. It celebrates the Incarnation of Jesus 2000 years ago. (These mysteries of our faith are focused upon on the 4th Sunday of Advent). The FUTURE Advent looks to the second coming of Jesus at the end of time, when he will return to judge the living and the dead. It centres on our being alert and ready for the Day of the Lord, upon the unexpected time of our being called before God, and our need to prepare the way for this coming. It teaches us how to wait. (The 1st and 2nd Sundays of Advent recall this coming of Jesus).

But there is a PRESENT Advent which is often overlooked. Jesus not only came in the past and will come in the future, but he comes to us every day in so many different ways. This coming is about how we treat Christ on the streets, in the face of the homeless, the oppressed, the poor. It's about how we relate to all those people who share our lives: friends, family and those with whom we work. The Incarnation happens every day. (This coming of Jesus is particularly associated with the 3rd Sunday of Advent). It doesn't make sense to wait around, singing and praying about past and future, if we are blind to the present. Advent is about waiting in joyful hope, and about the challenge to respond to Christ whenever he comes, including today.

*Author unknown*

**BENEDICTION** There will be Rosary and Benediction at St Peter's **this Sunday**, the First Sunday of Advent, at 3pm. Please try to join us as a way of beginning this short but prayerful *period of devout and expectant delight* (Roman Missal, p 135) in the run-up to Christmas. ✦ **'Walk with Me'**, a journey of prayer for Advent and Christmas is available. It is prefaced by Archbishop Peter and costs £1. **CHRISTMAS** ✦ Raffle tickets for our draw are available. ✦ Carols on the [Bearsted] Green, 7pm, Wednesday 17th December. ✦ Our pre-Christmas Carol Service will be on **Sunday 21st December at 6pm**. ✦ **Christmas Mass During the Night** ('Midnight Mass') will be at **10.30pm** this year on 24th December.

**YOUTH GROUP** Monday **1st December: bowling; please book and pay** (Erika Tel 739361). We welcome young people aged 10 – 15; older teenagers welcome to join in as young leaders.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2015** Preparations begin in January. Application forms are **now available**. Parents who live in the parish with children who are baptized and in school Year 3 or above are invited to apply. A meeting will be called once we have received back the applications.

**CHOIR NEWS** Next rehearsal, next **Sunday, 7th December** after 10.30 Mass. ✦ **MULLED WINE** and **CAROLS: Tuesday 9th December**, 8pm at St Peter's; *all are welcome!*

**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 30th NOVEMBER 2014  
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)**

**✕ FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT (B) ✕**

Sun 30th	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Margaret and Valerie Tipper RIP
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: Thomas Byrne RIP
		3.00pm	Rosary and Benediction
Mon 1st December	Feria	<b>7.00pm</b>	✕ Mass: Deacon John Roberts RIP
Tues 2nd	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Donor's Intention
Wed 3rd	St Francis Xavier	<b>(H) 10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Holy Souls (November lists)
Thu 4th	Feria	<b>7.00am</b>	✕ Mass: Fr John Oliver RIP
Fri 5th	Feria	<b>10.00am</b>	✕ Mass: David and Nancy Mendes RIP
Sat 6th	Our Lady	5.00-5.30pm	Confessions

**✕ SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT (B) ✕**

*Bible Sunday*

Sun 7th	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	✕ Vigil Mass: Special Intention
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>(H) 8.45am</b>	✕ Mass
		<b>10.30am</b>	✕ Mass: Pro Populo

**FINANCE COMMITTEE** meets **this Monday**, 7.30pm.

**ADVENT APPEAL** The Advent Appeal this year is for the **Maidstone Churches' Winter Shelter**. They are aiming to provide shelter for homeless people in Maidstone from 8th December until 1st March. They are using seven churches in Maidstone between 7pm and 8am. They hope to support homeless people to move on to appropriate accommodation. This is a continuation of the successful project from last year. Please collect an envelope and return at one of the Christmas Masses.

**PRISONERS of CONSCIENCE** Every year our Ecumenical Justice & Peace Group encourage members of our congregations to send Christmas Cards to prisoners of conscience. Attached to your newsletter are this year's cases. Please take note of the guidance about what details to include in any message you send.

**PLEASE PRAY...**

- **With the Holy Father for December:** *Christmas, hope for humanity: that the birth of the Redeemer may bring peace and hope to all people of good will; and that parents may be true evangelizers, passing on to their children the precious gift of faith. And for Pope Francis, as he visits Turkey this weekend: may he bring the Gospel message of peace and reconciliation for all people.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes, especially Cyril Adam, Arthur Hogben, Margaret Moses and Barbara Casey; for those recently dead especially Deacon John Roberts; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; and for all our relatives and friends.
- **For all migrants and refugees;** for those who travel far from their homelands to find work or safety: may our communities always welcome them and value the gifts that they contribute to our society.
- **That those called to serve the Lord** as priests, deacons and in the consecrated life will continue to be enriched by Christ's spiritual gifts and respond generously to his call, we pray to the Lord.

**Thank you:** the sum received last weekend at Mass was **£496.58 (£254.70** was Gift Aided). ♦ The retiring collection for the **Catholic Youth Service**, realized **£162.05**. There is **no retiring collection this week**.

**CHRISTMAS GREETINGS at St PETER'S** There will be a large Christmas Card/Poster at St Peter's again this year. Parishioners are invited to sign the card for the festive season to fellow parishioners instead of sending individual Christmas cards. All donations will go the Maidstone Homeless Night Shelter Appeal. Please make your donation using the secure collection box provided this year.

**ADVENT HOPE SERVICE** Tuesday **2nd December** at Holy Cross, Bearsted at 7.30pm: Christian Aid will be holding their Kent Advent Hope service. The service will feature the guest speaker Stephen Ngugi, who will be speaking about the organisation's work with expectant mothers in Kenya, the subject of this year's Christmas appeal. Those who plan to come are asked to get a (free) ticket in advance available from the southeast team at Christian Aid [southeast@christian-aid.org](mailto:southeast@christian-aid.org), or [Hjudges@christian-aid.org](mailto:Hjudges@christian-aid.org).