



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 A

SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT

4th December 2016

FAITH IN FOCUS: BETTER THE DAY Jesus exaggerates in today's Gospel when he claims not to know the day or the hour when he will come again. He occasionally makes such over-statements to drive home a point we might otherwise miss. His point here is that the exact "hour" is not important. What is crucial is that we do not postpone our repentance, that we be ready for him - spiritually and morally - when he comes. For he will surely come, he tells us - like a thief in the night, like the flood in the time of Noah. In today's epistle Paul, too, compares the present age to a time of advancing darkness and night. Though we sit in the darkness, overshadowed by death, we have seen arise the great light of our Lord who has come into our midst. He is the true light, the life of the world. And his light continues to shine in his Church, the new Jerusalem promised by Isaiah in today's first reading. In the Church, all nations stream to the God of Jacob, to worship and seek wisdom in the House of David. From the Church goes forth his word of instruction, the light of the Lord - that all might walk in his paths towards that eternal day when night will be no more. By our baptism we have been made children of the light and day. It is time we start living like it - throwing off the fruitless works of darkness, the desires of the flesh, and walking by the light of his grace. The hour is late as we begin a new Advent. Let us begin again in this Eucharist. As we sing in today's psalm, let us go rejoicing to the House of the Lord. Let us give thanks to his name, keeping watch for his coming, knowing that our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. *Author unknown*



BIBLE SUNDAY is today, the Second Sunday of Advent. It highlights the importance of the sacred scriptures in Christian living. We will be asking our Ministers of the Word (Readers) to renew the commitment to their ministry **this weekend**. This simple ceremony takes place before the Liturgy of the Word.

CONFIRMATION GROUP Meeting after Mass at St Peter's **today**.

RECOMMENDED for ADVENT ♦ Try to get to Mass during the week: there is so much beauty in the readings of this season. ♦ Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation (confession): there will be a penance service at Maidstone; date to be announced. ♦ Download a daily meditation from the diocese: <http://eepurl.com/bF0b6P>.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2017 Application forms should be returned by this weekend. Applications for 2017 have now closed.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE TIMES Details of the times of the Christmas services across all the Christian churches in the Bearsted locality are ready for distribution. **Volunteers please!**

CAROLS ON THE GREEN Wednesday **14th December** at 7.30pm on Bearsted Green. All are welcome for this annual ecumenical pre-Christmas event. After at the Methodist Church for soup and bread.

COFFEE MORNING at GOOD SHEPHERD After Mass, Sunday, **18th December**: back by popular demand, a rare chance to linger awhile, drink coffee and meet fellow parishioners.

CHRISTMAS DRAW Tickets will continue to be available after all Masses: various magnificent prizes. All proceeds to parish music projects.

MISSIO We have received a letter thanking us for our support during the Red Box appeal during October: 15 new members signed up for boxes. Thank you.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 4th DECEMBER 2016
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT (A)** ✕

Sun 4th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Raine, Countess Spencer RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: John Arbuthnott RIP
Mon 5th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Alan Flynn RIP
Tues 6th	St Nicholas	10.00am	✕ Mass: The Holy Souls
Wed 7th	St Ambrose	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Anthony Arbuthnott RIP
Thu 8th	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 9th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: The Holy Souls
Sat 10th	Our Lady	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>
✕ THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT (A) ✕			
Sun 11th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: The Holy Souls
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: The Holy Souls

PARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE Meeting **this Monday** at the presbytery.

CHRISTMAS POSTER It's not too early to pick up a Knights of St Columba Christmas poster and display it in your window or other prominent position.

CHOIR PRACTICE This Tuesday, **6th December**, 8 - 9pm at St Peter's. All welcome.

TRADCRAFT CHRISTMAS CARDS Please consider buying your Advent Calendars and Christmas Cards from our Traidcraft stall again this year. There is a large selection of cards available. There is a catalogue and order form at the table near the door at St Peter's. Patrick Harrison will place orders with our Traidcraft suppliers and will be available most Sunday mornings if you want to discuss your requests.

ADVENT APPEAL 2016 This year's appeal will be in aid of The Maidstone Churches' Winter Shelter. The Winter Shelter offers a warm welcome overnight for homeless people during the coldest months. Envelopes should now be available. Please return by the end of Advent. Thank you. ★ Please see the notice about donations of **clothes** to the **Maidstone Day Care Centre**. Marie Quarman will collect throughout this month.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for December:** *that the peoples of Europe may rediscover the beauty, goodness and truth of the Gospel, which gives joy and hope to life.*
- **For all the sick** and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those who have died recently, especially Alan Flynn, and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now; for all our relatives and friends, and the intentions on the notice board.
- **For all those who lost their lives in the Brazilian plane crash over Colombia,** *that they might have eternal rest. May their families, friends and colleagues, the survivors and everyone who feels touched by the tragedy find the comfort and support that they need. Lord, hear us*

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£390.15** (gift aided, **£246.70**; weekly standing orders amount to **£149**). • **Next Sunday** there will be a retiring collection to help with the **cost of flowers and decorations at Christmas.**

PARISH FAMILY CAROLS Sunday **18th December** at 6.00pm. Come and join us for a jolly good sing! Contributions from Children's Liturgy and Choir plus a reading or two. Anyone who would like to play in the band (any instrument!!!) please let Bob Piggott know (736661 or bob_piggott@hotmail.co.uk). Plead bring WRAPPED gifts for Maidstone Women's Refuge - children's toys or women's toiletries.

BEARSTED CHORAL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS 'CONCERT' at St Peter's, Saturday **17th December**, 7.30pm. An eclectic mix of old and new songs for Christmas (Tchaikovsky, anon., John Rutter, David Wilcocks, Berlioz, etc.) with some audience participation, conducted by Andrew Lowen. Refreshments

and raffle in the interval. Tickets £10, students free. Tickets from Bob Piggott after Mass or bob_piggott@hotmail.co.uk or 736661.

CARDS FOR PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE Please pick up a list of such prisoners; you may wish to contact them to offer comfort and support.