



Parish of St Peter, Bearsted
and
The Good Shepherd, Harrietsham
Newsletter



St Peter's Church, Button Lane, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8NJ

Church of The Good Shepherd, Rectory Lane (off East Street), Harrietsham, ME17 1HS

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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

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



3rd JANUARY 2016

FAITH IN FOCUS: It's the Epiphany, and traditionally the time of year to pack Christmas back into the attic (or at least on 6th January). Today the three wise men set us a shining example. Yes, it's time to put the tinsel away, but how can we keep the Christmas star alive?

The wise men in the Epiphany gospel were visionaries with a star that they were determined to follow whatever the obstacles. It's a romantic notion, but visionaries are more than just romantic dreamers. Visionaries are those who can visualise and map the future. More than this, visionaries can realise a better future by their conviction and focus. The wise men began their quest with a hunger for the truth and a determination to find answers. When they finally found Jesus lying in a lowly stable they came away happier and wiser men as a result. Following the star rewarded the three wise men for their focus, by giving their lives better meaning and purpose. Following their star helped the Magi to be the people God had meant them to be.

So how do we follow our star? Firstly, we have to have a vision. What does God want of us? Some people agonise over this question, but for many of us it's simply a case of looking at our talents and using them to make the world a better place. Having a vision is all well and good, but next we have to make plans and put those plans into action. This might involve sitting down and identifying obstacles. Remember that obstacles aren't always put in our way by other people. More often or not obstacles exist in our own minds and in our own character traits. As we travel towards our goal we have to determine in whom and in what we trust. When things get tough, it is easy to listen to a well-meaning friend encouraging us to take an easy way out, or adopt a more comfortable goal. "King Herods" don't always come in the obvious guise of a pantomime baddie. Lastly, we have to be able to recognise Jesus in our lives, and once we have found him, allow him to navigate.

For all those who are heading into the new year feeling lost, or tired, or lonely, or disillusioned, remember that good things await those who listen to God, and follow his star. *(Chapel Bell)*

NEVILLE PASS RIP Please pray for the repose of the soul of Neville Pass of Yeoman Way who died on 12th December. His funeral will be at St Peter's on Wednesday **6th January** at 10am. Neville's body will rest in church overnight on Tuesday **5th January** following a short service of reception at 5pm. For this reason, there will be no Mass this Wednesday at Good Shepherd.

FR JOSEPH Greetings from Fr Joseph Aduse: "Christ is born for us, our hearts rejoice! I wish you and all the parishioners a Christmas Season filled with God's manifold blessings." Fr Joe's apostolate in Germany is now over and he is back in Ghana. We look forward to hearing of his plans for 2016.

PARISH POST Parishioners wondering why they didn't receive a Christmas card from 'so and so' might find it in the box marked PARISH POST in the porch at St Peter's.

GRAND CHRISTMAS DRAW List of winners on notice board. Thank you to all our supporters. If you are a winner and have not yet collected your raffle prize from the office to be sure to do so



this weekend. We raised **£772** for parish funds. Our thanks to Ian and all our promoters and

DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 3rd JANUARY 2016 (Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✕ THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD ✕			
Sun 3rd	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Wellbeing of June Sayer
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
Mon 4th	Feria of Christmas Time	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Teresa Gorman RIP
Tues 5th	Feria of Christmas Time	10.00am	✕ Mass: Fr John Bolland RIP
		5.00pm	To receive the body of Neville Pass
Wed 6th	Feria of Christmas Time	10.00am	✕ Requiem Mass: Neville Pass
Thu 7th	Feria of Christmas Time	7.00am	✕ Mass
Friday 8th	Feria of Christmas Time	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 9th	Our Lady	5:00-5:30pm	Confessions
✕ THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (C) ✕			
Sun 10th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Wellbeing of Canon John Gunn
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: William Watts RIP

prize donors.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Preparations begin this Friday afternoon at St Peter's.

COFFEE at GOOD SHEPHERD Thank you to those who stayed for coffee after Mass the Sunday before Christmas: the organizers reported that they ran out of saucers and people were still chatting at 10 o'clock! We will schedule this again for Easter. Thank you to those who provided the coffee and eats!

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for January:** *that through dialogue, fraternal charity and with the grace of the Holy Spirit, Christians may overcome divisions.*
- **For those who are suffering as a result of the severe weather,** *especially those whose homes have been damaged by floods, that they may be kept safe, and receive the help they need to rebuild and repair.*
- **In this Holy Year of Mercy,** *that in this coming year we may better reflect the love of God for our world, and open our hearts to show God's mercy towards all people.*
- **For all the sick** *especially Barbara Casey, Christine Durbin, Stephen Hannant, Lawrence Miller and all who are unwell at home or in our care homes; for those recently dead, for all those whose anniversaries occur about now and for all our beloved dead; for all our relatives and friends; and for the intentions on the notice board.*

Thank you for your generous Christmas Offerings which amounted to around **£2.600**. Thank you in addition for your offerings *last* weekend which amounted to **£284.90** (Gift Aided, **£185.13**). **Crib offerings** throughout the season this year are split between the "Friends of the Holy Land", offering help to the poorest families in Bethlehem, and "Crisis Fund in Southwark" to help support children, young people and families in immediate need.

THANK YOU Fr Geoffrey thanks everyone for their customary generous offering at Christmas.

ADVENT APPEAL 2015 This year's appeal has been in aid of The Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter. The Winter Shelter offers a warm welcome overnight for homeless people during the coldest months. Please return your donations in the envelopes provided by the end of Advent. Thank you. Donations to date amount to **£570.78**. We also made **£150.20** from the Christmas Quiz at the end of November. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS The Church's liturgical celebration of Christmas (the Nativity of the Lord) continues until next Sunday, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Ordinary Time before Lent begins on **Monday 11th**

January, the First Week in Ordinary Time, ferial cycle 2 (weekday readings at Mass), psalter week 1 (Divine Office). Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, **10th February**.

IN ADVANCE There will be a service at Bearsted Methodist Church for the Church Unity Octave on Sunday **17th January** at 3pm. It will be followed by tea and cakes. A warm welcome is, as always, assured.