



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

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 C

SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT

9th December 2018

FAITH IN FOCUS: LEADING THE WAY God still speaks to us today. It would not make sense for God to go to all the trouble of sending Jesus to die for us, and then simply leave us floundering without any sense of current direction. Obviously, God speaks in the words of scripture. We find God in creation, in the sacraments, and in the authentic teaching voice of the Church. But God generally uses other people to get through to us. Our litanies of saints recall long lists of names who over the centuries have led by their example, have acted as prophets and spokespeople, have given inspiration and encouragement to their fellow Christians seeking to live up to the demands of the gospel. For the people of Jesus' time it was John the Baptist who acted as a pointer to Christ. It was he who marked Jesus out as the one who was to come into the world to save it. In fact, his own words were that he was to become less in order that Jesus might become greater. John was a visible sign to all around that Jesus was someone special. What about today? Where would you look to find those people who are the modern-day prophets? Where in the world would you expect to find men and women whose lives herald the fact that our only hope for life lies in the person of Jesus the saviour?



It's easy to point to international figures. Mother Teresa would come close to the top of any poll, as would various popes, or archbishops who speak out against corrupt political regimes, Maximilian Kolbe who gave his life in a concentration camp, popular social activists, and civil rights campaigners like Martin Luther King. But people whose lives bear witness to the coming of Christ are also found on our doorsteps. They live lives which are not particularly glamorous. They include shopkeepers, doctors, parents, teachers, children, clergy, farmers, nurses and even double-glazing salesmen!

In Advent we have a chance to look around ourselves and to ask where the John the Baptists are today. Who gives the lead in our part of the world? Who points to Christ in our society? But most importantly, what sort of John the Baptist do I make for those who share my life? (Author unknown)

TODAY IS BIBLE SUNDAY It highlights the importance of the sacred scriptures in Christian living (worth looking at: www.biblesociety.org.uk). We will be asking our Ministers of the Word (Readers) to renew the commitment to their ministry this weekend. If you feel you would like to offer your service as a Minister of the Word, please let Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril know.

RECOMMENDED for ADVENT The season of Advent has a twofold character: it is a time of preparation for Christmas, when Christ's first coming is remembered; and it is a time to direct mind and heart to await his second coming. Advent is, therefore, a time of devout and expectant delight. ♦ Do **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 on Monday **17th December** at 7pm. ♦ Advent reflections are on offer from the Diocesan Stewardship Team: <http://www.southwarkdsc.org.uk/>.

PARISH SOCIAL Thank you to those who supported our splendid pre-Christmas Quiz Night last Saturday. A grand time was had by all. Our thanks to our Quiz Master, our MC and song-leader and those who organized publicity and catering. We made a very useful profit of **£232** for parish funds.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE TIMES Details of the times of the Christmas services across all the Christian churches in the Bearsted locality need to be distributed this week. **Volunteers please!** ★ Pick up a Knights of St Columba **Christmas poster** and display it in your window or other prominent position.

PARISH MEETING Thank you to those who attended the meeting 2 weeks ago along. *Minutes are attached.*

GRAND CHRISTMAS DRAW See attached. If you can help with donating a prize (no electrical goods, please) this would be greatly appreciated. Draw takes place in two weeks' time.

FAITH CLUB 3.30 – 5pm at St Peter's. Next meetings: **16th December.**

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 9th DECEMBER 2018
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT (C)** ✕

Sun 9th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Peter Stevens RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Brian Smith RIP
Mon 10th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tue 11th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Wed 12th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 13th	St Lucy	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 14th	St John of the Cross	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 15th	Feria	<i>5-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT (C)** ✕

Gaudete Sunday

Sun 16th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Mass of the Angels, in loving memory of Sacha
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Hilary Ashdowne RIP

WOULD YOU LIKE to be an ALTAR SERVER? If so, if you have made your First Communion and are usually at a weekend Mass, please speak to Deacon Cyril who will provide further information.

FINANCE COMMITTEE After 7pm Mass, this **Monday, 10th December**.

CAFOD Play your part to renew our Common Home. A new report from a group of international scientists has been released, urging us to ramp up our efforts to fight climate change. We know that things are urgent now. Visit <https://cafod.org.uk/> for more information. • Do you want to change lives around the world and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas? If so there are some World Gifts catalogues which you can pick up in at the back of the church. Gifts range from teaching someone to read or giving enough seeds to grow a year's worth of food.

COMING UP:

- **CAROLS** on the [Bearsted] Green, this **Wednesday, 12th December**. • Bearsted Choral Society, **Saturday 15th December** at St Peter's, 7.30pm. *See poster*. • Carols at the Methodist Church, Bearsted, 6pm, **23rd December**.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **For those who work in our hospitals and care homes, and for the members of our police and emergency services, that God will bless their generous efforts to keep us safe and well.**
- **With the Holy Father for December – In the Service of the Transmission of Faith** That people, who are involved in the service and transmission of faith, may find, in their dialogue with culture, a language suited to the conditions of the present time.
- **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.**
- **Anniversaries** (St Peter's Chapel memorial): ✕ *Millicent Weightman, Frank Sanity, James Brennan, Edward Kinsman, Reginald Boncey, Florence Fountain, Hannah Haden, Anne Murray and Bernard Brennan.* ✕

ADVENT APPEAL this year 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 will be available from the First Sunday in Advent, w/e **2nd December**. Please return by the end of Advent. Thank you.

FAMILY CELEBRATION in ANTICIPATION of CHRISTMAS Thursday **20th December**, 6pm at St Peter's. All ages are warmly invited to come and have a jolly good sing to celebrate the approach of Christmas. We expect to have the usual fairly eccentric band of instruments, and the children will be singing. We will be giving our usual gifts as our offering for the Women's Refuge. Can adults bring wrapped ladies' toiletries, and children wrapped toys marked girls and boys. Children are also encouraged to get dressed up as shepherds, angels, camels, what you will. The band will meet at 4.30 for a run-through. If anyone would like to play please let Bob (07594 752297), Pete or Dan know.

CHRISTMAS CARDS Patrick Harrison is happy to order Christmas cards from the Traidcraft catalogue if you are interested in buying some. He will be in the St Peter's parish room after Sunday Mass to show you the catalogue or you can contact him on 01622 532998.

COFFEE MORNING at GOOD SHEPHERD After Mass, Sunday, **30th December**: back by popular demand, a rare chance to linger awhile, drink coffee and meet fellow parishioners.