



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

THE EPIPHANY of THE LORD



7th JANUARY 2018

FAITH IN FOCUS: New Year Same Disastrous Outcomes?

It's a well-known saying that if you continue to do the same thing you will get the same results. Yet despite this obvious truth we continue to approach life in exactly the same old ways and repeat the same disastrous outcomes. We tend to get through life relying on the knowledge we already have, instead of searching for something new.

Today the Church commemorates the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

We call it the 'Epiphany' a word derived from the Greek meaning 'to appear' or 'to be shown forth'. The Epiphany is about searching for meaning purpose and revelation.

The Magi were men of great learning, intellect and wealth, yet they weren't prepared to sit back and imagine they knew it all. Guided by a star and motivated by a hunger for truth, they stepped out of their comfort zone and set out across the desert not knowing what they would find or how long it would take. It was a journey of faith and great courage.

In the same way as the star got the wise men questioning, so too we find guiding stars in our lives that make us question. What circumstances get us looking for deeper meaning? The desire to leave a mind-numbingly meaningless job, the need to make sense of a family illness, or the curiosity to research the background to a motivational book are all circumstances in which we might find our 'guiding stars'. Today's gospel reading is an invitation for all God's people to step out of their comfort zones and search for a new way of life and a better truth. *Chapel Bell.*



CHRISTMAS The Church's liturgical celebration of Christmas (the Nativity of the Lord) continues this year until **tomorrow** (Monday), the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Ordinary Time before Lent begins this Tuesday, **9th January**, the First Week in Ordinary Time, ferial cycle 2 (weekday readings at Mass), psalter week 1 (Divine Office). It lasts **5 weeks** ☩ before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, **14th February**.

DONATIONS for the HOMELESS Thank you to all those who have donated money to the Advent Appeal for **Maidstone Churches' Winter Shelter**; a total of **£1,102** has so far been raised. There is still time before the end of January if you still want to donate. We are now collecting a variety of goods which includes clothing for men and women, blankets, sleeping bags, toiletries, shoes, etc., to be given to **Maidstone Day Care Centre**. The problem of homelessness in Maidstone and all other areas in the UK has become more acute even since this time last year, so if you are having a spring clean after Christmas please bring goods into St Peter's Church. **At the end of January** Alan and I will take them to the Maidstone Day Care Centre who do a magnificent job to help the homeless throughout the year. If there are any other items that you think could be useful please contact the Day Care Centre directly on 01622 674064, open Monday to Saturday. Thank you for your support. *Marie Quarman*

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

SOCIAL COMMITTEE This **Wednesday** at the usual time and venue.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS 2018 Applications have now closed. Preparations for those parents who have enrolled their children continue on **Fridays** at 4pm. Parents will be updated by email.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 7th JANUARY 2018
(Masses marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **The EPIPHANY of THE LORD** ✕

Sun 7th January	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Sister Sheila O'Hara RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Sacha and his family
Mon 8th	The BAPTISM of The LORD	7.00pm	✕ Mass: The Holy Souls
Tues 9th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Bishop Francis Walmsley RIP
Wed 10th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Peter Fraser RIP
Thu 11th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass: Gladys Jarvis RIP
Fri 12th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: For parishioners
Sat 13th	Our Lady	<i>5.00-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **SECOND SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (B)** ✕

Sun 14th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: For Titti and Family
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Michael Ashdowne RIP

CHURCHES TOGETHER Committee meeting at St Peter's, Tuesday **16th January**, 7.30pm. There is to be a service for Christian Unity at St Peter's at 3pm on **Sunday 21st January** (during the Church Unity Octave of Prayer) followed by refreshments in the hall. Parishioners are **urged to support** this event.

MOVEABLE FEASTS In 2017 the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales decreed that, with effect from the First Sunday of Advent 2017, the **Epiphany** is to be observed on **6th January**, except when it falls on a Saturday or a Monday, when it is to be observed on the Sunday (as is the case in 2018); the Ascension is to be observed on **Thursday**, 6th week of Easter Time. ✕ Thus in 2018 the following are Holy Days of Obligation: **Epiphany**, 7th January, **SS Peter and Paul**, Friday, 29th June, **Assumption**, Wednesday 15th August, **All Saints**, Thursday, 1st November, **Christmas**, Tuesday 25th December. ✕ **Ash Wednesday**, 14th February; **Palm Sunday**, 25th March; **Good Friday**, 30th March; **Easter Sunday**, 1st April; **Ascension Thursday**, 10th May; **Pentecost Sunday**, 30th May; **Trinity Sunday** 27th May; **Corpus Christi**, 3rd June; **Christ the King**, 25th November; **First Sunday of Advent**, 2nd December.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for January** – that Christians, and other religious minorities in Asian countries, may be able to practise their faith in full freedom.
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes especially Joan Hardings; for those who have died recently especially Gladys Jarvis and Bishop Francis Walmsley; 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 those affected by severe weather and other such disasters, both overseas and at home.**
- **Anniversaries this week (St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial):** ✕ Joseph Sanders, Lilian Roome, Thomas Power, Jane Kinsman, Robert Arnold, Bert Nutley, Peter Fraser, Herbert Walton, Peggy Cropper and Gillian Alcock. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£387.23** (Gift Aided, **£190.42**; weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank amount to **£158.00**). ♦ **Crib offerings** throughout the season will be shared 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.

PEACE ACTIONS for JANUARY 2018 • Sunday **14th January is Peace Sunday** when we celebrate the annual World Peace Day message of Pope Francis. Every school and parish is invited to explore the theme "**Migrants and Refugees.**" • At least once a year, Christians are reminded of Jesus' prayer for his disciples that "they may be one so that the world may believe" (see John 17.21). **The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from 18th-25th January.** • The theme for this year's **Holocaust Memorial Day commemorated on 27th January** is '**The power of words**'. Consider this this theme in the conversations you have and the blogs you write. Words can make a difference, both for good and evil. • **Family Fast Day** this Lent is on Fri-

day **23rd February**. *Match Funding* means that the government will double any donations to CAFOD, so please be sure to donate online or by using the envelopes provided between **13th February** and **12th May**.

St GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL CHOIR CD The choir of St George's Cathedral have produced a CD entitled: "O Sacrum Convivium - Music for the Mass", it features the cathedral's Boys' Choir, Girls' Choir, Choral Scholars and Lay Clerks. It costs £12 per CD plus p&p. The CDs can be ordered via the cathedral website or by emailing info@stgeorges.org.uk. Payment may be made via PayPal or cheque.