



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

FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT

2nd December 2018

FAITH IN FOCUS: STILL HOPEFUL Advent brings a familiar feeling. As it rings in the new Church year, it carries with it all the old echoes of encouragement and promise that Christians have celebrated over the centuries. The rhythm of the liturgy, the beautiful prayers, the favourite songs and hymns, the nearness of Christmas - all of these bring a sort of comfort and security for the worshipper. Yet as we celebrate again the mysteries of our faith and try to live them out in our lives, we are journeying towards the end of time.

Advent certainly challenges us. It warns us to stay awake, not to become complacent about our faith, to keep watch, to change our ways and to remain vigilant for the coming of Jesus. But Advent is also about patience. The word "patience" is about waiting, but oddly enough it's also about putting up with things, about waiting without grumbling, about being long-suffering and cheerful in our waiting. If we can recapture this sense of waiting, of joyful expectation, then we come close to the heart of Advent. It's not merely a passive waiting, like waiting for a bus, but an active trust-filled hope. So when we celebrate Advent we don't mark time, we increase our hope. Hope means trusting even when it seems that no progress is being made. It means hanging on to the promise of Jesus that he will come again. It means believing that our lives really do have a purpose and that the way we act towards each other really matters. For this reason the Church's very first Preface prayer for the new year speaks of this waiting, "hoping that the salvation promised us will be ours, when Christ our Lord will come again in his glory". This mature expectation is more than waiting; it is yearning. Advent stirs us to long for the promises of Jesus to be fulfilled. Not just a waiting in the mind but in the heart. No mere philosophy but a way of life. Thus, every day is an Advent day for the Christian. As the Advent season progresses, our hope is strengthened by the prophecies of scripture. We long for God finally to deliver us from all that keeps us from him. We know that our redemption is at hand. And each time we eat and drink the body and blood of the Lord in communion, we pledge ourselves to prepare a way for him as we wait in joyful hope. Our Christmas will be as happy as our Advent has been expectant. (Author unknown)



THE SEASON of ADVENT (From the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*) Advent has a twofold character, for it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, Advent is a period of devout and expectant delight. ♦ Advent reflections from the Diocesan Stewardship Team: <http://www.southwarkdsc.org.uk/>.

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 are now available.

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!**

PARISH MEETING Thank you to those who attended Benediction last Sunday along with the parish meeting that followed. We covered some very important topics that will affect the life of the parish as we go forward. Minutes of the meeting will be available soon.

GRAND CHRISTMAS DRAW Tickets are now on sale for our Christmas Draw, which will take place on **Sunday 23rd December** in St Peter's Hall after 10.30 Mass (see poster). All proceeds will go towards parish funds. Please join us for the draw and for mulled wine and mince pies on **23rd December**.

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

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

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 2nd DECEMBER 2018
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✧ **FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT (C)** ✧

Sun 2nd	Saturday	6.00pm	✧ Vigil Mass: Alan Flynn RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✧ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✧ Mass: Brother Michael McMullen RIP
		1.30pm	Baptism: Jamie Stafford
Mon 3rd	St Francis Xavier <i>Day of Prayer for Migrants</i>	7.00pm	✧ Mass: For Migrants
Tue 4th	Feria	10.00am	✧ Mass: William Tuffin RIP
Wed 5th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✧ Mass
Thu 6th	Feria	7.00am	✧ Mass
Fri 7th	St Ambrose	10.00am	✧ Mass
Sat 8th	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.	10.00am	✧ Mass
		<i>5-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✧ **SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT (C)** ✧

Sun 9th <i>Bible Sunday</i>	Saturday	6.00pm	✧ Vigil Mass: Peter Stevens RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✧ Mass: Pro Populo
			10.30am

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

COMING UP:

- **JUSTICE & PEACE:** meeting Tuesday **4th December**; also choir practice.
- **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION:** there will be an additional Mass this **Saturday** morning at St Peter's.
- **+ BIBLE SUNDAY**, Second Sunday of Advent, **8th and 9th December**. 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 that 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.
- **CAROLS on the [Bearsted] GREEN**, Wednesday **12th December**, 7.30pm.
- **BEARSTED CHORAL SOCIETY**, Saturday **15th December** at St Peter's, 7.30pm. See poster.
- **DEANERY PENANCE SERVICE**, Monday **17th December**, 7.30pm, St Francis', Maidstone.

FAMILY CELEBRATION in ANTICIPATION of CHRISTMAS Thursday **20th December**, 6pm at St Peter's. All ages are warmly invited 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.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **That the Lord will watch over migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and bring them safely to the place where they long to be. May we welcome them with joy and generosity while responding to their needs.**
- **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; in thanksgiving with Trish Royle who was received into the Church last Sunday; for Jamie, being baptized this Sunday and for his parents and godparents; 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):** ✧ Edward Roome, John Arbuthnot. ✧

Thank you for your offerings last week: **£335.36** (Gift Aided, **£149.50**; weekly standing orders paid direct into our bank, amount to **£158.00**). ♦ The collection for **Catholic Youth Services** amounted to **£188.29**. ♦ **Next week** there will be a retiring collection to help with the **cost of flowers and decorations at Christmas**.

CAFOD Do you want to change lives around the world and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas this year? If so there are some World Gifts catalogues which you can pick up at the back of the church for friends or family or even yourself. Gifts range from teaching someone to read or giving enough seeds to grow a year's worth of food.