



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

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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 ✘ 6th January 2019



FAITH IN FOCUS: NOT OVER YET All that preparation for Christmas and only ten days later it seems so far away. Gone are the Christmas adverts for food, drink and presents and we're all rushing to buy that last leather sofa on offer (hurry, sale must end next Monday!) or drooling at the adverts for our luxury cruise around the world, or maybe just the camping holiday... But the Church recognises Christmas as a season, not just a bank holiday. And we have two echoes of the Christmas event that keep it alive in our hearts and minds: Epiphany (today) and the Presentation of the Lord (in about a month's time).



The word epiphany is a most uncommon one. What it actually means is manifestation or showing. It recalls the day when the glory of God was made visible and accessible through the birth of the child Jesus. The wise men, coming from virtually the edges of the then-known world, represent the fact that the glory of God has been revealed to every corner of the globe: from the Great River to earth's bounds, as today's psalm tells us. Epiphany is about universalism. No one has a monopoly on God, and Christ did not come for some sort of elite group but for every single human being of all time. The three wise men came to do homage to Jesus because they felt he was special to them and to their people. Even people who have no evident outward religious expression often indicate that the simple message of Christmas is one that still appeals to the human heart. In fact, St Leo the Great was fond of saying that there can be no strangers at Christmas because God has graced us all, saints and sinners, with the gift of his own Son. But like every liturgy, Epiphany does not leave us simply looking at the past. It coaxes us to change and renewal in our daily life of faith and to make a difference to the future.

If we celebrate Epiphany as the making visible of God's gift of true humanity in the person of his Son, then we are also agreeing to be "epiphanies" ourselves, to be thankful people who never cease praising God for his many gifts and who show God's graceful presence in our world by the way we ourselves live. Christmas may have come and gone, but Epiphany reminds us that it's not over yet. We've a lot of showing to do.

(Author unknown)

CHRISTMAS The Church's liturgical celebration of Christmas (the Nativity of the Lord) continues this year until **next Sunday**, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Ordinary Time before Lent begins on **Monday 14th January**, the First Week in Ordinary Time, ferial cycle 1 (weekday readings at Mass), psalter week 1 (Divine Office). It lasts **7½ weeks** ☉ before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, **6th March**.

The PILGRIM See the report on last year's parish pilgrimage on p 11 of the diocesan newspaper.

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; the Ascension is to be observed on **Thursday**, 6th week of Easter Time. ✘ Thus in 2019 the following are Holy Days of Obligation: **Epiphany**, (Sunday) 6th January; **Ascension Thursday**, 30th May; **SS Peter and Paul**, Sunday 30th June; **Assumption**, Thursday 15th August; **All Saints**, Friday, 1st November; **Christmas**, Wednesday 25th December. ✘ **Ash Wednesday** is 6th March; **Palm Sunday**, 14th April; **Good Friday**, 19th April; **Easter Sunday**, 21st April; **Pentecost Sunday**, 9th June; **Trinity Sunday** 16th June; **Corpus Christi**, 23rd June; **Christ the King**, 24th November; **First Sunday of Advent** is 1st December.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 6th JANUARY 2019
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ The EPIPHANY of THE LORD ✕

Sun 6th January	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass
Mon 7th	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tue 8th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Peter Meekham RIP
Wed 9th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass
Thu 10th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Fri 11th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass
Sat 12th	Feria	<i>5-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ THE BAPTISM of THE LORD (C) ✕

Sun 13th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Peter Fraser RIP
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Michael Ashdowne RIP

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Applications have now closed. Preparations for those parents who have enrolled their children continue on **Friday 11th January** at 4pm. Parents will be updated by email.

COMING UP:

- **PEACE SUNDAY** *Good politics serves peace. 20th January.*
- **OCTAVE of PRAYER for CHRISTIAN UNITY 18-25th January:** This year we pray for unity amidst injustice and disunity related to divisions in our world. We think about Indonesia, where economic injustice and religious pluralism face challenges in the face of radicalization. ✕ There will be a united service at Bearsted Methodists on **Sunday 20th January** at 3pm.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **For the families who are rebuilding their lives** as a result of the floods, earthquakes and other natural disasters of 2018, that this coming year will be one of hope. May all those who find life a struggle discover new pathways and solutions to their difficulties
- **With the Holy Father for January** – May young people, especially in Latin America, follow the example of Mary and respond to the call of the Lord to communicate the joy of the Gospel to the world.
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes;** for those who have died recently especially Rita Baillie; 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):** ✕ Joseph Sanders, Lilian Roome, Thomas Power, Jane Kinsman, Robert Arnold, Kathleen Carter, Bert Nutley, Peter Fraser, Albert Murray, Herbert Walton and Peggy Cropper. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£299.91** (Gift Aided, **£175.60**; in addition, weekly standing orders paid direct into our bank, amount to **£158.00**). • The Advent Appeal netted **£120.00** • **Crib offerings** throughout the season will be donated to the Catholic Children's Society's *Southwark Crisis Fund*, which provides support to children and families of the archdiocese who are facing a crisis in their life.

MAIDSTONE DAY CARE CENTRE Donations of good used or new clothing for homeless men and women are needed. Toiletries would also be useful. Please bring to St Peter's in **January** and we will deliver any donations. Thank you.

GOOD COUNSEL NETWORK A request: "On Saturday **12th January**, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia in this country. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed, and it really does save lives. This is the day before the 22nd anniversary of the founding of the Good Counsel Network, for details of our live saving work see; www.GoodCounselNetwork.com". See poster.

PEACE ACTIONS for JANUARY

- Remember to pray for peace in the Middle East around Epiphany time.
- Mark **Peace Sunday on 20th January**. The theme is "**Good politics serves peace**".
- Make a visit to another Christian church in your area as part of your commitment to **Christian Unity Octave, (18th-25th January)**. The Christians of Indonesia prepared the resources for this year's celebration. They found this year's theme in the words of Deuteronomy, '**Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue...**' (see **Deut. 16:18-20**).
- Take time to learn about someone else's religion on '**World Religion Day**' (**17th January**).
- **Mark Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th January**. Resources are available from Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre (www.bethshalom.com).