

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 A

FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT

1st DECEMBER 2019

FAITH in FOCUS: THE HERE AND NOW Does Christmas seem to come round faster every year? Do you ever feel that the sand of time is running fast though your fingers and that life is passing you by?

The hardest thing about living our lives is finding time to live our lives! Our days are ruled by the clock. Few of us can wake up and choose what to do. Our time is dictated by routine and before we know it life has passed us by before we've had time to live it. The biggest theme of Advent is 'change' but in the busy run up to Christmas, changing the way we live our lives is probably the last thing on our minds. We are much more likely to be comparing prices of the latest iPhone!

Today we are given the biggest life changing piece of advice that we could ever have. Preparation! Preparation is essential whether we are setting out to buy a new washing machine or setting out to change the world. Without preparation we will end up wasting years of our time and missing all those heaven sent opportunities. We might not think that we have the time to live our lives any differently from the way we do now, but with the right kind of planning we can transform who we are and what we do and still manage to fit in the day job.

We hear a lot in the news of natural disasters around the world. Men women and children across the globe have lost their lives unexpectedly and prematurely. Death comes like a thief in the night, and so we must keep focussed and live in perpetual readiness. Jesus doesn't tell us this to frighten us but to encourage us to take responsibility for the here and now. *Chapel Bell*

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. ♦ **Do try to get to Mass during the week:** there is so much beauty in the readings of this season. For **Advent Reflections** visit the Diocesan Stewardship Team: <http://www.southwarkdsc.org.uk/>.

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 and the parish meeting that followed. Minutes of the meeting will be available.

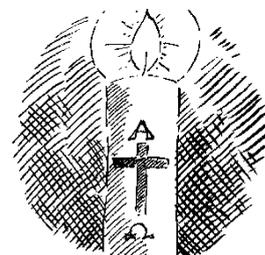
TRADCRAFT CHRISTMAS CARDS Please consider buying your Advent Calendars and Christmas Cards from our Traidcraft stall again this year (in conjunction with CAFOD). There is a large selection of cards available.

ADVENT APPEAL This year's Advent Appeal will be in aid of the Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter for the homeless. Envelopes for your donations are now available. Thank you.

THE END IS NIGH..! The last date for buying Christmas Quiz tickets is **this Sunday**. All proceeds will go to the Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter for the homeless. ♦ The last date for buying **GRAND CHRISTMAS DRAW** tickets and for returning your counterfoils and money is **next Sunday, 8th December**. There are a lot of tickets out there that have not been returned. This is our major annual fund-raising event for parish funds, so please let lan have them as soon as possible. There are major prizes to be won!

COMING SOON Following the meeting with just 10 parishioners last Sunday, we are thinking of reviving a previous custom of offering coffee after Mass at St Peter's on Friday mornings.

THURSDAY MORNING MASS As from the New Year, Mass on a Thursday morning will be discontinued. Apologies for any inconvenience.



DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 1st DECEMBER 2019
(Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)

✕ **FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT (A)** ✕

Sun 1st December	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Mass: Bridget Majdoub RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Fr Jim Kirby RIP
Mon 2nd	Feria	7.00pm	✕ Mass: Alan Flynn RIP
Tue 3rd	St Francis Xavier <i>Day of Prayer for Migrants</i>	10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls (followed by Adoration until 12noon)
Wed 4th	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Thu 5th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 6th	St Nicholas	10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Sat 7th	St Ambrose	<i>5-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ **SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT (A)** ✕
Bible Sunday

Sun 8th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Pro Populo
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls

FIRST COMMUNIONS The next session for the children will be on **Friday 10th January** at St Peter's.
PLEASE PRAY...

- **For the victims of the London Bridge terror attack:** for those who died, for the injured, and for those affected by the incident.
- **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:** for the future of the very young, that every country take the measures necessary to prioritize the future of the very young, especially those who are suffering.
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes;** for all those who have died recently; for all those whose anniversaries occur about now (see below); for all our relatives and friends and those who have asked for prayers.
- **Anniversaries (St Peter's Chapel memorial):** ✕ Patrick Morris, Barbara Huddy, Elizabeth Loughlin, Rose Brennan, Edward Roome, John Arbuthnot, Ellen Taylor and Frank Reilly. ✕

Thank you for your offerings last week to help run our parish: **£400.37** (of which, **£172.00** was **Gift Aided**; in addition, weekly standing orders paid direct into our bank amount to **£185.00**). ♦ The retiring collection for **Catholic Youth Work**, came to **£165.84**. ♦ **Next weekend** there will be a retiring collection to help with the cost of **flowers and decorations** at Christmas.

MEMORIAL CARDS Pick up a memorial card for Archbishop Emeritus Michael Bowen, who died last month. ✕ Also, a card to mark the installation of Most Reverend John Wilson as Archbishop of Southwark.

THE YEAR OF THE WORD In partnership with Bible Society, the Year of the Word focuses on celebrating, living and sharing God's word throughout the Catholic Church in England and Wales until the end of December 2020. Pick up a booklet 'The God who Speaks' for more information, or visit: <http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/>. ✕ **BIBLE SUNDAY**, next Sunday, the Second Sunday of Advent, 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.

SICK or in HOSPITAL? Do please let Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril know so that you get a visit. **They would rather know twice than not at all!**

COMING UP:

- **JUSTICE & PEACE:** meeting Tuesday **3rd December**.
- **FLOWER ARRANGERS:** Wednesday **4th December** (note change of date): final session at St Peter's, 7-9pm: preparing for Christmas.
- **FINANCE COMMITTEE:** after 7pm Mass, on Monday 9th December (transferred solemnity of The Immaculate Conception).
- **Bearsted Choral Society**, Saturday **14th December** at St Peter's, 7.30pm; see poster.
- **Carols on the [Bearsted] Green**, Wednesday **18th December**.
- **Family Carols**, 19th December. 6pm. at St Peter's.
- **Good Shepherd Coffee**, after Sunday Mass on 22nd December.