



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

Webmaster: webmaster@catholic-bearsted.org.uk

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 B

✠ FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT ✠

29th NOVEMBER 2020

BISHOPS WELCOME a RETURN to PUBLIC WORSHIP The government has confirmed that collective worship can resume in churches and other places of worship when the national lockdown expires on **2nd December**. This decision applies across all three tiers of COVID-19 restrictions in England. "As we move forward, it is incumbent on all who come to worship God in our churches to play their part in keeping themselves and others safe by following all of the guidance that has been prepared. Through our encounter with Christ in the Eucharist and other sacraments celebrated in the Church, the works of charity which have been expressed through Catholic charities and communities over the last nine months finds its source and goal." The Bishops have released a statement welcoming the return to public worship: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/bishops-welcome-return-to-public-worship/>. It is important that the routines of **cleanliness, stewarding** and **social distancing** to which we have become accustomed, and which have made our churches places of real covid security, be maintained. **Face coverings** should continue to be worn in churches, unless individuals are exempt. The maximum number of people allowed in church will be determined by its size, seating arrangements and the requirements for social distancing. Effectively this is a return to the covid-secure protocols that existed in our churches on 5th November. ♦ In addition, the government is conducting an open consultation, and would welcome submissions from Catholics. To take part please access <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-faith-engagement-review-call-for-evidence>. The closing date is **11th December**.

The Catholic Union with Catholic Voices are organizing a webinar on "how the government should engage with faith groups" on Wednesday at 7pm. Colin Bloom, the Faith Engagement Adviser at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, will present and promote the government consultation on the issue: <https://www.catholicvoices.org.uk/events/independent-faith-review>.

SATURDAY EVENING MASS At last, and at the start of a new Church Year, we feel the time is right to reintroduce the Saturday Vigil Mass, so from **5th December** we need volunteers to act as stewards and to sanitize the church after Mass. If you are able to help please give your details to Deacon Cyril as soon as possible. ✠ **Christmas Masses:** Attendance at these Masses will have to be booked in advance as more people than usual are likely to want to be present. Details will be available in next week's newsletter.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING Thank you to those who have contributed so generously to our 'food mountain' at St Peter's! Together with our friends from the Methodist Church we are collecting for a local food bank. In view of the current situation, we have decided to **extend the collection indefinitely**. If you see any offers (e.g. buy-one-get-one-free) of non-perishables when you do your shop please remember the needy in our area.

HEATING at St PETER'S Apparently it helps if the gas tap is in the 'on' position!

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 29th NOVEMBER 2020

✕ FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT (B) ✕

Sun 29th November	Sunday	10.30am	✕ Mass online: Pro Populo
Mon 30th	St Andrew	<i>No Mass scheduled</i>	
Tue 1st December	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass online: Teresa Carrier-Davies, unwell
		10.30am	Adoration, until 11.30am; church open
Wed 2nd	Feria	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass (with congregation): Francis Healey RIP
Thu 3rd	St Francis Xavier	<i>No Mass scheduled</i>	
Fri 4th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Graham Maslin RIP
Sat 5th	Feria	<i>5-5.30pm</i>	<i>Confessions</i>

✕ SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT (B) ✕

Sun 6th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Brigitta Hayward, unwell
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Gretl Bignell RIP
		11.30am	Baptism of Megan



LIGHTING the FIRST ADVENT CANDLE Advent is a season of waiting, expecting, and hoping. Beginning four Sundays before Christmas and ending on Christmas Eve, Advent helps us to prepare for the second coming of our Lord at the end of time, as well as the coming, or “advent” of the Christ child at Christmas. For hundreds of years

Christians have used an Advent wreath to inspire their hopes for the coming of Christ. There is no set meaning for the candles of the Advent wreath. Some wreaths use all white candles; others use three purple candles, one pink candle, and one white candle in the middle. The purple candles remind us of how serious and solemn God’s people have been in waiting for the Messiah. The pink signifies the joy of our waiting. The white is triumphant and celebrative because Christ is born.

ONLINE ADVENT CALENDARS Cafod has launched its annual online Advent Calendar. Each day gives us a reflection and a call to action. You can find this at <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Advent-calendar>. Archbishop Eamon Martin has launched a 2020 online Advent Calendar, which will go live on the first Sunday of Advent. You can find this at www.catholicbishops.ie. Now in its seventh year, the calendar offers resources for the parish, school and for families which can be accessed behind a virtual door each day during the season of Advent.

29th NOVEMBER: INTERNATIONAL DAY of SOLIDARITY for the PALESTINIAN PEOPLE Show solidarity with a gift that matters. This year consider showing solidarity with the Palestinian people with a gift that will support the people of Palestine. Zaytoun supports an olive tree planting project which is run by the **Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA)** which are based in Jenin. The PFTA supplies Zaytoun with fairly traded olive oil, za’atar, maftoul (Palestinian couscous), freekeh, and almonds. Consider making a donation of £20 which would pay for five, three year old olive tree saplings. 57,174 trees have been planted to date. Please help to plant more. To find out how visit www.zaytoun.org/plant_a_tree.html.

TRAIDCRAFT CHRISTMAS CARDS By choosing Traidcraft charity Christmas Cards you will directly contribute to the work of Traidcraft, CAFOD, SCIAF and Christian Aid to help support some of the world’s poorest communities. Order online at www.traidcraftshop.co.uk.

Bitesize

We must be willing to get rid of the life we’ve planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us.

Joseph Campbell US folklorist & expert on mythology (1904 - 1987)



St FRANCIS XAVIER, DAY for MIGRANTS and REFUGEES, 3rd December On this day the Church commemorates St Francis Xavier. This is the day chosen by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People to mark World Migration Day.

To do:- Consider ways to overcome language barriers and make immigrants feel more at home in our parishes.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION *For those at home. Prayer of St Alphonsus*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for December:** *that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.* (The Pope Video in support of this intention will be released on 3rd or 4th December: <https://thepopevideo.org/>.)
- **For scientists developing vaccines** *to control and eliminate coronavirus; and in thanksgiving that our churches are to open again for public Masses from **this Wednesday**.*
- **For those who have asked prayers;** *for the sick, especially Joanne Usher, Jean, Conchita, Brigitta, Theresa and Natasha; for those who have died recently; and for all those troubled in heart, mind and body.*
- **Anniversaries** *(St Peter's Chapel memorial):* ✠ Sue Hepper, Irena Harrison, Nora Walton, John Arbuthnot, Patrick Morris, Barbara Harding, Elizabeth Loughlin, Rose Brennan, Ellen Taylor and Frank Reilly. ✠

STANDING ORDER / BANK TRANSFER If you would like to donate to the parish by BACS bank transfer or standing order the details are:

Account name:	CATHOLIC SOUTHWARK ST PETERS
Bank:	NatWest
Account number:	03138925
Sort code:	51-70-55
IBAN (for international transfers):	GB22 NWBK 5170 5503 1389 25

Please include a hint in the transfer "reference" so it's easy to know what your donation is for (e.g. Mass offering, weekly collection). • The diocese has also set up a JustGiving page which may be helpful: www.justgiving.com/campaign/parishsupport.

PARISH CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2020 Our Christmas Appeal this year will be for the Salvation Army to support them in their work to provide food for families in need, a Christmas gift for deprived children, a Christmas meal for lonely older people and help for the homeless. As you know, we have not been able to raise contributions through raffles and social events, as we normally do, so this year we have set up a 'Just Giving' page in the name of 'St Peter and Good Shepherd, Bearsted and Harrietsham' and are asking you, please, to make a donation in this way. The easiest way to make your donation is by accessing our 'Just Giving' page through the link on the Parish web-site. If you do not have a computer or would prefer to pay by cash, you can put your donation in an envelope clearly marked 'Christmas Appeal 2020' through the presbytery letter-box. Our target is to raise £500 by Sunday 13th December, when the appeal will close. At the time of writing we are delighted to tell you that we have raised **£285**, which is 56% of our target. Every little helps, so please give something, however small, if you can, to help families, children, old people and the homeless, who may be suffering more than ever this Christmas-time as a result of the pandemic. Thank you!

LOOKING AHEAD This Christmas will be different for all our parishioners, so to bring our community together it has been suggested that our newsletter feature an additional page for Christmas greetings. Parishioners who want to send a greeting to their friends and acquaintances within the parish are asked to send an email to David Combes (the webmaster: webmaster@catholic-bearsted.org.uk), who will then include it on the Greetings page. You are asked not to identify the recipients just put your name and message (to avoid data being compromised).