

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON
The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

Lk 2:16

COLLECT
O God, who were pleased to give us
the shining example of the Holy Family,
graciously grant that we may imitate them
in practising the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity,
and so, in the joy of your house,
delight one day in eternal rewards.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
Amen.

FIRST READING
A reading from the Book of Sirach. Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14

The Lord honoured the father above the children, and he confirmed the judgement of the mother over her sons.
Whoever honours his father atones for sins, and whoever glorifies his mother is like one who lays up treasure. Whoever honours his father will be gladdened by his own children, and when he prays he will be heard. Whoever glorifies his father will have long life, and whoever obeys the Lord will refresh his mother.

O son, help your father in his old age and do not grieve him as long as he lives; even if he is lacking in understanding, show indulgence; in all your strength do not despise him. For kindness to a father will not be forgotten, and against your sins it will be credited to you.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 128(127):1-2. 3. 4-5. R.cf. 1
R. Blessed are all who fear the LORD, and walk in his ways.

Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be blessed and prosper.

R.

Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive
around your table.

R.

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the husband who fears the LORD.
May the LORD bless you from Zion.
May you see Jerusalem prosper
all the days of your life!

R.

SECOND READING
A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians. Colossians 3:12-21

Brothers and sisters: Put on, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to

God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.
Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL
Alleluia, alleluia. Colossians 3:15a, 16a
Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts;
let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23
The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

When the Magi had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ‘Out of Egypt I called my son.’

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ‘Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.’ And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS
We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation,
humbly asking that,
through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God and Saint Joseph,
you may establish our families firmly in your grace and your peace.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON Bar 3:38
Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

Prayer after Communion
Bring those you refresh with this heavenly Sacrament,
most merciful Father,
to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family,
so that, after the trials of this world,
we may share their company for ever.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Our Faith on Sunday

GOSPEL REFLECTION



In today’s gospel reading we see the Holy Family fleeing to Egypt to escape persecution. Unfortunately, it is a scene that has been repeated throughout

human history. Even today, for one reason or another in all parts of the globe families have to leave their native soil and seek refuge in a foreign land. For those of us who live comfortable lives Christmas is often a time of family and friends, warm fires and presents, tables overflowing with food and drink. Of course, the birth of Jesus is a time for celebration, but we can be sure that the stable which housed the Holy Family was a far cry from such abundance. And on their flight to Egypt what could they have taken except the bare essentials? This too is Christmas and it is the reality for all those who find themselves in refugee camps, homeless and abandoned, taking shelter from missiles in an underground basement. A secularised Christmas is not just about collective amnesia regarding what took place in Bethlehem two

thousand years ago. It is also the largely unintended consequences of our increasingly hedonistic culture: a massive desensitisation towards those who find themselves at the mercy of war and famine, poverty and disease. As we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family let’s keep in mind why Jesus came among us: to makes us all brothers and sisters, children of the one Father in heaven. It was this vision which inspired the first Christian community where everything was shared and no one was in need (Acts 4, 32-35).



POPE FRANCIS’ ENCYCLICAL
FRATELLI TUTTI
BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL

THE DEATH PENALTY

264. In the New Testament, while individuals are asked not to take justice into their own hands (cf. Rom 12:17.19), there is also a recognition of the need for authorities to impose penalties on evildoers (cf. Rom 13:4; 1 Pet 2:14). Indeed, “civic life, structured around an organized community, needs rules of coexistence, the wilful violation of which demands appropriate redress”.²⁴⁹ This means that legitimate public authority can and must “inflict punishments according to the seriousness of the crimes”²⁵⁰ and that judicial power be guaranteed a “necessary independence in the realm of law”.²⁵¹

249. Address to Delegates of the International Association of Penal Law (23 October 2014): AAS 106 (2014), 840.
250. PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 402.
251. SAINT JOHN PAUL II, Address to the National Association of Magistrates (31 March 2000), 4: AAS 92 (2000), 633.

Pope Francis’ Encyclical Letter DILEXIT NOS

The Christian message is attractive when experienced and expressed in its totality: not simply as a refuge for pious thoughts or an occasion for impressive ceremonies. What kind of worship would we give to Christ if we were to rest content with an individual relationship with him and show no interest in relieving the sufferings of others or helping them to live a better life? Would it please the heart that so loved us, if we were to bask in a private religious experience while ignoring its implications for the society in which we live? Let us be honest and accept the word of God in its fullness. On the other hand, our work as Christians for the betterment of society should not obscure its religious inspiration, for that, in the end, would be to seek less for our brothers and sisters than what God desires to give them.

PARISH COMMUNITIES OF



ST GEORGE

Eastbourne Road
Polegate



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(Answerphone service available)

Email: hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk

Website: www.saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk

The Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No. 252878

ST WILFRID

South Road
Hailsham



WEEKLY SERVICES

The Holy Family

Sat	27th	10am	St Wilfrid's —	Open for Adoration and Confessions
Sun	28th	9am	St George's —	Holy Souls' Intention
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's —	Parish Communities' Intention
Mon	29th	2.30pm	St George's —	Rosary Group - All Welcome
Tues	30th	10am	St George's -	
Wed	31st	10am	St Wilfrid's —	
Thurs	1st	10am	St George's —	Mary, Mother of God
Fri	2nd	10am	St Wilfrid's —	

Second Sunday of Christmas

(Tuesday is the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord)

Sat	3rd	10am	St Wilfrid's—	Open for Adoration and Confessions
Sun	4th	9am	St George's —	Parish Communities' Intention
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's —	

Confession on request before and after Mass or at other times by arrangement with Father Rory.

Unable to attend mass? The 10.30am St Wilfrid's mass is livestreamed when possible and can be accessed via the Parish Website or via the following: <https://saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk/online-masses-and-recordings/>

Facebook: https://m.facebook.com/gary.westcar#_=_

Newsletter items: Please send to Jackie at hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk, tel.841504
or by hand marked NEWSLETTER, to Fr. Rory's House by 9am Wednesday.

Local Catholic Education Contacts: St Thomas a Becket Nursery School: Tel 01323 725977

St Thomas a Becket Primary School: Tel 01323 737221 St Richard's Catholic College, Bexhill: Tel 01424 731070

USEFUL PARISH INFORMATION

St Wilfrid's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 832577

St George's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 487212

St George's & St. Wilfrid's

Finance Committee Treasurer Monika Beaver

Chairperson of the Finance Committee Gerry Palmer

ALL CORRESPONDENCE VIA THE PRIEST'S HOUSE PLEASE

Polegate Hall Hire (01323) 504753

Hailsham Hall Hire: (01323) 841504/Email at above address

Make your offertory donations go further! By simply signing up to the Gift Aid scheme, we can claim back an extra **25p** on every £1 you donate – **at no extra cost to you.** To join, contact Gerry today: pfc.hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Reps:

St George's: Maria - 07873759962

St Wilfrid's: Maria - 07873759962

CROSSLINK CHURCHES TOGETHER, HAILSHAM: Volunteer needed contact Father Rory

Churches Together in Polegate/Willingdon/Hampden Park/Hydneye Contact: Anne Bowe Tel: 07808 175455

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS those who are unwell & those named in the books in our churches

Amy Jenkins, Lily May, Joshua Hardy, Peter & Teresa Zurenkas, Anne Holt, Margaret, Rosie Tuson, Lilian Summers, Sue Nye, Tom Woodrow-Spencer, Laurey Stimpson, Nicole McCutchan, Nellie Oakshott, Jean Molloy, Alan Smith, Julie Martin, Holly Leone, Deborah Osbourne Walker, Gill Standen, Letty Booth, Thomas Pailey, Thomas Guy, Michael O'Regan, Richard Streeter, Patricia Delaney, Graham, Pamela Swanston, Jean & Chris Littlewood, Jean Skelton, Jennifer, Peter Mitchell, Cecilia Hyland, Madeleine Waters, Andrew, Gerry Page and Steph Simons RIP.

Warm Welcome! We're glad to have you at Mass, especially visitors.

New to the parish or looking to reconnect? Fill out a welcome form in the porch or speak to Fr. Rory - we'd love to meet you and help in any way!

Deacon John Writes:

God sent Jesus from Heaven to earth to give us human beings what we really need most in life: hearts filled with love. That is the gift which Jesus really wants from us, and that is what you and I really need from God this Christmas – a **heart filled with love**. That is what we all need, and Yes, God really does want to give each one of us a heart filled with love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness on this Christmas and every day of our lives.

Fr Rory, Deacon John and Tessa wish you all a happy and holy Christmas.

With all our love and blessings.

Deacon John and Fr Rory

Deacon John

Fr Rory

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year

The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The love of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit be with you throughout our New Year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the parish who gives up their time to volunteer and help our parish community to function and prosper.

Acknowledging Bishop Richard's message to us, and availing of this opportunity to promise to keep him in our prayers and support:-

"It has been a real privilege for me to serve you all during these last ten years and I shall be sad to leave the Diocese. May I thank you for all the support, patience and understanding you have shown to me over these years as we have journeyed together.

I know I can rely on your prayers as I prepare for new responsibilities and I assure you of my prayers for all that you do in the service of the Church in the Mission that the Lord has entrusted to us all."

Safeguarding Training: **Date:** Thursday 29th January 2026, **Time:** 17:45 - 20:00, **Location:** Our Lady of Ransom Hall (BN21 4EU).
Target audience: Catechists and other church volunteers (e.g. SVP, Eucharistic Ministers) requiring Level 3 Safeguarding (first training OR refresher training) for their roles with Children AND/OR Vulnerable Adults.
Please Note: The actual training will start at 18:00, people should attend for registration 15 minutes ahead of the start time.
In order that we can keep a central log and an idea of numbers, please respond directly to me, Alison Parsons sg1.eastbourneolor@abdiocese.org.uk, if you wish to attend. Thank you.

Christmas Collection: As I am sure many of you are aware, Catholic Priests do not receive a salary and rely on your generosity at Christmas and Easter as a thank you for all they do for us. It is also possible to claim gift aid on your donation if you are a UK taxpayer and that extra 25% will go directly to Father Rory. If you aren't part of a planned giving scheme then please use the "one off" gift aid envelopes located in the porch. You can also contribute via the digital collection plate at St Wilfrid's or via the QR code or donations website link (<https://donate.mydona.com/st-wilfrids-churchhailsham>) using the "Christmas Collections" tab.



New Years Day Mass - St George's Church - 10am
Epiphany of the Lord - Tuesday 6th January
Mass at St Wilfrid's Church - 10am
Requiem Mass for Christina Neyenhuizen - St George's, 11am

Thank you for all the lovely gifts and cards, they are very much appreciated. Wishing everyone a very Happy New Year. Jackie x

Baptismal programmes for St George's and St Wilfrid's will run at various times during 2026. Please enquire through the parish office on 01323 841504 or email hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk

The January edition of the Eastbourne St Leonards Parish Monthly Newsletter is now available. Please pick up a copy from the porch if you haven't already done so. It can also be accessed online through the new parish website;
[Catholic Parish of Eastbourne & St Leonards Website](#)

Dates for your Diary:

Sun 11th Jan, After Mass - St G's Quarterly Community Mtg, St G's
Thurs 29th Jan, 2-4pm - Over 50's Club, St W's Hall.
Fri 30th Jan, 11-12pm - Parish Bereavement Group, St W's Hall.
Sun 25th Jan, 10am - Community Charity Breakfast, St G's Hall.

St George's quarterly community meeting: We have decided to hold these on the second Sunday of the month instead of the first. 2026 meetings will therefore be after mass on Sunday: January 11th; April 12th; July 12th; and October 11th.

Sunday 21st December - Mass Attendance:
St Wilfrid's 91 St George's 86