

ENTRANCE ANTIphon

When a profound silence covered all things and night was in the middle of its course, your all-powerful Word, O Lord, bounded from heaven's royal throne.

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God, splendour of faithful souls, graciously be pleased to fill the world with your glory, and show yourself to all peoples by the radiance of your light. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Sirach. Sirach 24:1-2, 8-12

Wisdom will praise herself and will boast in the midst of her people. In the assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth, and in the presence of his forces she will boast: 'Then the Creator of all things commanded me, and the one who created me gave my tent a resting place. And he said, "Make your dwelling in Jacob and in Israel receive your inheritance." From eternity, in the beginning, he created me, and for eternity I shall not cease to exist. In the holy tabernacle I ministered before him, and so I was established in Sion. In the beloved city likewise he gave me a resting place, and in Jerusalem was my dominion. So I took root in an honoured people, in the portion of the Lord, his inheritance.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 147:12-13. 14-15. 19-20. R. John 1:14

R. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

*or:***Alleluia.**

O Jerusalem, glorify the LORD! O Sion, praise your God! He has strengthened the bars of your gates; he has blessed your children within you.

He established peace on your borders; he gives you your fill of finest wheat. He sends out his word to the earth, and swiftly runs his command.

He reveals his word to Jacob; to Israel, his decrees and judgements. He has not dealt thus with other nations; he has not taught them his judgements.

SECOND READING

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-18

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give

Wis 18: 14-15

you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL

Alleluia, alleluia. Cf. 1 Timothy 3:16
Glory to you, O Christ, proclaimed among the nations.
Glory to you, O Christ, believed in throughout the world.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John bore witness about him, and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me."

R. For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only begotten God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

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

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Sanctify, O Lord, the offerings we make on the Nativity of your Only Begotten Son, for by it you show us the way of truth and promise the life of the heavenly Kingdom. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIphon

Cf. Jn 1: 12

To all who would accept him, he gave the power to become children of God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

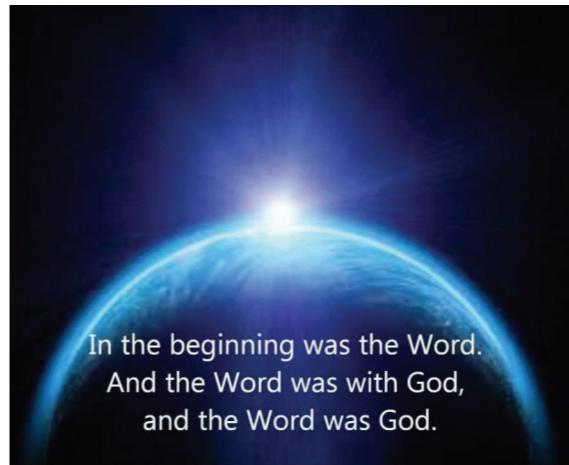
Lord our God, we humbly ask you, that, through the working of this mystery, our offences may be cleansed and our just desires fulfilled. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

4TH JANUARY 2026

Our Faith on Sunday

GOSPEL REFLECTION



In the beginning was the Word.
And the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

Among the many claims of Christianity which takes our breath away is the astounding affirmation we find in the opening of John's gospel: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1,14). How could God become man? loves us so much that in the words of St Paul he "emptied himself" (Phil. 2,7) and became "sin" (2 Cor 5,21). St. Athanasius writes that "God became man so that man might become God". Jesus came on earth with a return ticket to the



Pope Francis'
Encyclical Letter
DILEXIT NOS

THE DEATH PENALTY

265. From the earliest centuries of the Church, some were clearly opposed to capital punishment. Lactantius, for example, held that "there ought to be no exception at all; that it is always unlawful to put a man to death".²⁵² Pope Nicholas I urged that efforts be made "to free from the punishment of death not only each of the innocent, but all the guilty as well".²⁵³ During the trial of the murderers of two priests, Saint Augustine asked the judge not to take the life of the assassins with this argument: "We do not object to your depriving these wicked men of the freedom to commit further crimes. Our desire is rather that justice be satisfied without the taking of their lives or the maiming of their bodies in any part. And, at the same time, that by the coercive measures provided by the law, they be turned from their irrational fury to the calmness of men of sound mind, and from their evil deeds to some useful employment. This too is considered a condemnation, but who does not see that, when savage violence is restrained and remedies meant to produce repentance are provided, it should be considered a benefit rather than a mere punitive measure... Do not let the atrocity of their sins feed a desire for vengeance, but desire instead to heal the wounds which those deeds have inflicted on their souls".²⁵⁴

²⁵² Divinæ Institutiones VI, 20, 17: PL 6, 708.²⁵³ Epistola 97 (Responsa ad consulta Bulgorum), 25: PL 119, 991. "ipsi (Christo) non solum innoxios quosque, verum etiam et noxiós a mortis exitio satagite cunctos erucere..."²⁵⁴ Epistola ad Marcellinum 133, 1: PL 33, 509.

Christ asks you never to be ashamed to tell others, with all due discretion and respect, about your friendship with him. He asks that you dare to tell others how good and beautiful it is that you found him. "Everyone who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven" (Mt 10:32). For a heart that loves, this is not a duty but an irrepressible need: "Woe to me if I do not proclaim the Gospel!" (1 Cor 9:16). "Within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot" (Jer 20:9). In communion of service.

We should not think of this mission of sharing Christ as something only between Jesus and me. Mission is experienced in fellowship with our communities and with the whole Church. If we turn aside from the community, we will be turning aside from Jesus. If we turn our back on the community, our friendship with Jesus will grow cold. This is a fact, and we must never forget it. Love for the brothers and sisters of our communities – religious, parochial, diocesan and others is a kind of fuel that feeds our friendship with Jesus. Our acts of love for our brothers and sisters in community may well be the best and, at times, the only way that we can witness to others our love for Jesus Christ. He himself said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35).

PARISH COMMUNITIES OF



ST GEORGE



Eastbourne Road
Polegate

Parish Priest: Fr. Rory Kelly
South Road, Hailsham, East Sussex BN27 3JG
Tel: (01323) 841504
(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

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 —	Jim Ayres RIP
Mon	5th	2.30pm	St George's —	Rosary Group - All Welcome
Tues	6th	10am	St Wilfrid's -	The Epiphany of the Lord
		11am	St George's -	Requiem Mass for Christina Neyenhuizen
Wed	7th	9am	St Wilfrid's —	Margaret Madams RIP
Thurs	8th	10am	St George's —	James Lissenburg RIP
Fri	9th	10am	St Wilfrid's —	Fr Rory's Intention
				The Baptism of the Lord
Sat	10th	10am	St Wilfrid's —	Open for Adoration and Confessions
Sun	11th	9am	St George's —	Christina Neyenhuizen RIP
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's —	Parish Communities' Intention

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 and Gerry Page.

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!

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.

Please God, we will be in a good position to respond to the challenges with the change of Bishop, we will have to adapt and continue to develop the diocesan structure.



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.eastbourne@abdiocese.org.uk, if you wish to attend. Thank you.

New & nearly new items needed - the St George's table sale that raises funds for the charity of the month and youth activities is in need of new items for sale. Please consider donating anything suitable. Just leave in a bag at the back of either church marked St G table sale. Both churches would also welcome any unwanted gifts that are suitable as raffle prizes for fundraising purposes at social events in 2026.

The Parish Rosary Group meets every Monday at 2.30pm in St G's Hall (not bank holidays). Everyone is welcome to join as a regular or occasional member to Pray the Rosary a most wonderful devotion together.

Parish Over 50's Afternoon Tea & Games: We next meet on Thurs 29th Jan, 2-4pm. Anyone over 50 is welcome to join our merry group, just turn up on the day. All welcome.

Mary's Meals is looking for volunteers. Could you spare a few hours during the year to help? We are looking for parish reps, volunteer speakers (training and support provided!) and volunteers who can help at events. We are very much a volunteer-led movement, so any little you can offer will make a huge difference to the children we serve in some of the world's poorest communities. Please contact Roy Peachey (roy.peachey@marysmeals.org or 07593 447297) if you can help. To find out more about Mary's Meals, please visit marysmeals.org.uk. Thank you for your support!

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

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.

Community Charity Breakfast: Our next Charity Breakfast will be Sunday 25th January after mass at St George's when we will be supporting "Warming Up the Homeless". We hope you, your family and friends can support this.

The Catholic Women's League West Hub meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.00pm in Christ the King Parish Hall. All ladies are warmly invited to join us!

Exploring the vocation to teaching in our diocesan schools – online event -Tuesday 13 January – 5.30pm to 6.30pm

If you are interested in hearing more about the vocation to teaching and what teaching in a Catholic school involves, Dave Legrand, Diocesan Secondary RE Advisor, will be running this online information event. This event would be suitable for anyone considering a career change or simply interested in finding out more about the role of teachers in our Catholic schools for any age group or for any subject specialism. To book a place, please use the link: abdiocese.churchsuite.com/events/vqrcnwzj

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](http://Catholic%20Parish%20of%20Eastbourne%20&%20St%20Leonards%20Website)

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.

Christmas Eve - St Wilfrid's - 166

Christmas Day - St George's - 87

Sunday 28th December - Mass Attendance:

St Wilfrid's 76 St George's 80