



ADVENT: THE REAL

MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

Word of the Week

LUKE 2: 1-15

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields near by, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'

Suddenly a great company of heavenly hosts appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

God of light and life,
let the anticipation of your birth fill us
with overflowing joy.

May our excitement and hope be a
sign to the world that you are the real
meaning of Christmas

Amen.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...

The third Sunday of Advent (Sunday 16th Dec) is known as Gaudete Sunday, meaning rejoice or joy Sunday and the pink candle is lit on the Advent wreath this week.

But what actually is joy? What does it mean to truly be joyful?

Joy is much deeper and different to happiness. Happiness is external. It's based on situations, events, people, places, things, and thoughts. It is dependent on outside situations, people or events to align with our expectations so that the end result is our own happiness. Joy, on the other hand, is internal. Joy is not affected by changing emotions, circumstances or external forces. Joy comes from making peace with who we are, where we are, and why we are.

So think for a moment...We live in a material world, in which we try to find material pleasures, and this is especially obvious in the run up to Christmas. Such pleasures can give us thrills and make us feel very satisfied-for a time. But such things don't bring joy. Real joy, a kind of glow inside, is not achieved through having or possessing things. Joy, at its fullest, is not found in the material world- outside us- but experienced in places within us.

We can create joy by accepting and appreciating ourselves more. We can live with joy by experiencing more, celebrating more often and daring to love ourselves and others.

Each and everyday there are opportunities to discover real joy.

What do you need to do to find joy?

SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT...

Again, like last week, I invite you to talk to God, rather than the person next to you. We talk to God like we would a friend, sharing our joys and sorrows and asking for help or advice.

We do this in a time of silence.

WHATS ON THIS WEEK...?

On Monday our pupils and Performing Arts teachers will be singing and playing to our partner primary schools.

On Thursday we have Enrichment Day and Christmas dinner.

On Friday morning we have our Christmas Assemblies before going home for Christmas at 12:35pm.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!!

SOMETHING TO DO...

What is the real meaning of Christmas for you?

In a moment of quiet reflection complete the sentence:

"To me Christmas means/is..."

Feel free share these out loud as a class.