

The Choice

A few weeks ago, one of the year 8's asked me a brilliant question, "Miss, what if Mary had said no to the angel and refused to become Jesus' mum. What would have happened then?"

Indeed! What would have happened? Would the angel have gone to speak to another woman and invited her to be part of God's plan? What if Joseph hadn't believed the dream that God sent to him and divorced Mary anyway? Would Jesus have been raised by a single mum or would Mary have been stoned to death (as was legal for "unfaithful" women at the time) If either or both of them had said 'no' to God, would we even have the faith we know of as Christianity today?

There is of course no answer to this because, thankfully, both Mary and Joseph said yes and so all of our lives and our faith was changed forever. But this is an important reminder that they had the power to *choose* how to respond to God and we also have the same choice. We are of course highly unlikely to see an angel show up in our front room with the news Mary received, but we still have a choice about whether to follow God (or not) whether to practice our faith (or not) whether to invite God to be a part of our lives (or not).

I wonder what choice you have made over this past year and what choice you might make for this coming year? Remember, we can always make new choices if our previous ones are no longer fit for purpose. Wishing you all a gentle Christmas and holiday period.

Rev'd Charlotte

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

God our Father, help us to remember that we all have a choice about whether to follow your plan for our lives or not. Help us to be inspired by the example of Mary and Joseph and have the courage to follow you. Amen.