



# Fourth Sunday of Advent

## Matthew 1: 18-24

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall call his name Emmanuel" – which means, God with us.  
When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife.

## Some things to think about...

- Mary showed a lot of faith in God by accepting God's plans for her. Her strong belief and trust in God, among other qualities, made her the most special person to carry the Son of God.
- What can we learn from Mary's example?
- This reading shows that Joseph accepted Mary and Jesus as his family. He had an important role as the father of Jesus, because he said yes to God's plan.
- How do you say "yes" to God in your own life?

## Activity

Materials needed:

- Printed nativity worksheets
- Colouring pencils/pens

Colour in the picture of Mary and Joseph. In the space around Mary and Joseph, write their personality traits e.g. strong faith, kind, selfless etc.

Keep the prayer underneath to say at home or in your Mini Vinnie meeting.

## Teacher's Notes

This Gospel reading shows us that Joseph and Mary both chose to be parents to Jesus and say "yes" to God. Joseph was unsure at first, but an angel appeared to him in a dream and told him not to be afraid to marry her, because the baby was conceived by the Holy Spirit. The angel instructed Joseph to name the baby Jesus, and Joseph obeyed God by accepting Mary as his wife and raising Jesus as his son.

Mary showed amazing courage when she accepted a pregnancy when she was not married, knowing her situation would be looked down upon by many people in her community.

Mary was given a very important job, because God knew that she was capable and faith filled.

Encourage students to talk about how Mary and Joseph might have been feeling when they heard God's plan, and how in our school we are often asked to do things because our teachers believe we are capable of it.



Lord,  
Help us to grow in faith and put our trust in you, like Mary and Joseph did. May we live out  
our faith bravely, knowing that you are there for us.  
Amen.