

**Thought for the Week**  
**22nd December 2019**  
**4th Sunday in Advent**

The Gospel for this weekend recounts the birth of Jesus from the perspective of St Joseph.

Joseph is seen to be a man of honour and kindness in planning to spare Mary the public humiliation a divorce brings. We learn too that Joseph is a man of God and is ready to do His will, despite the distress he feels at the situation.

Joseph's heart is open to the message of the angel in his dream and, recognising God's work in Mary, he decides not to divorce her, but to take her home as his wife.

Joseph displays complete trust in God and takes radical action, going beyond the tradition and law set down by his ancestors.

To have complete trust in God and to recognise His will is something I pray about a lot and am trying to practise. However, it is not easy in this world where the expectation is often that we are in control of our own destiny. It can be daunting to step out of our comfortable, tried and tested routine. We all have our own ways of coping with everyday life, as well as times of stress and trouble. Opening our hearts and minds to God's will could lead to radical action that results in wonderful change - even transformation. This change may simply be in our personal lives, where a small gesture on our part can have a reverberating impact on the life of another.

A kind word, an extra donation, a helping hand when someone needs it could make a difference as to how they feel about themselves and their place in the world.

Let us all think about, and ask God's help to bring about transformation for those who are seeking a change in their lives. The love of God can change the world dramatically.

Wishing everyone the peace and joy of Christmas, Mary