

fourth SUNDAY OF ADVENT

■ LIGHT THE ADVENT WREATH

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ... Come Lord Jesus, be our light! Help us to trust in you, as Joseph trusted in God.

■ READ THE GOSPEL for the Fourth Sunday of Advent (Cycle A) Matthew 1:18-24

“When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him ...”

■ REFLECT WITH A STORY

Joseph and Mary were engaged to be married when Joseph found out that Mary was going to have a baby. After hearing this news, Joseph decided to call off the marriage. But an angel appeared to him in a dream and told him to stay with Mary and take care of her. The angel said the baby was God’s son and should be named Jesus.

This was not at all what Joseph had planned! The angel’s message was so unusual, and would require so much from him, that it would have been easier for Joseph to pretend he didn’t hear it. Instead, he trusted God and did what the angel asked, even though it would change his life.

Like Joseph, a group of Dominican sisters in India had to change their plans in order to respond to God’s call. They arrived in India in 1954, intent on opening a new hospital. But at that time, many men were losing their factory jobs, which meant that many women were looking for work so they could take care of their families. The Dominican sisters saw this, and instead of founding a hospital, they started St. Mary’s, a sewing and embroidery center, where women could come and work, and be a part of a supportive community.

Because these nuns trusted in God’s plan rather than sticking to their own, they were able to help Keechi, an Indian woman whose husband and older daughter had passed away. With the money she makes through sewing and embroidery, she is able to send her daughter, Reena, to school.

The Dominican sisters’ example invites us to consider how God may be calling us—like he called Joseph—to trust in him enough to do things we wouldn’t have necessarily planned for ourselves.



Photo courtesy of SERRV

PRAY

Father God, we ask that, like Joseph, we will trust in you and do your will, even when it isn’t what we would have planned for ourselves. Amen

REFLECT

How is God calling you to trust in him?

ACT

This week, practice this simple prayer each night before bed: “Jesus I trust in you.”

GIVE

Help people like Keechi work in a safe place and provide for their families by purchasing items they’ve crafted, like accessories and gifts. Visit ethicaltrade.crs.org.