

# The Word of Youth

3GY Publication

January 2014

Suggested donation: £0.90

*We are a people of light, and during Advent we were called to follow the signs of hope*



## God's gift was brighter than the brightest gold

'Signs of the Times' has been the 3GY theme last term. It's been a term of trips to Time Capsule, Glasgow's Christmas ice skating, Christmas parties and many other seasonal celebrations. It's not all been tinsel and mince pies; we've also been encouraging youth group members to discuss some of the cultural trends that characterise our world. During the recent Advent retreat the youth group explored the concept of 'being awake' in scripture and the need to be completely aware of the dangers posed by cultural and moral relativism. The gloomy part over, young people were then encouraged to remain open to progress and to remember the human goodness and love that they were born

with. The birth of hope and the Incarnation bring fullness of life. Ultimately, our young people can stand up and proclaim: 'that we are a people of light, and during Advent we follow the signs of hope.'

During this Advent 3GY have taken the Magi as their example. The Magi were seekers of knowledge, open to progress, and thirsting to know more about the world. In their curiosity they were not naive but prudent and aware of the blindness of the world. The Magi saw through Herod's plans and chose to continue following the star to Jesus. Arriving at the place where he was born they brought what worldly gifts they could; they gave what they had, and deep in their hearts knew that all

of their knowledge and riches were not important. In that moment they saw the hope of the world shine brighter than any gold. How does the tale end? They go home, avoiding Herod, filled with hope for the future: A future where the birth of a baby changes the world.

It is important that as a community we follow the example of the Magi. It is essential to the development of our young peoples' identity and consciousness that we highlight the tendency of the world to imprint it's - often mistaken - priorities on us. If we don't realise that obsession with control, possession and consumerism are an ever present danger, then we will lose focus on our humanity; our

loving nature and the promise of a better world founded on hope, justice, peace, and a true God given identity. The nativity helps us throw away what isn't important and remember what is. Jesus' family chose a stable: it contained what they needed and nothing more. Let's lose the distractions and remember God's plan for us.

Please look out for the 3GY Christmas music video 'Do you hear what I hear,' which will be available for viewing very soon - it's a hoot!

On behalf of the young people, youth leaders and youth workers of 3GY I wish you a very happy Christmas and a blessed New Year.

**Frankie McGuire**

# The Essence of Christmas

Another Christmas season ends. And yet again, we bought gifts for loved ones, prepared the Christmas tree, bought a turkey and Christmas crackers, sent out cards with Christmas wishes, and cleaned up the house.

- By Justyna Jablonska

We tried, at all costs to have the perfect Christmas. But in the sheer volume of tasks and duties, we often seem to forget about the real essence of Christmas, about what is really important.

Every year on December 25, when we sit down with our families for Christmas dinner it seems like only then we realise that Jesus is born again. Just when we spend time with our family, we exchange smiles, Christmas wishes, and conversations; we can feel how magical and unique this time is. It is extremely important to spend this holiday season in the right way. The entire family should be involved with Christmas preparations.

Children should feel important, and needed, in the holiday season. You will have encouraged

them to help by cleaning up their room, decorating the Christmas tree by making some handmade decorations, or by asking them to prepare small

Christmas carols. By explaining more of holiday traditions to children, we remind ourselves about the essence of holidays.

We told our children



gifts for their family by themselves. You may have explained to the children why, during Christmas time, we do particular things; why in the holiday season we give gifts to our loved ones, why we decorate a tree, or sing

about the birth of Jesus, and perhaps even a different Christmas story with a positive message.

The holyday was a special time of love and forgiveness. We reminded ourselves, if we are not at odds with someone, how

we act towards others, were we perhaps, maybe times when we were unnecessarily angry about something. It was a time to reach out to someone, and shake hands to end all the disagreements.

We would have reflected on ourselves and our lives.

Dressed in our festive clothes, we made a firm resolve that we will be in this day and during all the holidays good to all people

and with a smile on our face.

It is not the gifts, Christmas tree or a turkey on the table. But the time we got to spend together, with our families, celebrating the birth of Christ alone, this is exactly what we should look out for, during this holiday season. Let us be people of good will, it is time - God is born!



## PLANNING AHEAD FOR 2014

### THEME: Christ is Calling

TERM	SUB-THEME	Outings		Worship	Notes
<b>SPRING 2014</b>  <b>Lent and Easter</b>  <b>January - April</b>  <b>12 weeks</b>	<i>'You are Christ's voice'</i>   Lenten Justice and Peace projects	Edinburgh Laser Quest  Sunday 19th January  Mini-bus	Go Ape Aberfoyle  Sunday 16th February  Mini-bus	Youth Mass  St Mary Magdalene's, Perth  Sunday 30th March at 10am	"Born for This"  Rehearsals dates and times tbc.
<b>SUMMER 2014</b>  <b>April - June</b>  <b>10 weeks</b>	<i>'Hearing the call'</i>  Vocation  Prayer for discernment	Largs and Millport  Sunday 11th May  Mini-Bus	M&Ds  Sunday 15th June  Mini-bus	Youth Mass  St John's, Perth  Sunday 22nd June  'Hearing our call'	Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella  July 2014 (Tbc)





# A Christmas Story



**M**atthew woke up very happy. - Finally! - He thought and ran to his parents' bedroom. - Rise and shine! You have to help me to decorate the Christmas tree! What started in their house resembled a ride on the carousel. Everyone hustled in a hurry. Dad took care of decorating the Christmas tree. Mom with grandmother, who specially came today, worked in the kitchen. Small Anna was playing with her toys, and Matthew tried to help everyone. - When can I open the gifts? - He asked his mum - You have to be patient and wait until tomorrow. Now you can help me by tidying up your room - Mum was trying to find the boy something to do. Their house was slowly filling up with festive scents. In the living room the smell of spruce reigns. Christmas tree was beautiful. It had hung on chains and toys that Matthew did together with his mum. And at the very top of the tree dad hung a gold star. Enchanted boy was looking at it intently. Matthew was sitting by the Christmas tree. - Mom, there are some gifts under the Christmas tree - the boy could not take his eyes off the colourful packages. He did not even noticed when they were placed under the Christmas tree. - We can see them- said dad cheerfully. - But now, please come and sit with us at the table. I have something important to read about Christmas. Matthew reluctantly sat down on a chair. Dad picked up the Bible, and read a passage from it. Which one? Matthew had no idea. He kept thinking about gifts. Then, they talked while preparing the dinner. Matthew asked - Mom can I unwrap one of the gifts please? I was

behaving all day-Mom replied - Okay, but only one- Matthew unwrapped colourful box. - Look what I got - Said Matthew. - Remote control car! Awesome! In addition to the car the boy got from Grandma Agnes tiny box. Inside he found an angel figurine, but he did not found it interesting at all. - During the night mum and I will go to church. Grandma will stay with you - Said the father at the end of the dinner, but Matthew was not listening. How could he listen? He was interested only with his new car. For the rest of the evening, he was playing with it. He took his car to bed with him. In the middle of the night Matthew woke up unexpectedly. He had a dream, but he did not remember it. He took his car and went to his parents' bedroom. He jumped into their bed to cuddle to his mum but ... she was not in bed. Neither his dad. Frightened, he ran into the living room, but there was nobody in there. Not in the kitchen! In Anna's room grandma was sleeping indeed, but Matthew forgot about it. Also forgot what his dad said at the dinner; ... that at night they will go to church. Matthew sat under the tree. He was sad and now, he was about to cry when... - Do not cry - said the little angel. - And, ... how did you get here? - Asked the surprised boy. - What you mean how? You got me as a gift, remember? - Said unhappy angel. It's hard to blame him. Nobody likes to be unnoticed. - Where are my parents? Matthew tried to change the subject. He was foolish; he did not recognize the angel. - Get dressed quickly, then I'll take you to them.



Boy in a hurry found his clothes, and then opened the door and ran out of their apartment. He wanted to find the elevator, but there was no wall. Besides, it was very cold. Well, (it was probably the worst) he felt his feet sink into the snow. - What is it? - Called Matthew upset. - Where is the angel? But the angel was gone. The boy saw a tiny light in the distance. He bravely ran ahead. It was not easy. His legs sank in the snow. He ran, and ran, and the light was getting brighter. When Matthew was already close to it, he recognised that it was a

shining star. - Just the same as on our Christmas tree - he rejoiced. Close to him appeared some people. Matthew quickly followed them. The star shone brightly, and its tail clearly pointed to a tiny church. The door was open. Matthew pushed through the crowd of people. Everyone looked at the manger. But Matthew was too small to see anything. He continues to squeeze between people. He reminded himself about what Dad spoke today. So today is Christmas - quietly wondered Matthew. - Christmas - Then he remembered what his

mother had told him at the beginning of Advent, that when he will behave, the Lord Jesus will be born to him. - Was Jesus born for me, too? - He felt that he must look in the manger. - Jesus is there for sure. If only I could see him? - He was penetrated by deep concern. - But I tried to be polite during Advent - Full of determination he decided. With eyes full of tears, he looked up - and saw. On hay covered with a white scarf was laying a child. Then in the crowd he saw his parents. - Mom - Matthew whispered. - I know now what is the most important during Christmas.

## Did we get what we 'wanted' this Christmas?

*Leah Connor asks if our Christmas wish lists had all the best gifts*

Christmas is the time when we get up early with excitement on our faces, dashing down the stairs and ripping open our gifts from Santa. Our No. 1 top gift this Christmas might either have been a new phone or a tablet.

However in some countries, like the Philippines, it is just another day of suffering. After the Haiyan hit them all they had is gone. The massive typhoon was rated a 5 (being the worst) and it came as a massive shock when they heard it was coming. Some people

luckily got evacuated but some others did not want to leave their homes. It is now confirmed that 3,631 people have sadly lost their lives of the destruction of the typhoon.

I remember when I was sitting in class and Mrs Downie started our first lesson on tropical storms. Mrs Downie showed us the horrible typhoon on the BBC news, we watched a couple of live videos of the typhoon.

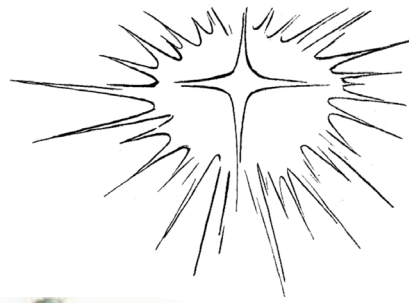
We all realised that this was for real. No textbooks, no jotters. It wasn't just a

made up story written on a sheet of paper.

I asked Ruaridh Blain in S6 how he felt about this news, "I feel sad for the people who had to go through the bad experience of seeing everything being destroyed round them."

As we opened our Christmas presents I hope we remembered to take a moment to think about the people of the Philippines.

On the other side of the world the No. 1 Christmas gifts would be shelter, food and fresh water.



# CHRISTMAS QUIZ

- What does the Bible say that the innkeeper said to Mary and Joseph? (Luke 2:7)
  - "There is no room in the inn."
  - "I have a stable you can use."
  - Both A and B
  - None of the above
- A manger is a...
  - stable for domestic animals
  - wooden hay storage bin
  - feeding trough
  - barn
- Which animals does the Bible say were present at Jesus' birth?
  - cows, sheep, goats
  - cows, donkeys, goats
  - sheep and goats only
  - none of the above
- According to the Bible, how did Mary and Joseph get to Bethlehem?
  - camel
  - donkey
  - it doesn't say
  - Joseph walked, Mary rode a donkey
- How many angels spoke to the shepherds? (Luke 2:10)
  - One
  - Three
  - Multitude
  - None of the above
- What did the angels say/sing? (Luke 2:14)
  - "Glory to God in the highest, etc."
  - "Alleluia"
  - "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given"
  - "Glory to the newborn King"
- There was snow that first Christmas...
  - Only in Bethlehem
  - All over Israel
  - Nowhere in Israel
  - Somewhere in Israel
- In Matthew, what does "wise men" or "Magi" refer to?
  - Men of the educated class
  - Eastern kings
  - Men who studied the stars
  - Sages
- What is myrrh?
  - Middle Eastern money
  - A drink
  - An easily shaped metal
  - A spice used for burying people
  - None of the above
- The wise men stopped in Jerusalem... (Matthew 2:2)
  - To inform Herod about Jesus
  - To find out where Jesus was
  - To ask about the star
  - To buy presents

- E. The innkeeper didn't "say" anything (See Luke 2:7).
- C. Feeding trough - interestingly enough, most mangers in New Testament times were made of stone.
- D In the bible it doesn't say what the innkeeper said.
- F. Although the modern "pictures" in my children's Bible show Mary on a donkey with Joseph beside her, the Bible doesn't say!
- A. Luke 2:10. A semi-trick question because verses 13-14 record what the angel company said as they praised God together. However, only one angel spoke directly to the shepherds.
- A. Glory to God in the highest
- D. Another trick question. There is always snow on Mt. Hermon.
- C. The word "Magi" literally means "star-gazers".
- D. Myrrh was used in embalming in those days.
- B. Read Matthew 2:2. They assumed Herod would know. Luke, a physician, records the pregnancy and birth.
- B. They wanted to ask if Herod knew where the King of the Jews was to be born.

