

CHRISTMAS 2021

In my first few years at the convent, a priest from outside the community was our regular celebrant at midnight mass. He was a gifted preacher and his sermons were often scholarly. But one year was different. He asked us a question. Had we heard the angels sing? His sermon made an impression on me. It differed from his usual type and I was moved by the question and have not forgotten it.

I still ask myself - Did I hear the angels? If not, then why not. Was I too caught up in earthly things? Was I too distracted to be able to lift myself and my belief above the day to day? Why did I not hear them?

Did you hear the angels last night?

Angels abound in the Christmas story. Beginning with Gabriel appearing to Mary – telling her the most amazing story of being chosen to bear and give birth to a long awaited Savior. Then Joseph visited by an angel to reassure him of marrying Mary. Angels watching over Mary through the months of her pregnancy. Most likely angels protecting them during the journey to Bethlehem.

As Christmas Eve passed into Christmas day – on the holiest of nights, the angels sang. Who heard them? The shepherds in their fields – the shepherds who were curious enough to leave their flocks unattended to follow the sound. Not knowing what they would find but to discover and to behold the wonder of that night.

That holy night when time stood still. When the impossible became possible. Angels descended and sang. Shepherds knelt in reverence. Animals watched in wonder. Oxen and donkeys spoke. A virgin bore a child. God came among us. Reality was suspended. All was quiet except for the sound of a newborn.

Last night the angels came from heaven. Did you hear the angels sing?

The song of the angels is not limited to that night so long ago. Christmas did not come just that one time in history. It does not come just once a year on December 25th. Christmas is always with us and lives in us. We just need to acknowledge it. It is ever close by, near enough to reach – we only need to be silent – to leave the world behind – to enter into the wonder of the moment – and Christmas will be with us – in our hearts and our souls and our lives.

Did you hear the angels sing?

If not, then enter the world of all that is possible and impossible – the world of faith – the fullness of love – the time when reality is suspended and the earth stands still and heaven is close enough to touch.

Listen for the angels. They are with you and waiting for you to hear them.

Just listen.