



THE ARCHBISHOP  
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*The Archbishop writes in [\*\*The Sun\*\*](#) today, encouraging us to show kindness this Christmas and in the year ahead. The article follows in full...*

An amazing thing happened at the McDonald's drive-through in Stockton-on-Tees the other week. Blake Durham, a six-year-old boy, was ordering breakfast with his mum and said to her he wanted to "do something kind". Encouraged by his mum, he asked the person serving whether they could also buy food for the man in the car behind them. This one act of kindness then spread down the line of cars, each person paying for the meal of the person behind them.

We are coming to the end of a difficult year.

Coronavirus has caused such sorrow and suffering. And, however we voted four years ago, we are all anxious about exactly what the post Brexit world will actually be like. What will happen to our United Kingdom? And that's before we've faced our fears about whether we will be able to make the right decisions about how to live sustainably on our planet.

It is wonderful that a vaccine has arrived at last. But as we approach Christmas, I think two injections are needed.

First, we need vaccines that are available across our world so that we can put coronavirus behind us. But we also need an injection of hope, so that the world we build might be a better one.

And that's why I find six-year-old Blake's example so encouraging. It captures the true spirit of Christmas. Instead of thinking of ourselves, we think of those who are behind us in the line. We reach out to each other with acts of kindness. But we also question why it is that some are hungry and others are over-fed?

We recognise that our own well-being is tied up with the well-being of our neighbour. To put it simply: it is no good just me being vaccinated, me being fed, me being housed, if my neighbour still goes without.

Let's look around us this Christmas, and see who is behind us in the queue. Let us find ways of reaching out and building a more beautiful world.

On the first Christmas, people put their trust in each other. Mary in the message of an angel. Joseph, in his pregnant wife and her strange story.

The shepherds in the song of angels.

Why don't we?

Wise men had the direction of their lives changed. They arrived by one route. They left by another.

What direction do we need to take as we build a different world in 2021?

There was no room at the inn. But someone made a space. Kindness was offered.

Let's try to do the same.

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