

Do you realise what a revolutionary time Christmas really is?

Do you remember the football match between the soldiers during World War One? They walked across no-man's land, they exchanged gifts, and they played football together.

It was a bold act, a foolish one, in some people's eyes. Certainly, the generals weren't happy and they made sure that 'normal' war was resumed the next day.

Or think of the movies we love so much at this time of year.

There's the terrible father who finds out the true meaning of Christmas and is reunited with his son,

or the characters who fall in love under impossible conditions; the couple who don't speak the same language, or the boy who thinks he'll never be noticed by the girl at school, or the guy who falls in love with his best friend's wife,

or how about the character who has to defend his home and be reunited with his parents?

And, of course the miserly old businessman whose life is turned upside down on Christmas morning.

Think of the plot of Les Misérables: The prisoner who is given a second chance even though he's stolen precious silver from a priest.

We love the impossible at Christmas time especially when it changes people and our world.

Of course, it's all there in the Christmas story:

The underdog: a baby born into poverty and fear,

His parents, refugees who flee oppression.

The weak become important – a group of illiterate shepherds are visited by a host of angels.

It shouldn't work. It should end in disaster and yet it doesn't. This Boy is promised, He's the Messiah the world has waited for, and we celebrate the apparent insignificance of His birth every year.

You may ask yourself why a child? Who would listen to a child?

And yet 2019 is marked by the world listening to a teenager. Greta Thunberg has been titled Time Magazine's most influential person of the year. Many of you took part in the marches that demanded a change in people and the world.

But change is not easy and being a revolutionary costs.

There's a line in the hymn 'O Holy Night' that says

'in all our trials, (He was) born to be our friend. He knows our need, to our weaknesses no stranger.'

You know, we all struggle with life sometimes, sometimes a lot of the time and particularly at Christmas.

We struggle to fit in, we wrestle with being part of a family, a form, a school. We ask what's different about me, why should anyone care what's going on in my life?

At Christmas time, it's all too easy to be what we're not, it's easy to sneer at the 'silliness' of the season and pretend we don't need it anymore.

But the thing about Christmas is that it is outrageous. It is power stooped low. Think of the most powerful person you know. Imagine them giving it all away. Imagine them acting like a child telling the wise of the world just how foolish they are.

Young people challenge and who knows, you might be the one to start the next revolution? You just don't know it yet. The world might be waiting for what you have to say.

That's the essence of Christmas.