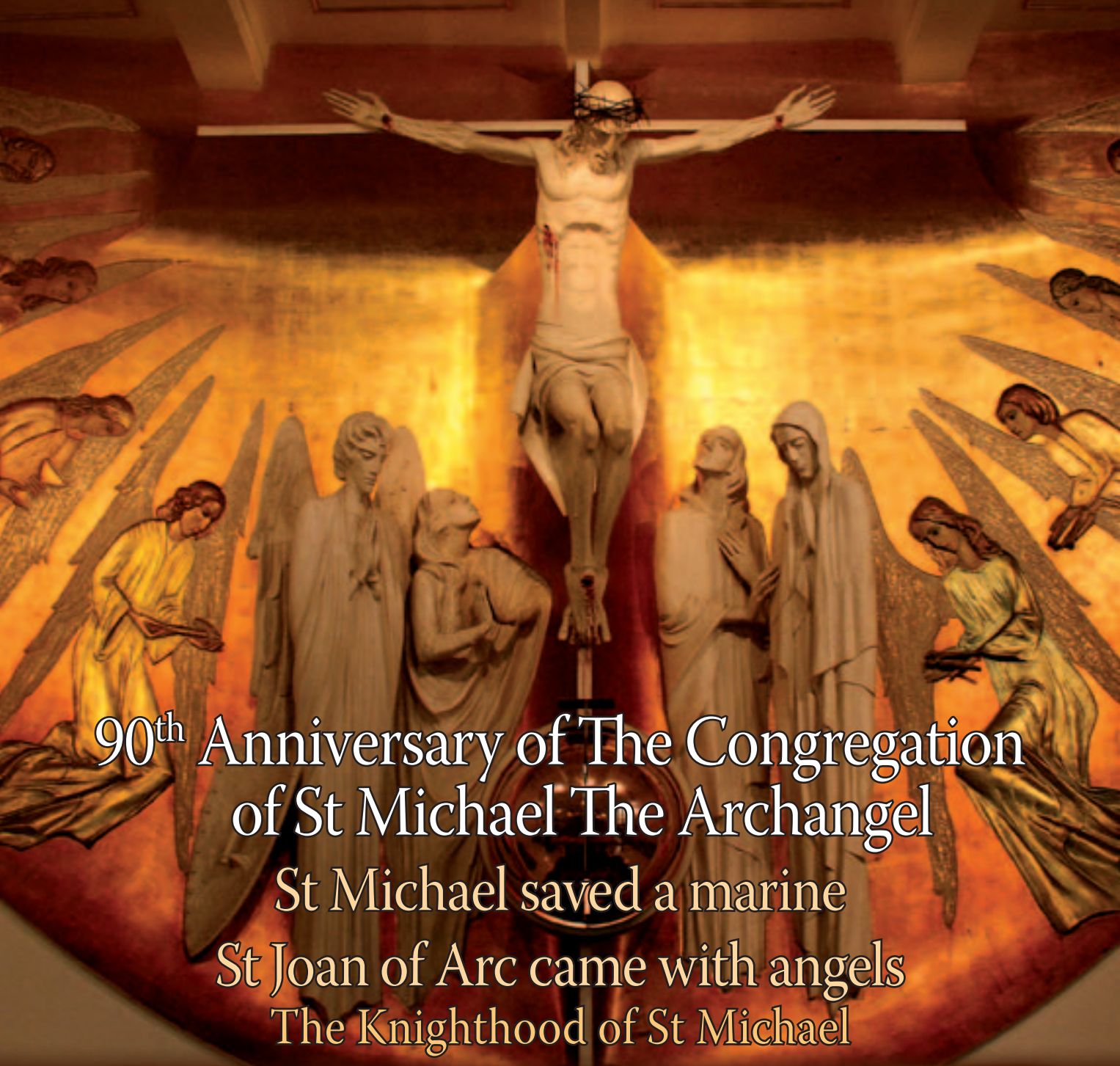




Messengers from a loving God

# The Angels



90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Congregation  
of St Michael The Archangel

St Michael saved a marine

St Joan of Arc came with angels

The Knighthood of St Michael

Angels and Divine Mercy



It is a pleasure to welcome you to the seventh quarterly edition of "The Angels. Messengers from a loving God" magazine. Thank you for all your letters, emails and positive feedback. We are glad that it inspires you for living a holy life and being like an angel to one another.

The Congregation of St Michael the Archangel received its ecclesiastical acceptance by an official decree 90 years ago. On 29th September, on the Feast of St Michael the Archangel, we are going to share a great joy with you and thank God for the grace of the establishment of the Congregation. We are happy to be God's servants in spreading the Good News as well as the devotion to angels. We realize our vocation by taking care of underprivileged, handicapped, abandoned and poor children, providing missionary work in 13 countries and by editing the magazine about angels and spiritual life. The first Polish issue was published 17 years ago whereas the first English one – 18 months ago.

Angels adore God and they surround us with their praise, their adoration and their thanksgiving long after we have left the church. They teach us how to pray; they can share with us their spirit of adoring love and they can strengthen us for the crosses of daily life. If we pray to the angels, our crosses will become lighter and our fidelity to God will increase. We will walk more surely in the way that Christ has traced

out for us and follow Him who is our Way, Truth and Life.

Let us remember the words of St Francis de Sales, "Develop a strong familiarity with the angels. Learn to see them invisibly present in your life and especially honour and revere the angel of the diocese where you are, the angels of persons with whom you live with and especially your own guardian angel. Call them often, praise them regularly and make use of their aid and assistance in all your affairs, both spiritual and temporal, so that they might cooperate in all your undertakings."

I would like to ask you kindly to let others know about our magazine and distribute it all over the world. We look forward to any questions and feedback. I would be interested to hear by letter or email any testimonies on how the angels helped you in your life. If you are interested in conferences or retreats on Divine Mercy and the angels, please contact the office or the Coordinators whose details are found on page 31.

May the Angels guide you on your way.

God bless you.

Father Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

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# The Angels

Messengers from a Loving God

A Catholic Quarterly Magazine on Holy Angels

Publisher: The Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel – Poland

Chief Editor: Father Piotr Prusakiewicz (CSMA)

Editorial Staff: Agata Pawłowska, Monika Chlebosz, Magdalena Świerczewska, Małgorzata Pytel, Rafał Świłto

English translations: Agata Pawłowska, Isabel Brak, Joanna Jabłońska  
Graphics & Layout: Jacek Kawa

Websites: [www.holyangelsmagazine.com](http://www.holyangelsmagazine.com)  
[www.kjb24.pl](http://www.kjb24.pl)

Editorial Office: The Angels Magazine  
ul. Piłsudskiego 248/252, 05-261 Marki. Poland  
Email: [redakcja.kjb@gmail.com](mailto:redakcja.kjb@gmail.com)

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ISSN 2081-5077

Printed in Poland

# St Joan of Arc and the Angels

**Joan of Arc, living in the years 1412-1431, liberated her French homeland from the yoke of its foes, aided by one of the most astonishing examples of angelic activity. The testimony of this survived only in the form of snippets from the trial conducted by the enemies of St Joan. However, the sacred past achievements of the saint show how significant angelic assistance had been in the enforcement of her mission.**

Saint Joan gave witness that she received her first consolation from St Michael the Archangel when she was 13 (after that the saint was comforted by visitations from St Catherine of Alexandria and St Margaret of Antioch). St Michael appeared to her in the summertime, at midday, in her father's garden. She heard the voice coming from the right-hand side, the side where the church was located, and it was linked with light. She was convinced from the outset that the voice had been sent by God to help and guide her. On the third visitation, she eventually recognized the angel's voice. Also, St Michael the Archangel became visible, surrounded by the heavenly angels. He began to teach her in order to prepare her for the future mission in France. St Joan cried after the Archangel and the angels had left her, because she wished to go with them.

When questioned by interrogators about what St Michael looked like, she answered that she had not seen the crown above his head (as with visions of St Margaret and St Catherine who wore the shining crowns). She could not say anything



▶ about his clothes. The interrogators asked the trick question whether he was naked. Her sharp and witty reply showed her great spirit and sense of humour, particularly surrounding the circumstances of the faked process run by her enemies. They did not look for the truth but only how to catch her on some failure, and, to prove that her visions were only deceptions by the devil or, at the very least, her own imagination. St Joan responded: “Do you think that God had not enough material to dress St Michael?”.

## The spiritual side

She also could not give exact details concerning St Michael’s hair or the scales for weighing souls (the attribute assigned to him in the arts). The saint focused on the spiritual side of her vision; the angelic visit assured her that she was not in a state of mortal sin. St Joan gave witness that the archangel came to her as a modest man. She admired St Michael and the angels so much that she kissed the ground in places where they had previously appeared. She also saw the angels coming down to the church and staying among the faithful during the Mass.

Interrogators tried to persuade her that she was a victim of the devil but St Joan replied that the heavenly voices always had helped her (even in her lucky jump from the tower), which made her sure of their friendly attitude. She said that St Michael announced angels and saints’ visit to her: “St Margaret and St Catherine will come to visit you. Follow their advice. They had been chosen to guide you and protect you in your mission. Believe in

what they tell you. It is a command of our Lord”. She called his language “angelic”.

## The identity of St Michael

The saint confirmed her certainty about the identity of St Michael, saying that the archangel himself taught her how to differentiate good angels from the fallen ones who often impersonated their heavenly counterparts. She was only a little girl when she saw St Michael for the first time; she did not know whether the spiritual being was real.

The archangel revealed to her the ways of discernment between the spirits. Next time she could easily recognize who was appearing to her. St Michael told her about the poor state of France and asked her to visit the church quite often and be obedient to her parents. He explained to her that God would like to use her as a tool to help the French king and the whole country. The archangel urged her to support the city of Orleans. She claimed she believed in St Michael’s apparitions as strongly as she believed that Jesus Christ suffered death for mankind.

The archangel also helped St Joan to convince the heir of the French throne of her mission. According to history, St Joan came to Chinon, a town where Charles, the rightful heir to the French throne, was hiding. Charles doubted she could offer him heavenly aid; therefore, he decided to test her out. He swapped clothes with his servant and ordered him to take the seat of honour. When St Joan entered the room, she passed the man in royal clothes and approached Charles. Afterwards,

during a private audience she convinced him that her mission was true. That is all that history records.

## She came with angels

On the other hand, however, trial records indicate the angelic intervention in Chinon. Having been called to Charles’ castle, St Joan came with St Michael, who was invisible for other people. The archangel took her hand, ignored the dressed-up servant and led her directly to the real successor standing among the crowd. During the audience St Michael came with the company of the angels and saintly women; he brought the crown and presented it to the incredulous Charles. It was an obvious sign of his heredity of the French throne. That was how the military part of St Joan of Arc’s mission started. Thanks to that wise 19-year-old woman a large part of the country regained freedom. The spirit of enthusiasm entered the nation.

However, that damning court was not the record that showed Joan’s devotion to the archangel. Twenty years later a fresh trial took place. Its aim was to restore St Joan’s good name. The court refuted the false accusations posed by her enemies. Witnesses said that even just before death she placed great trust in St Michael. When she was attached to the stake, she had especially called him. People present at the execution cried, saying that the saint was killed. St Joan burning in flames called Jesus and St Michael. Surely, the archangel carried her soul into heavenly bliss.

**Jakub Szymański**



## MEMORIAL OF THE THREE ARCHANGELS, ST PETER'S BASILICA

SATURDAY,  
29 SEPTEMBER 2007

# Homily of his holiness Benedict XVI

Dear Brothers  
and Sisters,

**W**e are celebrating the Episcopal Ordination of six new bishops on the Feast of the three Archangels who are mentioned by name in Scripture: Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. This reminds us that in the ancient Church – already in the Book of Revelation – bishops were described as “angels” of their Church, thereby expressing a close connection between the bishop’s ministry and the angel’s mission. From the angel’s task it is possible to understand the bishop’s service. But what is an angel? Sacred Scripture and the Church’s tradition enable us to discern two aspects. On the one hand, the angel is a creature who stands before God, oriented to God with his whole being. All three names of the Archangels end with the

word “El”, which means “God”. God is inscribed in their names, in their nature. Their true nature is existing in his sight and for him. In this very way the second aspect that characterizes angels is also explained: they are God’s messengers. They bring God to men; they open Heaven and thus open Earth. Precisely because they are with God, and they can also be very close to man. Indeed, God is closer to each one of us than we ourselves are. The angels speak to man of what constitutes his true being, of what in his life is so often concealed and buried. They bring him back to himself, touching him on God’s behalf.

In this sense, we human beings must also always return to being angels to one another – angels who turn people away from erroneous ways and direct them always, ever anew, to God. If the ancient Church called bishops “angels” of their Church, she meant precisely this: bishops themselves

must be men of God, they must live oriented to God. “Mulum orat pro populo” – “Let them say many prayers for the people”, the Breviary of the Church says of holy bishops. The bishop must be a man of prayer, one who intercedes with God for human beings. The more he does so, the more he also understands the people who are entrusted to him and can become an angel for them – a messenger of God who helps them to find their true nature by themselves and to live the idea that God has of them.

All this becomes even clearer if we now look at the figures of the three Archangels whose Feast the Church is celebrating today. First of all there is Michael. We find him in Sacred Scripture above all in the Book of Daniel, in the Letter of the Apostle St Jude Thaddeus and in the Book of Revelation. Two of this Archangel’s roles become obvious in these texts. He defends the cause of

▶ God's oneness against the presumption of the dragon, the "ancient serpent", as John calls it.

The serpent's continuous effort is to make men believe that God must disappear so that they themselves may become important; that God impedes our freedom and, therefore, that we must rid ourselves of him. However, the dragon does not only accuse God. The Book of Revelation also calls it "the accuser of our brethren..., who accuses them day and night before our God" (12: 10). Those who cast God aside do not make man great but divest him of his dignity. Man then becomes a failed product of evolution. Those who accuse God also accuse man. Faith in God defends man in all his frailty and short-comings: God's brightness shines on every individual.

It is the duty of the bishop, as a man of God, to make room in the world for God, to counter the denials of him and thus to defend man's greatness. And what more could one say and think about man than the fact that God himself was made man? Michael's other role, according to Scripture, is that of protector of the People of God (cf. Dn 10: 21; 12: 1). Dear friends, be true "guardian angels" of the Church which will be entrusted to you! Help the People of God whom you must lead in its pilgrimage to find the joy of faith and to learn to discern the spirits: to accept good and reject evil, to remain and increasingly to become, by virtue of the hope of faith, people who love in communion with God-Love.

We meet the Archangel Gabriel especially in the precious account of the annunciation to Mary of the Incarnation of God, as Luke tells it to us (1: 26-38). Gabriel is the messenger of God's Incarnation. He knocks at Mary's door and, through him, God himself asks Mary for her "yes" to the proposal to become the Mother of the

Redeemer: of giving her human flesh to the eternal Word of God, to the Son of God. The Lord knocks again and again at the door of the human heart.

In the Book of Revelation he says to the "angel" of the Church of Laodicea and, through him, to the people of all times: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me" (3: 20). The Lord is at the door – at the door of the world and at the door of every individual heart. He knocks to be let in: the Incarnation of God, his taking flesh, must continue until the end of time. All must be reunited in Christ in one body: the great hymns on Christ in the Letters to the Ephesians and to the Colossians tell us this. Christ knocks. Today too he needs people who, so to speak, make their own flesh available to him, give him the matter of the world and of their lives, thus serving the unification between God and the world, until the reconciliation of the universe.

Dear friends, it is your task to knock at people's hearts in Christ's Name. By entering into union with Christ yourselves, you will also be able to assume Gabriel's role: to bring Christ's call to men. St Raphael is presented to us, above all in the Book of Tobit, as the angel to whom is entrusted the task of healing. When Jesus sends his disciples out on a mission, the task of proclaiming the Gospel is always linked with that of healing. The Good Samaritan, in accepting and healing the injured person lying by the wayside, becomes without words a witness of God's love. We are all this injured man, in need of being healed. Proclaiming the Gospel itself already means healing in itself, because man is in need of truth and love above all things.

The Book of Tobit refers to two of the Archangel Raphael's emblematic

tasks of healing. He heals the disturbed communion between a man and a woman. He heals their love. He drives out the demons who over and over again exhaust and destroy their love. He purifies the atmosphere between the two and gives them the ability to accept each other forever. In Tobit's account, this healing is recounted with legendary images. In the New Testament, the order of marriage established in creation and threatened in many ways by sin, is healed through Christ's acceptance of it in his redeeming love. He makes marriage a sacrament: his love, put on a cross for us, is the healing power which in all forms of chaos offers the capacity for reconciliation, purifies the atmosphere and mends the wounds.

The priest is entrusted with the task of leading men and women ever anew to the reconciling power of Christ's love. He must be the healing "angel" who helps them to anchor their love to the sacrament and to live it with an ever renewed commitment based upon it. Secondly, the Book of Tobit speaks of the healing of sightless eyes. We all know how threatened we are today by blindness to God. How great is the danger that with all we know of material things and can do with them, we become blind to God's light. Healing this blindness through the message of faith and the witness of love is Raphael's service, entrusted day after day to the priest and in a special way to the bishop. Thus, we are prompted spontaneously also to think of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Sacrament of Penance which in the deepest sense of the word is a sacrament of healing. The real wound in the soul, in fact, the reason for all our other injuries, is sin. And only if forgiveness exists, by virtue of God's power, by virtue of Christ's love, can we be healed, can we be redeemed. Amen.

# St Michael – A good choice for a patron

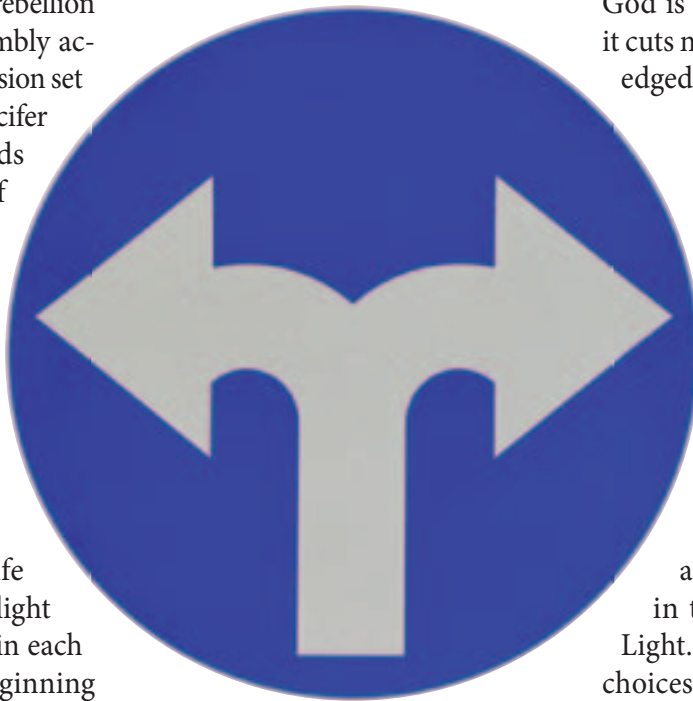
**“Look, today I am offering you life and prosperity, death and disaster. If you obey the commandments of Yahweh your God, which I am laying down for you today, if you love Yahweh your God and follow His ways, you will live and grow numerous. (...) I am offering you life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life, then, so that you and your descendants may live, in the love of Yahweh your God, obeying His voice, holding fast to Him, for it this your life consists.” (Dt 30:15-16, 19-20)**

The choice between life and death is rooted in human freedom. God is Life because he called Himself Life in Christ (John 14:6). St Michael the archangel chose God-Life during the rebellion of spiritual beings. He humbly accepted his place and the mission set for him by God whereas Lucifer refused obedience towards God. Standing in front of Light, Life and Truth he declared for darkness, death and lies. He became the father of lies forever. (1J 4:6)

## Free choice

The choice between life and death, truth and lies, light and darkness is inscribed in each human heart from the beginning of the world. The first free choice of the Parents was tragic in results; they were not satisfied with the gift of unity with God and succumbed to the instigation of the snake, “You will be like gods.” (Gn 3:5) From that moment each human heart is

torn, which the Old Testament presents with the example of many biblical characters. The Chosen People still rebelled against God and did not follow His way. However, the Lord



continuously called them to choose life. Satan offers quite a different choice. Even Jesus was tempted in order to be similar to us, apart from sin. Christ took the Word of God as His weapon in refuting the devil's attacks;

each sentence He said to the evil one was taken from Holy Scriptures. It is also the most powerful and effective weapon by which we can fight against satanic temptations: “The Word of God is something alive and active: it cuts more incisively than any two-edged sword.” (Heb 4:12).

## Visible in the Light

The more we pray to St Michael the Archangel, the more we remember that he invites us to take the sword of the Word of God, which cuts our hearts and makes what was hidden in the darkness visible in the Light. May we make big and small choices in the presence of God and of St Michael. In order to choose well we need the Holy Spirit, who enables us to agree on God's will in our lives. St Michael, patron of good choice – pray for us!

Sister **Leonia Przybylo** CSSMA



# My battle is not finished

**I would like my testimony to be one of the reasons for others to come back to God. I would like it to be a warning against dealing with the occult by the use of talismans, Atlantis rings and tarot cards. I have put on the Armour of Light and begun a war against Satan.**

**M**y name is Magda Myczko, I come from Poland. I am well-known on the Internet; it is easy to find my “achievements” there. I do not want to remain anonymous and I would like to tell the truth because I feel that this is the time to tell people my story. In September 2009 I received a great grace from God, thanks to which I have returned to our Heavenly Father.

I would like to tell you what happened before my conversion to make you aware what may occur if you sever your relationship with God. I was brought up seeing my father stay at home on Sunday mornings to watch movies on TV while my mother forced my brother, sister and I to go to church. I was annoyed by what I considered to be an injustice. He still does not go to the church and I pray for him to be reconciled with God. I always felt unwell in the church – before Holy Communion I felt sick or light headed; I was afraid and wanted to go home.



## My worst moment

When I was 19 I had a love affair with a married man twenty years older than myself who did not believe in God. I was impressed by him and so became absorbed in all his false philosophy of life. One day I rebelled and told my mum that I was not going to church. It

was the worst moment in my life because I ended my relationship with God and suffered from spiritual sterility for the next ten years. Being unaware that I was looking for my father’s love in older men I found myself being used by such men. I have a child by one of them. My idols became money, sex and alcohol and I thought that this was real life. I also looked for love on the Internet. My feelings were well and truly misplaced. I trusted in sinful people more than Jesus who alone could give me love.

In high school I came across a book about the subconscious. I began to concentrate my focus on gaining money.

I thought that I would be able to buy anything in the world including love if I was rich. Soon after, I bought several New Age items, an Atlantis ring and a cross as aids in my quest. And then something strange happened; each conversation about God, the Church, nuns and priests made me angry. Anger is really an insufficient word to describe how I felt; I hated all those who loved God. But deep in my heart I still looked for love and hoped someone would love me too.





But I hated myself for being so imperfect... I tried to be perfect in everything I did. I began my own business – perfect on the outside, rotten on the inside.

## Manipulate and lie

I trained others and went on courses of hypnosis, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), personal development and the law of attraction. I bought several talismans, tarot cards and stones of happiness thinking that things could make me happy. I did not realise that by behaving in this way I would hurt my sister, who loved God and prayed for me all the time. I hated her then. I taught people how to manipulate and lie to others and pray to idols. I was an expert in relaxation techniques, in the law of attraction and NLP – I taught how to use it to be happy. But frankly speaking I taught people how to die gradually. I had wanted to show them that all I talked about was true, that I was rich. But this was a lie because I used six credit cards to give the impression that I lived like a queen. I bought peoples' love and respect. I regret it and pray for all those people who had learned from me to forgive me.



## Fear and no sleep

I lived this life for ten years. Once I started to feel a strong pain in my chest and I could not breathe. I had no appetite, I could not think, I could not hear anything, I felt terrible. Each night on going to bed I saw green shiny eyes like those of cats'. At the beginning it was just one pair of eyes but while I was praying to my idols, there were more and more of them. I felt worse, and I realized that I should do something but I did not know what. Later it transpired that my sister had introduced exorcised salt in the house. She had filled all the salt-cellar with it. My taking this salt resulted in the devil reacting against me.

## Message from Jesus

One night I was afraid of sleeping and my sister was awake too. She came to my room and said: 'I have a message from Jesus to you. There are many demons around you who wait for your soul.' I asked her to stop frightening me. 'I am not trying to scare you. This is the truth. Jesus is waiting for you. Throw away everything you have: talismans, strange necklaces, rings, tarot cards, books, everything which is connected with Satan. You do have a free will and while you do not have to listen to me, I have to save my family. If you do not do this, I have to stop seeing you for good.'

## Fight for a soul

That was enough for me. Next morning I asked my sister to help me in getting rid of all the evil stuff. She

knew what was good and bad. I had so much of it that it took us two days to throw it all away. The tarot cards did not want to burn; we could hear horrible rumblings coming from the burning books. Then I began a fight for my soul – making my first confession after ten years, meeting with an exorcist and saying prayers for liberation and healing. The battle is not finished yet, but thanks to Jesus I become stronger every day.

## Christ's soldier

I closed my business but I still have credit card debts to pay off. I am looking for work and if I give most of my salary to the banks for ten years, I will redeem my debts. I thank-you Lord, for this difficult time because I know that you love me and will not let me die. Today I tell people about God, I try to help them. Before each conversation I ask the Lord to put appropriate words in my mouth. I am writing a book entitled "Christ's soldier." My mission is to put people in touch with love through the truth.

'Besides, you know the time has come, the moment is here for you to stop sleeping and wake-up because our salvation is nearer than when we first began to believe. The night is nearly over, daylight is on the way; so let us throw off everything that belongs to the darkness and equip ourselves for the light. Let us live decently, as in the light of day; with no orgies or drunkenness, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ, and stop worrying about how your disordered natural inclinations may be fulfilled.' (Romans 13: 11-14)

**Magda Myczko, Poland**

# 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CSMA



**On 29<sup>th</sup> September 2011 is the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel. On this joyful occasion we would like to acquaint you with our mission and the Knighthood movement (see page 12). The Michaelite brothers and sisters continue the ideals of blessed Father Bronislaw Markiewicz, taking care of abandoned and poor children in orphanages, schools and youth centres including missionary work in 13 countries. Father Kazimierz Radzik superior general of the Congregation visited Papua New Guinea recently.**

### **What brings you to Australia?**

Aproximately every four years I come and do a canonical visit to the Pacific Province and meet up with my brother priests here in Australia and Papua New Guinea. We have seven priests working here in Australia as well as one postulant. I come to see the pastoral work they are doing especially with the youth which is part of our charism. I also want to meet with the local bishops and discuss with them our involvement especially in the field of education. I am happy to see there are already numerous Catholic schools operating within our parishes. This creates opportunity and pastoral work for the Michaelites. It is good to know that there is religious education in these schools. Within the Australian parishes, devotions of St. Michael have been established starting with the daily recital of the prayer after every Mass and the chaplet being said on a monthly basis by devotees.

Currently, there is a movement to promote hosts for the Knights of St Michael and to gather more devotees to help spread this devotion.

### **Tell us about your visit to PNG.**

I had a special reason for this visit because of the great occasion of the Sacrament of Ordination of the first Papua New Guinean, Peter Kaupa becoming a Michaelite Priest. The Ordination was held in his local parish in Dirima, in the Chimbu Province of PNG. This was a great joy to all of us in the Congregation and a hope for others, especially for the youth in this region. I was also pleased for another New Guinean, Brother Thomas Lasen who in January, professed his final vows.

### **How strong is the presence of Michaelites who are working in the missions in PNG?**

In PNG there are five priests, 1 brother, three seminarians and two

postulants, who are working in two provinces: Western Highlands and Enga. This is a good group and they work well together even though those who are working in the Enga Province are very remotely located in the mountains. Wanepap has 15 outstations and Kasap 10. Mass is said at least once a month and the local people are coming to receive the Sacraments of reconciliation, baptism, marriage and anointing of the sick. In most cases the priests must travel to these outstations by foot for it is impossible to go there by car. At times it can take more than six hours to travel there.

### **How did the local people welcome you?**

Our meeting with the people of Wanepap, Kasap and Kuli was an affectionate one and their ways of welcoming us with their traditional dances and song was absolutely beautiful. We all felt that these people were very happy to see us in their parishes

and were keen to meet us, talk with us and pray with us. It was a very kind gesture that they would give us what they could even though they are very poor. Their hearts are very open and generous and no matter where we went they were always freely giving to us. As we visited each parish, we introduced the Chaplet of St Michael to the catechists, youth and parishioners. We gave them some colourful chaplet beads lovingly made by devotees of St Michael in Australia and taught them the prayer. It seemed a fitting thing to do since it is the year of St Michael and he is the Patron Saint of Papua New Guinea. The people seemed very keen to learn it and receive the beads.

**Did you see a need in the people that we could help to fulfill?**

I felt very sorry when I was informed that many children in these

parishes do not attend school because of tribal quarrels or because the parents are very poor. They do not have the money to pay for the school. They attend the church but are unable to pay school fees for their children. I think with what we have in Australia, Poland and other wealthier countries perhaps we could consider helping these families who have no money to pay for their children's education. We must see this as a priority to help these families and send their children to school. It would be good if we could develop a sponsoring system among our families to adopt a child from these parishes, receiving a photo of them and taking care of their education costs for a school year.

**Was there any other events you attended while in PNG?**

It was very nice to be present for an Australian-Polish couple who

decided to be married while on their visit to PNG. The marriage ceremony was organized by Fr Bogdan Swierczewski and his Kuli parishioners at the outstation of Kartanim. It was celebrated in a partly completed Shrine to the Divine Mercy, which the people are constructing on their own with some assistance from the Michaelite parishes in Australia.

**Overall, what was your outlook?**

I am very grateful and thank God for the work that my brother priests do in Papua New Guinea and Australia. I feel that within the hearts of the people, the presence of St Michael the Archangel and our founder, Blessed Markiewicz is near, helping and interceding for them.

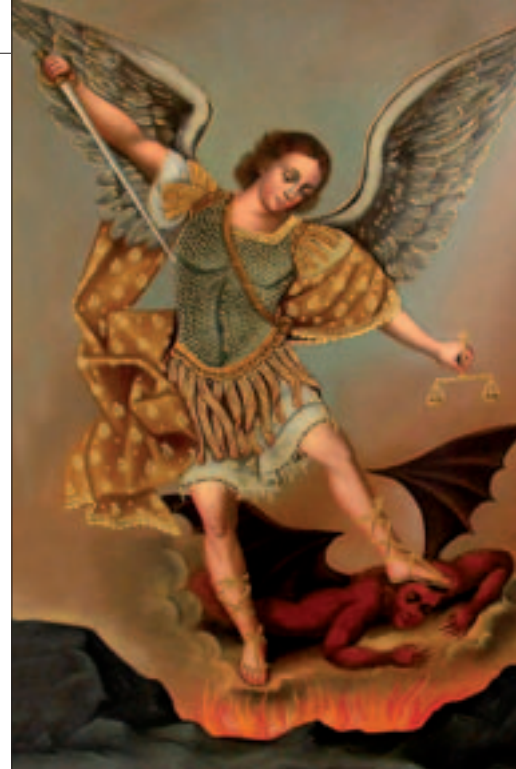
May the Lord bless and protect them always.

Interview by **Caterina Raccosta**



■ The members of the General Chapter of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel, Marki, Poland, 2010

# Host for the Knights of St Michael



**We would like to present a Catholic religious movement which can be seen as an answer to the ongoing endangerment to our faith.**

## History

**T**he Knighthood of St Michael the Archangel was formed in 1994 with the initiative of the Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel (CSMA) in Poland with approval from the Holy See's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The Patron of the Knighthood is St Michael the Archangel, the biblical warrior, whose name in Hebrew means "Who is like God". The apparitions of St Michael the Archangel in Monte Sant' Angelo, Gargano, Italy (in 490 AD) inspired devotions to this Prince of the Heavenly Hosts (Rev 12,7:9) whom we revere as the Defender of the Church.

The Knighthood is governed by its own statutes. These statutes were approved by the Superior General of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel in August 1994. The headquarters of the Knighthood is located at the General House of the Michaelites (CSMA) in Warsaw, Poland. Since 2004 Fr Peter Prusakiewicz has been the General Animator of the Knighthood. Each country has its own appointed

National Animator. All the members of the Knighthood are remembered and recommended to St Michael's protection in every liturgy that is celebrated in the Sanctuary of Monte Sant' Angelo in Gargano, Italy.

## How do the Knights fight?

The Knights are to proclaim the victory of Jesus Christ over Satan. Their mission is to expiate God for the sins of humankind and to obtain the conversion of sinners. They aim to achieve this by reciting a prayer of exorcism every day to keep away evil spirits from oneself, the Church and the whole world, particularly from those that are tempted and possessed by Satan.

Members carry out the duties of recitation of the prayer of St Michael (simple exorcism) after daily Mass, praying the Chaplet of St. Michael and holding monthly prayer meetings in the local parish. Each member promotes devotion to St Michael and encourages people to join the

Knighthood. The Knights actively support the apostolate of the Congregation of St. Michael in their work with the youth, fostering vocations and aiding missionary causes.

## How do you become a Knight?

The movement has been operating in Poland for 17 years. However, its structures are being established in English-speaking countries this year. If you are interested in the Knighthood of St Michael the Archangel, you may wish to become familiar with its statutes which is the first step to becoming a Knight. The statutes can be sent to you from our office in Poland via email [redakcja.kjb@gmail.com](mailto:redakcja.kjb@gmail.com) or please write to CSMA ul. Pilsudskiego 248/252, 05-261 Marki, Warsaw, Poland

**Agata Pawłowska,**  
Editorial Office CSMA, Poland  
**Caterina Raccosta,**  
Michaelite Provincial Office

# The Beatification of Blessed John Paul II

1<sup>st</sup> May 2011 – Feast of Divine Mercy

## The Eternal City

I set out to the Eternal City a few days before the Mass of Beatification to prepare spiritually and practically for the days ahead. A small group of us from various parts of the UK gathered in the same hotel so that we would be witnesses to the events unfolding together. I hope to take you on this Pilgrimage of grace, through this reflection, knowing that so few were able to travel from the UK. What a joy it was once again to behold the beauty of St. Peter's Basilica and Piazza and breathe its atmosphere of grace and anticipation as the preparations for the Beatification were under way.

To be in the Vatican is like being in the very womb of the Church and I felt so safe and secure there knowing that I was present with so many millions of others from around the world all of the same Catholic faith and expectation. St. Peter's Square was adorned with a banner depicting poignant moments of each year of the long Pontificate of beloved Pope John Paul II.

## Our Lady of Fatima

For me the most moving one was the image of Pope John Paul kneeling in

front of Our Lady of Fatima in thanksgiving for saving his life. For the first time I was able to find the very spot where the Holy Father was shot on May 13th 1981. For some reason I was drawn to pray there often. It moved me. Also adorning the Piazza was a 20 meters by 15 meters high image of the Pope gazing intently at the Cross. My eyes could not help but be drawn to the intensity of his gaze of love and union with the Cross of Christ.

A large icon of Our Lady and Jesus adorned another corner demonstrating the motto of John Paul II 'Totus Tuus ego sum omnia mea tua sunt. Accipio te in mea omnia. Praebe mihi cor tuum Maria.' – 'I belong entirely to you, and all that I have is yours. I take you for my all, O Mary, give me your heart.' This motto was taken from the Treatise on True Devotion to the blessed Virgin, 266 by St. Louie Gringnon de Montfort.

## A witness of Catholic Faith

Pope Benedict XVI had inaugurated a special exhibition in tribute to his beloved predecessor. For an hour or more I journeyed through the life of Pope John Paul from his earliest infancy to his moment of birth into Heaven and beyond. This pilgrimage



took me through the highs and lows of his life to the peaks of joy and ecstasy as well as into the depths of his personal suffering and crucifixion. What a witness of Catholic Apostolic Faith in its fullness of vision, life and action! The journey took me through his life, papacy, mysticism, faith and love for the Church, along side a window into his world of theatre, poetry, kayaking, cycling, skiing, and his disposition of general joie de vie! He was truly a man fully alive in Christ in every aspect of his humanity – body, mind and spirit. What a giant of a man who became ▶

▶ a giant of a priest, bishop, cardinal and pope! The experience of reliving the shooting of May 13th 1981 in video presentation penetrated to my very heart. I palpably felt every shot and wept...and then the experience of him rising again from the jaws of death for another 25 years, for a fruitful pontificate blessed mightily by the Lord – to the moment when he again began an ascent of his personal Mt Calvary with his deteriorating Parkinson's disease. The agony of those final weeks and months struck me deeper than ever before.

His deep faith, suffering in union with his Crucified Lord and his Sorrowful Mother were a vivid portrayal of the immensity of the power and efficacy of Redemptive Suffering for the salvation of souls. The look of agony as he stood at the window gazing upon the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims in the Piazza and gave his final blessing to us was almost more than I could bare to see. In that moment he could not speak and could barely raise his hand – this was his final farewell to us upon this earth and the suffering Christ was visible in his face and wracked body. Only love – a love far greater than any of us can ever fathom could have held him upright in that moment. Thank you Blessed Pope John Paul – you taught us how to live a life of faith in Christ and also how to die as a witness to faith in the Crucified one with the hope of the Resurrection firmly rooted in your heart. I pray that one day I can have just one ounce of your faith and love for Jesus and Mary to sustain me in my final hours before meeting my God.

## Feast of Divine Mercy

Pope John Paul II died on April 2nd 2005 at 9.37pm on the Vigil of the movable Feast of Divine Mercy – the very

Feast which he declared as a Feast of the Universal Church. I was present at his funeral liturgies in 2005 and it was my privilege to be there once again for his Beatification...after all I was one of the 2 million in 2005 who joined the crowd chorus of “Santo Subito!”. The declaration of the Feast of Divine Mercy and the canonisation of St Faustina (the first saint of the new Millennium) were two of the first acts of Pope John Paul II in celebrating the Jubilee Year of 2000 and which highlighted the importance of the Mission and devotion of Divine Mercy for our time. In the end we will only have left, recourse to God's Mercy....

My personal preparation centred around Masses, prayer and devotion in both St Peter's Basilica and Santo Spirito Church—the Church designated by Pope John Paul as the heart of devotion of Divine Mercy. So many connections and associations. My Confession was in the Confessional which John Paul II used to use on Good Fridays. The priest gave me a Novena leaflet of Saint Gianna Molla—a saint close to the heart of Pope John Paul who saved the life of her unborn child rather than her own. This was a further encouragement to me to pray for all the millions of unborn babies who daily die through abortion and other destructive unethical medical techniques and chemical interventions.

The Eve of the Beatification was dawning and hundreds of thousands from every Nation were pouring in waves into the Eternal City. Our little UK group under the mantle of Our Lady of Walsingham, were carrying England, Our Lady's Dowry and her peoples with us. We decided to stay out on the streets all night prior to the Beatification to ensure that we would be in the Piazza for this Mass. With 1.5 million people present we were blessed to be given the grace of achieving this!



The sacrifices involved, the tensions and the difficulties to achieve this were all worth it. We were full of gratitude to God knowing that so many others were on the outskirts as far back as the Tiber, Circus Maximus and Castle St Angelo. The queuing from 9pm to 6am when we finally arrived into the Piazza was a life's pilgrimage all of its own and not for the faint hearted! We had the joy of meeting people from all over the world, prayed with them, did penance with them, got crushed with them and acknowledged all the common human frailties of impatience and agitation along side the experiencing the expectations, hopes and faith of our fellow pilgrims.

It meant we missed the Vigil at Circus Maximus at which Sr Marie Simon-Pierre gave her testimony. She was one of the people healed through the intercession of Pope John Paul and whose miracle was accepted. She awoke one day to find she had been miraculously cured of Parkinson's disease. There were also testimonies from others close to the Holy Father one of



whom was Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, the late Pope's personal secretary who said "If today he is proclaimed blessed it is only because he was already a saint in life, he was for us who were near to him. I knew he was a saint. I knew for a long time when he was alive before he was elected Pope. I knew it when I began to live near him. The Pope in private was no different than the public Pope. He was always himself. Always in front of God!"

## The Mysteries of Light

The second part of the Vigil was centred upon the praying and meditating of the Mysteries of Light—first introduced by the Pope and led by Cardinal Vallini. This part began with the hymn "Open the doors to Christ." There was a simultaneous video link-up with Marian Shrines dear to John Paul II in Lagniewniki in Krakow, Kawekamo in Tanzania, Our Lady

of Lebanon in Harissa, Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, and Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal. Following this, eight Churches were open throughout the night with Eucharistic Adoration for private prayer.

Once in the Piazza we were in close proximity to groups of Sisters of the Holy Family from Poland and Mother Teresa's sisters and laity from the USA, Poland and Italy. At 6 am all we wanted to do was lie down after standing so long – but – no others were continuing to stream in and we were like packed sardines but Deo Gratis! We were in the Piazza! The flags, balloons and banners in their tens of thousands were waved and flowing in the breeze and the expectations of the millions present both in Rome and around the world was growing to a crescendo. Solemnly enthroned near the altar was the large Image of the Divine Mercy borrowed from Santo Spirito Church.

Preparation for the Mass of Beatification began at 9 am with a reading from the Homily of Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the Canonization

of St Faustina, 30th April 2000 followed by the praying of the Divine Mercy Chaplet in different languages and a sung Jezu Ufam Tobie – Jesus I Trust in You!

'What will the years ahead bring us? What will man's future on earth be like? We are not given to know. However, it is certain that in addition to new progress there will unfortunately be no lack of painful experiences. But the light of Divine Mercy, which the Lord in a way wished to return to the world through St Faustina's charism, will illumine the way for the men and women of the third millennium.'

We were supported in prayer by heavenly music and a full choir. Then the great moment came as Pope Benedict arrived amongst us to rapturous applause and cheering. How we loved him as he affirmed us by his presence and faith. The Mass began with a sung 'You are Peter and the rite of Beatification soon followed after the penitential rite. Pope Benedict XVI invited Cardinal Agostino Villani, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Rome to proclaim the findings of the Congregations for the Cause of Saints which prepared the way for Pope John Paul II to be declared 'Blessed'. Pope Benedict then prayed the formula of Beatification in Latin and declared Pope John Paul II Blessed John Paul II and declared that his Feast Day would be celebrated on October 22nd each year. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Following this there was a triumphant fanfare of trumpets, organ, orchestra playing and choir singing to the great acclaim of the faithful who roared their approval and ascent with strong voice, thunderous applause and the ecstatic waving of myriads of flags and banners representing every nation upon earth. As this moment reached a climax so the official Beatification Image of the

► new Blessed was unveiled which hung from the front of St Peter's Basilica. And there we saw once again the beautiful and fatherly smile of Pope John Paul once again radiating down to us from St Peter's as he always did!

## Santo Subito

This moment of acclamation of joyous praise and gratitude from faithful and clergy alike of the Church is a grace I will cherish for always. It lasted for 10 minutes. My heart could hardly contain the joy of this moment. The 'sensus fidei' which had called out so strongly six years ago at his Funeral Mass on April 8th 2005 – 'Santo Subito' had been realised. The choir sang a short Chorus with the words, 'Open wide the doors of your heart to Christ'—the first words of John Paul II as he began his pontificate. As this happened, Sr Marie Simon-Pierre and Sr Tobiana – head of the Blessed Pope's apartments brought forward a relic of his blood to

the altar. This blood was taken in the hospital when his doctors thought he might need a blood transfusion at some point in the future. Little did they know that this blood would one day be part of a reliquary of a new Blessed!

The Rite of Beatification was concluded by a prayer of thanksgiving from Cardinal Villani to Pope Benedict for the proclamation of John Paul II as Blessed. This was followed by an exuberant sung Gloria in Latin which we all sang – and the Holy Father was visibly full of uncontainable joy and gratitude to God for his predecessor. The Mass continued with great reverence and meditative silence so that we could all reflect upon the Scriptures and Eucharistic Mysteries which we were celebrating. The moments of silence and reflection seem to be a hallmark of the Pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI as we are always reminded that it is in 'silence' we hear the voice of God deep within. Like today amidst a storm of desolation I heard 'Courage it is I' from the Gospel of St. Mark!

## Homily

In his homily Pope Benedict began by saying.... 'Dear Brothers and Sisters, Six years ago we gathered in this Square to celebrate the funeral of Pope John Paul II. Our grief at his loss was deep, but even greater was our sense of an immense grace which embraced Rome and the whole world: a grace which was in some way the fruit of my beloved predecessor's entire life, and especially of his witness in suffering. Even then we perceived the fragrance of his sanctity, and in any number of ways God's People showed their veneration for him. For this reason, with all due respect for the Church's canonical norms, I wanted his cause of beatification to move forward with reasonable haste. And now the longed-for day has come; it came quickly because this is what was pleasing to the Lord: John Paul II is blessed! This took me back six years as I too was present at his Funeral and I too was there as one of the two million who called Santo Subito – God Bless our Pope!'

The full text of the Holy Father's sermon is worth reading! I just highlight a few thoughts below.

'Today is the Second Sunday of Easter, which Blessed John Paul II entitled Divine Mercy Sunday. The date was chosen for today's celebration because, in God's providence, my predecessor died on the vigil of this feast. Today is also the first day of May, Mary's month, and the liturgical memorial of St Joseph the Worker. All these elements serve to enrich our prayer, they help us in our pilgrimage through time and space; but in heaven a very different celebration is taking place among the angels and saints! Even so, God is but one, and one too is Christ the Lord, who like a bridge joins earth to heaven. At this moment we feel closer than ever, sharing as it were in the liturgy of heaven.'







## Totus Tuus

The Holy Father throughout his sermon affirmed the joy of the Risen Christ, the grace of the Feast of Divine Mercy, the model of faith of the Blessed Virgin Mary under whose mantle Blessed John Paul II lived his life – Totus Tuus – the Primacy of Peter, the grace of the Second Vatican Council in which John Paul II as Karol Wojtyła participated and influenced some of the major documents. The Pope also spoke at length of the long and fruitful Pontificate of Blessed John Paul II and proclaimed again his words at the start of his Pontificate - ‘Do not be afraid. Open, open wide the doors to Christ!’

The Pope then finished with a beautiful and moving personal note— ‘Finally, on a more personal note, I would like to thank God for the gift of having worked for many years with Blessed Pope John Paul II. I had known him earlier and had esteemed him, but for twenty-three years, beginning in 1982 after he called me to Rome to be Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, I was at his side and came to revere him all the more.

My own service was sustained by his spiritual depth and by the richness of his insights. His example of prayer continually impressed and edified me: he remained deeply united to God even amid the many demands of his ministry. Then too, there was his witness in suffering: the Lord gradually stripped him of everything, yet he remained ever a “rock”, as Christ desired.

His profound humility, grounded in close union with Christ, enabled him to continue to lead the Church and to give to the world a message which became all the more eloquent as his physical strength declined. In this way he lived out in an extraordinary way the vocation of every priest and bishop to become completely one with Jesus, whom he daily receives and offers in the Church. Blessed are you, beloved Pope John Paul II, because you believed! Continue, we implore you, to sustain from heaven the faith of God’s people. You often blessed us in this Square from the Apostolic Palace: Bless us, Holy Father! Amen.’

What a beautiful testimony to a spiritual friendship rooted in Christ of genuine love, respect and faith. Let us make Pope Benedict’s prayer our own. The

ending of the Mass was once again a joyous cascade of cheering, chanting, banner and flag waving and the Santo Subito chant calling now for his canonisation!

## Act of Consecration

And so the great crowd began to disperse – joyous and totally exhausted! As I left the Piazza I found myself walking besides an American bishop who was gentle and still in awe of the beautiful liturgies he had just had the privilege to be a concelebrant to. I sensed the hand of beloved Blessed John Paul II in this providential meeting! You see I had with me his Prayer of Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary which he had prayed in St Peter’s Square before the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima on March 25th 1984! I told the Bishop how for over 22 years I had been petitioning and praying that the Bishops of England and Wales would re consecrate our countries to the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary. As this Bishop listened to me, he took the prayer and said ‘If the Bishops of England and Wales do this it will save England and Wales.’ These were the first words I heard as I left the Beatification Mass. I feel they were given from the Lord in the Holy Spirit, and a direct encouragement from Blessed John Paul II who first prayed the prayer all those years ago. These words are prophetic!

## O Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary pray for us!

Pope Benedict XVI has recently spoken of Marian Acts of Consecration during the Television Question time ▶

▶ he participated in on Good Friday. The Pope invites us 'to enter into this entrustment that has already been made, so that we might truly live it every day, and thus that a truly Marian Church might grow, a Church that is Mother, Bride, and Daughter of Jesus'... Here in England the laity are doing just that through making their own the Text of 1984 ...and in time hopefully the Bishops will also make it their own?

The Holy Father invites us to do this but does not rule out that one day it may be necessary for him as Pope to also renew it. For now we respond to his call. Again I would invite you to read the full texts of the questions he answered on Good Friday.

## Soaked in prayer

The Day after the Beatification Mass I joined the queue to venerate the body of the new Blessed whose coffin was lying in State in the central isle of St Peter's Basilica. The queuing had moments of prayer and encounter with all the other hundreds of thousands doing the same. I had the grace to remain 3 hours praying near my beloved Pope John Paul II and it was a joy to join in the recitation of the Rosary and sung Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary accompanied by meditations upon the mysteries by one of the Cardinals. St Peter's became soaked in prayer invoking the powerful intercession of Our Lady.

Other memorable moments of communal prayer were experienced at the General Audience with Pope Benedict, further times of prayer by St Sebastian's altar which is now the new Blessed's place of rest. We had early morning Mass near the tomb of St Peter and had the blessing of being permitted to pray by the tomb of Cardinal Merry de Val who wrote the 'Prayer for England'. Near to his tomb was the

tomb of Cardinal Henry Duke of York ...who initiated a crusade of prayer in the 17th century for the Conversion of England...and who was the brother of Bonnie Prince Charlie, also buried there along with their Father King James III. All of them are buried a stone's throw from the tomb of St Peter in the Crypt of St Peter's. I spent a week in Rome to celebrate the Beatification of beloved Blessed John Paul II to be strengthened in my faith on the very Rock upon which Jesus founded his Church. When I am in St Peter's I experience that I am in the very womb of the Church. In some ways the prayer 'Jesus I Trust in You' and 'Totus Tuus' have penetrated deeper into my heart. A final gift to me before I left Rome was to be given a piece of marble excavated from near the tomb of St Peter. Nothing remarkable in this! Yet it's message to me was to hold onto the Rock which is Christ and his Church, to be a faithful Catholic and to pray much for His Holiness the Pope, for the Church and for God's will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven!

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**Antonia Moffat**  
Walsingham, England

**Today, we are so familiar with angels and what they look like that we can find it hard to imagine a time when the first images of angels appeared in art.**

The earliest image of an angel depicted in Christian art dates from the middle of the third century and was found in the Catacomb of Priscilla. This angel is interesting in that it was depicted without wings. It was not until the time of the Emperor Constantine that angels began to be appear with wings and indeed this is a characteristic that we would look for today to identify an angel in art.

Angels were a common feature of early Christian art. In the East, angels were to feature prominently in icons from the Byzantine era. The painting of icons was developed over the centuries with its own distinctive style and technique. One only has to think of some of the celebrated icons from this tradition to see how frequently angels are depicted.

The icon of the three angels at the Oak of Mamre (Gen. 18) by Andrei Rublev (c. 1410) is one of the most instantly recognisable images in religious art. This icon shows the three mysterious visitors who approached Abraham in the desert. Abraham and Sarah offered them hospitality as was the custom among the nomadic people of that time. In return the visitors gave a prophetic message that Sarah will give birth to a son. The three angelic visitors of Rublev's icon are often

# Angels through the Ages

interpreted as the three Persons of the Trinity. As we contemplate these figures seated around a table, they appear to be both masculine and feminine at the same time. The faces of the angels are identical suggesting that they share something in common. At the centre of the image is a cup which perhaps suggests the Eucharist – the sacrament where we enter into communion with the life of the Trinity.

In the West, angels in Christian art were depicted in a variety of ways – in painting, frescos, sculpture and in stained glass. The mediaeval cathedrals of western Europe are a great testament to how angels were depicted using these different media.

During the Renaissance period, paintings by Botticelli, Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci were to depict angels with exquisite beauty and grace. The use of colour and light in Renaissance art gave angels a more natural appearance. Among the painters of the Renaissance were the Ghirlandaio Family of Florence. The name Ghirlandaio would become a trademark for the workshop of artists from this family who were active during the second half of the fifteenth century. The Ghirlandaio Family came to dominate Florentine art with the support of a number of wealthy patrons who commissioned their work.

The skill of these artists can be seen in *Tre Angeli rivolti a destra/a sinistra* by Ridolfo del

Ghirlandaio (1483-1561) which is in the Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence. Ridolfo depicts three angels, one of whom is kneeling in adoration. His use of colour is exceptional and he is able to give each of these angels a personality that we do not see with the earlier Rublev icon. These angels have a poise and a delicacy which shows them to be heavenly beings rather than creatures of the earth.

Perhaps today, artists are less likely to depict angels in art, but angels are still to be seen particularly in public art. In the aftermath of the First World War many towns and villages erected memorials to those who died in the trenches. Bronze or stone sculptures of angels are to be found in many places giving comfort to those families and communities who remember those who died in the conflicts of the twentieth century and also in more recent years.

Another notable representation of an angel in public art is Sir Jacob Epstein's *St Michael and the devil* (1956-1958) at Coventry Cathedral, England. This bronze sculpture is 19 feet in height and shows a victorious St Michael subduing the devil who is bound hand and foot beneath the archangel. This dramatic image was a reminder to those who had lived through the Second World War of the victory of Good over Evil.

In the twenty-first century just as in the third, how angels are depicted will



change with artistic style. Yet we will still be able to recognise these incorporeal beings as God's holy messengers who reflect God's beauty, goodness and love.

Father **Andrew Kingham**  
St Andrews, Scotland

# Angels – our most powerful allies

**Godly and just when Job was suffering from harsh ordeals, he asked himself, “Is not human life on earth just conscript service?” (Job 7:1) Christ’s life was also full of hardships. He continuously fought with the three evil powers: Satan, the world and the body.**

According to Andre Combes, an author and authority on the life of St Thérèse, these three powers were a sinister trilogy which endangered people all the time. The lives of the twelve Apostles and of St Paul were also lived in constant combat and many ended in martyrdom. However, their deaths turned out victorious as they resembled their Master’s death on the cross. Their generation laid the foundations of Christianity which changed the world.

St Paul described and encouraged us to wear equipment for spiritual warfare. It was compared to the armour of a Roman legionary: “breastplate”, “belt”, “helmet”, “shoes”, “shield” and “sword” (Eph 6: 14-17) St Paul particularly emphasised the shield and the sword for they symbolized faith and the Word of God: “Always carrying the shield of faith so that you can use it to quench the burning arrows of the evil one. And then you must take salvation as your helmet and the sword of the Spirit, that is, the word of God.” (Eph 6: 16-17)

Spiritual warfare takes place in each human heart, “For it is not against human enemies that we have to struggle, but against the principalities and the ruling forces who are masters of the darkness in this world, the spirits of evil in the



heavens.” (Eph 6:12) It is a fight between God and Satan who dared to attack Jesus at the beginning of His mission. “He has given His angels orders about you to guard you wherever you go. They will carry you in their arms in case you trip over the stone.”

Pope Paul VI made an address “Deliver us from evil” during a general audience in 1972: “Evil is not only the lack of something; it is an active living being, who is perverted and who perverts others. It is a frightening reality. Satan is our top enemy. He acts faithlessly and deceitfully; he hides himself but via erroneous opinions he spreads chaos in mankind.”

The Babylonian Talmud called it “a song of satanic plagues” for it included many metaphors depicting evil whereas Paul Claudel (1868-1955), one of the greatest Christian writers, named it “a hymn of Sainly Angels” due the beautiful 11th and 12th verses. The Psalm is about spiritual warfare. On the one hand, it presents the dangers and attacks of the evil one; on the other hand, it suggests trust in victory. There are twelve metaphors of evil: ‘the snare of the fowler’, ‘destruction’, ‘the terrors of night’, ‘the arrow that flies in the daytime’, ‘the plague that stalks in the darkness’, ‘the scourge that wreaks havoc at high noon’, ‘disaster’, ‘plague’, ‘wild beast’, ‘adder’, ‘lions’ and ‘snakes’ (Psalm 91).

In line 13 the Psalmist advises us not to be afraid although total war seems to have broken out by evil powers. St Therese of Lisieux once had a dream, in which she chased by two little devils who hid behind barrels in a cellar. What is our spiritual power against the evil? It is deep faith expressed in the first two lines of the psalm 91. God is called with four names: “Yahweh” (“yhw” in Hebrew), “God” (“elohim” in Hebrew) and two other names indicating particular attributes of God: “the Highest” (“elyon” in Hebrew) and “Almighty” (“shaddai” in Hebrew). The Highest name represents wisdom and power of God ruling the world and heavens. Almighty is the name, which God uses to introduce Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob before He reveals His name Yahweh, Lord, to Moses. Although God is known and worshipped under many names, it is Yahweh, Lord, to which particular Divine intervention is connected.

Having seen His nation’s sufferings in Egyptian slavery, God hears their complaints and “descends” to take them away from the Pharaoh and leads them to the Promised Land. (Ex 3:7-8) The psalmist, in an intimate relationship with Lord, he cries out, “My God in whom I trust!” His trust seems boundless for God is named his “fortress”. God responds with maternal love and tenderness to such a declaration. The Lord sends angels to those who worship and via pure spiritual beings He spreads His protective arm over those who love Him: “The angel of Yahweh encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them.” (Ps 34:7) Enemies of our salvation obstinately set traps for us by making use of weaknesses in our human nature.

Angels, help us live in fear of God and wish only what leads to Him and eternal happiness.

Fr Henryk Skoczylas CSMA



DO YOU KNOW ... ?

# Why are angels fascinating?

**The first reason angels are fascinating is their otherness. They are utterly different from anything we ordinarily experience. They are fascinating for the same reason UFOs and extraterrestrial beings would be fascinating if they were real: they do not fit familiar earthly categories.**

**H**ow fascinated would you be if aliens really landed here, if you knew it was not just a science fiction story but literal fact? Well, it is fact. Angels are the real aliens among us, the real extraterrestrials. They overcome the safe

separation between the “out there” and the “down here”. Meeting an angel is a true “close encounter” with an alien. Second, we are naturally fascinated by intelligence in nonhuman form. That’s why we also find the higher, more intelligent animals

▶ fascinating and why little children naturally love stories about talking animals. We can't stand being alone in the universe.

I once gave a questionnaire to a few hundred of my college students and asked, among other strange questions, these two: (1) Are you very interested in angels? (2) Are you very interested in animals? I expected that these two questions would divide the students into the "materialists", who would be interested in animals but not angels, and the "spiritualists", who would be interested in angels but not animals. But I found instead that most students were interested either in both animals and angels or in neither.

Those who were interested in neither were usually majoring in, or interested in sociology, politics, or economics. The abstractions of ideology and finance are much more mundane than the smell of a dog. There may be dogs in heaven (why not?), but not dollars. A third reason we are fascinated with angels is that they are really superior beings. We are supposed to think that superiority is somehow suspicious and that equality is good and true and even beautiful. But deep down we know that equality is boring and that superiority and hierarchy and excellence are true and good and (especially) beautiful. We secretly long to bend the knee. Angels don't fit into our flat, one-level, ranch-style modern universe. They fit the old vertical universe. They're superior; they're supernatural.

Can you be a Christian without believing in angels? Angels are not at the very center of Christianity; Christ is. To be a Christian is essentially to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior. But Jesus clearly taught the existence of angels. So if angels don't exist, Jesus was in error;

if Jesus was in error, he was not divine and infallible; and if he was not divine and infallible, Christianity is essentially false. So to be a Christian includes believing in angels. Or perhaps the question means: Can you be saved, can you go to heaven, without believing in angels? Yes. You don't get to heaven by believing in angels. You get to heaven by believing in Jesus, by repenting of sin and accepting God's forgiveness. Or perhaps the question means: Can you be a good person without believing in angels? Of course. But "Christian" does not mean "good person". Some Christians are not very good people, and some very good people are not professing Christians.

All orthodox Christians believe the teachings of the Bible, and angels are clearly taught throughout the Bible. Catholics also believe all the public, official, creedal, binding teachings of the Church. These are *de fide*, of faith – not my faith but the Faith, the public, universal Catholic Faith. This includes angels. Angels are *de fide*. The Fourth Lateran Council explicitly declared that. So to be a believing Catholic is to believe (among other things) in angels. If angels are myths, the Church has been teaching error and she is not what she claims to be. In that case, she may be in error on other issues, on any issue.

As to what Catholics must believe about angels and about anything else, the new Catechism of the Catholic Church is the clearest and most recent definitive work to answer that question. Next to the Bible, it should be every Catholic's primary reference book today.

**Peter Kreeft,**

"Angels (and demons).

What do we really know about them?"

**The Modern world knows the image of a Merciful Jesus according to a vision of St Faustina. The more people are interested in Divine Mercy, the more dangers appear in misunderstanding that attribute of God, for we tend to forget about God's justice.**

There are five misinterpretations of Divine Mercy:

### 1. Divine Mercy is oblivion

The one who forgives, does not remember what they forgive. On the contrary, human memory is going to be improved so that we will remember all good and bad deeds we committed on earth. Divine mercy forgives, not forgets.

### 2. Divine Mercy is a prescription

Many people ask: "Let us live in the current moment. Let us not return to what had happened. Why shall we recollect the past?" But God requires full responsibility which reaches eternity.

### 3. Divine Mercy is tolerance

We should take people as they are; they have a right to do what they consider good because they are free. Tolerance is used as an argument for misunderstood freedom. However, the word "tolerance" does not exist in the Bible. Instead, there is "patient love", which waits

# Justice or Mercy?

for a person to take responsibility for their conduct. Patient love does not connive at bad deeds. God is not tolerant as the world wants Him to be. He is our Father who never agrees to misuse freedom by His children. He waits so that we could become smarter; He is patient, not tolerant.

## 4. Excessive trust in Divine Mercy is treated by people as a gate to sins

However, the Church considers such an attitude one of the most deadly sins. "I can sin because I can confess," say those who think that Divine Mercy is like a washing machine cleaning all stains in their hearts. But the sin is not like a stain; it is like a razor blade cutting off connection between God's heart and mine. Lack of trust in human relationships causes hurts and puts distance between people. Our relationship with God is a thousand times more delicate than with others.

## 5. Divine Mercy relieves us of responsibility

We can observe the escape from responsibility almost everywhere: in broken marriages, in the poor raising of children, in politics and the economy, in dirty money, in broken holy orders, in lack of accountability for the media. There is no field of life where there would not be people escaping from responsibility. However, in the moment of death we will meet God's justice. No one can avoid His

justice. Divine Mercy is a chance for us to respect His justice and take responsibility for what we do. That chance is valid till our death; if we take it, we do not have to be afraid of God's justice for we will show Him our deeds settled in the Sacrament of Atonement.

## Why do we deform Divine Mercy?

The answer consists of many elements but let us suggest one; it is the fall of parental authority in families. Modern parents are no longer guardians of their families, they are not seen as having any obligations towards their children and do not bring them up to be responsible. It is often that those children are aged 40 or more nowadays and they do not respect their parents. Moreover, children may overlay an image of a weak father onto God. According to them, God is then seen as weak.

We should never forget that God is just and merciful. He would not be perfect if He was only just and did not take into consideration the possibility of people's conversion. A just God wishes to forgive us for each bad deed if only we would take responsibility for it here on earth. A just God wants to bring to responsibility, even to responsibility for His Mercy. We should thank God for His justice for He punishes for bad deeds and rewards for good ones. And let us realize that there are much more good deeds in our lives than the bad ones. So we can be sure that God will reward us in eternity.



If we happen to commit a sin, we may not throw it away. Instead, we may bring it to a Merciful God with remorse. God will take our deed and ask us to plant it in our gardens so that it could bear fruits of Divine Mercy. We can trust God because he is just; we can meet Him even when we disappoint Him because He is merciful. Let us sing Him a thanksgiving song today and forever.

Fr Edward Staniek

Sermon said on the Divine Mercy Sunday, 2009, in Felician Sisters' Church of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cracow

# Michael, Michael of the morning...

**This is the true story of a Marine wounded in Korea in 1950. Writing to his mother, he told her of a fascinating encounter he experienced in the war. Father Walter Muldy, a navy chaplain who spoke to the young Marine and his mother as well as to the outfit commander, always affirmed the veracity of this narrative.**

**W**e heard it from someone who read the original letter and retell the story here in all its details and in the first person to better convey some of the impact it must have had when first told by the son to his mother.

Dear Mom,

I am writing to you from a hospital bed. Do not worry, Mom, I am okay. I was wounded, but the doctor says that I will be up in no time. But that is not what I have to tell you, Mom. Something happened to me that I do not dare tell anyone else for fear of their disbelief. But I have to tell you, the one person I can confide in, though even you may find it hard to believe.

You remember the prayer to Saint Michael that you taught me to pray when I was little: "Michael, Michael of the morning..." Before I left home for Korea, you urged me to remember this prayer before any confrontation with the enemy. But you really did not have to remind me, Mom. I have always prayed it, and when I got to Korea, I sometimes said it a couple of times a day while marching or resting. Well, one day, we were told to move forward to scout for Commies.

It was a really cold day. As I was walking along, I perceived another

fellow walking beside me, and I looked to see who it was. He was a big fellow, a Marine about 6'4" and built proportionally. Funny, but I did not know him, and I thought I knew everyone in my unit. I was glad to have the company and broke the silence between us: "Chilly today, isn't it?" Then I chuckled because suddenly it seemed absurd to talk about the weather when we were advancing to meet the enemy. He chuckled too, softly.

"I thought I knew everyone in my outfit," I continued, "but I have never seen you before."

"No," he agreed, "I have just joined. The name is Michael."

"Really?! That's mine, too."

"I know," the Marine said, "Michael, Michael of the morning..."

Mom, I was really surprised that he knew about my prayer, but I had taught it to many of the other guys, so I supposed that the newcomer must have picked it up from someone else. As a matter of fact, it had got around to the extent that some of the fellows were calling me "Saint Michael."

Then, out of the blue, Michael said, "There's going to be trouble ahead." I wondered how he could know that. I was breathing hard from the march, and my breath hit the cold air like dense clouds of fog. Michael seemed to be

in top shape because I could not see his breath at all. Just then, it started to snow heavily, and soon it was so dense I could no longer hear or see the rest of my outfit. I got a little scared and yelled, "Michael!" Then I felt his strong hand on my shoulder and heard his voice in my ear, "It is going to clear up soon."

It did clear up, suddenly. And then, just a short distance ahead of us, like so many dreadful realities, were seven Commies, looking rather comical in their funny hats. But there was nothing funny about them now; their guns were steady and pointed straight in our direction.

"Down, Michael!!" I yelled as I dove for cover. Even as I was hitting the ground, I looked up and saw Michael still standing, as if paralysed by fear, or so I thought at the time. Bullets were spurt-ing all over the place, and Mom, there was no way those Commies could have missed at that short distance. I jumped up to pull him down, and then I was hit. The pain was like a hot fire in my chest, and as I fell, my head swooned and I remember thinking, "I must be dying..."

Someone was laying me down, strong arms were holding me and laying me gently on the snow. Through the daze, I opened my eyes, and the sun seemed to blaze in my eyes. Michael





was standing still, and there was a terrible splendour in his face. Suddenly, he seemed to grow, like the sun, the splendor increasing intensely around him like the wings of an angel. As I slipped into unconsciousness, I saw that Michael held a sword in his hand, and it flashed like a million lights.

Later on, when I woke up, the rest of the guys came to see me with the sergeant.

“How did you do it, son?” he asked me.

“Where is Michael?” I asked in reply.

“Michael who?” The sergeant seemed puzzled.

“Michael, the big Marine walking with me, right up to the last moment. I saw him there as I fell.”

“Son”, the sergeant said gravely, “you are the only Michael in my unit.

I hand-picked all you fellows, and there is only one Michael. You. And son, you were not walking with anyone. I was watching you because you were too far off from us, and I was worried. Now tell me, son,” he repeated, “how did you do it?”

It was the second time he had asked me that, and I found it irritating. “How did I do what?”

“How did you kill those seven Commies? There was not a single bullet fired from your rifle.”

“What?”

“Come on, son. They were strewn all around you, each one killed by a swordstroke.”

And that, Mom, is the end of my story. It may have been the pain, or the blazing sun, or the chilling cold. I do not know, Mom, but there is one thing I am sure about. It happened.

Love,

**Michael**

Taken from the website:  
[www.americanneedsfatima.org](http://www.americanneedsfatima.org)  
 on 16th May, 2010

This prayer that the soldier referred to is likely a take-off of Chesterton’s poem, see below:

*Michael, Michael, of the morning,  
 Fresh chord of Heaven adorning,  
 Keep me safe today  
 And in time of temptation,  
 Drive the devil away.*

## “To St Michael, In Time of Peace”

G.K. Chesterton (ca. 1929)

Michael, Michael: Michael of the Morning,  
 Michael of the Army of the Lord.  
 Stiffen thou the hand upon the still sword, Michael,  
 Folded and shut upon the sheathed sword, Michael,  
 Under the fullness of the white robes falling,  
 Gird us with the secret of the sword.

When the world cracked because of a sneer in heaven,  
 Leaving out of all time a scar upon the sky,  
 Thou didst rise up against the Horror in the highest,  
 Dragging down the highest that looked down on the Most High:  
 Rending from the seventh heaven the hell of exaltation  
 Down the seven heavens till the dark seas burn:  
 Thou that in thunder threwest down the Dragon  
 Knowest in what silence the Serpent can return.

Down through the universe the vast night falling,  
 (Michael, Michael: Michael of the Morning!)  
 Far down the universe the deep calms calling,  
 (Michael, Michael: Michael of the Sword!)  
 Bid us not forget in the baths of all forgetfulness,  
 In the sigh long drawn from the frenzy and the fretfulness,  
 In the huge holy sempiternal silence,  
 In the beginning was the Word.

When from the deeps a dying God astounded  
 Angels and devils who do all but die,  
 Seeing Him fallen where thou couldst not follow,  
 Seeing Him mounted where thou couldst not fly,  
 Hand on the hilt, thou hast halted all thy legions,  
 Waiting the Tetelestai and the acclaim,  
 Swords that salute Him dead and everlasting  
 God beyond God and greater than His Name.

Round us and over us the cold thoughts creeping,  
 (Michael, Michael: Michael of the battle-cry!)  
 Round us and under us the thronged worlds sleeping,  
 (Michael, Michael: Michael of the Charge!)  
 Guard us the Word; the trysting and the trusting  
 Edge upon honour and the blade unrusting.  
 Fine as the hair and tauter than the harpstring,  
 Ready as when it rang upon the target

He that giveth peace unto us; not as the world giveth:  
 He that giveth law unto us; not as the scribes:  
 Shall He be softened for the softening of the cities  
 Patient in usury; delicate in bribes?  
 They that come to quiet us, saying the sword is broken,  
 Break men with famine, fetter them with gold,  
 Sell them as sheep; and He shall know the selling,  
 For He was more than murdered. He was sold.

Michael, Michael: Michael of the Mastering,  
 Michael of the marching on the mountains of the Lord,  
 Marshal the world and purge of rot and riot,  
 Rule through the world till all the world be quiet:  
 Only establish when the World is broken,  
 What is unbroken is the Word.

*It is in Vol. 10 of the Collected Works, p. 174.*

# America's oldest church (Part 2)

**The oldest operational church in the United States is not found on the U.S. coast either east or west, but instead, like a spear thrust deep into the heart, is found near the centre of the land.**

## San Miguel through the years

In 1692 the Spanish returned and regained control of New Mexico. Governor General Don Diego de Vargas at once inspected San Miguel and “ordered its prompt restoration and repair.” Repairs and restorations took 17 years to complete and in 1710 a massive beam was installed to support the choir loft. San Miguel was the center of Christian worship in Santa Fe until a few years later when the new military chapel, Our Lady of Light, was built. The mission was then seldom used for the next 70 years and fell into serious disrepair.

In 1798, 200 years after it was first built say the Christian Brothers, “the Mayor of Santa Fe, Alfarez Don Antonio Jose Ortiz, took pity on the Old San Miguel Mission and, with great personal expense, made numerous major repairs including the construction of the beautiful altar screen that can still be seen in the present day sanctuary.” A three-tiered tower was constructed in 1830 but was destroyed during an unprecedented 4.5 earthquake that came on the heels of a powerful winter storm in 1872. So, in 1887

with no funds to fix the mission, the Christian Brothers determined to tear down the old church. News of the mission's fate soon brought people from all over the region, young and old, willing to do whatever they could to save San Miguel. Repairs and restorations once again spared the mission the dusty fate of most of the other original mission churches in New Mexico and have since earned this beloved church the title of the “Oldest Church in America.”

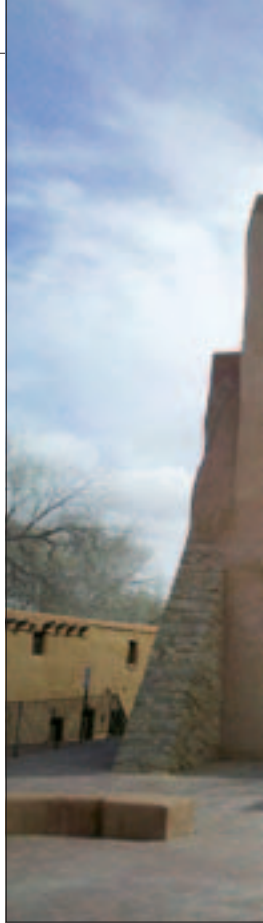
Unfortunately there are concerns mentioned by a clerk at the mission gift shop that the Old San Miguel Mission has again fallen on hard times and is once again threatened. Like many other churches in the area, it may be sold into private hands, cease operating as a Catholic church and instead become a museum.

## An array of treasures

Like a sunken Spanish galleon, San Miguel Mission is awash in valuable and historic treasures. Visitors can peer through plexiglas-covered holes in the walls and the floors to view the original walls, and the sanctuary

steps. The ceiling is made in the original style with a series of large wooden beams creating a long, narrow worship space. Ten rows of wooden pews have been added to the chapel and the mud floor has been covered with wood. Inside, the chapel is full of wonderful artistic treasures. The wooden altar screen dates from 1798 and is the oldest wooden “reredos” in New Mexico. According to the Christian Brothers, “The top rectangular painting is of St Michael flanked by St. Teresa on the left and St. Gertrude on the right. In the center is the painting of Christ the Nazarene with St Francis of Assisi to the left and St. Louis on the right.” Standing in the center niche is a carved wooden statue of St Michael, which is believed to be the oldest statue of St Michael in the United States and celebrates his victory over Satan.

The statue is covered with gesso and gold leaf and dates from at least 1709 when it was brought from Mexico. There is also a 400-year-old painting of St Michael the Archangel on buffalo hide along with a couple of other very rare buffalo hide paintings.





Most paintings of this time and style were destroyed in the 1680 Pueblo Indian revolt.

## The bell of St Michael

In the back of the chapel, behind the last pew and under the choir loft rests a huge bronze bell that hangs from a wooden scaffold. Visitors are encouraged to ring the bell with a hammer. “Ring the bell of San Miguel and spirits will return you to Santa Fe,” says historian Richard Lindsley. “If you ring it too much, you may end up moving here.” The bell is inscribed *San Jose – ROGAD – por nosotros 9 De 1356* (“St. Joseph pray for us!” December, 9, 1356.) It is rumoured that the 780-pound, 3-foot-high bronze bell was created in San Jose, Spain, then shipped to Mexico and finally carried north to Santa Fe by the Ortiz

family in 1712. Others argue that the bell was made in 1856 by a local blacksmith.

In his autobiography, *Life of the Right Reverend Joseph P. Machebeuf, D.D.* (1908) the first bishop of Denver, Colorado, described the bell in San Miguel mission. He said: “In a little room at the base of the tower of San Miguel is the sweetest-toned bell in America, and perhaps the richest. It too has its history filled with poetry and romance of the ages of faith. In 1356, so the legend runs, the Spaniards were fighting the Moors. Battle after battle was fought and lost by the Christians, until the people vowed a bell to St. Joseph as a gauge of their confidence in his assistance. They brought their gold and silver plate, their rings and their bracelets, their brooches and earrings and cast them into the melting pot with the other metal. The bell was cast, and in its tone were the richness of gold and the sweetness of sacrifice. It sounded the defeat of Islam in Spain, and then came to ring in the birth of Christianity in Mexico, and with the Padres it found its way up the Rio Grande to rest and ring out its sweet notes over the City of Holy Faith.”

In the same book, Rev. W.J. Howlett remembers the bell in poetry:

*“In the old adobe church stands the bell. From the ancient tower its notes have ceased to swell O’er the houses, quaint and low whence it summoned long ago Spanish conqueror, Indian slave, all to gather beneath this nave. Pealed it many a bygone day O’er the roofs of Santa Fe. And before that, century long had it sent its sacred song O’er the hills and vales of distant, sunny Spain. Six long centuries have passed since the ancient bell was cast, and sounded forth its first long sweet refrain. Strike it now and you shall hear, sweet and soft, and silver clear, such a note as thrills your heart with its tender, magic art. Echoing softly through the gloom of that ancient, storied room. Dying softly, far away in the church at Santa Fe.”*

And so, the little mission of San Miguel, a Shrine to St Michael, nestled in the highlands of the New Mexico desert stands as a beacon to America and to the Christian world, to return to our roots and call upon the protection and patronage of St Michael, defender of all who are sacrificed for the benefit of others.

**Dede Laugesen, USA**

# The cherubim

**In Catholic theology, the cherubim are the second highest rank in the angelic hierarchy, below the Seraphim.**

(Part 2)



**T**he cherubim are one of the company of angels spoken of in Hebrews 12:22 which have an indefinite number. It is important to know the classification of angels to better understand the organization of God.

Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologica* (I.108) followed the *Hierarchia* (6.7) in dividing the angels into three hierarchies each of which contains three orders, based on their proximity to God, corresponding to the nine orders of angels recognized by St. Gregory.

1. Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones;
2. Dominations, Virtues, and Powers;
3. Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.

The word cherub (cherubim is the Hebrew masculine plural) is a word borrowed from the Assyrian kirubu, from karâbu, it means “to be near”, like a personal servant or bodyguard. It was commonly used of those heavenly spirits, who closely surrounded the Majesty of God and paid Him intimate service. It came to mean as much as “Angelic Spirit”.

## Worship and praise

The cherub have an intimate knowledge of God and continually worship and praise Him. They are first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis 3:24, “After He drove the man out, He placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.” Prior to his rebellion,

Satan was a cherub (Ezekiel 28:12-15). The tabernacle and temple along with their articles contained many representations of cherubim (Exodus 25:17-22; 26:1, 31; 36:8; 1 Kings 6:23-35; 7:29-36; 8:6-7; 1 Chronicles 28:18; 2 Chronicles 3:7-14; 2 Chronicles 3:10-13; 5:7-8; Hebrews 9:5).

## Cherubim's wings can be heard

However chapters 1 and 10 of the book of Ezekiel describe the Cherub (Ezekiel 1:5). Each are said to have four faces: that of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle. Also, that they possess the torso and hands of a man, the feet of a calf and have four wings. Two wings extended upward and meet above the Cherub and in doing so hold up the throne of God. The other two wings are extended down and actually cover the Cherub's body. Their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, are full of eyes round about. (Ezekiel 10:1-22).

Ezekiel's vision of God's glory described as the appearance of a sapphire stone and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man high above it. This is the likeness of the glory of the Lord. “The dazzling light of the Lord's presence rose up from the creatures and moved to the entrance of the Temple. Then the cloud filled the Temple, and the courtyard was blazing with the light.

The noise made by the creatures' wings was heard even in the outer courtyard. It sounded like the voice of Almighty God”. (Ezekiel 10:1-22).

The cherubim became the power by which the Lord God's chariots or throne was able to fly. (Ezekiel 1:14-28).

Ezekiel witnessed the departure of the Lord's glory from the temple. The glory went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the temple. The glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. The cherubim lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in the sight of Ezekiel. (Ezekiel 10:2-19).

## Holiness and power

Cherubs and Cherubim are most frequently referred to in the Bible to designate sculptured, engraved, and embroidered figures used in the furniture and ornamentation of the Jewish Sanctuary. The imagery of Revelation 4:6-9 also seems to be describing cherubim. The cherubim serve the purpose of magnifying the holiness and power of God. This is one of their main responsibilities throughout the Bible. In addition to singing God's praises, they also serve as a visible reminder of the majesty and glory of God and His abiding presence with His people.

In Genesis, two Cherubim were placed by God at the entrance of paradise. Also in 1 Kings 6:23, and 2



Chronicles 3:11, Solomon placed in the Holy of Holies two huge Cherubim of olive-wood overlaid with gold. “They stood on their feet and their faces were towards the house”, which probably means they faced the Holy Place or the Entrance.

Cherubim were embroidered on the Veil of the Tabernacle, separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. “With blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen” they were made. How many such cherubim were embroidered on the Paroket, or Veil, we do not know. It is often supposed that as this veil screened the Holy Holies, two large-sized figures to represent guardian spirits or keepers were depicted. Exod, xxvi, 31,

## Do not worship angels

We are warned in (Colossians 2:18) not to worship angels. Let no man defraud your reward by delighting in false humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.

In the Book of Revelations and after which John saw and heard all that he was permitted, he fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which had shown him all those things. The angel told him NOT to bow down because he was a fellow servant, and a brother of the prophets, instead he should worship the Lord God. (Revelation 22:8-9).

**Noreen Bavister, England**

## Brief introduction to the Nine Choirs of Angels

### 1. Seraphim

The Seraphim is said to be the highest order of angels who guard God’s throne. They are often depicted as ‘burning angels’ to represent them on fire with love for God. In the Bible Isaiah saw them as six winged beings. These heavenly creatures praise God.

### 2. Cherubim

The word Cherubim is said to mean ‘fullness of knowledge’. The Cherubim have the honour of observing and keeping the records of God’s creative powers. Cherubims are said to have four wings and four faces. The Cherubims also act as heavenly counselors and are the seekers of the eternal truth.

### 3. Thrones

Throne Angels represent the divine majesty and are associated with the power of judgement. They carry out God’s justice according to spiritual and universal laws. The Thrones also act as angels who are friends of all the planets. It is the Thrones who will drive forward God’s chariot, often they are portrayed as angels who carry the scales of justice.

### 4. Dominions

The Dominions are angels of leadership and are said to ensure that God’s will is carried out by other angels. They help balance the force of creation of the material and spiritual worlds. The Dominions represent the superiority of wisdom over intellect and govern the natural world and the elements.

### 5. Virtues

Virtues are known as angels who watch over the heavenly bodies and nature. The Virtues are often associated with miracles performed on earth. Shining

bright and often depicted with swords, shields or sceptres, these wonderful angels will assist you in your darkest hour.

### 6. Powers

Powers are warrior angels who maintain order around planet earth and protect it from being overthrown by Satan, defending the cosmos and human souls. They fight against evil spirits who attempt to wreak chaos through human beings.

### 7. Principalities

The Principalities are a realm of angels who keep a watchful eye of the nations of planet earth and its leaders. They are protectors of religion, giving strength in times of hardship.

### 8. Archangels

The Archangels are the most frequently mentioned throughout the Bible. They are the leaders of the angelic armies and are Holy messengers of God. There are only three archangels acknowledged by the Catholic Faith, Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. They also command God’s armies and act as guardian angels to leaders of world movements. They may be of this or other hierarchies like St Michael the Archangel.

### 9. Angels

These include guardian angels who are assigned by God to every human being at the moment of conception. Angels are closest to the material world and human beings. They deliver our prayers to God and return with God’s answers. Guardian angels have the capacity to access all other angels at any time, their role is to watch over us during our lives. They are also the most caring and social of beings who assist those who ask for help.

# BIBLE PHONE NUMBERS

## USE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY!

**W**e all experience difficult moments in our lives, but do not worry. God has provided us with His Word which always brings consolation and peace. Angels in Heaven just wait to answer our calls so do not hesitate when in suffering.



## HANDY REFERENCE LIST OF EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS:

- When in sorrow ..... call **John 14**
- When men fail you ..... call **Psalm 27**
- When you have sinned ..... call **Psalm 51**
- When you worry ..... call **Matthew 6:19-34**
- When you are in danger ..... call **Psalm 91**
- When God seems far away ..... call **Psalm 139**
- When your faith needs stirring ..... call **Hebrews 11**
- When you are lonely and fearful ..... call **Psalm 23**
- When you grow bitter and critical ..... call **I Corinthians 13**
- When you feel down and out ..... call **Romans 8:31**
- When you want peace and rest ..... call **Matthew 11:25-30**
- When the world seems bigger than God ..... call **Psalm 90**
- When you want Christian assurance ..... call **Romans 8:1-30**
- When you leave home for labor or travel ..... call **Psalm 121**
- When your prayers grow narrow or selfish ..... call **Psalm 67**
- When you want courage for a task ..... call **Joshua 31**
- When you think of investments and returns ..... call **Mark 10**
- If you are depressed ..... call **Psalm 27**
- If your pocketbook is empty ..... call **Psalm 37**
- If you are losing confidence in people ..... call **I Corinthians 13**
- If people seem unkind ..... call **John 15**
- If discouraged about your work ..... call **Psalm 126**
- If self pride/greatness takes hold ..... call **Psalm 19**
- If you want to be fruitful ..... call **John 15**
- For understanding of Christianity ..... call **II Corinthians 5:15-19**
- For a great invention/opportunity ..... call **Isaiah 55**
- For how to get along with fellow men ..... call **Romans 12**
- For Paul's secret to happiness ..... call **Colossians 3:12-17**

## PLEASE NOTE:

Emergency numbers may be dialed direct. No operator assistance is necessary. All lines to Heaven are open 24 hours a day! Feed your FAITH, and DOUBT will starve to death! Please use and feel free to pass on!

## ALTERNATE NUMBERS:

- For dealing with fear ..... call **Psalm 34:7**
- For security ..... call **Psalm 121:3**
- For assurance ..... call **Mark 8:35**
- For reassurance ..... call **Psalm 145:18**

Unknown contributor

**Africa**

Alfons Van Craeynest  
 Divine Mercy Catholic Bookstore  
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 South Africa  
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**Australia**

Sonia Starc  
 20 Field St, Craigieburn  
 Victoria 3064  
 Australia  
 Email: starcsonia@hotmail.com  
 Phone: +61-413-314-718

**Colombia**

Gabriella Casas  
 Carreara 53B No 121-80  
 Bogotá  
 Colombia  
 South America  
 Email: gabcasas07@hotmail.com

**Eire and Northern Ireland**

Holy Angels & Divine Mercy  
 Oak Lodge  
 Thomastown, Duleek.  
 Co.Meath. Eire  
 Email: holyangelsmagazine@gmail.com  
 Phone: +353-87-252-2862 – office hours

**Fr Piotr Prusakiewicz** *Chief editor*

The Angel Magazine Head Office  
 The Congregation  
 of Saint Michael the Archangel

ul. Pilsudskiego 248/252  
 05-261 Marki, Warsaw, Poland  
 Email: redakcja.kjb@gmail.com

**Philippines**

Davina M Padill (LADMA)  
 Lipa Archdiocesan Divine Mercy  
 Pastoral Center  
 Gen Luna St. corner P. Laygo St.  
 Sabang, Lipa City  
 4217 Philippines  
 Phone: + 63-939-913-1359  
 Landline: + 63-43-756-5583

**Scotland**

Holy Angels & Divine Mercy  
 Email:  
 catholicolyangels@hotmail.com  
 Phone: +44 (0) 7944 581 656

**United Kingdom / Worldwide**

Holy Angels & Divine Mercy  
 P.O. Box 4332 Harlington  
 Dunstable Beds  
 LU6 9DG UK  
 Phone Noreen:  
 +44 (0)779-531-8605  
 Phone Alison:  
 +44 (0)780-137-2166  
 Email: holyangelsinfo@gmail.com

**USA and Canada**

Dede Laugesen  
 P.O. Box 543  
 Monument, CO 80132 USA  
 Phone: +1-800-511-1514  
 Email: dede@holyangelsmagazine.com  
 www.holyangelsmagazine.com

**Day of Prayer to the Divine Mercy**

Invoking the intercession of Our Lady of Walsingham

**Saturday  
 24th September 2011**

**9.30am to 4.30pm**

**Westminster Cathedral  
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# Chaplet of St Michael

L. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

A. *Amen*

Say the following prayer on the medal:

*O God, come to my assistance.*

*O Lord, make haste to help me.*

*Glory be to the Father, etc.*

1. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Seraphim, may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. Amen.

*(1 Our Father on the first large bead, 3 Hail Mary on the next three small beads)*

2. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Cherubim, may the Lord vouchsafe to grant us grace to leave the ways

of wickedness to run in the paths of Christian perfection. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary)*

3. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Thrones, may the Lord infuse into our hearts a true and sincere spirit of humility. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary)*

4. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Dominions, may the Lord give us grace to govern our senses and subdue our unruly passions. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary)*

5. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Powers, may the Lord vouchsafe to protect our souls against the snares and temptations of the devil. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary)*

6. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Virtues, may the Lord deliver us from evil and suffer us not to fall into temptation. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary)*

7. By the intercession of St Michael and the Celestial Choir of Principalities, may God fill our souls with a true spirit of obedience. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary)*

8. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Archangels, may the Lord give us perseverance in faith and in all good works, in order that we gain the glory of Paradise. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary)*



9. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Angels, may the Lord grant us to be protected by them in this mortal life and conducted hereafter to eternal glory. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary)*

*Recite on the next four beads:*

1 Our Father  
in honour of St Michael

1 Our Father  
in honour of St Gabriel

1 Our Father  
in honour of St Raphael

1 Our Father  
in honour of our Guardian Angel

O glorious prince, St Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King, and our admirable conductor, who shines with excellence and superhuman virtue, vouchsafe to deliver us from evil, who turn to you with confidence, and enable us by your gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day. Amen.

July 29, 2011  
125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## Prayer of Pope Leo XIII

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the Divine Power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.