



Messengers from a loving God

# The Angels

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A large, detailed sculpture of an angel, likely St. Raphael, is the central focus. The angel is depicted in a white, flowing robe with intricate details. The angel's right arm is raised, holding a sword with a decorative hilt. The left hand rests on a staff or a similar object. The sculpture is set against a dark, textured background, possibly a wall or a large piece of fabric. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of the figure.

## St Raphael helps to deal with depression

The Annunciation

What do the angels know about people?

The power of the Divine Mercy Chaplet

Saint Padre Pio

The Angels in the life of St Faustina's confessor

Apparitions of St Michael



It is a pleasure to welcome you to the second quarterly edition of "The Angels" – Messengers from a Loving God. Thank you for all your letters, emails and positive feedback. We are glad to hear that it gives you knowledge, spiritual input and inspiration for living a holy life.

People may question the existence of Angels. But it can be argued that being blind does not exclude the reality of color in the world. Similarly, being deaf doesn't mean that sounds do not exist. If someone doesn't believe in Angels it doesn't lead to the conclusion that they do not exist. The angels exist regardless of whether someone believes in them or not.

They are the real messengers from a loving God. Saint Sister Faustina wrote in her Diary "O God in your unfathomable mercy you have created angelic spirits and admitted them to your love and to your divine intimacy. Although you bestowed on them so generously, O Lord, the splendor of love and beauty, Your fullness was not diminished in the least. And if you have allowed them to participate in your happiness that is only due to the abyss of your mercy..." (Diary 1741).

This magazine on the Angels is published by our religious order, which has an angelic patron (Saint Michael the Archangel). We would

like to make everyone aware of the presence of our heavenly companions. Although they are invisible, they accompany us all the time, they lead us to the Merciful heart of Jesus Christ. Their purpose towards God is to do perfectly what we on earth do so imperfectly, that is to worship Him.

Let's put into practice the advice of Pope Saint Leon the Great who said: "Make friends with the holy angels and we shall find in them most loving companions, our champions against the malice and rage of the devils, our advocates at the judgment seat of God and companions in glory throughout the endless eternity".

I kindly ask you 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 have helped you in your life. Please contact the office or the coordinators whose details can be found on this page.

Father Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

# The Angels

## Messengers from a Loving God

A Quarterly Magazine on Holy Angels

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# Mary's dialogue with the Archangel Gabriel

*In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.'* (Luke 1, 26:28)

Although Luke does not mention how the archangel introduced himself to Mary, she knew his name as well as the fact that he was sent to Elizabeth. Gabriel seemed to be the only Divine being that was familiar with God's plan of the Incarnation before it was realized. Other angels found out about it on the night of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The words 'the angel went to her' may have two meanings: firstly, Mary and Gabriel met in her house; secondly, it could be a deep spiritual experience, in which the appearance of the angel resembled a dream.

At the beginning of the Announcement the archangel enumerated Mary's titles: she was highly favored and enjoyed God's grace. *Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, 'Don't be afraid, Mary, you have found should be favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.'* (Luke 1, 29:31). She felt astonished and worried. She never thought about herself as the Mother of God. It appears significant that she was surprised by angelic words rather than by his visit. It may suggest that as

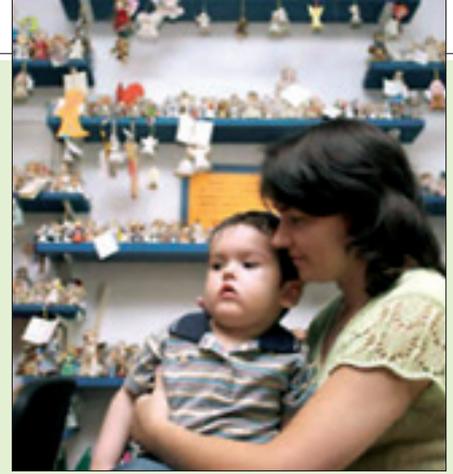
a mystic woman she had already experienced the Divine world. Gabriel calmed Mary down and announced that apart from the Lord's grace she had obtained another gift: God had chosen her to be the mother of His Son. The information was clear – she would deliver a boy, who was going to be named Jesus. Mary became responsible for the Child. *'How will this be?', Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin.'* (Luke 1,34). Her question appears justified for she decided to serve God as a virgin. Mary presented the Lord with her pure heart at His own disposal. *The angel answered, 'The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.'* (Luke 1,35). It was God Himself, who took care of her and her baby; she would be filled with the Holy Spirit when pregnant. *'Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God'* (Luke 1,36:37). The news was unbelievable: old and infertile Zechariah's wife would be a mother! The most important sentence Gabriel said was that the word 'impossible' did not exist for God even



if something seemed unfeasible for human beings. *'I am the Lord's servant', Mary answered. 'May it be to me as you have said.' Then the angel left her.* (Luke 1,38). Mary's answer was as clear as an angelic announcement: she agreed to conceive, deliver and bring up a Divine Son. Gabriel waited for her agreement to respect Mary's freedom. After taking his leave the young woman realised that the only person, who she could talk to about the mystery, was her relative Elizabeth who also experienced Divine Mercy.

Father Edward Staniek

# Chapel of the Angels



Interview with Fr **Przemysław Woźniak**, a chaplain in the children's hospital in Katowice – Poland

**Prayers and hope can sometimes lead to faith-healing. Do you observe this in your hospital?**

Well, it's hard to measure it. What usually happens, is when a patient is diagnosed with an illness they turn to God. Yet zealous faith and enthusiasm may only last for a short time. When God does not work a miracle people rely on themselves. It also occurs that when a family has prayed a lot and a sick person is cured, some may forget to thank God for the healing.

**Do you know cases of spectacular faith-healing?**

Yes, a girl was admitted to us who had been in an accident with a lorry. The prognosis was hopeless; the doctors had considered amputation of both legs but she recovered after a few months. Now she's healthy. I also remember a case of an altar boy who suffered from encephalitis. After a month we all lost hope but we were afraid to tell his parents that their son would not survive. Now, he's still alive, which was an obvious miracle for me. I also remember Przemek, a little boy with a malignant brain tumor with 9 metastases. Doctors gave him 3 months to live and that was

2 years ago. The boy is healthy but medical science cannot explain how this is possible.

**Do doctors visit the angelic chapel? What do they feel about it?**

Most of the staff are enthusiastic about it and many bring their students here.

**'Go, your faith has made you well', said Jesus to one of the sick. Could that be a key message from this hospital?**

Yes, it could be. But it should be remembered that sometimes faith-healing occurs in one's heart, not one's body. We have had patients that were not cured but they still looked upon their disease as a grace from God.

**And what if faith and prayers are insufficient and a child dies; what should one say to a despairing family?**

People lose sense of their life, especially if their beloved child's death is unexpected. St Paul advises us to rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn. I try to make bereft parents aware of the fact that they have their own private saint who prays for them in heaven.

**Who needs the chapel more, the sick children or their families?**

All of them need it. Children understand that therapy may take a long time and experiencing the chapel full of little angels makes them joyful. Many parents visit it when their child is undergoing treatment. The chapel is always open and everyone is welcome. The staff and students often come here as well. I celebrate the Mass three times a week; we organize retreat services with the litany to Our Holy Mother in May and rosary services in October.

**Working here as a chaplain must be exhausting?**

Oh yes but I'm motivated by my work here. I am pleased that I can visit Christ in each sick person and help them in any way I can. I sit by their beds, talk to them and support them. It seems that the sick children appreciate my service more than the children I once taught in school. Sick children are more open towards God; that is why it is easier to muster up energy to work. My gratitude for God's gifts increases each day I'm here.

Interviewed by **Herbert Oleschko**

# Exorcisms of Padre Pio

In January 1903, 21 days before he took the Franciscan habit, a young Francesco Forgione (later known as Padre Pio) had a vision, in which he fought with evil attacking souls. This battle lasted for 50 years, during the long hours spent everyday in the confessional. The only break occurred when Padre Pio was forbidden to hear confessions.

## Physical torment

Although Padre Pio quite seldom conducted exorcisms, a few cases had wide repercussions. In the summer of 1964, a possessed eighteen year old girl waited for Padre Pio in a church vestry. When he appeared, the girl started to shout and blaspheme but Padre Pio seemed not to care. However, a demon that possessed the girl attacked the Saint. Later that night a terrible noise woke up all the monks and they heard Padre Pio scream, *Brothers help me! Help me!* They discovered him the saint lying on the floor in his room. His nose and mouth were bleeding and his right eyebrow ridge was hurt as if someone had hit him. The next day Padre Pio was so weak he could not celebrate the Mass.

Several priests made futile exorcisms over the girl, during which the demon boasted about breaking Padre Pio's spine. A few days later when Padre Pio met the girl again, she screamed and fainted. When she regained consciousness, she was free.

Lots of seemingly possessed people were brought to Padre Pio. He would look at a person as if he were scrutinizing them to see their souls and then he advised how to cure them.



## Satan is afraid of me

During another exorcism a possessed woman tried to kick and bite those who held her. She shouted *'I cannot do any harm to you because you've got him (Padre Pio) next to you; he is praying; he helps you!'* It is significant that even nowadays people who have been set free from demonic possession relate how they had seen Padre Pio during the exorcism.

Sometimes the possessed person attempted to fling themselves onto Padre Pio but he would reply

with such phrases as *'Be silent! That's enough! Stop it!'* or *'Get out of here!'* In most cases possessed people regained peace in their heart. Fr Tarcisio (a companion of Padre Pio's) witnessed that the demons would repeat to Padre Pio: *'You make much more trouble than St Michael! and Stop snatching souls from us and we'll stop tormenting you!'* When Father Tarcisio asked Padre Pio if he had heard these words, the Saint replied: *'Satan is afraid of me.'*

Taken from: **Marco Tosatti**, *Padre Pio e il diavolo*. Gabriele Amorth racconta

# Pope John Paul II views on the angels

JOHN PAUL II GENERAL AUDIENCE: JULY 9, 1986

**1.** We cannot conclude our catechesis on God, the Creator of the world, without devoting adequate attention to a precise item of Divine Revelation: the creation of purely spiritual beings which Sacred Scripture calls “angels”. This creation appears clearly in the Creeds, especially in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed: “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, of all things (that is, entia or beings) seen and unseen”. We know that man enjoys a unique position within the sphere of creation: by his body he belongs to the visible world, while by his spiritual soul which vivifies the body, he is as it were *on the boundary* between the visible and invisible creation. To the latter, according to the Creed which the Church professes in the light of Revelation, belong other beings, purely spiritual, *therefore not proper to the visible world* even though present and working therein. They constitute a world apart.

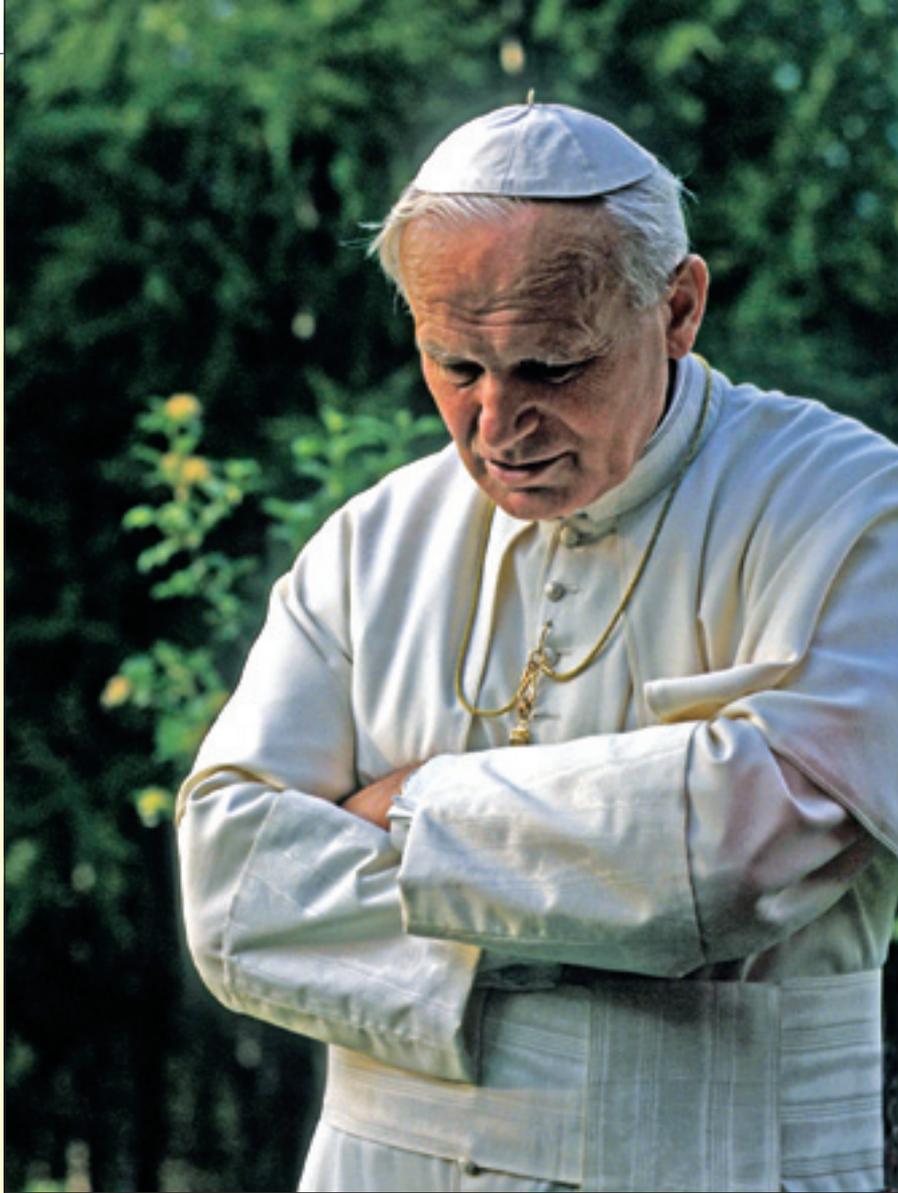
**2.** Today, as in times past, these spiritual beings are discussed with greater or lesser wisdom. One must recognize that at times there is great confusion, with the consequent risk of passing off as the Church’s faith on the angels what does not pertain to it, or, vice versa, of neglecting some important aspect of the revealed truth. The

existence of spiritual beings, which Sacred Scripture usually calls “angels”, was denied already in Christ’s time by the Sadducees (cf. **Acts 23:8**). It is denied also by *materialists and rationalists* of every age, but as a modern theologian acutely observes, “if one wishes to get rid of the angels, one must radically revise Sacred Scripture itself, and with it the whole history of salvation” (A. Winklhofer *Die Welt der Engel*, Ettal 1961, p. 144 note 2; in *Mysterium Salutis*, II, 2, p. 726). The whole of *Tradition* is unanimous on this point. The Church’s Creed is basically an echo of what Paul writes to the Colossians: “for in him (Christ) all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominations or principalities or authorities - all things were created through him and for him” (**Col 1:16**). That is to say, Christ who, as the Son-Word eternal and consubstantial with the Father, is the first-born of all creation (**Col 1:15**), is at the centre of the universe, as the reason and cornerstone of all creation, as we have already seen in the previous catecheses, and as we shall see later when we shall speak more directly of him.

**3.** The reference to the “primacy” of Christ helps us to understand that the truth about the existence and activity of the angels (good and bad) is *not the*

*central content of the word of God*. In revelation God speaks first of all “to men... and moves among them, in order to invite and receive them into his own company”, as we read in the Constitution *Dei Verbum* of the Second Vatican Council (DV, 2). Thus “the most intimate truth ... both about God and the salvation of man” is the central content of the revelation which “shines forth” more fully in the person of Christ (cf. DV, 2). The truth about the angels is *in a certain sense “collateral”*, though *inseparable* from the central revelation, which is the existence, the majesty and the glory of the Creator which shines forth in all creation (“seen” and “unseen”) and in God’s salvific action in the history of mankind. The angels *are not* therefore creatures *of the first order*, in the reality of Revelation, *though they fully belong to it*, so much so that sometimes we see them carrying out fundamental tasks in the name of God himself.

**4.** All this that pertains to creation enters, according to Revelation, into the mystery of Divine Providence, Vatican I, which we have quoted several times, states it in an exemplarily concise manner: “All that God created, he conserves and directs by his Providence reaching from end to end mightily and governing all things well” (cf. **Wis 8:1**). “All lies bare and



## Oh, Heavenly Angel!

*You are the Guardian  
of my lost trails  
You are the runner  
on the mountains of my ecstasies  
And stepping down  
Into my dark nights  
You must be very patient  
I feel the protection of Your wings  
Sometimes I feel Your fatigue  
Then I try to comfort You  
With a prayer, a gesture of mercy  
There are moments when I escape  
When You sleep,  
covered with Your white wing  
Indeed, I have my own will!  
Maybe You will sleep  
over my rebellious escape?  
But where to?  
Over there, where it is easier,  
nicer, where ...  
The cross doesn't "spoil"  
the landscape  
But I come back, my Angel  
I touch You with my sins carefully  
And I beseech You ...  
please forgive and rescue me.*

**Barbara Kacperska**



exposed to his eyes” (cf. **Heb 4:13**), even what will take place through the free initiative of creatures” (DS, 3003). Providence then embraces *also the world of pure spirits*, which are intellectual and free beings still more fully than men. *In Sacred Scripture* we find *important references to them*. There is also the revelation of a mysterious, though real, drama concerning these angelic creatures, without anything escaping divine Wisdom, which strongly (*fortiter*) and at the same time gently (*suaviter*) brings all to fulfillment in the kingdom of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We recognize above all that Providence, as the *loving* Wisdom of God, was manifested precisely in the

creation of purely spiritual beings, so as to express better the likeness of God in them who are so superior to all that is created in the visible world including man, who is also the indelible image of God. Also, God who is absolutely the perfect Spirit, is reflected especially in spiritual beings who *by nature*, that is *by reason of their spirituality*, are nearer to him than material creatures, and who constitute as it were the closest “circle” to the Creator. Sacred Scripture offers abundant explicit evidence of this maximum closeness to God of the angels, who are spoken of figuratively as the “throne” of God, as his “legions”, his “heavens”. It has inspired the poetry which presents the angels to us as the “court of God”.



# St Michael the Archangel and St Faustina

**“In the day of his festival I saw St Michael who said to me these words: ‘The Lord has ordered me to take special care of you. Know that you are hated by evil; but do not fear – “Who is like God!”’ and disappeared. I still feel his presence and care” (Diary, par. 706).**

## Seeing angels

**A**lthough angels are spiritual beings, they sometimes appear in a bodily form. The angelic doctor St Thomas Aquinas wrote: “by Divine power sensible bodies are so fashioned by angels as fittingly to represent the intelligible properties of an angel. And this is what we mean by an angel assuming a body” (*STh I, q.51, a.2*).

In the Old Testament there are many examples of angels being seen by people: an angel comforting Hagar (*Gen 16,7:14; 21, 17*), angels in Sodom (*Gen 19*), angel preventing the sacrifice of Abraham’s son Isaac (*Gen 22, 11-18*). Jacob saw angels going up and down a ladder (*Gen 28,12*). When Gideon met an angel, he said fearfully: “Ah, Sovereign Lord! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!” (*Jud 6,11:22*).

The New Testament also begins with angelic appearances: Zechariah saw an angel (*Luke 1,11*); Mary talked to the Divine messenger Gabriel (*Luke 1, 26-38*); shepherds were told about the birth of Christ by angels (*Luke 2, 9.13*). After the Resurrection both guards and women noticed an angel beside the grave of Jesus (*Matthew 28, 2:7*), Mary Magdalene saw two angels (*John 20, 11:13*). It was the angel who rescued the apostles from prison (*The Acts 5, 19 and 12, 5:7*).

Monte Sant’Angelo was established as a result of revelations of St Michael, which occurred in 492. Mary’s apparitions in Fatima, 1916, were preceded by angelic revelations to three children. These are just a few examples of angelic presence in the fulfilment of God’s plans. Therefore, it does not seem strange when St Faustina wrote that she saw St Michael.

## Particular care

St Michael did not come to Faustina on his own initiative; he was sent to her at God’s command (*Diary, par. 667*). The word “angel” originates from Latin “angelus”, which means ,an emissary, a “messenger”; it is natural for angels to fulfil a mission charged them by the Lord, the best example of which seems the Announcement by Gabriel: “God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth (...). The angel went to her and said (...). Then the angel left her” (*Luke 1, 26:38*).

St Michael’s task was to take care of Faustina particularly. Why “particularly”? Was her guardian angel, who always helped her quite effectively, insufficient (*Diary, par. 419*)? What was Faustina and St Michael’s role in the Divine plan of salvation? In order to answer these questions, we should try to know both characters.

According to her diary, Faustina's mission was appointed by Christ to live and suffer for other people. Jesus told her: "You don't live for yourself, you live for souls. Your continuous suffering will give them My Light and strength to accept My will" (**Diary, par. 67**). Faustina was aware of the fact that her suffering would rescue many people from eternal damnation. She wrote: "Daily I make great efforts to gain graces for souls' salvation, shielding them by my sacrifice from the fire of hell. For the salvation of even a single soul is worth the sacrifice of a lifetime and the bearing of the greatest sacrifices and torments, seeing how great the glory it gives to God" (**Diary, par. 1435**).

The highest sacrifice of love, which is a gift of one's life for the others, is hated by satan who does everything he can to threaten God's servants. Jesus experienced similar attacks when he pronounced the Divine Realm (**Luke 4, 1:13** and **Matthew 1,14**) as well as when he was caught and sentenced to death (**Luke 22, 39:53**).

In one of his general audiences John Paul II said: "The evil spirit makes attempts to instill man with an inner attitude of rivalry and disobedience towards God" (June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1986). Rivalry and disobedience! He managed to infect some angels with such thinking and now tries to infect man, too. It is an endless war that broke out at the dawn of the world between St Michael and his army and the dragon and his subordinates. It is a fight for places in heaven that lasts till this day (**Ap 12,7:9**). Faustina took part in the war during her life on earth and now from her heavenly homeland: "Do not be afraid, my child. You are not alone so fight bravely; you are supported by my arm. Encourage souls to trust in My Divine Mercy; it is your task now and

forever." (**Diary, par. 1452**). The Lord knew that she would need His right hand; therefore He sent her St Michael for help in her everyday struggle.

Fallen angels, called demons or devils, live in malevolence to God and His creatures. Where does their hostility come from? St Thomas Aquinas answers in "Summa Theologiae": "The first sin of the angel can be none other than pride. Yet as a consequence, it was possible for envy to also be in them (...) [Angels] grieved over man's good, and also the Divine excellence." (**S.Th. I q.63, a.2**).

Envy generates dislike of other people's successes or possessions. Sometimes such a feeling changes into hatred; those devoured by hatred have no wish for luck on their neighbour and look for an occasion to do harm. Evil spirits hate man and the good he can achieve, which is eternal happiness. St Thomas Aquinas explains that eternal happiness is nothing less than the union with God in love and seeing God directly (**STh I-II, q. 3, a. 8, p.11**). Satan realises that he has lost it irretrievably! That is why he attempts to prevent people from desiring and doing good, so that they can not achieve heaven (**STh I, q. 64, a.3**). He uses deceitful methods to gain his goal; namely ruses, ambushes, lies, deceptions (**2 Cor 2,11; Eph 6,11**); he even tries to take the form of an angel (**2 Cor 11,14**).

Peter the Apostle warned against satan by calling him a starving lion that looked for a meal among the faithful (**1 Peter 5,8**). The evil one wanted to threaten Faustina, too. Jesus said to her: "You are united with Me so do not be afraid of anything. But you must know that satan hates you. Yes, he hates all souls but you are hated the most, my child, for you freed many souls from his reign" (**Diary, par. 412**). Satan has admitted to me that I am the object of

his hatred. He said that "a thousand souls do me less harm than you do when you speak of the great mercy of the Almighty One. The greatest sinners regain confidence and return to God, and I lose everything. But what is more, you persecute me personally with that unfathomable mercy of the Almighty One." I took note of the great hatred satan has for Mercy of God. He does not want to acknowledge that God is good. (**Diary, par. 1167**). Faustina suffered from demonic haunting; she begged God to accept her spiritual pain and fear as a sacrifice for her sins as well as the conversion of sinners. All of a sudden, my room filled with black figures that shouted with fury "Damned you and He, who is in you for you are tormenting us even in hell!" (**Diary, par. 323**). On another occasion when she was writing about Divine Mercy, satan rushed into her room, grabbed a screen and broke it furiously. Satan's rage was horrific (**Diary, par. 713**). Yet, Faustina trusted Jesus and relied on Him like an infant depended on his/her mother (**Diary, par. 1490**).

## Archangelic help

Man is exposed to numerous menaces during their pilgrimage to heaven. St Paul emphasised the war between Christians and the evil powers (**Eph 6,11**), in which men are often weak and disoriented whereas the devil is an intelligent yet fallen angel. Therefore, God appointed angels to protect us and direct us towards good (**STh I, q 113, a. 1**). However, there are situations that require the intervention of someone more powerful than our guardian angel. Faustina's task was extraordinary; that was why Jesus sent her St Michael the Archangel for help.

Fr Karol Dąbrowski CSMA

# Angels in the life of blessed Father Michał Sopoćko – the confessor of St Faustina

Our contemporary world needs to experience the merciful presence of God; it craves for witnesses of Divine Mercy who announce the Lord's love and express it by an example of their lives. Father Michał Sopoćko seems such a witness. After his beatification we discovered that he touched a mystery, both of the angelic world and demonic reality filled with sin and death. Fr Sopoćko (1888 - 1975) is a signpost that indicates a way to Divine Mercy. He managed to join the deep meditative life with vigorous service as a priest of Wilno and Podlasie regions, a professor in a theological seminary, a pedagogue and pastoral theologian, a chaplain of the Polish army, a fervent propagator of teetotalism and a confessor of St Faustina Kowalska (1933-1936). It was he who asked her to write the *Diary* as well as ordered her to paint a picture of Merciful Christ with an inscription *Jesus, I trust in You*. The printing and distribution of small pictures of Merciful Jesus together with a text of the Divine Mercy rosary were commissioned by him. Fr Sopoćko strove for the establishment of a Divine Mercy festival by church authorities and founded a female Congregation of Merciful Jesus.

He put Divine Mercy into practice via material and spiritual care of the poor; he helped many young boys realise their priestly vocation. He also sponsored an extension of a chapel in Białystok; he was often seen building it hand in hand with workers. In the *Diary St Faustina* called him a priest with a heart similar to Jesus, one who was chosen to preach Divine Mercy and fulfil the nun's 'spiritual testament'; *his soul was so humble that it could bear all difficulties, his soul was never discouraged by adversities but it answered to God's calling faithfully.*

As a moderator of the St Michael Brotherhood Fr Sopoćko knew the angelic subject well; he taught that angels are our friends on the way to heaven like the Archangel Raphael; or messengers of the Lord's will like the Archangel Gabriel. They also help us, like St Michael, to go beyond ourselves so that God can take the first place in our lives. According to the priest, we should live under the banner of St Michael for angels to let us know ourselves better as well as The Divine Mercy. On the basis of the Bible Fr Sopoćko explains that the spiritual world is divided into good angels sent by God to protect us and fallen demons who try to separate us



from God via smart methods and tricks. However, Christ is the core of faith, not angels. Everything goes around the Core – the world, angels and people.

*God was happy on His own; He did not need the world, angels or people; He created them because of His Divine Mercy,* Fr Sopoćko writes. The Lord appears generous in His Mercy, for each person in the world is given a guardian angel, who prompts us to pray; moreover, by praying for us our angels beg God for the grace of prayer for us. Jesus also prayed a lot in the presence of spiritual beings; He was accompanied by good and fallen angels in the desert, before twelve Apostles were chosen, during exorcisms and miracles and in the Garden of Gethsemane.

In his works Fr Sopoćko notes that God likes prayers in which people immerse their souls in Divine Mercy and trust in God boundlessly. We should model our lives and prayers on Jesus' life and prayers. We can give our life to the Lord so that He can heal the wounds in our hearts. God does not need beautiful words, He needs the time that we devote to meet Him in prayer. Only then our suffering becomes His suffering and He opens His arms to snuggle us tightly. God waits to hear *Jesus, I trust in You* from a sinner's mouth for that sentence opens His Divine Heart full of love and mercy. *God was much more powerful in Redemption than in creation of perfect spiritual beings. It is easier to create angels from nothingness than present a sinner with sanctity.* Therefore, if we are lost in evil, we should call for His Divine Mercy because God never leaves us without help. Divine Mercy permeated the life of Fr Sopoćko who wanted it to be known in the world: *impudent confidence in Divine Mercy constitutes soul power and encouragement to remain faithful; it is the energy of seraphs to fly swiftly towards supernatural virtues; that tears us away from our weaknesses.*

Evil is not abstract; it is satan who opposes Christ and people's salvation. The devil scorns Divine Mercy and tries to devastate Christ's kingdom of love. However, the demonic reign was defeated by Jesus so satan cannot triumph over us if we turn to God. Fr Sopoćko reminds us that Our Holy Mother smashed the snake's head; therefore we should also rely on the Queen of Angels who is our Merciful Mother at the same time.

Sister **Maksymiliana Krocak** ZSJM

## I pray to the guardian angel of my husband

I really feel the presence of my guardian angel; he is always with me. I often hear some inner voice in my heart "do this" or "don't do that". The voice sometimes advises me to take something along with me which turns out to be useful for me or my friends later the same day. My guardian angel also reminds me when I have forgotten to bring something from my house; I thank him for that. In all those cases I know that my guardian angel helps me a lot. I pray to the guardian angel of my husband, my children and grandchildren that they will protect them. Once my husband had an accident when he was riding a bike. Fortunately, nothing harmful happened to him because his angel protected him.

Everyday I say the prayer "Angel of God, mine and my husband's guardian dear, to whom God's love commits us here. Ever this day be at our side to light and guard, rule and guide. Amen."

**Barbara** from Myszków – Poland

## The intercession of Padre Pio

One day when I was sick in bed I was reading a book by a Capuchin Fr Allesio Parente O.F.M. C.A.P. called "Send me your guardian angel". I could not put the book down and read with great

interest how Padre Pio would communicate with his guardian angel and how the angels helped and protected him at different times in his life.

My friend was very, very ill at the time in hospital with septicemia. It was a Wednesday and I remember for some reason looking at the clock, it was 12.30pm. After reading the book, I prayed and asked my guardian angel to go to Padre Pio and Padre's guardian angel, and ask that they go directly to visit my friend to help with her healing as the infection was spreading down her leg. Up to this point in my life I had never asked my guardian angel for anything. This prayer request then went out of my mind.

Two weeks later my friend rang me when she returned home to thank me for sending flowers. At the very end of the conversation my friend just happened to mention that she had never had a devotion to Padre Pio but for some unknown reason one day she suddenly started to think about Padre Pio while in hospital and she could not understand why.

I asked "when did this happen" and she said it was a couple of weeks ago on a Wednesday around mid-day. She said around that time she started feeling better.

On hearing this I was totally stunned, I remembered that it was the exact day and time that I had prayed for her via my guardian angel going to Padre Pio, and his guardian angel. I then shared with her my prayer request and what I had said for her healing.

I am delighted to say she made a full recovery, all thanks to my guardian angel and the intercession of Padre Pio.

**Mrs B.** from England

# St Jean Vianney Part I.



**John Vianney** was ordained as a priest in 1815 and three years later he became parish priest of Ars, a small hamlet near Lyons. He began visiting his parishioners, especially the sick and poor and spent days in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. His life was one of extreme mortification and he did penance for his parishioners. He had the gifts of discernment of spirits, prophecy, hidden knowledge, and of working miracles. Although tormented by evil spirits, especially when he tried to get his 2-3 hours of sleep each night, his life was filled with works of charity and love.

## **St. Jean Vianney gives witness to his conscious devotion to the holy angels in these short texts.**

Ah! if we had the eyes of angels with which to see our Lord Jesus Christ present on the Altar and looking at us, how we should love Him!

The first thing about the angels that we ought to imitate, is their consciousness of the Presence of God.

Our Guardian Angels are our most faithful friends, because they are with us day and night, always and everywhere. We ought often to invoke them.

The Angels take great pleasure in helping us with our enterprises, when they are in accordance with God's will.

If you find it impossible to pray, hide behind your good Angel and charge him to pray in your stead.

We ought to ask the Blessed Virgin, the angels, and the saints to pray for us, that we may receive the good God as worthily as it is possible for us to receive Him. (Sermon on Holy Communion)

There is not a single creature which does not provide us with the means of reaching God. If any of them become an obstacle, it is only by our misuse of them.

The devil writes down our sins—our Guardian Angel all our merits.

Labour so that the Guardian Angel's book may be full, and the devil's empty.

If you invoke the Blessed Virgin when you are tempted, she will come at once to your help and satan will leave you.

Do not try to please everybody. Try to please God, the angels, and the saints—they are your public.

With what humility should we assist at Mass, if we realized that our Guardian Angel was kneeling beside us, prostrate before the majesty of God! With what eagerness should we not ask him to offer our prayers to Jesus Christ!

Like the saints, let us be very zealous in fulfilling all our duties; let the devil never find us doing nothing, lest we should yield to temptation.

God, the Blessed Virgin, the angels and saints are about our path; they are at our side and see all we do.

After thanking our Guardian Angel who has remained by our side during our sleep, we should ask him for his protection during the day.

How happy is that Guardian Angel who accompanies a soul to Holy Mass!

# Jesus gave me new life

**A few months ago I was a slave to drug addiction and to a drug-addicted friend. It's really hard to write about myself: I was a SLAVE. I couldn't distinguish between good and evil. I wanted to leave my drug addicted friends but I couldn't do it on my own. The Holy Mother asked me if I wished to meet a real friend, Her Son Jesus Christ. I refused Her offer. How stupid of me!**

Jesus is the light which helps a man see the way (a wonderful way, I must say). Yet I didn't ask Him to show me my way; and He didn't insist on it as I had free will. So I groped my way in complete darkness. Needless to say, I fell and went deeper into darkness instead of screaming for help. My real friends didn't know what to do or how to help me, they avoided me. I suppose they were afraid of having contact with drugs. They did the right thing because it made me think about my life. The Holy Mother asked once again whether I wanted to be cured by Her Son. This time I agreed and went to Jasna Góra in Częstochowa to pray for The Virgin Mary's intercession. I knew that Jesus didn't refuse His Mother if she interceded for human beings.

Jesus stood near the pit which I was in and gave me His hand with joy. When I felt better He asked me whether I'd like to be His disciple; but I thought that there's no need to follow Him and listen to His words as I had left my drug prison. I was free again and could do whatever

I wanted. I chose my own way; the story of striding in darkness repeated; yet, I didn't care as I had stopped taking drugs. However, I became addicted to alcohol and my life rolled full circle; nothing but the substance changed. Once, when smoking a joint (I was drunk then) I suddenly felt some pricks of conscience, that I trembled as if I was dying from cold. I understood the truth. I was frightened but I knew where to find help. Full of despair and trust in God's mercy I shouted 'JESUS, HELP ME!!!' It's difficult to describe what was happening with me at that time.

After I had prayed to St. Michael for a few hours I felt totally free. Later on I was tempted by intrusive thoughts; some of them were so cruel and terrible that I had a feeling that I was going to kill myself in order to stop them. In the worst moments I said the rosary and a prayer to St Michael the Archangel.

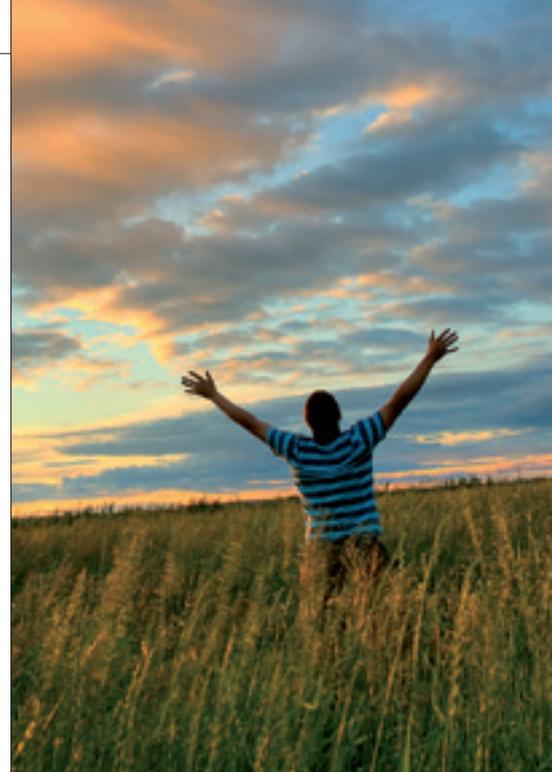
Now you can see the effects of my spiritual transformation. To my great joy, I've heard that I have changed for the better. It's all thanks to Jesus who always hears our calling in the most

difficult situation. He always rushes to help us if we want it.

In the past I believed in God but I didn't want to engage in friendship with Him. I attended the mass on Sundays only because my mother ordered me to do it. In my opinion the experience with drugs and alcohol was necessary for me to change my life and to see that my family suffered because of me. The Holy Mother touched my heart with love and mercy. St. Michael, who is my patron, also took care of me. The Rosary is a wonderful prayer – one can understand oneself and correct one's mistakes.

And now I'd like to thank you, my dear friends. You accepted me when other 'friends' laughed at me and mocked 'Are you crazy? You don't smoke joints! You don't drink vodka! Yes, you're a moron! You're a saint, an angel!' When I stopped taking drugs and drinking alcohol, being surrounded by normal people was a shock for me. You helped me to find my place among you. Jesus gave me new life and you contributed a lot to it.

**Michael** from Poland



## What do angels know about people?

Angelic intellect and cognition is more perfect and more thorough than ours; nevertheless, their abilities are limited. They perceive God because they are alike in their nature but they cannot know The Divine Mystery until the Lord reveals it to them. It seems that God reveals this to each angel in a different way.

The demons' ability to know us are also limited by God. But, according to exorcists if one concludes a pact with the devil, the latter will know all aspects of the spiritual life of a person and influence their way of thinking. We should ask the Lord for protection of our thoughts and intentions from demons so that they cannot sabotage our purposes. Degradation of demonic minds concerns the supernatural area of knowledge. Their speculative knowledge has been decreased and their affective knowledge



connected with Divine Love has disappeared completely.

Both good and fallen angels do not know the future that is dependent on our free will. Besides, we too, do not know what we are going to do next because sometimes we change our mind. Only God knows us on the whole. Angels may predict our decisions on the basis of our susceptibilities, psychic condition and on how we behaved in similar situations in the past. Demons know about past and current events in our lives; they also know our psychical and physical nature which allows them to tempt us and do us a disservice. However, they do not know people's spiritual experiences and God's graces revealed in souls. After their rebellion, a demons' intellect only serves the evil one.

## Angelic will and power

Angels have got free will and accurate power to act, but they have not got creative power. On the one hand, they cannot extort spiritual wishes and decisions from us or create our thoughts directly. On the other hand, they do it indirectly via our lower instincts. Angels may act miraculously in a material world because they know the forces of nature better than we do. They can create imaginative thoughts in our minds, evoke both positive and negative emotions and affect our senses in a supernatural way through images of apparitions, strange noises, etc.

There are numerous examples of angelic power in the Bible; for instance: the miraculous rescue of three men from the effect of fire (**Daniel 3**), Heliiodorus's punishment (**2 Macabees 3, 24:35**), the

supernatural healing of Tobias (**Tobias**), the healing powers of water in Bethesda Pool (**John 5,4**), taking away the stone which covered Christ's tomb (**Matthew 28, 2:3**), Peter's liberation from prison (**Acts 12, 7 and 10**). Demons may do us harm in contrast to angels who may do us good.

The will and morale of those who have revolted against God has been degenerated rather than their mind. Demons wish to do bad things; even if their activity is seemingly good, it is always to hide their fraudulent act. They tell the truth in two cases only. Firstly when an exorcist orders them to tell the truth in the Name of Christ and secondly when telling the truth is to bring people to despair and mental and spiritual chaos. Their smart dealing always appears sinister and destructive.

## Did the evil one know who Jesus was?

On the River Jordan satan heard God's words 'This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased' (**Matthew 3,17**); but he also heard the same phrase 'my son' when Adam was created in the Garden of Eden. The evil one knew that Jesus was the Lord's beloved son. However, he did not know the mystery of the Holy Trinity so he could not know about Christ's divine nature.

## Did Jesus take pity on the evil one when He let him get into a herd of pigs?

Jesus neither took pity on satan nor felt mercy towards the demon. The latter was God's servant who



rebelled against Him and was therefore punished eternally. On the one hand, Jesus agreed to Satan's request in order to show that a man is God's most beloved creature. What is more important: people or pigs? On the other hand, expelling Satan from a place in a human heart to the herd of pigs cannot be considered as mercy. Besides, pigs were treated as the unclean by the Jews; the ancient

context should also be taken into consideration.

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### **May some objects or places be under the rule of evil?**

Yes, they may. Demons from the pagan country of Gadarenes asked Jesus not to drive them out of the region.

That was a sign that they ruled in that area. Christ then ordered them to get into a herd of pigs. The practice of the Blessing of houses and cars etc. is because it is possible that demons live in particular objects or places.

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### **Can one be enslaved via using incense sticks?**

If one prays with all one's heart and communes with the Living God, then there is no danger of enslavement. Prayer is a meeting of a free man and free God. However, if there is no contact with The Living God, it is possible that one can become addicted to the scent; and that it is an open way to other addictions and enslavements.

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### **Can Christians make use of the techniques of zen or yoga when praying? If one does it, do they have to confess it?**

The purpose of these techniques, is toward calmness and concentration and are similar in various religions. However, the techniques through which one makes an attempt to commune with God (or other spirits) differ from one another qualitatively. For example, controlling the breath and maintaining the position of the body are basic in all schools of spirituality. Even repeating a word or a phrase from the Bible and breathing in a particular way was – and still is – practised. Each of us should find their own technique of contact with God; but if it denies the gospel truth, it should be rejected.

Father **Marian Piątkowski**  
Father **Edward Staniek**

# The Archangel consoles a woman suffering from depression

**T**he Book of Tobit raises important issues and painful events often faced by families. Among such problems there is the despair of a young widow Sara, who loses seven husbands on their wedding nights before the marriages are consummated. She cannot stand the scathing remarks that she hears even from her servants and decides to commit suicide in an act of desperation.

Only a widow knows how difficult and sorrowful life is when she has to live without a husband. It becomes a mysterious mental cross that she bears, especially when the same scenario repeats itself seven times. Public opinion is ruthless; *When she heard these things, she was very sorrowful, so that she thought to strangle herself; and she said, I am the only daughter of my father, and if I do this, it shall be a reproach unto him, and I shall bring to his old age sorrow unto the grave (Tb 3:10).*

Sara's respect for her father is the crucial motive that makes her change her decision to commit suicide and this is an important point for people with depression. If they

find someone they want to live for, the idea of suicide seems much harder to make. It is easier to end one's life if you feel lonely and ostracized from society. However, sometimes only a thought that somebody needs you is enough to start a new hopeful chapter in life.

Although love for her father prevented Sarah from committing suicide, it is not sufficient to make her want to live. She cannot deal with her problems; therefore she asks God for death:

Then she prayed toward the window, and said: *"Blessed art thou, O Lord my God, and Thy holy and glorious name is blessed and honorable for ever: let all thy works praise thee for ever. And now, O Lord, I set mine eyes and my face toward thee, and say, take me out of the earth, that I may hear no more reproaches. Thou knowest Lord, that I am pure from all sin with man, and that I never polluted my name, nor the name of my father, in the land of my captivity: I am the only daughter of my father, neither hath he any child to be his heir, neither any near kinsman,*

*nor any son of his alive, to whom I may keep myself for a wife: my seven husbands are already dead; and why should I live? But if it pleases thee not that I should die, command some regard to be had of me, and pity taken on me, that I hear no more reproach."* (Tb 3, 11:15).

A scream of prayer escapes her lips. Sarah understands that God is the merciful Lord of everything; also the Lord of her life. On the one hand, she asks for death, but on the other hand, she does not want to impose her will on God. Even if the Lord decides to make her stay alive, she begs Him to save her from tormentors whose words hurt her humiliated heart and soul.

The Book of Tobit draws the readers' attention to the fact that both Sara and old Tobit pray together although physically they are in different places. God answers the cries for help from two unhappy people. He sends the angel Raphael who guides protagonists through hard periods in their lives. With all His heart God



# The power of the Divine Mercy Chaplet



wishes for His creatures' happiness, even if sometimes the way to joy goes through troubles.

So the prayers of them both were heard before the majesty of the great God. And Raphael was sent to heal them both, that is, to scale away the whiteness of Tobit's eyes, and to give Sara the daughter of Raguel for a wife to Tobias the son of Tobit; and to bind Asmodeus the evil spirit; because she belonged to Tobias by right of inheritance. At the selfsame time he came to Tobit's home, and entered into his house, and Sara the daughter of Raguel came down from her upper chamber (Tb 3, 16:17).

Father **Edward Staniek**

In both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible we find many promises. They were given to groups of people and also to individuals and some of them were fulfilled on certain conditions. Although, God has always been trustworthy, many people have not always received the benefits of these promises. This is because many biblical promises relate to our eternal life after death. But there are also many others which relate to our present, earthly life. Jesus promised:

*Let anyone who is thirsty come to me! Let anyone who believes in me come and drink! From his heart shall flow streams of living water (J 7,37-38);*

*Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or property for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times as much, and also inherit eternal life (Mt 19,29).*

*Set your hearts on God's kingdom, and these other things will be given you as well (Lk 12,31).*

In the revelations given to Saint Maria Faustina, Jesus attached some promises to praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet. It is an amazing and precious gift of God. We know about the chaplet from Saint Faustina's Diary, which has the title "The Divine Mercy in my soul".

## What is the history of the chaplet?

It was revealed to Saint Faustina through a vision. It happened on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September in 1935 on the eve of the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross in Vilnius. In her Diary she wrote: *When I saw this sign of the divine wrath, which was about to strike the earth... I began to implore the Angel to hold off for a few moments, and the world would do penance... Just then I saw the Most Holy Trinity.... I found myself pleading with God for the world with the words heard internally. As I was praying in this manner, I saw the Angel's helplessness. He could not carry out the just punishment which was rightly due for sins. Never before had I prayed with such inner power as I did then. The words with which I entreated God are these: Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ for our sins and those of the whole world; for the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us.*

*The next morning, when I entered the Chapel, I heard: Every time you enter the chapel, immediately recite the prayer which I taught you* ▶

▶ *yesterday... This prayer will serve to appease My wrath (Diary 474-476).* On that day Jesus precisely dictated to her the words of the Chaplet which we know.

The date of the revelation of the Chaplet underscores the primary place of the cross in the mystery of the revelation of God's Mercy. God revealed Himself most fully as Mercy in His redemptive Passion and Death on the Cross.

## What are the roots of the chaplet?

The source of it is God Himself. Faustina didn't make up the chaplet. She got it directly from heaven through the revelation... It was dictated word by word by Our Lord to Saint Faustina.

The source reveals the value of things. For example: a computer print-out of a picture is good if it comes from an excellent printer. Just as a car is good if it comes from a high-quality car manufacturer. Diamonds are good, even the best, if they come from Africa. The same is true in human relationships. What increases the value of the gift is the giver. Who the giver is, increases the value of a gift. The Chaplet then is great and valuable, by virtue of its Divine Author, God who is its Source. It is an expression of God's greatness and mercy.

## What is the purpose of saying the chaplet?

God in many instances in the Diary said that the chaplet served to mitigate and appease His anger.

It is so, because through this prayer we offer the eternal and perfect sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Man in the state of sin is an enemy of God and deserves punishment. Christ through his body on the cross reconciled us to God. Through him we have access in one Spirit to the Father. Jesus said that He would draw all people to Himself when he ascended into Heaven.

## What is the content of the Chaplet?

The question to be asked is who is the chaplet offered to? It is offered to our Eternal Father by man. But our "offer" is taken up into Christ's offering. We offer through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ and also for the sake of Christ. What is offered? The Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord. And for whom is it offered? It's offered for man and his sins: "in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world".

God is everything here: the giver, the gift and the receiver. He gives himself as the perfect gift to be offered. He is united with the giver by dwelling in his soul. He receives man's gift because He is united and one with the Father.

Jesus in this prayer gives us an opportunity to unite our souls with His complete, perfect Sacrifice on the Cross. This is possible through grace.

In the words "I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity..." we are offering the complete Jesus, God and Man. Nothing is left.

The chaplet is also a share in the Son's work of mediating between God and man. Jesus is the only Mediator between God and man. By offering the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of

Jesus we plead with God. We don't let that sorrowful passion and suffering of the Son be in vain.

"Have mercy on us and on the whole world". Praying the chaplet does not allow us to focus only on ourselves. It leads us to rescuing other souls for whom we pray "and on the whole world". There are a lot of people hidden under the meaning "the world". Some of them we know. They live in our families, parishes, societies. The others are unknown to us. But they are in danger of eternal condemnation.

## The promises

There are general and specific promises. The willingness to give is constant in God. God is basically saying "I promise to shower you with all the graces you want on condition that it will agree with My will". His word is true. This is what every child would love to hear from their father.

Christ said to Saint Faustina: *It pleases me to grant everything they ask of Me by saying the Chaplet. When hardened sinners say it, it will fill their souls with peace, and the hour of their death will be a happy one (Diary 1541).* (...) *Even if there were a sinner most hardened, if he were to recite this chaplet only once, he would receive grace from My infinite mercy, Priests will recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. (Diary 687).*

In addition there is a special promise given for the dying over whom the chaplet will be prayed. Jesus promised: *When this chaplet is said by the bedside of a dying person, the indulgence is the same. God's anger is placated, unfathomable mercy envelops the soul (Diary 811).*

Jesus said that even if a sinner recited the chaplet only once, he would



obtain the merciful grace of conversion and death in a state of grace. Of course the chaplet must be prayed with the proper attitude of trust in God, humility and repentance for sin.

We know that a dying person in mortal sin can be saved, provided he turns even a little to God. Provided he opens his soul even by a crack to God's omnipotent mercy.

Man has free will and God accepts his decision where to go to after death. God's omnipotent mercy acts upon the soul at the moment of dying. The grace of forgiveness

of sins is so precious at the hour of death. As Catholics we know that the grace of forgiveness of sins is given to us by the Sacrament of Reconciliation. God, however, is not limited by the sacramental structure that He instituted in the Church. The sacraments provide facility and certainty that we will receive the grace of forgiveness, provided we do not place obstacles before it.

Other promises attached to the chaplet pertain to the temporal aspect of death - the actual dying. It will be peaceful and happy. Jesus also

said: *I will stand between My father and the dying person, not as the just Judge but as the merciful Saviour.* (**Diary 1541**). It proves how much Jesus desires to bring us back to the Father's house.

Saint Faustina offered the chaplet many times for dying people about to go to hell. Nearly immediately she saw the fruit of her prayer. These people were dying in peace. She felt the power of Mercy envelop these souls. Jesus faithful to His promises saved these people. (**Diary 811,1565**).

Saint Faustina also recognised that this prayer was pleasing to God. He assured her that by saying the chaplet she brought humankind closer to Him (**Diary 929**). Indeed the Chaplet to the Divine Mercy is powerful. Perhaps many of us have had such a first hand experience. For sure in heaven we will see the results of our prayer to the Divine Mercy.

What's more, we may offer this chaplet asking God for any other ordinary graces which will be granted to us. There is only one condition. The grace we ask for agrees with God's will.

One day Saint Faustina was awakened by a great storm. She began to pray that the storm would not cause any harm. Jesus stopped her prayer saying: *Say the Chaplet, and the storm will cease. Faustina started praying it and even before the end the storm ceased.* (**Diary 1731**).

In another situation she prayed the Chaplet asking God for rain. They haven't had rain for several days and eventually before supper a heavy rain fell on the earth. (**Diary 1128, 1731**).

In conclusion we have to admit that the Chaplet indeed is a vessel, a link, a bridge and a path to the infinite ocean of Divine Mercy, to God.

Father **Piotr Prusakiewicz** CSMA

# The History of Monte Sant' Angelo

**Italy has many interesting and beautiful places to visit. One such place is the sanctuary of Monte Sant' Angelo perhaps more commonly known as Monte Gargano. It is the oldest shrine in Western Europe dedicated to the Archangel Michael.**



**T**he town of Monte Sant' Angelo was built 850 meters above sea level and overlooks both Gargano Massif and the sea. Dominated by the ruins of a Norman castle it has kept its ancestral customs and ancient appearance with tightly packed whitewashed houses on its sloping mountainside.

It is at this lovely spot that the apparitions of St. Michael The Archangel took place and it is from here that St. Michael became known throughout Europe and the new world.

The story of the first apparition, which occurred in 490 blends with legend.

One day Elvio Emanuele, a nobleman of the area, lost the best bull of his herd. After days of searching, he found it, kneeling in an inaccessible cave. Not being able to get near it he shot an arrow but the arrow turned around and struck him. Surprised by this event he went straight to the Bishop who ordered three days of prayer and fasting.

Three days later, the Archangel appeared to the Bishop and said: "I am Michael The Archangel and am always in the presence of God. I chose the cave, which is sacred to me. There will be no more shedding of bull's blood (a reference to the fact that among the mountain the pagan cult was still thriving). Where the rocks open widely the sins of man may be pardoned. What is asked here in prayer will be granted. Therefore, go up to the mountain cave and dedicate it to the Christian cult!" The Bishop, undecided, deferred the execution of the angelic order.

Two years later, in 492, the Christian City of Siponoto at the foot of the mountain was besieged by the pagan hordes of Odoacre. The city was desperate. Bishop Laurence obtained a three day truce from Odoacre and ordered prayer and penance.

The Archangel appeared to him and promised his help to the townspeople if they would attack the enemy. They trustfully dared. Suddenly a storm broke out, sand and hail rained upon the army of Odoacre, which were terrorized. Siponoto was saved! The Bishop announced a thanksgiving procession and went up to the top of the Archangel's mountain but he did not venture into the grotto.

On the third anniversary of the first apparition, still uncertain if he should follow the Archangel's order, the Bishop asked counsel of the Pontiff who ordered him to go there with other bishops of the region following a three day fast.

For the third time St. Michael appeared and ordered him to enter the grotto: "It is not necessary that you dedicate this church that I have consecrated with my presence. Enter and pray with my assistance and celebrate the Sacrifice. I will show you how I have consecrated this place." The Bishop finally obeyed. Upon



entering the grotto he found an altar covered with a red cloth and a crystal cross upon it while at the entrance the imprint of an infantile foot confirmed the presence of the Archangel Michael.

The Bishop had a chapel built at the entrance to the grotto and dedicated it on the 29th of September, now kept as the feast of the Archangel Michael, Raphael and Gabriel. The grotto is the only place which is not consecrated by the hand of man. The title of 'celestial Basilica' was conferred during the centuries.

The last apparition of St. Michael was in answer to prayer as the terrible plague of 1656 had hit the area. The local bishop with his people invoked the Archangel and the plague ceased. It was at this time that the use of stone chips from the cave began to be used by the faithful much as medals or scapulars are used today. This custom is carried on even now by the local people who take small stones and place them around their homes and in the fields.

During the centuries, millions of pilgrims have gone to Monte Sant'Angelo in order to visit the Celestial Basilica. Among the pilgrims are many popes (Gelasius I, Leo IX, Urban II, Alexander III, Gregory X, Celestine V, John XXIII as Cardinal, John Paul II), saints (Bridget of Sweden, Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Aquinas) emperors, kings and princes (Louis II of Italy, Otto III, Henry II, Matilda of Tuscany, Charles I of Naples, Ferdinand II of Aragon).

Francis of Assisi also went to visit the Sanctuary, but feeling himself unworthy to enter the grotto, he stopped in prayer and meditation at the entrance, kissed and carved on a stone the sign of the cross in the form of "T" (tau)

Since 13 July 1996, the pastoral care of the Saint Michael Archangel Sanctuary has been given to the Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel. The (CSMA) also known as the Michaelite Fathers, is a religious order of the Roman Catholic Church

*founded in 1897 by the Blessed Father Bronisław Markiewicz, a Polish priest from Miejsce Piastowe, Poland.*

Taken from:  
**[www.santuariosanmichele.it](http://www.santuariosanmichele.it)**



# The Merciful Hands of God

*The sermon of Father Piotr Prusakiewicz CSMA*

*said on EWTN in Alabama – USA on the 20 January 2010*

**1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51**  
**Mark 3:1-6**

What do these two readings for today have in common? In both of them we hear about human hands. David put his hand into the bag and took out a stone. He overcame the Philistine with a sling and stone. A man with a withered hand was present in the synagogue and Jesus healed Him. Our Lord was moved with compassion. By all his healings, he wants us to experience His Mercy. To be merciful – means – to have a compassionate heart. Jesus came down on the Earth not to suffer but to love man. Even though he had to suffer in order to do it. Sometimes he stopped himself from healing all the people. He didn't want them to concentrate only on his miracles. He wants to lead us further – to the intimate relationship with the Father and with Himself. That's why he sends the Holy Spirit who gives us the deep intimacy with God.

When I came to the USA six days ago, I was asked at the airport to put my hand on a screen. They wanted to have my fingerprints. Our fingerprints are **unrepeatable** and unique. In everyday life we need our hands very much.

We use them for eating and drinking, for driving and praying. We could be fascinated by the hands of a painter, a gardener, as well as a carpenter or a nurse. We have two hands – one for giving, the other one for receiving.

All things – made by hand – are most expensive. We speak about the gestures of hands. Hands which hold, stroke, lift up or hurt.

What is the cause of many crises of modern societies nowadays? The cause might be called the crises of the human hands, the crises of solidarity. The crises of hands that don't want to shake the hand of their neighbor and don't seek one another. They are not put together in prayer and don't put God in the first place.

Does God really need our hands? Yes, he does. That's why Jesus healed the sick man with the withered hand.

Jesus needs the hand of a Polish woman who is with us today as a special guest of EWTN. What is her name? Her name is Sister Faustina Kowalska. She went to heaven on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 1938 but she is present among us spiritually and physically because we have her first class relic which I have brought from the Divine Mercy shrine in Poland. With her hand she wrote

the Diary which has the title “*The Divine Mercy in my soul*”. She was employed by Jesus as the secretary of His Divine Mercy. Her hands had the connection with her heart. She gave her heart to Jesus, first. She answered to the request of Jesus: *I thirst for the salvation of souls, help me my daughter to save souls.*

To this simple, uneducated nun Christ directed an amazing declaration. He said: *I am sending you with my mercy to the people of the whole world. I don't want to punish mankind but I desire to heal it and press it to my merciful heart.*

Saint Sister Faustina reminds us of the merciful hands of God. We can say God the Father has two hands: one is His Son Jesus Christ and the other one is the Holy Spirit. By using these hands He wants to embrace us, to attract us to his loving heart.

The Bible says that God created man from the best soil, the best clay. He molded us. He is forming us all the time. We are being shaped by Him almost as if we are on a potter's wheel. God is holding us in his hands. One hand is strong enough to keep us on the wheel. The other hand, is gentle and delicate so that we will be moulded, to give us the best possible shape.



Jesus the Son of God, Mercy incarnate became man. He came down on earth. He used his hands to wash our feet. He puts his hands on the cross to have them nailed. His arms are widely spread to reach out for those who have gone far away from God, burdened by their own serious sins. These arms are open and able to hug all sinners coming back to God.

In the first reading we heard the words of David – who said “*For the battle is the Lord’s.*” That’s why in relation to these words we can talk about the different hands of God, the arms of God – the angels. Some saints called the angels “arms of God” because by using them He acts in this world. This Holy Mass is being celebrated in the Chapel of the Angels.

We should consider our lives as a spiritual fight. We don’t get through life in a cruise ship but by battle ship. Saint Faustina wrote: “I begin a day with the battle and I end with a battle”. The prayer *Our Father* consists of seven requests. Two of them refer

to the presence of the devil and evil in our life. We say in plural number “not lead us to temptation and deliver us from every evil”. The devil does everything to blind people’s minds and put out the light of faith. People can be blinded by their selfishness, conceit, jealousy, anger, hatred, greed for material goods.

Saint Paul is saying to us as he said to the Ephesians: *Be ready for the fight.* God gave us a special protector and defender. His name is Saint Michael the Archangel. Most of the paintings and statues show Saint Michael as a knight. His sword, armour and helmet are symbols of his spiritual weapons. But, we are not made to fight but to win. The Psalmist says: *Thanks to my God, I can jump over the wall. We are the winners because Jesus has won.*

I belong to the order of Saint Michael the Archangel. We were founded in Poland, in Miejsce Piastowe in 1922 by a Polish priest blessed Father Bronisław Markiewicz.

Our Founder wrote: *We live in very sad times. The devil has never before been so persistent and clever in his fight against God and the Church like nowadays. His fight seems to be supernatural. As a consequence we need to turn to St. Michael, the leader of God’s army and the suppressor of the devil.*

When Sister Faustina saw Saint Michael the Archangel, he said to her: *The Lord has ordered me to take special care of you. Know that you are hated by evil but do not fear. Who is like God* (Diary, 706). We find Saint Michael in the lives of many saints such as saint Padre Pio. They encourage us to be under his protection and to pray to Him. When our community went to Rome to see the Holy Father John Paul II he said to us: *The prayer to Saint Michael written by Leon XIII is very powerful. Pray it often and teach others how to pray it.* We should take advantage of this prayer in our everyday life. Together with the angels we are taking part in this Holy Mass. Saint Faustina wrote: *If the angels were capable of envy, they would envy two things – one is suffering, the other is receiving the Holy Communion. So welcome Jesus who is coming to us in his Body and Blood.*

I will finish with a prayer taken from her Diary:

*Help me O Lord that my hands be merciful and filled with good deeds, so that I may only do good to my neighbors and take upon myself the more difficult tasks. (...) All my strength is in You, O Living Bread. It would be difficult for me to live through the day if I did not receive the Holy Communion. I feel that this Holy Fire has transformed me completely.*

Saint Faustina, Blessed Father Bronisław – pray for us, Saint Michael – defend us in battle. Into your hands, o Lord, I commend my spirit.

# Everlasting angelic adoration of God

**T**he Old and New Testament depict the angels continuously worshipping the Lord. In one of his visions, the prophet Daniel saw the Eternal God in white robes sitting on a throne: *A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before Him. Thousands*

*upon thousands attended Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated and the books were opened. (Book of Daniel 7,10).* Isaiah saw a similar image: *I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him were seraphs, each with six wings: with two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory. At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. (Book of Isaiah 6, 1:4; compare: Ap 4, 6.8 and 5,11:12).* The prophet Micaiah also participated in the Divine Glory: *I saw the Lord sitting on His throne with all the host of heaven standing around Him on His right and on His left. (1 Kings 22,19).*

In all those scenes God sits on the throne, whereas the angels stand around Him. Such positioning appears appropriate when in the presence of the Lord and suggests their readiness to serve and adore His majesty. There are many examples of servants surrounding their ruler in the Bible, for example, the tribe of Levi was said *to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and to pronounce blessings in His*

*Name (Deuteronomy 10, 8).* King Saul was seated under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah, with all his officials standing around him (1 Samuel 22,6), when he was informed about the return of David.

If a ruler is adored by his servants, God should be worshipped in a much greater way by His creatures. People often stand when they pray, to show their respect and love for the Lord. For instance, Anna stood and begged God to give her a child (1 Samuel 1, 26); King Solomon stood up to pray during a consecration of the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8,22).

In the Book of Isajah, angels call God 'the only Lord' and 'Holy, Holy, Holy', which means that God is the source of Sanctity and therefore, He deserves the greatest reverence. Holiness is God's crucial attribute, which includes His moral perfection as well as His extraordinary transcendence. The Lord is also called 'The Holy of Israel', whose glory in Jerusalem fills the whole world.

Angels both adore The Divine Majesty and try to encourage people to take part in the worship of The Only and True God. Everlasting worship makes the angelic will more perfect and increases their wish to adore God continuously. They are happy for they can do it together with Christ. Angels pay reverence to God much better than we do, so it is good for us to join them 'in Jesus Christ'.



It does not seem surprising that saints wanted to worship the Lord with angels.

For example, St. Catherine of Siena (1347 – 1380) was often compared to St. Mary Magdalene, who was taken to heaven by angels seven times a day; St. Catherine was also thrown into ecstasy during which she contemplated God. St. Gemma Galgani (1878-1903), the Italian mystic and stigmatic, talked to her guardian angel whose beauty and kindness made her amazed in delight. She gained spiritual perfection under angelic direction; she often said that she wished to join the Lord's angels and devoted herself to prayer so that God's glory reigned all over the world.

However, love and humility are the doors that open our hearts to God (**Matthew 22,37**); that is why we should pray with utmost engagement. Angels encourage us to pray, they help us and pray for us (compare: the **Book of Tobiah 12,12** and the **Book of Zachariah 1,12**). But, if we are absent-minded when praying, we may appear ungrateful to our angels. They are always at our side and will protect or fight for us if necessary. Distraction or lack of concentration while praying makes us lose our connection with God then making it difficult for angels to help us as they wish.

Angels who worship the Holy Trinity continuously, make each Christian aware of being sacred to God via baptism. They make each Christian adore and worship God fervently. Thank God for the grace of redemption and divine childhood.

Father **Henryk Skoczylas** CSMA

## Our Guardian angel helped us in the journey

**M**y wife and I were returning to Rawicz after a 10-day holiday in Kudowa Zdrój. We had to drive through Wrocław, which is a huge metropolis with a maze of streets. I didn't know where to turn so I asked one of the passers-by for advice, but his directions were inadequate. Several minutes later I stopped the car to consider how we would get back home. Suddenly, I noticed a car pulling over; a man came out and offered to guide us through the city to the exit to Rawicz. If it was not for him, we would never have found the way. Later on I thought that my guardian angel had protected us all the time. My wife and I went together to the church of St Jadwig and offered thanksgiving for the angel's care.

**Ludwik** from Rawicz – Poland

## My prayer was heard

**W**hen my sons were young they played the accordion. However, as they got older they wanted to play the electric harmonica. My husband went to Austria to work, in order to earn enough to buy them the instrument. One day I felt a strong need to pray for him. I had never experienced such intense emotions before; I trusted my

husband to The Virgin Mary and begged Her to let him return home as soon as possible. When he came back he told me about the problems he had in Austria – it was on the same day and at the same time I was inspired to pray. I realised that Our Holy Mother and the angels intervened to help my husband. From that moment I believed in the power of prayer. Since then, I have become increasingly familiar with my guardian angel.

**A Reader** from Poland

## Our invisible friends

**I** belong to an association called the St. Michael Knighthood. I worked in a hospital for many years and now I'm retired. I often meet sad people who have lost their loved ones and express the pain associated with loneliness and depression. I tell them that they are not alone; they have their guardian angels who are assigned to us not only to protect us from evil but also to help us gain heaven. We should entrust ourselves to our guardian angels every morning and thank them for their care every evening. If we are unhappy, ill or alone, let's lay our suffering by the Cross of Jesus Christ and offer it up for sinners or the souls in purgatory. Be grateful to God for every single day and love your Lord. Smile at people and your day will be joyful. Go to the Holy Mass as often as possible, take Communion; it will make our guardian angels happy.

**Helena** from Gdańsk – Poland

# A prayer for one's liberation

**Nowadays we seem to be more aware of the problem of demonic activity, however, we should not stop at awareness only. We should try to gain a spiritual insight into our souls (we would be better to do it with a confessor or a spiritual guide) and pray for liberation from enslavement if needed.**

A prayer for liberation is not just a humble request of Christ to throw away demons from one's life. The prayer is an order given to demons in the name of Jesus to stop tormenting a person and go back to hell, and never return. Such prayer is usually said in thoughts; yet, if in company, it can be said aloud. There are two forms of prayer for liberation: firstly, a prayer for oneself; secondly, a prayer for an enslaved person said in a congregation and led by a priest.

## A personal prayer

According to 'Sacrosanctum Concilium' (Constitution of Holy Liturgy) Jesus freed us from the power of Satan by His Death and Resurrection; our liberation is in Christ. That is why we should begin the prayer for liberation from the worship of Christ and through His power start an act (a prayer) of spiritual fight. The act consists of three elements:

1. Preparation for the prayer and calling Jesus.
2. Saying what exact harm the demon does and ordering him to go away.

3. Forbidding the demon to return to our hearts and lives.

The three parts of the prayer constitute a basis on which we can say various prayer formulas. For instance, if one realizes that they are plagued with envy, they may say "In the name of Jesus Christ, by the power of the sacrament of baptism, I command you evil demon of envy to go to hell and never come back. Let the power of my Lord Jesus Christ stop you from doing harm to me or anyone else. I'm giving myself to Christ and I'm happy that He blesses my sister/brother in what they possess. Let your demonic activity never raise envy in my heart. By the name of Jesus Christ, evil demon of envy go to hell and never come back. Amen."

We should always remember to focus on our Lord rather than demons or our weaknesses. We should not talk with demons or provoke them via mockery. We are Christ's knights and should pray prudently.

Many Christians pray for liberation because suffering appears a great spiritual, psychic and physical burden. Such motivation is insufficient, for a prayer is not just



a means of wellbeing. Prayer without conversion. Spiritual enslavement is often a result of our lack of watching over our lives; or sometimes it is an effect of our agreement on demonic activity (when we follow temptations or lapse into

devastating addictions). One has to realize their neglect and make attempts to give up bad habits and imitate Christ.

## A group prayer

A group prayer should be practiced in the presence of a priest only.



Participants have to be mature in faith and fulfill their service in the state of sanctifying grace and with humility and love. Humility lets them think of themselves as useless servants whereas love urges them to care about their brothers' and sisters' salvation.

According to Father Jim McManus, the following schedule shall be effective in group prayers:

1. The prayer of worshipping and joy of Christ's victory over Satan.
2. The prayer for Christ's protection of all participants who do not have to be afraid of demons from now on.

3. The prayer for binding of a demon before it is going to be driven out of the enslaved. If participants know what kind of demon it is, they may say for instance "I am binding you, the demon of fear, in the name of

Jesus Christ." The act of binding limits demonic activity in one's heart and life.

4. Giving orders to evil spirits to return to hell and never come back. A priest is responsible for that part of group prayers whereas the rest worship Jesus Christ. If the enslaved joins the others in adoration of God, it is a sign that the demon has gone. But if they cannot do it yet, it usually means that they still need prayers. It is advisable to ask about the person's feelings, emotions, thoughts or what blocks them in accepting God's grace. The prayer can then be conducted in such a way that the source of the enslavement may either be discovered or healed.
5. The prayer to the Holy Spirit to come to the enslaved together with thanksgiving to God for freedom (or request of mercy and care when one needs solemn exorcism).

The above stages of group prayers are commonly known and practised by members of Charismatic Renewal; nevertheless, they may be used by other Catholic groups such as Padre Pio's, Knights of the Immaculate, Knights of St. Michael Archangel and many more. It is important to emphasize the strict co-operation between a priest and a prayer group. Groups without a representative of the Church are in danger of distortions caused by demonic manipulations. That is why such groups should pay obedience to church authorities, by assent of whom they take part in the mission of the Highest Priest and become witnesses of faith.

Father **Bogdan Kocańda** OFMConv

# The Annunciation

**The Feast of the Annunciation, March 25<sup>th</sup>, is one of the most important in the Church calendar. It celebrates the actual Incarnation of Our Savior, the Word made Flesh in the womb of His Mother, Mary.**

The biblical account of the Annunciation is in the first chapter of the Gospel of Saint Luke, 26-56. Saint Luke describes the annunciation given by the angel Gabriel to Mary that she was to become the mother of the Incarnation of God. The angel having taken the figure and form of a man, came into the house. Here is recorded the “angelic salutation” of Gabriel to Mary, “*Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee*” (Ave, gratia plena, Dominus tecum - **Luke 1:28**), and Mary’s response to God’s will, “*Let it be done to me according to thy word*” (fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum, (v. 38).

This “angelic salutation” is the origin of the “Hail Mary” prayer of the Rosary and the Angelus (the second part of the prayer comes from the words of salutation of Elizabeth to Mary at the Visitation).

The Angelus, is a devotion that daily commemorates the Annunciation and consists of three Hail Mary’s separated by short verses. It is said three times a day – morning, noon and evening – traditionally at the sound of a bell. The Angelus derives its name from the first word of the verse, Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae (The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary).

Mary’s exultant hymn, the Magnificat, found in Luke 1:46-55, has been part of the Church’s Liturgy

of the Hours, at Vespers (evening prayer), and has been repeated nightly in churches, convents and monasteries for more than a thousand years.

The Church’s celebration of the Annunciation is believed to date to the early 5th century, possibly originating at about the time of the Council of Ephesus (c 431). Earlier names for the Feast were Festum Incarnationis, and Conceptio Christi, and in the Eastern Churches, the Annunciation is a feast of Christ, but in the Latin Church it is a feast of Mary. The Annunciation has always been celebrated on March 25th, exactly nine months before Christmas Day.

Two other feasts honoring Our Lord’s mother, the Assumption (August 15th), and the Immaculate Conception (December 8th), are celebrated as Holy Days of Obligation in the United States and many other countries. New Year’s Day, January 1st, is observed as a Solemnity of Mary. The Annunciation was a Holy Day throughout the Universal Church until the early 20th century. Many Catholics, who are deeply concerned with defending the life of the unborn child, believe it would be fitting if the Feast of the Annunciation were restored to this status. Although it seems

unlikely that it will be added to the Church calendar as a Holy Day of Obligation, we can certainly take on the “obligation” ourselves to attend Mass. In any case, it is most appropriate that we encourage special celebrations in the “Domestic Church”.

One sign of the significance this Christian feast had throughout Western culture is that New Year’s Day was for centuries celebrated on March 25th. It was believed by some ancient Christian writers that God created the world on March 25th, and that the fall of Adam and the Crucifixion also took place March 25th. The secular calendar was changed to begin the year on January 1<sup>st</sup> (in 1752 in England and the colonies, somewhat earlier on the continent).

Another remnant of the historic universality of Christianity in the West is the use of BC (before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini The Year of Our Lord) to denote periods of time in history. There has been an attempt in some circles to change BC to BCE (before the common era), and AD to CE (common era). While, it is true that the religious significance of our system of dating has been effectively obliterated, nevertheless, Christians and non-Christians alike consent to the birth of Christ as the “fulcrum” for dating the events of human history.



## Family observance of the Annunciation

In families with young children, this feast would be a good time to begin teaching youngsters important lessons about the inestimable value God places on human life.

First, that He loved us so much that He chose to become one of us to take on our humanity so completely that He “became flesh”, as utterly weak and dependent as any human infant is. Second, God became “like us in all things except sin” at the moment of His conception in Mary’s womb, not at some time later. The Feast of the

Annunciation is a celebration of the actual Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Children may, quite naturally, think that the birth of Jesus is the time when Our Savior first “became Man”, especially since Christmas has become the Christian holiday in our culture. We understand best what we can see, what is visible. The invisible, the hidden, is no less real for our lack of seeing it. (We think of the baby in its mother’s womb, known and felt, though unseen, only to her.)

Even very young children can know the truth about the growth of a baby inside its mother’s body, especially if the mother of the family (or an aunt, perhaps) happens to be pregnant on the holiday. The nine months’ wait from March 25 to December 25 for the baby to be born would be interesting to most children (God made

no special rules for His own bodily development!). What better way than reading the first chapter of Luke to gently begin teaching children about the beginning of each new human life?

Children should be told how important it is to every person that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (**John 1**), and parents can find this feast a valuable teaching moment.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church on Article 3 of the Creed: “He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the Virgin Mary” should be read by parents. This will not only give adults a timely review of Catholic doctrine, but it can be a great help to us in transmitting important truths of the faith to our children. The summary at the end can help formulate points we want to emphasize. Excerpts from the Catechism could be read aloud to older children.

Some other lessons that can be drawn from this important feast on the Church’s Calendar are: The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Angels as God’s messengers; the importance of humility, submission and obedience to God’s will; the value of humility and silence.

## Family Prayers and Readings

- Saint Luke 1:26- 53; Magnificat (Luke 1:46-53); Psalm. 139; John 1.
- Creed (See also Catechism of the Catholic Church, Creed, Article 3.)
- The Angelus
- Rosary (Five Joyful Mysteries: Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Presentation of Jesus, Finding of Jesus in the Temple)

Taken from:  
[www.wf-f.org/Annunciation.html](http://www.wf-f.org/Annunciation.html)



## The Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel (C.S.M.A.)

The Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel (C.S.M.A.), also known as the Michaelite Fathers, is a community of brothers and priests who choose Jesus Christ as the primary object of their love and the example to follow. This religious order was founded by Polish priest, Blessed Father Bronislaw Markiewicz in Miejsce Piastowe. They received Ecclesiastical approval in 1921. Blessed Father Bronislaw also founded the female branch of the Sisters of Saint Michael.

The apostolic activity of the Congregation concentrates on the ethical and educational teaching of children and youths who are neglected both morally and materially. They help by teaching religion, the gospel and by their priestly service. In their work they strive to bring God's Word

to people whose religious lives have been neglected and whose courage and self-denial need to be strengthened. They try to teach prudence, persistence and diligence in work. The Michaelites try to show the value and the beauty of a life in which God is most important.

In addition, the Michaelites, run several orphanages and oratories which provide children with professional help in learning assistance as they grow up and frequently, a simple meal. This help takes place at numerous summer and winter holiday camps and events and is supported by various groups and programs, which exist in the parishes.

At present the Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel has nearly 400 members: priests, deacons, brothers, seminarians and novices. They are the guardians of the Shrine of



Saint Michael the Archangel in Monte Sant' Angelo in Italy.

The priests and brothers also run a publishing house called Wydawnictwo Michaelineum and publish a bi-monthly magazine on Saint Michael and the Angels in Polish and in English.

[www.michaelites.ca](http://www.michaelites.ca)  
[www.michalici.pl](http://www.michalici.pl)



■ The shrine of St Michael the Archangel in Miejsce Piastowe (Poland)

## A Mother's Prayer to the Guardian Angels of her children

I humbly salute you, O you faithful, heavenly Friends of my children! I give you heartfelt thanks for all the love and goodness you show them. At some future day I shall, with thanks more worthy than I can now give, repay your care for them, and before the whole heavenly court acknowledge their indebtedness to your guidance and protection. Continue to watch over them. Provide for all their needs of body and soul. Pray, likewise, for me, for my husband, and my whole family, that we may all one day rejoice in your blessed company. Amen

## Prayer to Our Holy Guardian Angels

Heavenly Father, Your infinite love for us has chosen a blessed angel in heaven and appointed him our guide during this earthly pilgrimage. Accept our thanks for so great a blessing. Grant that we may experience the assistance of our holy protector in all our necessities. And you, holy, loving angel and guide, watch over us with all the tenderness of your angelic heart. Keep us always on the way that leads to heaven, and

cease not to pray for us until we have attained our final destiny, eternal salvation. Then we shall love you for all eternity. We shall praise and glorify you unceasingly for all the good you have done for us while here on earth. Especially be a faithful and watchful protector of our children. Take our place, and supply what may be wanting to us through human frailty, short-sightedness, or sinful neglect. Lighten, O you perfect servants of God, our heavy task. Guide our children, that they may become like unto Jesus, may imitate Him faithfully, and persevere till they attain eternal life. Amen

## Pope John XXIII, Reflection on the Divine Gift of our Guardian Angel

According to the teaching of the Roman catechism, we must remember how admirable was the intention of divine Providence in entrusting to the angels the mission of watching over all mankind, and over individual human beings, lest they should fall victims to the grave dangers which they encounter. In this earthly life, when children have to make their way along a path beset with obstacles and snares, their fathers take care to call upon the help of those who can look after them and come to their aid in adversity. In the same way our Father in heaven has charged his angels to come to our assistance during our earthly journey which leads us to our blessed

fatherland, so that, protected by the angels' help and care, we may avoid the snares upon our path, subdue our passions and, under this angelic guidance, follow always the straight and sure road which leads to Paradise... Everyone of us is entrusted to the care of an angel.

## Prayer to the Guardian Angels

My good Angel, Thou comes from heaven; God has sent you to take care of me. Oh, shelter me under your wings. Lighten my path, direct my steps. Do not leave me, stay quite near me and defend me against the spirit of evil. But above all come to my help in the last struggle of my life. Deliver my soul so that with thee it may praise, love and contemplate the goodness of God forever and ever

## Prayer to St Michael the Archangel

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 Power of God, cast into hell, satan and all the evil spirits, who roam throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

# Chaplet of St Michael

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

**A. Amen**

L. O God, come to my assistance

**A. O Lord, make haste to help me**

Glory be to the Father, etc..

L. 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, 3 Hail Mary's)**

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's)**

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's)**

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's)**

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's)**

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

**(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Mary's)**

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's)**

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's)**

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's)**

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

V. Pray for us O glorious St Michael, Prince of the Church of Jesus Christ.

**A. That we may be made worthy of His promises.**

Almighty and everlasting God, who by a prodigy of goodness and a merciful desire for the salvation of all men, has appointed the most glorious Archangel, St Michael, Prince of the Church, make us worthy, we beseech you, to be delivered from all our enemies that none of them may harass us at the hour of our death, but that we may be conducted by him into the august presence of your Divine Majesty. This we beg through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.