



# The Angels

Messengers from a loving God

## St Michael saves marines

Divine Mercy Chaplet;  
a Eucharistic prayer

Mission from an angel

Angelic Team

Holy Rosary with the angels



## There is no top limit to trust, and this word 'trust' was one of the key words in the Diary of St Faustina.

It is pleasing to God that the soul has living faith and living trust. Therefore, it is important to feed our soul by reading the writings of St Faustina because by not feeding our souls we will become weaker day by day spiritually. Faith comes from hearing; so when people do not listen to the word of God or if we do not read spiritual books people can become influenced by the secular world of today. We have to protect and defend our souls from it by persevering in prayer, faith and trust. Trust is a dynamic active word.

St Faustina wanted everyone to experience the love of God and each word written in the Diary is so precious. One of the most frequent words written is 'love', her love for God and His love for us and all of mankind.

Jesus loves us and is helping us to grow in trust and mercy. In His goodness He instructed St Michael to protect St Faustina because of her special mission on earth to write the Diary, which is the main source of knowledge of the Divine Mercy.

In the Diary the angels are mentioned at least 70 times. St John Paul II wrote "I have a particular devotion to my guardian angel. I have prayed to him since my childhood. My guardian



angel knows what I do. My faith in his presence and care is deep. St Michael the Archangel, St Gabriel and St Raphael are those angels I often call out for in my prayers."

There is a renewal of interest in St Michael the Archangel and many people want to become followers of the devotion to him and become knights.

Jesus wanted St Faustina to become a knight and fight for the salvation of souls. If you become more advanced in the Divine Mercy spirit, it makes you become more courageous and you know then that this is a spiritual fight and it is not easy. St Faustina had a daily battle. The first rule of the spiritual fight is to have faith in victory. Many people are taking up this battle and we can call on God because of our trust in Him and that we trust that St Michael will help us. Jesus I trust in you.

I assure you of the constant daily prayers of the priests of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel for all our readers and their families. Please let others know about this magazine and help us to distribute it all over the world.

God bless you.

Fr **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA

## The Angels

Messengers from a loving God

A Catholic Quarterly Magazine on Holy Angels

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- Page 3** Angels find a loss
- Page 4** St Michael saves marines
- Page 5** 2016 Pilgrimage to Krakow and Warsaw
- Page 6** Angelic Team Interview
- Page 8** Belarus project
- Page 10** The Lord's victim
- Page 12** The chaplet; a Eucharistic prayer
- Page 14** Proclaiming Divine Mercy – sources of uneasiness
- Page 16** Holy Rosary with the angels
- Page 19** In the footsteps of St Faustina (part 2)
- Page 20** Mission from an angel
- Page 22** St Augustine, the doctor of grace (part 2)
- Page 24** St Michael visits continents
- Page 26** The Knighthood
- Page 28** Holy Land Pilgrimage
- Page 29** Retreats by Fr Peter Prusakiewicz
- Page 30** Distributors and Co-ordinators
- Page 32** Chaplet to St Michael

# Angels find a loss

**I had a medallion with a section which opened up so you could place other small objects inside it, into which I had placed my blessed medals and a cross. I wore the medallion on a chain around my neck. One day, I realised that it was lost!**

I had no idea when or where it could be. I checked thoroughly through all my clothes, to make sure that it had not got caught on something. I checked in and around my bed and all around the house. My medallion containing my blessed objects had disappeared.

I was very sad to have lost it. Feeling helpless in the face of this situation, I then asked my guardian angel to find my medallion and to bring it back to me. "You are an angel" I said, "and I am only a human being. I cannot find my medallion, while you know where it now lies. Please, bring it back to me from wherever it now may be."

A couple of days later, when I was in the kitchen, making breakfast before going to work, I suddenly heard the metallic sound of something hitting the tiled floor. I turned around and looked at the floor. Behind my back, slightly further away, at a spot on the floor where you normally walk, lay my medallion! I picked it up off the floor, kissed it and thanked my guardian angel with all my heart for helping me regain my lost blessed medals and the cross which had been my husband's present to me on our wedding day.

Joanna, Poland



## Wisdom of Padre Pio

*Oh, how precious time is! Blessed are those who know how to make good use of it. Oh, if only all could understand how precious time is, undoubtedly everyone would do his best to spend it in a praiseworthy manner!*

\* \* \*

*The life of a Christian is nothing but a perpetual struggle against self; there is no flowering of the soul to the beauty of its perfection except at the price of pain.*

\* \* \*

*Keep close to the Catholic Church at all times, for the Church alone can give you true peace, since she alone possesses Jesus, the true Prince of Peace, in the Blessed Sacrament.*

\* \* \*

*Prayer is the best weapon we have; it is the key to God's heart. You must speak to Jesus not only with your lips, but with your heart. In fact on certain occasions you should only speak to Him with your heart.*

\* \* \*

*The longer the trial to which God subjects you, the greater the goodness in comforting you during the time of the trial and in the exaltation after the combat.*

**MARJAH, Afghanistan. It is hard to know whether Monday was a very bad day or a very good day for Lance Cpl. Andrew Koenig. On the one hand, he was shot in the head. On the other, the bullet bounced off him.**



■ Lance Cpl. Andrew Koenig shows the spot on his helmet where a Taliban bullet struck, almost centred, between the eyes. Bryan Denton for the Wall Street Journal

# St Michael saves marines

In one of those rare battlefield miracles, an insurgent sniper hit Lance Cpl. Koenig dead on in the front of his helmet, and he walked away from it with a smile on his face.

“I don’t think I could be any luckier than this” Lance Cpl. Koenig said two hours after the shooting. Lance Cpl. Koenig’s brush with death came during a day of intense fighting for the Marines of Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment. The company had landed by helicopter in the predawn dark on Saturday, launching a major coalition offensive to take Marjah from the

Taliban. The Marines set up an outpost in a former drug lab and roadside-bomb factory and soon found themselves under near-constant attack.

Lance Cpl. Koenig, a lanky 21-year-old with jug-handle ears and a burr of sandy hair, is a designated marksman. His job is to hit the elusive Taliban fighters hiding in the tightly packed neighbourhood near the base. The insurgent sniper hit him first. The Casper, Wyoming native was kneeling on the roof of the one-story outpost, looking for targets. He was reaching back to his left for his rifle when the

sniper’s round slammed into his helmet. The impact knocked him onto his back.

“I’m hit!” he yelled to his buddy, Lance Cpl. Scott Gabriel, a 21-year-old from St. Louis. Lance Cpl. Gabriel belly-crawled along the rooftop to his friend’s side. He patted Lance Cpl. Koenig’s body, looking for wounds. Then he noticed that the plate that usually secures night-vision goggles to the front of Lance Cpl. Koenig’s helmet was missing. In its place was a thumb-deep dent in the hard Kevlar shell. Lance Cpl. Gabriel slid his hands

under his friend's helmet, looking for an entry wound. "You're not bleeding," he assured Lance Cpl. Koenig. "You're going to be OK." Lance Cpl. Koenig climbed down the metal ladder and walked to the company aid station to see the Navy corpsman.

The only injury: a small, numb red welt on his forehead, just above his right eye. He had spent 15 minutes with Doc, as the Marines call the medics, when an insurgent's rocket-propelled grenade exploded on the rooftop, next to Lance Cpl. Gabrian. The shock wave left him with a concussion and hearing loss. He joined Lance Cpl. Koenig at the aid station, where the two friends embraced, their eyes welling. The men had served together in Afghanistan in 2008, and Lance Cpl. Koenig had survived two blasts from roadside bombs. "We've got each other's backs." Lance Cpl. Gabrian said, the explosion still ringing in his ears.

Word of Lance Cpl. Koenig's close call spread quickly through the outpost, as he emerged from the shock of the experience and walked through the outpost with a Cheshire cat grin. "He's alive for a reason." Tim Coderre, a North Carolina narcotics detective working with the Marines as a consultant told one of the men. "From a spiritual point of view, that doesn't happen by accident." Gunnery Sgt. Kevin Shelton, whose job is to keep the Marines stocked with food, water and gear, teased the lance corporal for failing to take care of his helmet. "I need that damaged-gear statement tonight." Gunnery Sgt. Shelton told Lance Cpl. Koenig. It was understood, however, that Lance Cpl. Koenig would be allowed to keep the helmet as a souvenir. Gunnery Sgt. Shelton, a 36-year-old veteran from Nashville, said he had never seen a Marine survive a direct shot to the head. Next to him was Cpl. Christopher

Ahrens, who quietly mentioned that two bullets had grazed his helmet the day the Marines attacked Marjah. The same thing, he said, happened to him three times in firefights in Iraq.

Cpl. Ahrens, 26, from Havre de Grace, Maryland, lifted the camouflaged cloth cover on his helmet, exposing the holes where the bullets had entered and exited. He turned it over to display the picture card tucked inside, depicting Michael the Archangel stamping on Lucifer's head. "I don't need luck," he said. After his moment with Lance Cpl. Gabrian, Lance Cpl. Koenig put his dented helmet back on his head and climbed the metal ladder to resume his rooftop duty within an hour of being hit. "I know any one of these guys would do the same," he explained. "If they could keep going, they would."

**Michael M. Phillips**

Taken from the Wall Street Journal

## DIVINE MERCY PILGRIMAGE

# 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016

## Saints of the Divine Mercy – St Faustina, St John Paul II 11<sup>th</sup> Divine Mercy Pilgrimage to Poland lead by Father Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

**PRICE £570 / €790 / \$895 + FLIGHT TO KRAKOW**

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■ Statue of St Michael in the Divine Mercy Shrine, Cracow, Poland

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# Angelic Team

■ Editorial staff  
of The Angels magazine:  
Karol, Agata, Noreen,  
Magda, Fr Peter, Jacek



## Interview with Agata Pawlowska, our Polish translator for the magazine.

The Angels magazine's sixth birthday is a good time to give an overview for our magazine which is distributed to all five continents.

### How did your contact with 'The Angels' start?

My contact with 'The Angels' magazine started some years ago. I was then a recent English Language graduate and particularly wanted to become a translator. Being too shy and reticent to take matters into my own hands, my sister - a recent convert, rang editors of many Catholic publications, offering my skills as a translator on a voluntary basis. It so happened in November 2009, Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA wanted to create an English-language version of the 'Who is Like God' magazine and this came to fruition with the first edition in March 2010. During my training period my translations were sent to Fr Peter and then forwarded to Noreen Bavister who organized the proof reading with UK volunteers who are still with us to this day. On January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, I was interviewed by both Fr Peter and Noreen in Warsaw and offered a job on the editorial team.

### What is your role?

Since then, my job has been to prepare articles, translating and correcting texts from Polish to English which

involves working in co-operation with our other Polish volunteers at home and abroad. Near our deadline I am in contact with our graphic designer and I liaise virtually on a daily basis with Noreen. I was given my job the very day of the liturgical commemoration of Blessed Bronislaw Markiewicz (the founder of the Michaelites), something which I believe to be no coincidence.

### From a six year perspective, how would you assess the development of 'The Angels'? What have been your successes?

I feel that we are moving in the right direction. After all, St Michael is our boss and it is he who is overseeing everything. Each successive edition of the magazine looks more professional in appearance and content. Fr Peter oversees the content from a theological point of view and ensures that it is in line with the Church's teaching and it is he who has the final say.

### What remains to be achieved?

I feel that we should promote 'The Angels' further in English-speaking countries, as it is a means of

evangelisation and re-evangelisation. I would love for 'The Angels' to reach out to people in the African countries and to the Far and Middle East. We hear that there are many Catholics in the world who are hungry for religious literature. God will show us the way.

### What is the most difficult aspect of work on each edition of the magazine?

Co-ordinating deadlines (laughs), however, we now plan ahead and work at least one quarter in advance thus avoiding last minute hiccups. I don't worry about the selection of articles and subject-matter, as I pray to St Michael for his guidance. During this prayer, I ask him what subject I should focus on for that edition, and it somehow becomes clear. It helps our team has evolved from small beginnings together and we work closely for the glory of God. We all have the same spirit and heart to support one another and co-operate fully. Our Polish translators and our English speaking proof-reading volunteers from the United Kingdom are truly invaluable and always ensure the texts arrive before the deadline.

Technical difficulties are another problem, for instance, when I have problems with my computer just before I need to send files to the printers or when important emails fail to reach Noreen for no obvious reason. Burning electric cables or the sudden loss of files or the



inability to read a screen no longer stress me. I say this now, a few years down the line. In the past, I became extremely irritated by sudden technical hitches and emergencies, which would happen just as we were preparing a new edition of the magazine. Someone is clearly working very hard to prevent the Truth reaching the hearts which are thirsting for it.

### **What, on the other hand, gives you the greatest satisfaction and joy?**

I get the most pleasure from holding a brand-new edition of the magazine, just fresh from the printer, in my hands. Before I even open the pages, I always use my sense of smell. The new magazine smells of the printers' ink and I am pleased that I have helped to create this piece of religious literature. I know that someone will hold it in their hands and that it will speak to hearts somewhere in the world such as Australia, Africa, America or the Philippines for example.

### **Can you recall any particularly happy moment?**

It is whenever I go into churches in Poland or Great Britain and see copies of 'The Angels' magazine. That gives me immense satisfaction, both on a spiritual and purely human level.

### **What feedback do you get on the topics covered in 'The Angels'?**

The design of the magazine is one of the first things that draws favourable

comment from the readers. This is thanks to our talented graphic designer Jacek, we can be sure of having success. The English-speaking readers particularly enjoy the content, reading articles on the Knighthood of St Michael the Archangel, the Q&As on the scapular of St Michael, the Divine Mercy, St Faustina and St Michael and the nine choirs of angels. Logical intellectual argument is given priority in our magazine over testimony. English-speaking readers are looking for information on spiritual matters. Matters which are basic aspects of religious knowledge for Catholics in Poland, such as the Church's social teaching, are often much less known. I am not surprised at this, when there is such a spiritual mish-mash and where even the New Age handbooks speak of Jesus.

### **Do you have any contact with the readers?**

Readers write to Fr Peter direct on spiritual matters and if a reader requires information on the Knighthood of St Michael or other questions I forward them to Noreen to deal with.

### **Now that we have English-speaking pilgrimages, can we see more of a sense of community arising as a result?**

We can certainly speak of a greater openness, understanding and friendship. English-speaking pilgrims come from such a range of countries in Europe, America, Australia, Asia and Africa, and pilgrims do feel they are connected through their faith. The pilgrimages are organised so that each day starts with Holy Mass; this fosters a loving and peaceful group that comes together as a result. Apart from the spiritual nourishment and experiences, pilgrims also get to know one another, to share and make friends,

staying in contact with Fr Peter and one another when they return home. Because of the recent renewal in St Michael, many pilgrims have become Knights of St Michael the Archangel and the Knighthood is growing across the English-speaking world.

### **What plans do you have for the immediate future? What can we expect from 'The Angels'? Who would you like the magazine to reach?**

In the immediate future, I would like to do the Will of God, both in my personal and professional life. We will continue to work on the magazine under St Michael's direction. Through the grace of God and with the help of priests and laypeople we would love to be able to reach as many churches, prayer groups and homes on the five continents. We value any help from volunteers inspired to help Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA in his mission spreading 'The Angels' magazine and the devotion to St Michael the Archangel.

### **What should we wish the magazine on its 6<sup>th</sup> birthday?**

I would like to say with Isaiah, that the magazine "would not fail to bear fruit and that it should successfully fulfil its mission" (cf. Is 55:11) - to work towards opening people's hearts to God throughout the world.

To my knowledge there is no other 32 page Catholic magazine like this in the world which supplies spiritual nourishment and knowledge on the Divine Mercy, the Devotional Knighthood of St Michael the Archangel and the nine choirs of angels, strictly from the teachings of the Catholic Church. It is humbling to be part of it.

**Agata Pawlowska**  
was speaking to **Karol Wojteczek**

# My hopes and dreams

***We built and are making a difference which is now bearing fruit for the glory of God.***

While in the midst of this project, I often repeated the words of our founder Bl. Bronislaw Markiewicz: *“Jesus, You are my everything. I give to you the fullest ministry. The greater the poverty and scarcity, the better for me.”*

Let us live with the awareness that we are never alone in the midst of our

seemingly hopeless situations, human concerns and problems, diseases and deficiencies. God, who became Man is with us.

The people of Belarus have beautiful, precious souls but neither mankind nor an individual finds peace and serenity unless they find the Divine Mercy.

You have hearts of mercy. I want to thank you for your kindness and update you on our progress to build a pastoral youth centre in my parish Gatowo, Belarus.

## Heart full of gratitude

Since my open letter to you in volume 3, issue 1 of *The Angels, Messengers from a loving God* magazine in 2012 my project has started to bear fruit. I am very grateful for your generosity and my heart is full of gratitude to those who have responded with prayer, sacrifice and donations.

This new building which has a few rooms completed, is slowly starting to function like the one built by our founder at the shrine of St Michael in Miejsce Piastowe, near Krosno, Poland.

It is a warm, secure and loving place that pulsates with life and happiness giving the youth in Gatowo, who used to aimlessly wander the streets day and night, somewhere to go. Our centre will provide a place where they can play games, read books and receive assistance with their education. There was a desperate need and it is wonderful because the children feel very fortunate now. The youth have peace, joy and the love of God. The



■ Fr Krzysztof Poświęta CSMA with local children

youth very much appreciate what we are doing for them.

I was giving retreat during Lent some distance away. A young boy Juan from Spain was preparing to make his Holy Communion and he asked his parents and guests not to buy him a gift. Juan wanted to give something for the children in Belarus as some parents could not afford such luxury to dress their children in white for their Holy Communion day. It was a total surprise and very touching to receive a donation from little Juan and his parents to pay for one boy's alb. So with the help of a local seamstress with a sewing machine she made Albs for all the children. We are standing together for their Holy Communion day in the room used temporarily as a small chapel beside the Statue of St Michael.

You may remember I had a chapel built around an old 1950's caravan. Local parishioners kindly helped to make improvements by painting the chapel white and adding a new red tiled roof. Families, young and old who attended Mass, stood outside in all weathers without any complaint. Because we are able to use one of the rooms temporarily it has made a big impact for families to come each Sunday to celebrate the Holy Mass without getting cold and wet outside.

Maybe not in my lifetime, but one day we will build a beautiful church in honour of St Michael the Archangel.

## Weekly Mass

I trusted in God with all my heart and prayed that with Him the impossible could be possible. You gave me a glimmer of hope in a seemingly despairing situation.



■ The local children on their Holy Communion day

If you wish to help me with the final push to finish the last stage of the building I would be most happy. No donation will be too small to make a difference and I will personally write to every benefactor to confirm receipt.

There are three easy ways to pay, please make all donations via the Global Children's Foundation.

### Donate by Post

Please make your cheques payable to **Global Children's Foundation** and post to:  
**Belarus Project**  
**Global Children's Foundation**  
**PO Box 4332, Harlington,**  
**Dunstable, Beds LU6 9DG. England.**

### Donate By BACS

You can transfer money directly into the GCF bank account.  
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### Donate Securely Online

Please visit our Just Giving site:  
[www.globalchildrensfoundation.net](http://www.globalchildrensfoundation.net)

I wish to thank Fr Peter Prusakiewicz, our patron of this work. Since November 2011 each Tuesday (the day of St Michael the Archangel) I have fulfilled my promise to celebrate a Mass for all donors.

With my gift of prayer and a grateful heart.

**Fr Krzysztof Poświata CSMA**  
Belarus Project  
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PO Box 4332, Harlington,  
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# The Lord's victim

**When she was 12, Alexandrina became sick with an infection and nearly died; the consequences of this infection would remain with her as she grew up and would become the “first sign” of what God was asking of her: to suffer as a “victim soul”.**

Alexandrina Maria da Costa was born on 30 March 1904 in Balasar, Portugal. She received a solid Christian education from her mother and her sister, Deolinda, and her lively, well-mannered nature made her likeable to everyone.

Her unusual physical strength and stamina also enabled her to do long hours of heavy farm work in the fields, thus helping the family income.

## The consequences of sin

When Alexandrina was 14, something happened that left a permanent imprint on her, both physically and spiritually: it gave her a face-to-face look at the horror and consequences of sin.

On Holy Saturday of 1918, while Alexandrina, Deolinda and a young apprentice were busily sewing, three men violently entered their home and attempted to sexually violate her. To preserve her purity, Alexandrina jumped from a window, falling four metres to the ground.

Her injuries were many, and the doctors diagnosed her condition as “irreversible”: it was predicted the paralysis she suffered would only get worse.

Until age 19, Alexandrina was still able to “drag herself” to church where, hunched over, she would remain in prayer, to the great amazement of the parishioners. With her paralysis and pain worsening, however, she was forced to remain immobile, and from 14 April 1925 until her death - approximately 30 years - she would remain bedridden, completely paralyzed.

Alexandrina continued to ask the Blessed Mother for the grace of a miraculous healing, promising to become a missionary if she were healed.

Little by little, however, God helped her to see that suffering was her vocation and that she had a special call to be the Lord's “victim”. The more Alexandrina “understood” that this was her mission, the more willingly she embraced it.

She said: “Our Lady has given me an even greater grace: first, abandonment; then, complete conformity to God's will; finally, the thirst for suffering”.

## Mission to suffer with Christ

The desire to suffer continued to grow in her the more her vocation became clear: she understood that she was called to open the eyes of others

to the effects of sin, inviting them to conversion, and to offer a living witness of Christ's passion, contributing to the redemption of humanity.

And so it was that from 3 October 1938 until 24 March 1942, Alexandrina lived the three-hour “passion” of Jesus every Friday, having received the mystical grace to live in body and soul Christ's suffering in his final hours. During these three hours, her paralysis was “overcome”, and she would relive the Stations of the Cross, her movements and gestures accompanied by excruciating physical and spiritual pain. She was also diabolically assaulted and tormented with temptations against the faith and with injuries inflicted on her body.

Human misunderstanding and incredulity were also a great cross for her, especially when those she most expected would “assist” her - members and leaders of the Church - were adding to her crucifixion.

An investigation conducted by the Curia of Braga resulted in a circular letter written by the Archbishop which contained a series of “prohibitions” regarding Alexandrina's case. It was the result of a negative verdict made by a commission of priests.

In addition and by way of spiritual comfort, after her spiritual director, a Jesuit priest who had helped her from

1934 to 1941, stopped assisting her, a Salesian priest, Fr Umberto Pasquale, came to her aid in 1944.

## Nourished only by the Eucharist

On 27 March 1942, a new phase began for Alexandrina which would continue for 13 years and seven months until her death. She received no nourishment of any kind except the Holy Eucharist, at one point weighing as few as 33 kilos (approximately 73 pounds).

Medical doctors remained baffled by this phenomenon and began to conduct various tests on Alexandrina, acting in a very cold and hostile way towards her. This increased her suffering and humiliation, but she remembered the words that Jesus himself spoke to her one day: “You will very rarely receive consolation... I want that while your heart is filled with suffering, on your lips there is a smile”.

As a result, those who visited or came into contact with Alexandrina always found a woman who, although in apparent physical discomfort, was always outwardly joyful and smiling, transmitting to all a profound peace. Few understood what she was deeply suffering and how real was her interior desolation.

Fr Pasquale, who stayed close to Alexandrina throughout these years, ordered Alexandrina’s sister to keep a diary of her words and her mystical experiences.

In 1944, Alexandrina became a member of the “Union of Salesian Co-operators” and offered her suffering for the salvation of souls and for the sanctification of youth. She kept a lively interest in the poor as well as



in the spiritual health of those who sought out her counsel.

## “Do not offend Jesus anymore!”

As a “testimony” to the mission to which God had called her, Alexandrina desired the following words to be written on her tombstone: “Sinners, if the dust of my body can

be of help to save you, come close, walk over it, kick it around until it disappears. But never sin again: do not offend Jesus anymore! Sinners, how much I want to tell you.... Do not risk losing Jesus for all eternity, for he is so good. Enough with sin. Love Jesus, love him!”

Alexandrina died on 13 October 1955. Her last words: “I am happy, because I am going to Heaven.”

Taken from [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

# The chaplet - a Eucharistic prayer



**When we say the chaplet we pray in Jesus' name, we pray with Jesus, through Jesus and in Jesus; we say "Eternal Father, I offer you the Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the sake of his sorrowful passion have mercy on us and on the whole world."**

**T**he chaplet is offered to the Father by us. Our offering is taken up to Jesus and by this we offer it with Christ, through Christ and in Christ.

The chaplet is a Eucharistic prayer because of what is going on during the Eucharist. From this altar we offer Our Father the holy sacrifice of His dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is the dearly beloved son of the Father, and because he is the dearly beloved son, the Father cannot say no to his request.

## God's unconditional love

The message of mercy, is the message of God's unconditional love for each one of us. God loves us. There are some attributes of God - what is God like? We are reminded of the attributes of God in the chaplet; first of all God is holy and when we say the final prayers of the chaplet we say "Holy God, Holy mighty one, Holy immortal one", we have reverence and kneel down for him.

Only when we discover the holiness of God will we be able to recognise our own sinfulness, because sometimes when we are far away from God we can say 'I am perfect' or 'I am better than other people'. But when we approach a bright light we can discover something small and it appears as dirt in our souls; that is why the saints went to confession often. In the light of God's holiness they were aware of their weakness and sins.

So many people say 'I have no sins', but this is untrue. It is like being in a dark basement, where initially we cannot see anything and yet after a while our eyes will become used to the dark, likewise it will be the same with the darkness which is sin. So when we approach God who is holy we will be aware of our sinfulness.

## Almighty and powerful

God's second attribute is His omnipotence – this power is exercised so effortlessly. Because he is so almighty

and powerful we become aware of this when we pray; when we pray we receive, because for God everything is possible. He can change people's minds. He is omnipotent and that is why when we say the chaplet we say, "Mighty One, Holy God, Holy mighty one". We trust, and we also trust that God will answer our prayer.

The third attribute – God is just. That is why we feel the remorse of conscience and we know that we are responsible for what we do, think and say. We are aware of it; that is why we confess our sins and ask for forgiveness. At the same time we believe in God's mercy. If God was only omnipotent and just, we would keep our distance and hide from Him. But God is love and He loves us. He loves us freely. Love does not need to be deserved, it is given freely. Justice needs to be deserved, we long for justice. God is above all merciful and loves us just as we are. If you had a very good mother you would understand, a mother's love is unconditional. The love of God is unconditional, it will last forever.



## Abba, Abba

While all the names of God are important in many ways, the name “*Abba* Father” is one of the most significant names of God in understanding how He relates to people. The word *Abba* is an Aramaic word that would most closely be translated as daddy or father.

When listening to a sermon on the Fatherhood of God, the illustration that when Jesus refers to his Father as *Abba*, it is a very comfortable, a deeply intimate child-like term, interpreted as either *papa* or *daddy*. Jesus uses the term once in Mark’s gospel and Paul uses it two times in Romans and Galatians.

However, in explaining the word *Abba* in this way is to show us that Jesus had a very intimate relationship with his father, not stoic or merely positional. It is what a loving father has with his son and the son who lives securely and comfortably in that love. It is an important message. We also see this Father/Son intimacy at Jesus’ baptism where the Father proclaims from heaven to us all his extravagant love in his Son. This intimacy and love between the divine Father and his Son is as true as the existence of

God himself, for it is his very nature. When Jesus was teaching us how to pray the Our Father, he wanted us to be like children in the Holy Land and say ‘*Abba, Abba*’ because we are His children. He is our Father.

The most beautiful passage in the Bible says, “For this is how God loved the world: he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16). Jesus the Son of God became man.

Why? We do not have to lift our heads up, Jesus is here, He wanted to be one of us. He suffered and was betrayed by his friends, by Judas. Jesus needed a rest, He was sleeping in the boat. He was hungry, tired and thirsty, He wanted to share our earthly life in everything because He wanted to be close to us. But above all He died for you and me.

## Confession sets us free

As a result, when I go to confession, His blood purifies my soul and I am forgiven and set free. He died for each one of us, for the whole world. We hear this passage during the Holy Mass “This is my body which will be given up for you and for all, so that sins maybe forgiven.”

In the diary of St Faustina; the throne of God’s mercy is not a sign of condemnation but a sign of justification and forgiveness.

Saint John Paul II through his actions and words said “Christ makes the Father present among men”. In fact, with his lifestyle, Jesus Christ shows the presence, in the world in which we live, of the love that addresses itself to man and embraces all his humanity. “By becoming the incarnation of the love that is manifested with particular

force with regard to the suffering, the unfortunate and sinners, makes present and thus more fully reveals the Father.”

In the Divine Mercy image we see the wounds of Christ, Jesus wanted them to be visible. He said to St Faustina “If you not believe my words at least believe my wounds, if my death has not convinced you of my love, what will?”

Jesus, this is how God wanted to present mercy, He is presenting Jesus the one who died for us. Open your hearts to Jesus, the Son of God.

## Jesus wants to enter our lives

In the image of the Divine Mercy you see that Jesus is not standing, he is moving, approaching each one of us, he is taking a step forward. He wants to enter our lives. He has already entered it; we are touched by His love and mercy. How many sins has he forgiven you and me?

The diary of Saint Faustina has a section ‘The Divine Mercy in my soul’, it is the mystery of her life and the main area where we can see traces of Divine Mercy. She wrote, ‘Lord Jesus, we cannot imagine how much you love us, we open our hearts to you. That we never get discouraged. That you trust in us, that you want us to be with you forever. Lord Jesus heal us by your love and mercy, give us your peace and strengthen us. Jesus we do trust in you until the end of our lives, forever. Amen.’

The message of mercy is the message of God’s unconditional love for us.

Fr **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA  
Pallotine College Chapel, Thurles  
Co. Tipperary, Ireland 16th May 2015

# Proclaiming Divine Mercy

## Sources of Uneasiness

Thus, in our world the feeling of being under threat is increasing. There is an increase of that existential fear connected especially, as I said in the encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*, with the prospect of a conflict that in view of today's atomic stockpiles could mean the partial self-destruction of humanity. But the threat does not merely concern what human beings can do to human beings through the means provided by military technology; it also concerns many other dangers produced by a materialistic society which - in spite of "humanistic" declarations accepts the primacy of things over persons. Contemporary Man, therefore, fears that by the use of the means invented by this type of society, individuals and the environment, communities, societies and nations can fall victim to the abuse of power by other individuals, environments and societies. The history of our century offers many examples of this. In spite of all the declarations on the rights of Man in his integral dimension, that is to say in his bodily and spiritual existence, we cannot say that these examples belong only to the past.

Man rightly fears falling victim to an oppression that will deprive him of

his interior freedom, of the possibility of expressing the truth of which he is convinced, of the faith that he professes, of the ability to obey the voice of conscience that tells him the right path to follow. The technical means at the disposal of modern society conceal within themselves not only the possibility of self-destruction through military conflict, but also the possibility of a "peaceful" subjugation of individuals, of environments, of entire societies and of nations, that for one reason or another might prove inconvenient for those who possess the necessary means and are ready to use them without scruple. An instance is the continued existence of torture, systematically used by authority as a means of domination and political oppression and practiced by subordinates with impunity.

Together with awareness of the biological threat, therefore, there is a growing awareness of yet another threat, even more destructive of what is essentially human, what is intimately bound up with the dignity of the person and his or her right to truth and freedom.

All this is happening against the background of the gigantic remorse caused by the fact that, side by side

with wealthy and surfeited people and societies, living in plenty and ruled by consumerism and pleasure, the same human family contains individuals and groups that are suffering from hunger. There are babies dying of hunger under their mothers' eyes. In various parts of the world, in various socio-economic systems, there exist entire areas of poverty, shortage and underdevelopment. This fact is universally known. The state of inequality between individuals and between nations not only still exists; it is increasing. It still happens that side by side with those who are wealthy and living in plenty there exist those who are living in want, suffering misery and often actually dying of hunger; and their number reaches tens, even hundreds of millions. This is why moral uneasiness is destined to become even more acute. It is obvious that a fundamental defect, or rather a series of defects, indeed a defective machinery is at the root of contemporary economics and materialistic civilisation, which does not allow the human family to break free from such radically unjust situations.

This picture of today's world in which there is so much evil both physical and moral, so as to make of it a world entangled in contradictions and



tensions, and at the same time full of threats to human freedom, conscience and religion - this picture explains the uneasiness felt by contemporary man. This uneasiness is experienced not only by those who are disadvantaged or oppressed, but also by those who possess the privileges of wealth, progress and power. And, although there is no lack of people trying to understand the causes of this uneasiness, or trying to react against it with the temporary means offered by technology, wealth or power, still in the

very depth of the human spirit this uneasiness is stronger than all temporary means. This uneasiness concerns - as the analyses of the Second Vatican Council rightly pointed out - the fundamental problems of all human existence. It is linked with the very sense of Man's existence in the world, and is an uneasiness for the future of Man and all humanity; it demands decisive solutions, which now seem to be forcing themselves upon the human race.

Taken from [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

You are not living for yourself but for souls, and other souls will profit from your sufferings. Your prolonged suffering will give them the light and strength to accept My will.

### Diary 67

You are the delight of My Heart; from today on, every one of your acts, even the very smallest, will be a delight to My eyes, whatever you do.

### Diary 137

My daughter, do not omit Holy Communion unless you know well that your fall was serious; apart from this, no doubt must stop you from uniting yourself with Me in the mystery of My love. Your minor faults will disappear in My love like a piece of straw thrown into a great furnace. Know that you grieve Me much when you fail to receive Me in Holy Communion.

### Diary 156

The flames of mercy are burning Me - clamoring to be spent; I want to keep pouring them out upon souls; souls just don't want to believe in My goodness.

### Diary 177

Call upon My mercy on behalf of sinners; I desire their salvation. When you say this prayer, with a contrite heart and with faith on behalf of some sinner, I will give him the grace of conversion.

### Diary 186



■ Annunciation by Matthias Storm, 1635

# Holy Rosary with the Angels

## THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

### 1. The Annunciation

“Do not be afraid, Mary! You will conceive and give birth to a Son, whom you will name Emmanuel” (Luke 1, 30:31). The words of the Archangel Gabriel brought great joy to Mary; her life will change completely, because she will become the mother of God. Motherhood of God is not for her a cause of sadness; it is the source of great joy. The scene of the Annunciation applies to us in two ways: on the one hand we are sent to

convey the Good News to others, and on the other, to accept humbly the word of God in our hearts and fulfil it like Mary.

St Gabriel the Archangel, reveal to us the Word of Life and the Good News that we are to announce to the world, and teach us to accept them humbly and to fulfil them in our hearts.

### 2. The Visitation

Each one of us has helped someone unselfishly, out of the needs of our heart. And although we were not planning to help, we stretched out our hand seeing a person who needed it. Mary, specifically inspired by the Spirit, hastened to help Elizabeth, although she

also needed help. She did it out of the needs of her heart. Love of God has to be tested by the love towards those who need our service.

God’s Archangel, surround us with your care, just like Mary surrounded with care her relative Elizabeth, but also teach us that to love means to serve, and serving in humility, to give glory to God for the great things that he does in our hearts.

### 3. The Birth of Jesus

The promise given by God was fulfilled – Mary gave birth to a Son. The place where Jesus was born did not foretell his majesty – it was a poor manger surrounded by animals. But in this simplicity, uncommon things were taking place: shepherds came from everywhere to bow before the Child. Three wise men came also to adore the One who was greater than them. Angels rejoiced at the Lord’s birth. They told the shepherds about what happened in Bethlehem and sang Gloria at his splendour.

St Michael the Archangel, teach me at every moment to sing with the legions of angels in heaven a hymn of adoration to God. Help me to look for Christ in other people each day with the same haste as the shepherds.

### 4. The Presentation

Mary and Joseph came to the temple to offer God his own Son. But this happens with us too. Through Baptism we became God’s own children. We were also offered to God as his children. But that first offering requires us to renew it; advancing in faith, we have to again offer ourselves wholly to God.

Saintly Archangel, help me to offer God only pure offerings, regardless of what sword may pierce my heart. Teach

me to offer like the widow from my inadequacy, and not from my excess.

## 5. The finding of the child Jesus in the temple

Those who lost someone close: a child, a parent, a friend, know what Mary felt. She realised that Jesus was not returning with them already far from Jerusalem. And, like every mother would do, Mary returned in a hurry to look for her child. We can imagine Mary entering the temple, tears of joy for having found her Son flowing freely down her cheeks. The loss of someone dear causes the greatest pain. Penetrating feelings of fear and longing pierce the heart deeply. And how do you feel when you lose sight of Jesus? Are you scared for your life, for your soul?

Heavenly Prince, help me never to lose sight of Jesus, and when sin veils his face, help me to break with it and be found by Him, who defeated my sin.

# THE MYSTERIES OF LIGHT

## 1. Christ's Baptism in the Jordan

Jesus asks John the Baptist for baptism, although it would seem that the roles should be reversed. He, who was to prepare people for the coming of God's Lamb is to baptise the Son of God in front of everybody. All this, however, had to take place for God's glory to be revealed. "This is my beloved Son – listen to Him!" (Mt 3:17). Not John the Baptist, but the One who is God's beloved child. Each one of us, through Baptism has become God's beloved son, God's beloved daughter. Do you treat this honour seriously, or is it only empty words to you?

St Michael the Archangel, help me to renounce the Devil, like my parents

did on my behalf during my Baptism. Watch over my vocation. Help me to discover the road prepared for me by God's beloved Son and to persevere in it.

## 2. Christ's Self-Revelation at the Marriage at Cana

It may seem that Jesus did not want to help the newlyweds; in the end it is their wedding feast, it is their problem that the wine ran out so quickly. The Son of God felt that it was still not a good moment to perform the first miracle. Mary, like every good mother, wanted to help with all her heart and trusted deeply that Jesus would do it. That is why she asked for everything to be done as per her Son's word. So often we see people who need help. It may not be 'on the way' to stretch out a helping hand; it may be in conflict with our plans. Have you considered how you would feel if it was you who needed help?



■ The Finding the Saviour in the Temple by William Holman Hunt, 1860



■ The First Eucharist by Vicente Juan Masip, mid-late 16th century

St Michael the Archangel, do not allow me to waste any opportunity to do good. May this desire fill my heart every day.

### 3. Christ's Proclamation of the Kingdom of God with his Call to Conversion

Everyone who lives in the Church may think that they do not need to convert. We live according to the Commandments, we love our neighbour, we do not neglect the practice of our religion. But Jesus will remind us of the need to convert all the more. We will also remember often other words of Jesus: "Who is without sin, let him throw the first stone" (John 8:7). Announcing the Gospel is the job left by Jesus to his Apostles. But this mission involves each one of us. It means that we should be Jesus' witnesses in our lives, that we should announce his teaching to those closest to us. This is what we are called to do.

Commander of the celestial armies, give me the endurance to never stop converting, because only working on my sinfulness can lead me to real freedom.

### 4. Christ's Transfiguration

We continually notice the need to change our behaviour, our character, our habits, the way we perceive the world, the way we relate to those closest to us. "This year I will change for sure," that is how many people's New Year's resolutions often sound. You also make similar undertakings. How long were you able to persevere in them: a week, a month? And it is only because we want to change by ourselves, to show the whole world that we can work on ourselves alone, with no help from others. With Jesus' help, everything is easier. Because Jesus has the power to heal, to convert and to transform.

St Michael the Archangel, every time that I want to start work on myself, remind me and direct me to the One

who is the Doctor. He has the power to heal and to change my heart.

### 5. Christ's Institution of the Eucharist

The bread that we eat every day guarantees our survival because it satisfies our hunger. Man praying for daily bread, thinks about the total nourishment that he seeks and consumes every day. Sometimes he seeks it too forcefully, at the expense of Sunday Mass, evening prayer, shared family meals; because he has started calling all the goods that he uses his daily bread. Jesus gives different bread that guarantees immortality. This bread, He Himself, gives eternal life in the fullness of happiness and joy.

Heavenly Prince, St Michael the Archangel, who continually adores Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament, may I sing with you a song of adoration for the gift of the Eucharist at the end of time.

**Joanna Chlopecka, Poland**

## In the footsteps of St Faustina

# Parish church (part 2)

**On Saint Faustina's journey through life there are villages, towns and cities of great importance, where the Apostle of the Divine Mercy stayed.**

These places are now frequented by pilgrims who visit in order to touch the places marked by her presence as well as to meet the saint, learn about her experience of God and about the example of her life.

## Swinice Warckie

From Głogowiec, St Faustina's birthplace, to the parish church in Swinice Warckie the distance is approximately two kilometers. This parish was built over 700 years ago by the Archbishop of Gniezno, Jakub Swinka. He was a prominent figure in the Middle Ages, who founded the village and the first church. Until the beginning of the 16th century the village belonged to the archbishops of Gniezno and later it was owned by a few prominent families, the Byszewskis, Uminskis, Swinickis and the Zarebas.

St Gotthard's was the first wooden church built around 1300. In 1592 it was replaced by a new wooden church, and in 1828 a third church was built. However, a few days after it was consecrated it burnt down along with the presbytery, belfry and shelter for the elderly and the out-buildings. The present St Casimir the Prince's Church

dates from 1859. Today in the high baroque altar there is the image of the Merciful Jesus. Next to this altar there is St Faustina's ornamented reliquary and the font in which she was baptised.

In this church Helenka Kowalska (her name before entering the convent) prayed, attended the Eucharist services during which the Blessed Sacrament was exposed and went to confession. The original confessional is still there - the silent witness to her meetings with God during the Sacrament of Mercy. When she was seven years of age at vespers, for the first time she tangibly experienced God's merciful love. It was at this church and years later, she interpreted the experience as a call to serve God. When Sister Faustina came to visit her seriously ill

mother she also came to pray in her parish church. She wrote: "How easy it was to pray in that little church! I remembered all the graces that I had received there, and which I had not understood at the time and had so often abused. I wondered how I could have been so blind. And as I was thus regretting my blindness, I suddenly saw the Lord Jesus, radiant with unspeakable beauty, and He said to me with kindness: "My chosen one, I will give you even greater graces that you may be the witness of My infinite mercy throughout all eternity" (Diary 400).

**Sr M. Elizabeth Siepak O.L.M.**

Taken from the book  
'In the footsteps of St Faustina'



■ The baptism and parish church of StFaustina, Swinice Warckie, Poland

# Mission from an angel



■ Prophet Habakkuk by 18th-century icon painter, Iconostasis of the Transfiguration Church, Kizhi Monastery, Karelia, north Russia

**The Book of Daniel presents us with a lot of information about angels as the guardians of particular nations. Angels save lives and interpret visions. There is also the curious story of an angel who appears to the prophet Daniel who was in prison and provides him with food. Let us examine this interesting story more closely.**

It is found in one of the writings forming part of the canon of Deuteronomy, written in Greek. In the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, during a religious persecution at the hands of the leader of the Seleucids, Antioch IV, the story of ‘Susanna and the Judgement of Daniel’ together with that of ‘Bel and the Dragon’ were written. The Catholic Church acknowledged these works as canonical and they became chapters 13 and 14 of the Book of Daniel, given that Daniel was the hero of these stories.

## Daniel’s salvation

The story of the great serpent (or ‘dragon’ in some translations) deals with the way in which Daniel proved to the king that this reptile was not a creature of God. Having first obtained permission from the king, he took some pitch, some fat and some hair, rolled the mixture into balls and fed them to the dragon, who then swallowed them and

burst. The Babylonians were, of course, furious at this, and, under pressure from public opinion, Daniel was handed over to the Babylonians and fed to the starving lions. At this point, of course, the reader experiences a sense of déjà vu as we have an analogous situation earlier in the book where Daniel is also in a lion pit. The lions did not eat Daniel as they were pacified by an angel: “My God sent his angel, who sealed the lions’ jaws, they did me no harm, since, in his sight, I am blameless and I have never done you any wrong either, o king” (Daniel 6:24). In chapter 14, the angel not only ensured that the hungry lions showed no interest in Daniel but also satisfied the prophet Daniel’s own hunger (given that Daniel remained there for six days - on the first occasion, he had only been in the lion pit for one day): “Now the prophet Habakkuk was in Judea: he was making a stew, and breaking up bread small to put in the basket. He was on his way to the fields, taking this to the harvesters, when the angel of the Lord spoke to him “Take the meal

you are carrying to Babylon and give it to Daniel in the lion pit.’ ‘Lord’ replied Habakkuk, ‘I have not seen Babylon and know nothing about this pit.’ The angel of the Lord seized his head and carried him off by the hair to Babylon where, with a great thrust of his spirit, he set Habakkuk down on the edge of the pit. ‘Daniel, Daniel,’ Habakkuk shouted ‘take the meal that God has sent you’ and Daniel said ‘You have kept me in mind, O God; you have not deserted those who love you.’ Rising to his feet he ate the meal, while the angel of God lost no time in returning Habakkuk to his own country” (Daniel 14:33-39).

## The prophet Habakkuk

In Theodocian’s translation, Habakkuk is clearly described as a prophet: “Now the prophet Habakkuk was in Judea” (Daniel 14:33). This information is not given in the Septuagint, but instead, the story begins with the words: “From the

prophecy of Habakkuk, the son of Joshua, from the generation of Levi". The Habakkuk mentioned in the Book of Daniel is probably the same person as the prophet whose book forms part of the Hebrew Bible. Some researchers consider that his name derives from the Acadian word 'hambakuk', which is the name of a garden plant with beautiful yellow flowers, which is a variety of the cinnamon plant. Others have looked for the origins of the name in Hebrew from the word 'habak' meaning 'to embrace' or 'to hold in the arms'.

In contrast to many other biblical prophets, the author of the Book of Habakkuk said nothing about himself. Its first words are: "The visions had by the prophet Habakkuk", the entire book consisting only of forty verses. From the text we can surmise that he lived in Jerusalem around the year 600 BC and was therefore the contemporary of Jeremiah, Zephaniah and Nahum. He was not involved in high politics, with the threat posed by Babylon, and concentrated instead on condemning the violence, force and injustice which occurred among his countrymen. He was active shortly prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the incident described in the Book of Daniel took place in the time of Cyrus. Habakkuk would have been very old when this curious incident occurred.

## From Judea to Babylon

It is hard to imagine how a person grabbed and carried up in the air must feel. In the sculpture known as 'Habakkuk and the Angel' in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, we see the Divine messenger who brings the prophet from Judea, holding his hair by two fingertips, as if he weighed no more than a feather. This sculpture

seems to portray a relatively peaceful scene, while the description given in the Bible implies that the incident was sudden and violent. Habakkuk was suddenly lifted into the air and transported over 1,000 km by the Angel of the Lord, in order to assist God's imprisoned servant, the prophet Daniel.

The general idea is probably that Habakkuk's 'transportation experience' from Judea to Babylon should be regarded as an experience occurring while he was in a state of ecstasy and carried by the Holy Spirit. So it says in the Vulgate, and the Syrian translation uses the word 'Holy Spirit'. A similar 'transportation experience' caused by 'the spirit of Yahweh' occurs with reference to Elijah (1 Kings 18:12 and 2 Kings 2:16). Habakkuk's words to Daniel testify to the fact that God is the main author of this occurrence, when he tells him that God sent him the food.

## Why did the angel take such trouble?

It is likely that Habakkuk would never in his lifetime have actually understood why he was transported a distance of 1,000 km there and back in order to bring food to a prophet in Babylon. From our standpoint, it is a curious story given that an angel could, after all, have fed Daniel himself, without the assistance of a prophet from distant Judea.

It is the Angel of the Lord mentioned in verses 34-35, just as in 'The Story of Susanna and the Judgement of Daniel' (verse 42), who rouses a human being to come to the aid of someone who has been wronged and who was in danger.

The story aimed to stress the ties that bound the Jews who had remained in the Holy Land with those living in the distant diaspora. It drew attention

to the fact that God's saving action extends over the entire world.

## The symbolic meaning of hair

Christians living in the times of the Fathers of the Church regarded the motifs appearing within the Bible as having a symbolic meaning beyond the literal meaning intended by the original authors. They recognised a deeper spiritual meaning within the events described in the Old Testament.

The key to understanding this spiritual typology is that Habakkuk and all the Old Testament prophets, symbolise Christ, who comes to feed us by means of His Word. Habakkuk's hair was recognised as a symbol of Christ's disciples, who, in their turn, proclaimed the Gospel.

It is thanks to them that he is capable of penetrating in to the very depths of the lion pit, symbolic of human pride and the darkness of lack of faith, in order to feed those people, loved by God, and to whom He wishes to address His Word. The meaning attached to hair as a representation of the disciples, was introduced by the Fathers of the Church, and derives from the description of the beloved in the Song of Songs as well as from St Paul's metaphor for the Church as the Body of Christ, of whom Christ is the head. Strands of hair are the elements of the body to be found nearest the head and out of which they grow. The number of our hairs cannot be counted, similarly to the number of disciples proclaiming the Gospel. It is thanks to them that Christ, here symbolised by the figure of Habakkuk, comes to those who are hungry for His Word.

**Roman Zajac, Poland**

# St Augustine, the doctor of grace (part 2)

**In accordance with Plato, Augustine, in his writings, recognised two kinds of knowledge: (1) sensual knowledge, which is shallow and fallible, and (2) rational knowledge, relating to the world of ideas.**

**R**ational knowledge, although superior to the sensual, cannot, however, be acknowledged as perfect. Superior to both these types of knowledge, however, is revelation and faith.

## The concept of spirits

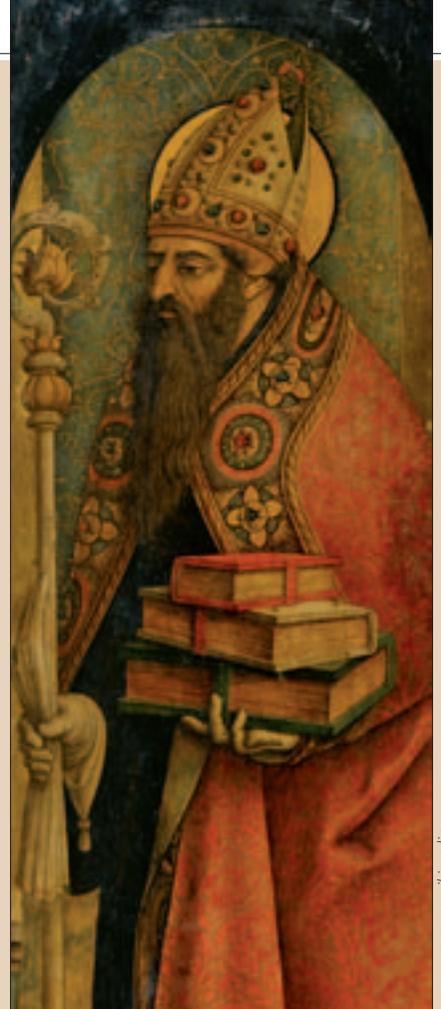
According to Platonic and Neo-Platonic conceptions, the world was formed out of a substance called chaos. However, Augustine clearly writes of creation out of nothing ‘*creatio ex nihilo*’, which has the status of dogma in Christianity, having been officially decreed by both the Lateran and the Vatican Council. Augustine’s theory of ‘*Summum bonum*’ was certainly borrowed from the Platonic idea of absolute good. Plato ranked the idea of goodness above all others. We must remember that, for Plato, ideas were neither fictions nor abstractions, but non-material beings with an autonomous existence, being forms or types reflected in the material world. The concepts of the absolute good and of

the ‘*demiurge*’ are complementary for Plato, as they conceal a personal God.

For Plato, lesser beings emanate from the highest, absolute being, in sequence, firstly, the spiritual beings, followed by material beings, progressing from the most perfect and ending with plants and minerals. Beings which emanate from the primordial cause will eventually return to it and lose their individual identity. Angelic beings therefore form a rich hierarchy of beings along a continuum of perfection from the absolute to the less perfect. All this occurs as it were, by itself, automatically, and is of necessity out with the confines of time.

## *Creatio ex nihilo*

For Augustine, things are very different: God does not act of necessity and automatically, but of His own free will. Nothing emanates of itself, but is called into existence from nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*) by means of a conscious act of creation. In accordance



■ St Augustine by Carlo Crivelli, 1487-88

with the words of the Gospel of St John, the Doctor of Grace attributes the power of creation to the Word of God: “He created everything by means of His Word, and this Word is Christ Himself, in whom the angels and all the pure heavenly spirits rest in holy silence” (‘Homilies on the Gospels’).

In another passage, Augustine comments without the slightest shadow of doubt “God is an unchanging being and the greatest good, from whom all remaining beings come into being, the spiritual as much as the physical.” The angels and the human soul were created out of nothingness, while material beings from pre-matter – in accordance with the principles underpinning the existence of such beings in the mind of God: “He made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is within it, visible and invisible. The invisible are those

in heaven, the Thrones, Dominions, Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels, who, if we but lead honest lives, are our fellow citizens.”

The Power of God is, in an unfathomable way, greater than that of all the angels: “However powerful may be the will of the angels, or that of people, whether good or bad, and whether or not their desires are in accordance with those of God, the Will of the Almighty always remains unvanquished.”

## When and out of what?

Augustine understood that the work of creation took place outside the confines of time, as if in one moment: “God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). In the text the word ‘heavens’ denoted spiritual ‘matter’, created in its final, definitive form, and meant the angels. They had been created and therefore possess some material ‘basis’ and tendency to change, but the gift of joyful contemplation of God, which restrains this tendency to alteration and changeability, making them recede from carnality and from the constraints of time. Augustine writes of this matter as follows: “The question of the carnal nature of spirits: By those means, the angels, as it were, suggest that they do not have tangible bodies, making the question of how the Fathers washed their feet, how Jacob wrestled with an angel, holding him tightly very difficult, and, as these are contentious questions about which people have differing theories, let them not fall into the trap of thinking that they know what they do not actually know (for certain), despite the fact that it is nevertheless worthwhile attempting to consider these questions.

The question of the time when the spirits came into being: It is said of the angels, that they have always existed, as they existed in all time periods and there has been no time at which they did not exist. Time, which passes as a result of the constant change which occurs, cannot exist contemporaneously with unchanging eternity” (The City of God XII.15).

Augustine treats the parable of the Six Days of Creation as an allegory which helps people to imagine creation. Considering the question of the creation of the angels further, the Doctor of Grace concludes that this occurred when God said “Let there be light” and that we can imply from this the creation of the angels. Spiritual beings, that is, the angels as well as human souls, have a complete and eternal form, as they are not limited as to time and space. Physical beings are incomplete in form, that is, they have the capacity for growth and development, for procreation and change, which can be encompassed within time and space.

## How many (of them) are there?

Apart from the question of the material and temporal nature of spiritual beings, Augustine touches on another metaphysical question relating to the angels which has puzzled people over the centuries, that is, their number. Many saints and Fathers of the Church have attempted such calculations, despite the fact that the Bible provides them with little basis.

Augustine is careful in voicing his opinion of these speculations: “We know neither the numbers of holy persons nor of the evil spirits... The number of these citizens, both present

and future is known to the Creator of beauty” (The City of God XV.1). Of the numerical proportion of angels to people, the Doctor of Grace, writing in a manner fairly typical of his time, concludes as follows: “When some of the angels, due to their godless pride, abandoned God and were cast down from the heavenly heights into the deepest darkness of this world, God established and secured the rest of their number with Him in eternal happiness and holiness. One fallen angel does not give rise to others who would bequeath the taint of original sin, together with its deserved punishment, to their descendants in an endless chain, as is the case with humans. It is obvious that the holy angels, with knowledge originating from the fount of Divine wisdom, from whose eternal truth they derive happiness and with which they are enraptured, do know how many human beings will make up the full complement of citizens in the City of God” (The City of God XII.23, XX.1).

There is no mention anywhere in the Bible of the existence of the angelic choirs. Despite this, the concept has been in existence since the earliest centuries of Christianity. Some of the Fathers of the Church writing on this subject included St Ignatius of Antioch, St Irenaeus, St John Chrysostom, St Ambrose and St Jerome, Augustine’s contemporaries, and, somewhat later, Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite, St Isidore of Seville and St John of Damascus. There are slight differences in their views, the number of angelic choirs varying from 7 to 9, but all are based on information from the Old Testament as well as on providential interpretation of phrases by St Paul. St Augustine frequently refers quite naturally to Paul’s terminology.

**Herbert Oleschko, Poland**

# Visitation of the statue of St Michael through the lens



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for Martin Jan Ogradnik



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# Interested in becoming a Devotional Knight of St Michael?



**The Knighthood is overseen by the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel. Many Knights read 'The Angels, Messengers from a loving God' magazine to gain more knowledge in the spirituality of St Michael the Archangel, the angels and the Divine Mercy.**

**T**his is a devotion and therefore there is no need for an official enrolment. However, if the General Animator of the Knighthood, in this case Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA is on a mission in a particular country and a person or group want to make their promise before God, then an official enrolment can take place after the Holy Mass.

Devotional Knights are people of quiet prayer, confirmed Catholics, who are open to the Holy Spirit and give themselves to Christ, unite with Him, and help the Church by keeping demons away from Her. The main duty of the Knights is the continuous effort to be in a state of

grace, in friendship with God so they can exclaim about Satan: "He has no power over me" (John 14:30).

All Knights must respect the Holy Father, bishops, priests and all the teachings of the Church. An attitude of humility and obedience towards God and the Church should be an obvious feature of every Knight.

Any Catholic man or woman who desires to become a Knight is required to make a promise between themselves and God.

## The Promise

I, (your name) a repentant sinner, renounce Satan and resolve to follow Jesus Christ. I express my faith in the Holy Trinity and the Holy Church. Today in the presence of God, St Michael and the Holy Angels, I promise to be a Knight of St Michael to the end of my life and to take part in the spiritual battle for the salvation of souls. I entrust myself to St Michael as my Patron and Protector in this devotion.

## My weapons are:

- Daily Bible reading
- Daily exorcism prayer to St Michael
- Daily angelic chaplet to St Michael
- Fast each Friday on bread and water (or a good deed if a fast is impossible)
- Monthly Reconciliation
- Monthly Eucharistic Adoration
- Nine day Novena to St Michael before the feast day on 29<sup>th</sup> September

May God help me to fulfil this devotion. St Michael the Archangel pray for me. Amen.

For your daily bible reading, choose any passage from the New Testament. It is good to start with Matthew or Luke. Read the words and ask God to let the passage speak to you. Pay special attention to anything that strikes you and ask God what he wishes for you to draw from that message.

# The Knighthood Coat of Arms

Our coat of arms represents two important mottos closely related to the patron saint of the Michaelite Fathers. It displays a round coat divided into two fields. On the left there is a gold sword, the symbol of the spiritual battle. Because of its brightness, gold symbolises what is precious and valuable and so symbolises the presence of God, majesty, joy and celebration. On the right is St Michael the Archangel – “Who is like God” the first knight and defender of the heavenly fight for justice and souls. The white background is the colour of humility, purity, holiness and virtue, as well as respect and reverence in the symbolism of the Catholic Church.

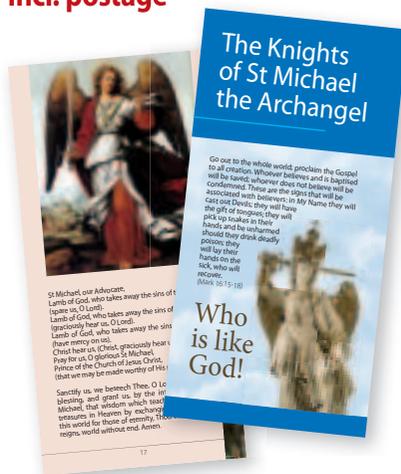
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# Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

## 5 - 13 March 2016

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Spiritual director

Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

Our English speaking guide will be Agnieszka

**Day 1** – Arrival into Tel Aviv.

**Day 2** – Jerusalem – Mt. Olives, The Ascension Chapel and the churches of the Pater Noster and Dominus Fleuit, Garden of Gethsemane, lunch, Mt. Zion, Wailing Wall, Coenaculum 'upper room of the last supper', the Church of St Peter in Gallicantu. Dinner, overnight stay.

**Day 3** – Holy Sepulchre Basilica, Via Dolorosa, lunch, Old City - free time. Dinner, overnight stay.

**Day 4** – Journey to Tel Aviv: panoramic view and Jaffa oldest part of the city, then onto Caesarea and Tiberius. Dinner, overnight stay.

**Day 5** - Tiberius – boat ride on the Sea of Galilee, Kafarnaum, Tabgha, Jordan river, lunch, Multiplication Church, Mt. Beatitudes. Dinner, overnight stay.

**Day 6** Nazareth and Nazareth Village, lunch, Cana, Mt. Tabor, return to Tiberius. Dinner, overnight stay.

**Day 7** – Jericho – Mt. Temptation, lunch, Dead Sea, free time, return to Bethlehem. Dinner, overnight stay.

**Day 8** - Bethlehem – Nativity Church, Shepherd Fields, lunch, East Jerusalem. Return to Bethlehem. Dinner, overnight stay.

**Day 9** – Departure to airport.

For further information

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Email: [holyangelsinfo@gmail.com](mailto:holyangelsinfo@gmail.com)



2016

## USA

9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016

All Weekend Masses

11<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**Divine Mercy Mission**

St Anthony of Padua Catholic Church  
Fresno, California 93704  
5770 N. Maroa

Contact: Marie Farley  
Email: mariefarley@live.com  
Phone: +1- 805-878-6902

14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016**Parish Mission**

Holy Spirit Catholic Church  
355 East Champlain Drive  
Fresno, CA 93730-1273

Contact: Marie Farley  
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Phone: +1- 805-878-6902

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2016**Divine Mercy Sunday**

Start time: 9.00am – 4.00pm

12:00 pm Holy Mass

3.00 pm Chaplet and Benediction

Venue: Green Meadows  
Retreat Centre  
Santa Barbara Blvd. Santa Cruz.  
Contact: Mona Rahael  
Email: monarahael@mac.com  
Phone: +1-868-678-2636

## WALES

5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2016**Divine Mercy Retreat****Reading the Diary of Saint Faustina**

Franciscan Friary  
Monastery Road, Pantasaph  
Holywell, Flintshire CH8 8PE  
Contact: Br Loarne Ferguson  
Phone: office +44(0)1352-711-053

14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016**Talk: The Angels – invisible or visible companions**

Franciscan Friary  
Monastery Road, Pantasaph  
Holywell, Flintshire CH8 8PE  
Contact: Br Loarne Ferguson  
Phone: office +44 (0)1352-711-053

# PRAYER TO ST MICHAEL

## THE ARCHANGEL FOR HELP AGAINST SPIRITUAL ENEMIES

Glorious St Michael, Prince of the heavenly hosts, who standest always ready to give assistance to the people of God; who didst fight with the dragon, the old serpent, and didst cast him out of heaven, and now valiantly defendest the Church of God that the gates of hell may never prevail against her, I earnestly entreat thee to assist me also, in the painful and dangerous conflict which I have to sustain against the same formidable foe. Be with me, O mighty Prince! that I may courageously fight and wholly vanquish that proud spirit, whom thou hast by the Divine Power, so gloriously overthrown, and whom our powerful King, Jesus Christ, has, in our nature, so completely overcome; to the end that having triumphed over the enemy of my salvation, I may with thee and the holy angels, praise the clemency of God who, having refused mercy to the rebellious angels after their fall, has granted repentance and forgiveness to fallen man. Amen.



■ St Michael expelling Lucifer and the Rebellious Angels by Peter Paul Rubens, 1622

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Father **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA

Deputy Editor  
and Chief Co-ordinator:  
**Noreen Bavister**

## Prayer to St Gabriel for intercession

O Blessed Archangel Gabriel, we beseech thee, do thou intercede for us at the throne of Divine Mercy in our present necessities, that as thou didst announce to Mary the mystery of the Incarnation, so through thy prayers and patronage in heaven we may obtain the benefits of the same, and sing the praise of God forever in the land of the living. Amen.

## Prayer to one's guardian angel

Dear angel, in His goodness God gave you to me to guide, protect, and enlighten me, and to bring me back to the right way when I go astray. Encourage me when I am disheartened, and instruct me when I err in judgment. Help me to become more Christ-like, and so some day to be accepted into the company of angels and saints in heaven. Amen.

## Prayer for the Holy Souls in Purgatory by St Gertrude the Great

Eternal Father, I offer You the most precious blood of thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the Universal Church, for those in my own home and in my family. Amen.



## PRAYERS

# Chaplet of St Michael

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

*Say the following prayer on the medal:*

*O God, come to my assistance.  
O Lord, make haste to help me.  
Glory be to the Father, etc.*

1. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Seraphim, may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. Amen.  
*(1 Our Father on the first large bead, 3 Hail Marys on the next three small beads)*

2. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Cherubim, may the Lord vouchsafe to grant us grace to leave the ways of wickedness, to run in the paths of Christian perfection. Amen.  
*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

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 Marys)*

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 Marys)*

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 Marys)*

6. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Virtues, may the Lord deliver us from evil and suffer us not to fall into temptation. Amen.  
*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

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 Marys)*

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 Marys)*

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 Marys)*

*Recite on the next four beads:*

- 1 Our Father in honour of St Michael
- 1 Our Father in honour of St Gabriel
- 1 Our Father in honour of St Raphael
- 1 Our Father in honour of our Guardian Angel

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

## Prayer of Pope Leo XIII

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