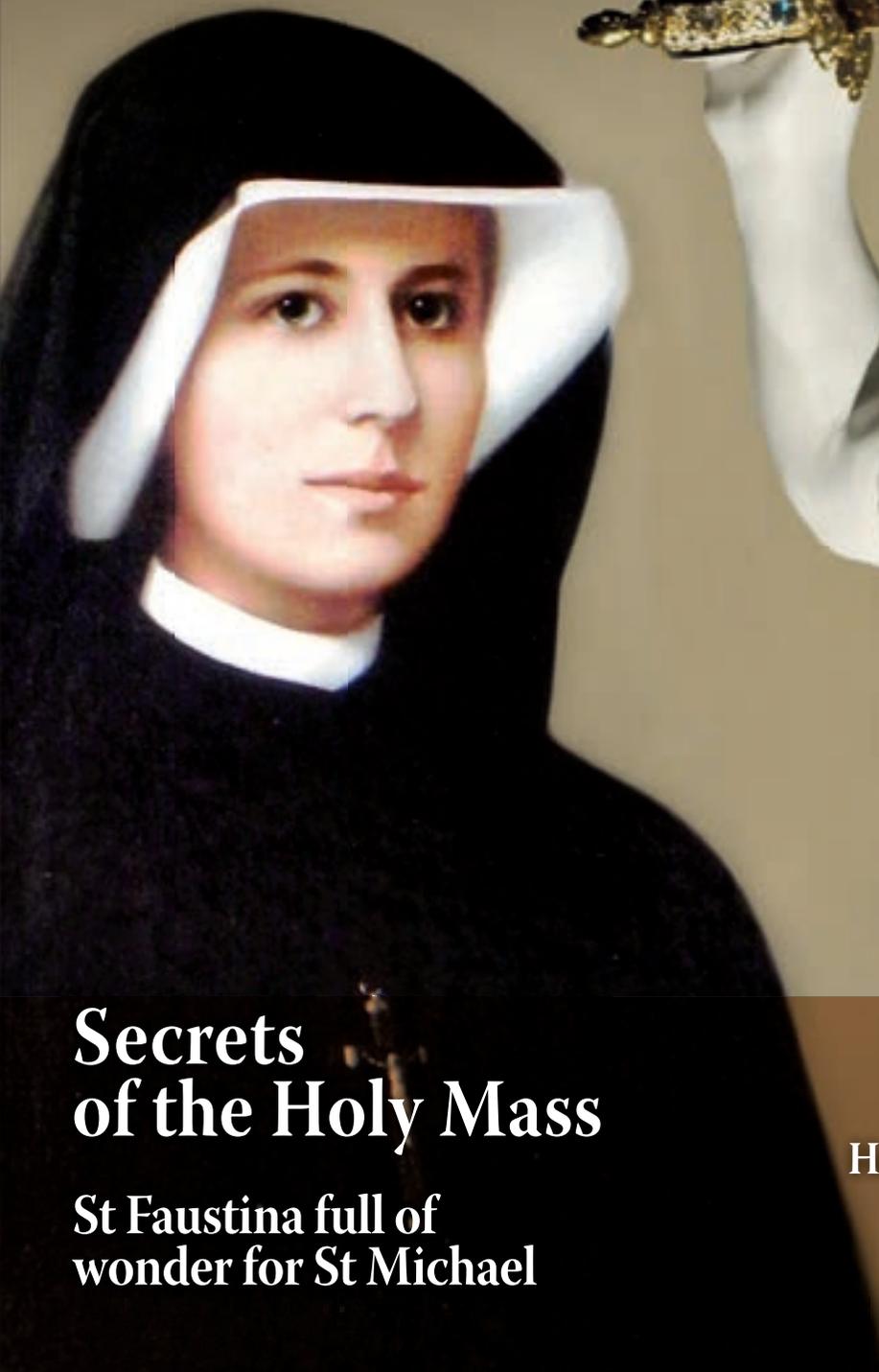




The Angels

Messengers from a loving God



**Secrets
of the Holy Mass**

**St Faustina full of
wonder for St Michael**

**What we can learn
from the angels**

Healing touch of St Michael

**Angelic revelations
within dreams**



Jesus said “where your treasure is, the heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21)

The Mother of Mercy from heaven also reminds us about eternity. The future life - life after death - is a gift of God’s mercy. His mercy is endless. It will last forever, what wonderful things will be given to us in heaven.

We should realise that a Christian is a citizen of heaven. One day Jesus Christ will transform our lowly bodies, so that they will be like this glorious body.

As we age, our bodies are lowly, getting weary, our eyesight and physical strength fails. Our mental powers gradually wane. Often we experience humiliating illness. We all die.

Jesus will transform these bodies to be like His glorious body, which will never age or decay. It will be very different although there will be a continuity. The beauty of our transformed bodies will reflect the quality of our life. In the image of merciful Jesus we see how beautiful he looks like in his resurrected body.

Our Lady looks at us and says ‘Do not worry, do not be afraid of death’. This life is not the end. Death is the gateway to heaven. There is life beyond the grave. My Son Jesus said “I am the resurrection. Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live” (John 11:25).

There will be no crying, for there will be no more pain. There will be no more temptation for there will be no more sin. There will be no more suffering and no more separation from loved ones.

Then we will see Jesus face to face. We will be given glorious and painless transformed bodies. Heaven will be the place of intense joy and delight which goes on forever.

Mary Mother of Mercy is in heaven, and she knows our needs and we should pray the Rosary and call on her often asking her to intercede for us. We can also ask our heavenly Mother what she cares about the most, what are her desires and concerns. If we listen to Her heart she will want to share them with us like she did with St Faustina, and we will realise that her greatest desire is to have one day all of her children, the daughters and sons in heaven, to see them happy forever.

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.

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The Angels

Messengers from a loving God

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■ The Holy Spirit Chapel at St. Clare's Retreat Centre, Soquel, CA

www.stclaresretreatcenter.com

Wonder worker St Philomena

Enter Divine Providence and intercessory prayers to St Philomena.



Fleeing the ravages of World War II in China, American born Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrows, Sr Mary Dulcissima and Sr Mary Agatha, arrived in California in May 1949. Upon finding new apostolic work in this new West Coast mission field, originally founded by Bishop Raphael Angelo Palazzi to provide missionaries for China, they recognized that it depended on the very life of their

little community. For a short time they served as catechists in the then Diocese of Monterey-Fresno, USA, but our Lord soon made known to the newly-arrived sisters the real apostolic ministry to which they were being called.

At that time the Franciscan, Fr Owen de Silva, O.F.M., was a retreat master, giving retreats for men, at St Francis's Retreat Centre in San Juan Bautista, when he realized the

need for a similar retreat house for women. However, this would require an Order of Sisters to look after the domestic needs of the women: but where to find such sisters?

Deciding to invoke the powerful intercession of the 'Wonder Worker,' St Philomena, the Franciscan friars began a novena to this virgin saint of the catacombs, begging God to somehow work this out and make His Will known.

One day the Franciscan Fathers consulted with His Excellency, Bishop Aloysius Willinger, C.Ss.R., of the Monterey-Fresno diocese about the matter of establishing a new retreat house to be solely at the service of women. The bishop, thinking it a fine idea, mentioned the possibility that certain sisters who had recently arrived from China might be interested in this ambitious and much needed project. Travelling to the old Mission of San Miguel, Fr Owen wasted no time in personally meeting with the sisters to present this proposal. During the course of their discussion Fr Owen was surprised to learn that the sisters, too, had been begging the intercession of St Philomena to find them a new missionary apostolate which would assure their becoming solidly established in the diocese.

A dream into reality

In earnest, both the Franciscan Fathers and the Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrows set about finding the perfect house and property to make this dream a reality. Combing the countryside for a suitable location, a Watsonville real estate agent brought them to the old Mountain View Ranch Hotel, built in the 1800's and located in the majestic Santa Cruz Mountains seven miles east of the seaside city of Santa Cruz. Known for its healing mineral springs, this country resort served wealthy clients from the San Francisco Bay area for years. Standing on the expansive decking overlooking the valley, Fr Owen and the sisters were held breathless by the beauty of the surrounding redwoods. Then Fr Owen triumphantly declared, "This is it!"

Without hesitation, both Fr Owen and the sisters knew that this was the place: perfectly ideal for meditation and lifting one's heart to God! They were satisfied with the property, as this two-story structure with its separate cottages could be purchased as it stood. It was also completely furnished, allowing for retreats to be held there immediately. Desiring to do great work for God and for souls, Mr & Mrs Dessell became the first benefactors of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters and the purchase of the original 18 acre property was providentially made. As the 'sister house' of the men's St Francis Retreat at San Juan Bautista it was given an appropriate name: that of 'St Clare,' the spiritual sister of St Francis.

Labouring from dawn to dusk, the sisters and brothers completed all the work on the house in preparation for St Clare's formal opening on 14 April, 1950. It was quite a feat converting a hotel into a retreat house: a beehive of activity with many people coming to help support this monumental and transforming work. The very first retreat was scheduled for the weekend of 14-16 April, 1950, which was organized by the wife of the Santa Cruz city mayor. The chef at the Santa Maria del Mar Hotel in Santa Cruz was summoned to insure the smooth running of the new retreat house kitchens, with additional assistance kindly pouring in from all sides. Fr Owen de Silva and Fr Leander Laner, O.F.M. served as excellent retreat masters, conducting all spiritual exercises. Fr Leander, as field man to St Clare's, organized most of the retreatant groups on the parish level with special groups being added over time.

As the months passed, St Clare's became known over an ever-wider area with everyone agreeing that it was the perfect place to make a retreat. Formal dedication of the retreat house took place at 3:00 p.m. on 25 June, 1950 with the Most Reverend Bishop Willinger blessing the chapel, house and grounds.

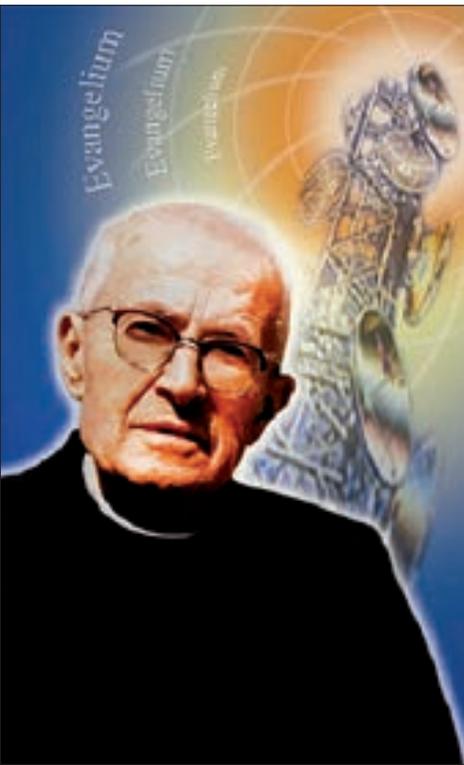
St Philomena Hall

In August 1952, Sr Mary Dulcissima, Superior at St Clare's, celebrated her golden jubilee as a religious. In April 1956, St Philomena Hall was completed, and appropriately dedicated to her whose guidance and protection had been so evident through the years. Like St Agnes Hall, which followed later, both buildings are of modified Swiss Alpine architecture and constructed of re-sawn redwood, so appropriate in this magnificent mountain setting.

Only God can compute the graces which He was able to grant to future retreatants because of so many sacrifices of these early pioneer Franciscan Missionary Sisters and the sacrifices of that long line of devoted and loyal retreatants who have faithfully passed the torch from one generation to the next.

Taken from a book 'A peek to the past' by unknown nun from Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrows

Fr **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA will be leading a weekend retreat, from 1st - 3rd June 2018 at St Clare's and also next year. For further information please contact: www.stclaresretreatcenter.com



■ Blessed James Alberione (1884-1971)

Blessed James Alberione (1884-1971), priest and founder of the Pauline Family, daily celebrated the Eucharist and spent four to five hours in adoration. The Eucharist was central to his day, sustaining an active apostolic lifestyle. Blessed James developed a Pauline method of Eucharistic adoration and it is scripturally based and easy to use. At the centre of Blessed James Alberione's Eucharistic spirituality is Jesus, our Way, Truth and Life. Jesus not only proclaimed the truth, but is himself our **Truth** because in him we discover the loving face of God. Jesus is the **Way** to the Father by his example, but also because he walks with us on our journey. As our **Life**, Jesus saves us from sin and invites us to experience the fullness of life in him. Our deepening relationship with Jesus, Way, Truth, and Life, transforms us and our relationships; we become more loving and

Hour of adoration

committed to advancing peace and justice in our world. The Pauline hour of adoration is divided into three parts or "moments," based on Jesus' definition of himself as the Way, the Truth and the Life.

First Moment: adoring Jesus' Truth

We listen attentively to God's Word to us today and let his truth shape our minds and attitudes. As we begin the hour of adoration, we choose a theme or recall a particular need to bring to prayer.

- Begin with a hymn or prayer of adoration.
- Ask for the light of the Holy Spirit.
- Choose and read a passage of scripture (or another reading from Chapter 3).
- Listen with your heart to how Jesus is speaking to you in his Word.
- Converse with Jesus about how this reading touches your life.
- Make a personal act of faith.

Second Moment: following Jesus' Way

In light of our reading, we turn to contemplate Jesus as our Way and

model looking more closely at our relationship with him.

- Contemplate God's action in your life, thanking God for the marvelous ways he has gifted you.
- Again, ask for the light from the Holy Spirit, who searches our hearts.
- Confront your life with Jesus' words and example, express sorrow for your sinfulness, and resolve to follow Jesus faithfully.
- Renew your trust in God's great love for you.

Third Moment: sharing Jesus' Life

Converted anew, we open our hearts to Jesus' Life, to let his sustaining grace and peace fill us so that we can bring that same peace and love to others.

- Rejoice in Jesus' presence and love for you, inviting him to transform you.
- Invite Jesus into your heart and share your deepest desires.
- Bring to God your needs and those of the world.
 - Pray spontaneously or use a psalm, the Liturgy of the Hours, the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, or another favourite prayer.
 - Conclude with an act of love.

St Faustina and St Michael the Archangel



Although angels are pure and incorporeal and, therefore, invisible spirits, they nevertheless sometimes assume bodies. The Angelic Doctor has this to say on the subject: “By Divine power sensible bodies are so fashioned by angels as fittingly to represent the intelligible properties of an angel assuming a body” (Summa 1 51,2).

No example to follow

He had no example to follow in doing the will of God. There are two crucial words in the above sentence. The first of these is **example**. It plays a significant and fundamental role in the formation of character. A good example inclines and encourages us to do good, a bad example, to reprehensible and sinful behaviour. One of the most outstanding Roman writers and orators, the philosopher Lucius Annaeus Seneca (died AD 62), in his “Moral Letters” to Lucilius, which include a wealth of wisdom and reflection and ethical study in their own right, wrote: “Verba docent, exempla trahunt” (meaning: words instruct, examples attract). Jesus, the good master and teacher (Mark 10:17), asks: “Can people pick grapes from thorns, nor a rotten tree bear fruit?” He goes on to explain this, saying that “A sound tree cannot bear bad fruit,

nor a rotten tree bear good fruit” (Matthew 7:16). St Faustina quite rightly points out that St Michael had no example to follow in doing the will of God.

In what was the crucial moment which would shape his whole future, he was on his own. Given his personal difficulties, the lack of example, the contrary behaviour of the other angels, particularly the chief amongst them, Lucifer, he was reliant entirely on himself, on his own reason and will.

In examining the life of Jesus, we note that from the moment he began his public ministry, he was constantly being put to the test. Beginning with the temptation by the Devil in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11), then by the Pharisees, Sadducees and teachers of the Law (Matthew 16:1-4; 19:1-3; 22:15-22; 34-40). Jesus emerged victorious from all these trials. Was this only because He is the Son of God? Such an answer would be too simple. In serving as an example for us, Jesus was to appeal to two standards,

which, for Him, were fundamental: to His Father and to the Father’s Word. Above all, His Heavenly Father was for Him an example in all he did, to which He himself testified: “I tell you most solemnly, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees the Father doing; and whatever the Father does the Son does too. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he does himself” (John 5:19-20). Somewhat further “I do nothing of myself: what the Father has taught me is what I preach; he who sent me is with me, and has not left me to myself, for I always do what pleases him” (John 8:28-29). It is therefore not at all surprising that Jesus should give us not Himself, but the Father, as our example: “You must therefore be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

Jesus could not, and indeed was incapable of, acting contrary to the will of the Father. We can give as Jesus’ motto the words: “I always do what pleases him” (John 8:29). He

expressed this at the very beginning of His public ministry when, in the synagogue in Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he read out the words of the prophet Isaiah which referred to himself (Luke 4:16-22). On another occasion, he told the disciples: “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to complete his work” (John 4:34). This he confirmed even more positively in His last words on the Cross: “It is accomplished” (John 19:30).

Faithfully fulfilling the will of the Father

The second model to which Jesus frequently referred in faithfully fulfilling the will of the Father was the Word of God, that is, Holy Scripture. He tells the tempter three times in different ways: “Scripture says; Scripture also says; For scripture says” (Matthew 4:4; 4:7; 4:10). His answer to the teachers of the Law is similar (Matthew 19:4-5; 22:27-39;

42-46). We can say, therefore, that Jesus took a good example from Scripture – from that which is written – with the result that the tempter was vanquished (Matthew 4:9) and the Pharisees did not dare question him further (Matthew 22:46).

God did not put His Son to the test in the same way that he tested creatures, that is, angels and men. There was no need to do so. As we acknowledge in the words of the Creed, Jesus is “God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father”. The angels, on the other hand, were subjected to testing by the Creator. St John Paul II teaches: “It must also be said that the pure spirits were subjected to a test of a moral character” (General Papal Audience, 23rd July 1986). A test of our moral courage is always harder than that which only tests our physical courage. In God’s eyes, it is only the former that counts. The holiness of the Christian life is expressed in the exercise of the virtues of faith, hope and love to a heroic degree. St Michael the Archangel was tested in the same way as the other pure

spirits. This was far from easy, not helped by his having no example to follow in the behaviour of his fellow angels. He could not seek guidance in what was written, simply because it had not yet been written. All that was left to him was to look to the One to whom he owed his existence. And so he looked incisively and perceptively, using all his reason and intelligence, opened himself up to the Divine Wisdom whereby his will inclined him ever closer to the will of God.

The second sets of crucial words are the WILL OF GOD. What was the Will of God in respect of all the angels and, therefore, also of St Michael? We can answer this question only when we discover God’s purpose in creating the world, creating all that is seen and unseen, including the angels.

A goal or aim is that for which we strive or wish to attain, a point or destination which we attempt to reach. Theology defines this as the limit of our conscious action. This can be a thing which is the result of our activity, a desired state or circumstance, or else the reason or intention underlying our actions. The parables of the treasure and of the pearl illustrate this perfectly. The treasure found in the field becomes the object which is acquired as a result of the actions which the person undertakes: “He hides (the treasure) again, goes off happy, sells everything and buys the field”. Similarly, “A merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it” (Matthew 13:44-46).

What is the limit of conscious action of God the Creator? It is the glory of God, that is, the participation of creatures on both the ontological



■ Divine Mercy Sunday in Retreat Centre, Santa Barbara Blvd, Santa Cruz, Trinidad and Tobago

(existential) and moral level in the natural order and Divine grace. It is the one objective and absolute purpose which God has determined, the source whereby we develop and attain our full potential and happiness as creatures possessed of free will and reason, as well as the ultimate goal. Unity with God as the highest and sole Good. According to the teachings of St Thomas Aquinas, unity with God is the highest sole good. For good is attributed to God, inasmuch as all desired perfections flow from him as from the first cause” (Summa I:6,2), and so eternal life in God is the one and ultimate purpose of the angels. Participation in the Divine nature in the eschatological sense – that is, beyond that which we experience here on earth, participation in the life of God by means of a faith which ensures our unity with God (cf. 1 John 1:3) is also the ultimate aim of human beings. St Peter testifies that God “has called us by his own glory and goodness. In making these gifts, he has given us the guarantee of something very great and wonderful to come: through them you will be able to share the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). That is the reason Jesus came into the world, revealed the Father, so that we may have life in abundance (cf. John 10:10).

In recognising God’s underlying purpose in creating beings with the power of reason, we are better able to recognise God’s will for the angels. In preparing his work entitled “On the Will of God”, St Thomas asserts: “The will is such that, in as far as is possible, it shares the good it possesses with others. This is particularly true of the will of God, from which all perfection comes.”

Divine goodness

Therefore God desires the existence of Himself and all other entities. He desires His own existence as the purpose, and all other entities are subject to His will with reference to this purpose, to allow them to participate in His goodness. For natural things have a natural inclination not only towards their own proper good, to acquire it if not possessed, and, if possessed, to rest therein, to also spread abroad their own good amongst others, so far as possible and especially does this pertain to the Divine Will, from which all perfection is derived in some likeness. Thus, He wills both Himself to be, and other things to be, but Himself as the end, and other things as ordained to that end; inasmuch as it befits the divine goodness that other things should be partakers therein” (Summa I:19,2). God’s will for the angels is for them to participate in His goodness, His happiness and in His glory. This is both a gift and a mission, which was the reason why all the angels were put to the test. It was a trial of the mind and the will, the two attributes of the soul which they possess. They were tried to see if they were capable of perfectly recognising what was essential and of making a decisive choice by an act of will. St Thomas considers “that the angels did not have from the beginning of their creation that ultimate beatitude (happiness) which is beyond the power of nature” (Summa I:62, 1). Theologians generally assert that the angels had originally lived in an intermediate state of existence in which they were given the time and opportunity to make a choice as to their ultimate purpose (to contemplate God

or else to reject Him). The angels who chose to contemplate God were raised to a supernatural state as well as then being granted an extraordinary state of grace. The first among them was St Michael, on the other hand, those angels who consciously rejected God and their God-given mission, committed unforgiveable mortal sin and became evil spirits, known as demons or devils with Lucifer as their head.

Faithfully fulfilled God’s Will

As St Michael serves us as a perfect example in faithfully fulfilling the will of God, this brings us to the question of how he recognised God’s will? Was he granted some extraordinary light or grace? St Thomas Aquinas states that for since God’s image is impressed on the very nature of the angel in his essence, the angel knows God in as much as he is the image of God. In coming to know the perfection and dignity of his own angelic nature, he came to understand that he had been created by God, that he was called into being by the Divine Mercy, as are all rational beings.

St Faustina wrote, “Divine Mercy, in calling us for from nothingness to existence, I trust in You” (Diary 949). And elsewhere, “My eye, enlightened by faith, reached You, and my soul recognises its Creator, its Highest Good. Here Your light illumines my mind, enabling it to know you more and more deeply” (Diary 1692). If St Faustina, in spite of the limitations of her human nature, was capable of coming to know God, to delight in Him and praise Him, how much more so



■ St Michael the Archangel by Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, detto il Guercino, 1644

can St Michael, a pure spirit who “was endowed by God with mental perfection together with his angelic nature. They (angels) attain their intelligible perfection through an intelligible outpouring, whereby they received from God the species of things known, together with their intelligible nature” (Summa I:55,2).

St Michael recognised also that his Creator and Lord was his only goal and purpose, and that his ultimate happiness was to be found in Him alone. “Happiness is the perfect good of a rational being. Nothing else is understood to be meant by the term beatitude than the perfect good of an intellectual nature” (Summa I:26,1). St Michael, *a rational being*, desired his own happiness and attempted to attain it, without contravening the will of God. He clung to God with his whole being and his will was permanently grounded in goodness.

We see so much wisdom, prudence and courage in St Michael the Archangel in his time of trial. Before sin entered their lives, St Michael was neither the leading nor the most

prominent of the angels. St Gregory says that it was Lucifer, the angel who fell, who held such a leading position. Why was it that, the highest of the angels, Lucifer, did not do the will of God and serve as an example to the others?

St Thomas Aquinas

Considering the sin of the fallen angels, the Angelic Doctor, St Thomas Aquinas, claims that Satan can only commit those sins “in which the spiritual nature can take delight. As to guilt, all sins are in the demons, since by leading man to sin, they incur the guilt of all sins. But as to affection, only those sins can be in demons which can belong to a spiritual nature” (Summa I:63,2). Given that Satan is a spirit, he cannot desire or take delight in material goods, but only in the spiritual. He can take delight in the highest and most perfect Good, that is, in God, or in himself as a spiritual being, who was created good from the very first moment of his existence. St Thomas asserts that “the will of every creature acts rightly only when it follows God-given precepts, the purpose of which is the ultimate end. But every created will has rectitude of act so far only as it is regulated according to the Divine will, to which the last act is to be referred” (Summa I:63,1).

Satan closed his mind to the Divine Wisdom by a perverse act of will and did not subject himself to God’s authority. Blinded by his own self, he was only able to call out: “I will not serve!” (Jeremiah 2:20). One contemporary theory attempting to explain this attitude is the Christological hypothesis, according to which the angels

were shown the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in a vision, and were to do Him homage and worship Him. Because of Christ’s human nature, Satan refused, and therefore failed to do the will of God. Other rebellious angels acted in the same way. St John Paul II develops this hypothesis further, “The world of the pure spirits appears divided into good angels and bad ones. This division is not the work of God’s creation, but is based on the very freedom proper to the spiritual nature of each one of them. It is the result of choice, which for purely spiritual beings possesses an incomparably more radical character than that of man and is irreversible given the degree of intuitiveness and penetration of the good where with their intelligence is endowed.

It was a decisive test, regarding first of all God himself, a God known in a more essential and direct way than is possible to man, a God who granted to these spiritual beings the gift of participating in his divine nature, before doing so to man” (St John Paul II, General Papal Audience, 23rd July 1986).

Satan did not act in accordance with the precepts of God’s will, making an erroneous, irreversible choice for both himself and his followers.

This is part of an extended booklet, further details of which can be obtained on page 29.

‘St Faustina and St Michael’ personal contemplation and reflections by Fr **Karol Dabrowski** CSMA, Poland

Adapted from the text by
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Healing touch of St Michael

It was the end of January, and we had only one week left of our holiday. We were considering what we should do with ourselves from Monday onwards. How should we use our free time?

For a long time my husband Krzysiek and I wanted to visit and explore many of the towns in Poland, especially to those places where we had never been. Krzysiek loves sightseeing and discovering historic locations. As a person of faith I would prefer to visit a shrine. Krzysiek is also a 'believer' but could be seen as somewhat lukewarm in his faith. I've not really seen him praying; he goes to church perhaps once or twice a year. This is completely opposite to me, as personally I could not imagine a Sunday without going to Mass, or a single day in which I did not pray to my beloved Merciful Jesus, St Faustina, our Blessed Mother or to St Rita.

A transformative encounter

I had really wanted to visit the site of the Eucharistic miracle in Sokółka, but I wondered what Krzysiek would say. However, he was enthusiastic about the idea and we set out early on the Monday morning. The visit was a great success – filled with spiritual experiences and I saw for the first

time signs of a change happening to Krzysiek. As soon as we got back, we began to plan our next trip – to the shrine of Our Lady in Licheń. Krzysiek had not been there and seeing the change in him I wanted him to be fully awakened to God. In the depths of my soul, I was counting on the possibility that he would be filled with wonder by the things of God and His Blessed Mother. I saw how deeply he had been affected by the apparition site in Grąblin Forest and was filled with joy. On our way home, we spoke of visiting the shrine of the Divine Mercy in Łagiewniki, which I was now eagerly anticipating.

On our return home that evening, Krzysiek went on his tablet and read that there would be a visit to the Divine Mercy Shrine of the pilgrimage statue of St Michael the Archangel on the following Tuesday. Krzysiek had always been interested in the spirit world and in films about exorcism. He now began to read about St Michael the Archangel and was deeply interested in the subject. He really did feel the need to go to Łagiewniki on the day of the visit of the statue, which, unfortunately, was impossible, as our holiday ended on Friday.



A disturbing idea

He felt a great connection to St Michael the Archangel, began to read about the scapular and the Knighthood of St Michael the Archangel. He read testimonies of various people and was very touched by them, to the extent that he tried to convince me that we should both be invested with the scapular. I write that 'he convinced me' because, although I had a deeper faith and trust in God, I nevertheless felt more removed from St Michael and the angelic choirs. I possibly even felt some fear when hearing of the battle between good and evil and being cast down into hell.

However, Krzysiek researched fully for a place where we could be invested with the scapular. He found the parish of Our Lady of Częstochowa in Wołomin, where there is a Mass in honour of St Michael the Archangel at which you can be invested with the scapular. It worked out very well, as that Saturday was the last day of our holiday.

That morning, I phoned the parish to ask if we could be invested with the scapular on the Saturday and they reserved them for us. The parish sister

informed me that we should come to the sacristy at five minutes to eight, in order to complete the necessary form and collect the scapulars. We then looked forward in anticipation for our encounter with St Michael on the Saturday. From that moment, we could actually feel him touching our lives.

The perversity of inanimate objects

On that eagerly-awaited Saturday, we ourselves witnessed the action of St Michael. It was 20 kilometres to Wołomin and we had no idea as to how to find the church we were looking for. We set our alarm, but it failed to ring, so that we did not wake up until 7.10! Hurriedly, we dressed and got into the car, only to find that we had run out of petrol! At the petrol station we again experienced the perversity of inanimate objects, when the fuel filler cap failed to shut. We finally set off with next to no chance of arriving on time. Krzysiek said that we could at least be at Mass. I said nothing, just felt that we must still obviously be unworthy of receiving the scapular. And so as we are driving along the road, I thanked God that Krzysiek had made no complaint, but I knew he was so eager to be at Mass. We're driving along and to our surprise! We did not stop at any lights, the roads were empty and we arrived at the church despite not knowing the address at exactly five minutes to eight. I ran breathlessly into the sacristy, my hat in my hand. Everyone was about to go to the altar, but the parish sister said to me: "Calm down, dear, calm down", whereupon I told her how I was convinced that we would be late, that we were unworthy of receiving

the scapular. The sister replied: "You're worthy, you see, everything's under control!" It's quite unbelievable! What St Michael has done for us is inexplicable in human terms!

A day of momentous changes

The 31st of January, 2015 is a most important day for us – a day of huge changes. From that day onwards, I have watched my husband kneeling down in our bedroom each morning and praying. He has carried on doing this even when we were on holiday in Croatia. I see the devotion with which he wears the image of St Michael the Archangel and how he talks about it. I have seen how deeply he experiences each and every Holy Mass, at which I've even noticed him weep. Since that time, we have not missed a single one of the Masses in honour of St Michael in Wołomin. In addition, we also go there for evening Mass every first Saturday of the month. Krzysiek recently told me how he felt. He said to me: "You know how good I feel here, I feel as if I'm home". It is beautiful, so very beautiful to feel at home – calm, safe and good. I could almost envy him – but my heart truly rejoices.

Another aspect of the working of St Michael in our lives is that Krzysiek has discovered a talent for carpentry and design. That same day in the afternoon, he made a bookshelf from boards he had at home – it took him just three hours. From then, Krzysiek began planning our kitchen – a desk and shelving unit, shelves and many other things. He had no idea he possessed such talents. Finding one has a new talent at the age

of fifty is rather late in the day, to be sure, but God knows what he is doing and doubtless has his own plans. He knows what is best for us. It would undoubtedly have paid us better to have discovered such a talent sooner – he could have built a prosperous business by now – only I don't know if it would then have been the same Krzysiek – devoted to St Michael and loving God and Our Lady. Only God knows and we must trust in Him. He loves us and will straighten out our paths and wrong turnings in life.

I'm not afraid for tomorrow

St Michael has taken us to visit him in Gargano, where we attended the celebrations on the 29th of September. Had someone told us in the January that we would be on an angelic pilgrimage, we would not have believed it, even though we wanted to go there. Our beloved patron saint has brought us and my daughter (who was also invested with the scapular while there) before his face, as well as to many more miraculous places, where we did him homage and where his wings covered and strengthened us. We are happy and joyful. We no longer fear what tomorrow may bring and fear the darkness. Our beloved archangel is there with us and he leads, protects, upholds and assists us all the time and in every situation. We would gladly proclaim to all the world the joy, happiness and love which, despite the sad moments which sometimes come to us all, also touch us.

WHO IS LIKE GOD!

Grażyna Binczycka, Poland

When we do not know how to pray

We are fascinated by saints who spend many hours in prayer. We observe with wonder and envy, those who, either at prayer meetings or during their personal prayer, are able to focus on God completely: that they seem to attain states of ecstasy, when we are unable to do so, however much we may desire to do so.

Is prayer an art? If so, is it an art which we can learn? Prayer is not an art. Above all, what it is, is the courage to stand in truth before God. The first truth about us is that we are weak and frail. Paradoxically, however, this very frailty not only does not constitute an obstacle to our prayers, but actually forms the content of our prayer. Prayer is, above all else, the work of the Holy Spirit, who acts on our frailty and wretchedness. So, all we can 'learn' are ways of praying, but not prayer itself.

The groan of the Holy Spirit

Anyone who sincerely wishes to pray must first trust in the words of St Paul: "And as well as this, the Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness; for, when we do not know how to pray properly, then the Spirit personally makes our petitions for us in groans that cannot be put into words; and he who can see into all hearts knows what the Spirit means because the prayers that the Spirit makes for God's holy people are always in accordance with the mind of God" (Romans 8:26-27).

It is worthwhile noting that the sentence translates as: the Spirit personally makes our petitions for us in groans that cannot be put into words" is rendered in the original Greek as *Pneuma stenagmois*, which literally translates as, "the Holy Spirit groans within us". This groan, which we are inclined to regard as a weakness of which we accuse ourselves and see as a blemish against us, is actually the groan of the Holy Spirit, speaking within us and conducting a dialogue with the Father and Son.

This 'groan' makes itself felt within us most readily when touching on our three weaknesses in prayer: persistent distraction, dryness and the pain and suffering of unheard/unanswered prayer. How should we cope with these difficulties – and how should we perceive the working of the Holy Spirit within them?

Distraction

Masters of the spiritual life suggest that we should face this difficulty (known as *explication desideris*) by disclosing our distractions, hunger, fears and all that prevents us from focusing on our prayer to God. The Latin

word *explication* comes from the word *plica* (that is, a fold). The Evil One, the prince of darkness, delights to hide within these *folds* and attack, ridicule and mock us from within these very *folds*. At the start of our prayer we should therefore iron them out and disable the power of temptation over us. They are then unmasked, that is, given over to God and open to His action. God wants us to first hand over to Him our powerlessness and weakness which He will then replace with His power. It is therefore worth our while devoting the first few minutes of the time spent with God in prayer, calling all our difficulties by name, and, in among the 'groans' of the Holy Spirit, immersing them in God. God is not disgusted by them. He will transform them into a loving dialogue of the Father with a beloved child, granting us consolation, light (insight) and strength.

Spiritual dryness

Everyone who takes God seriously has experienced times when their prayer has been a pleasant, beautiful and blessed experience. Each of us has



absent could not enjoy the sweetness of the beautiful airs he sang.”

Unanswered prayer

We all know people who have for many years prayed for a particular intention and beseeched God and ... have not been answered. In place of trust there is now pain and a sense of grievance and resentment against God. They accuse themselves of being unworthy and they even accuse God of not being there or else feel that He does not exist. Regret, sadness and hopelessness have become their daily bread. After all, they petitioned God in good faith and with noble intentions. They did not ask for wealth or advancement or comfort for themselves, but for life and health, and for freedom from addiction or enslavement to vice, asking that they and those dear to them should remain in a state of grace. They asked God, and – nothing changed. Did they pray badly? Did their petitions fail to find favour with God? – No!

What advice can we give to such souls? To renew their trust and to do so blindly, just as Job had done when he was tested by his Creator and called out: “Let him kill me if he will; I have no other hope than to justify my conduct in his eyes” (Job 13:15). Only God can know whether hearing our pleas would help us gain salvation or not. So, in every circumstance we should say: Jesus, I trust in You!

One more question – is work a form of prayer? No! Work is work, and prayer is prayer. A piece of advice: When you pray – do nothing (else); when you work – always pray!

Fr Ryszard Andrzejewski CSMA

also known days (and even months or years) when prayer has been boring, an ordeal and a (seeming) waste of time; in other words, when our prayer experience has been a desert. This is accompanied by a feeling of pointlessness and the temptation to constantly blame ourselves (for this state of affairs).

It is, however, rare that the experience of dryness in prayer is our fault. It is more usually something which God has permitted; a type of cleansing and a test of our faithfulness to God.

Indifference, on the other hand – the state whereby a person has given up on prayer and is no longer spiritually alert and has become cold as stone – is down to us. We then persist in a state of sin and unfaithfulness and do nothing to change our situation; while the person experiencing spiritual dryness laments their state. This very lamentation is in itself a beautiful prayer and music to God’s ears. What is left is for the person in this situation to remain open and alert (to God), to thank, praise Him and cry out: “Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy upon me”.

That great master of the spiritual life, St Francis de Sales (1567 – 1622), Bishop of Geneva, in the *Treatise on the love of God*, wrote:

“One of the most excellent musicians in the world, who played perfectly upon the lute, became in time

so extremely deaf that he entirely lost the use of his hearing, yet ceased he not for all that to sing and to handle his lute marvellous delicately, by reason of the great skill he had acquired, of which his deafness did not deprive him. But because he had no pleasure in his song, nor yet in the sound of his lute, inasmuch as, being deprived of his hearing he could not perceive its sweetness and beauty, —he no longer sang or played save only to content a prince whose native subject he was, and whom he had an extreme inclination, as well as an infinite obligation, to please, because brought up in his palace from childhood. Hence he took an incomparable delight in pleasing him, and when his prince showed that he was pleased with his music he was ravished with delight. But it happened sometimes that the prince, to make trial of this loving musician’s love, gave him an order to sing, and then immediately leaving him there in his chamber, went to the chase. The desire which this singer had to accomplish his master’s will, made him continue his music as attentively as though his prince had been present, though in very deed he had no content in singing. For he neither had the pleasure of the melody, whereof his deafness deprived him, nor the content of pleasing his prince, who being

AFTER COMMUNION

Stay with me Lord for without Your Presence I forget You:
You know how easily I abandon You.

Stay with me Lord, for without your strength I fall;
You know how weak I am.

Stay with me Lord, for without You my fervour fails;
You are my life.

Stay with me Lord, for without You I am in darkness;
You are my light.

Stay with me Lord and show me Your Will.

Stay with me Lord and let me hear your voice.

Stay with me Lord that I may follow You.

Stay with me Lord that I may love You more.

Stay with me Lord that I may stay with You.

If You would have me to be faithful, stay with me Lord.

Stay with me Jesus, for though my soul is poor; it desires to be an abode of love for You, a place of consolation.

Stay with me Jesus, for it is getting late; the day is ending, life is passing; death, judgment and eternity are coming soon.

Now I must muster all my forces so that I do not faint on the road. I have great need for You on this journey. It is getting late and death is approaching.

Darkness, temptations, dryness, crosses and troubles beset me -and oh how much I need You my good Jesus, in this night of exile.

Stay with me Jesus because this night of life is so full of dangers and I have such need of You. Grant that, like Your disciples, I may recognise You in the breaking of bread.

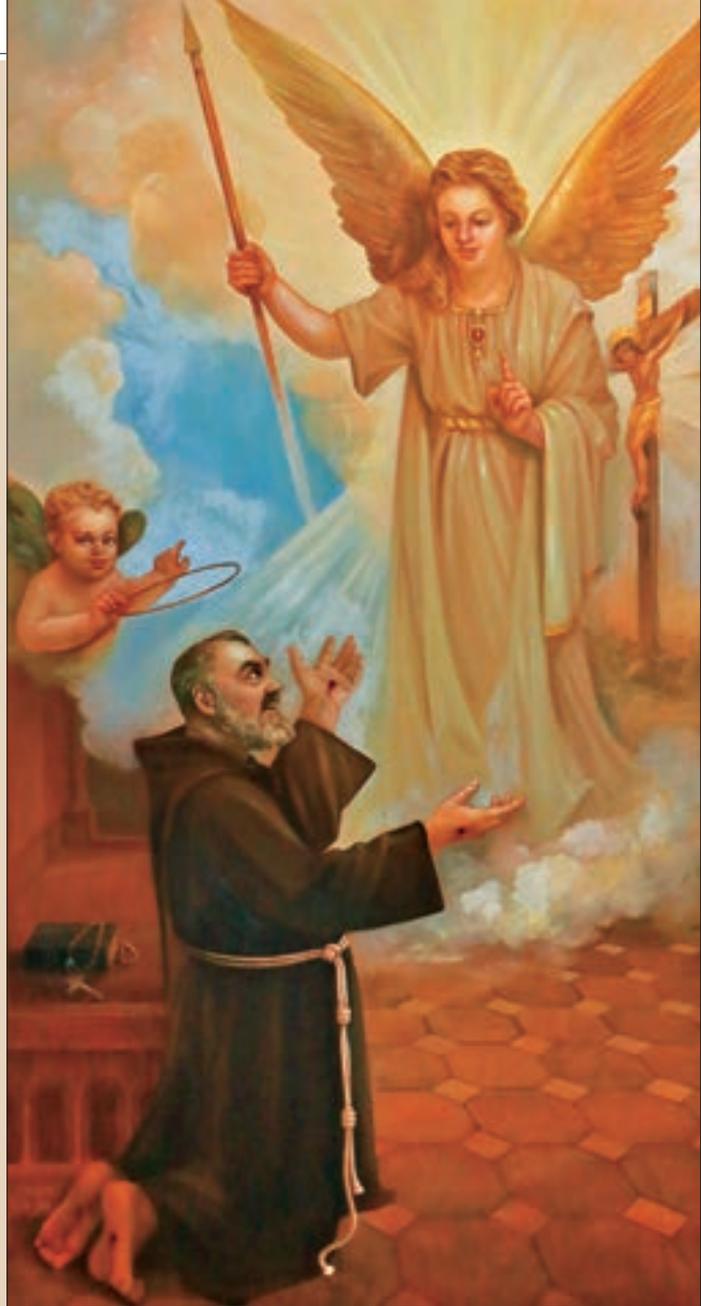
Grant that the Eucharistic union may be the light which casts out the darkness, the force to sustain me and the one means to sanctify my soul.

Stay with me Lord because, when death arrives, if I cannot be really with You in Holy Communion, then I shall wish to remain united with You at least through Grace and Love.

Stay with me Jesus, I do not ask You for divine consolation because I deserve it but I beg of You with all my strength for the gift of Your most Holy Presence.

Stay with me Lord - You alone I seek; Your Love, Your Grace, Your Will, Your Heart, Your Spirit - for I love You. You alone I love.

Let me seek no other reward but the increase of that love, that my love may be real and firm and practical. I ask no more than to love You with all my heart on earth and to follow You with all-perfected love for all eternity.



NOVENA PRAYER TO OBTAIN THE HELP OF PADRE PIO

O Loving Jesus, Who by Your Most Precious Blood has given Eternal life to those who take up the Cross and follow You, we beseech You make known by Your Heavenly favours the powerful intercession of Your Servant Padre Pio, who during his life of suffering, penance and love, was chosen to bear the imprint of Your Own Most Sacred Wounds.

Grant O Lord, that by imitating Your Servant, we may increase in love and charity towards all men, beholding You in the sick, the dying, the lonely and the oppressed. May we ever increase in devotion to Mary Your Mother, be ever obedient to the Holy Father and ever mindful of the needs of Your Church.

Grant O Lord, not only the petitions we ask in this Novena..... but also that all men may receive the grace to follow You. Who are the Way, the Truth, and the Life. AMEN.

Mary Queen of Heaven send us good and holy vocations.

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory be...



In 1967 the first Padre Pio Prayer Group was formed in England. The late Tony O'Brian, a father of a family with immense courage, was one of the leading lights in promoting Padre Pio's cause. He composed this Novena Prayer which has been so effective for so many.

Some few years earlier, Marchese Bernardo Patrizi told me that Padre Pio wanted his post-Communion prayer, *Resta con me*, translated into English. This too has proved of help. We do not know if Padre Pio actually wrote the original himself. It is likely.

Taken from the booklet
"A saint on my back
– personal experiences
of Padre Pio 1887-1968"

Testimony of blood

St Agnes of Rome was born in AD 291 in to a wealthy Christian family. Both her beauty and wealth attracted many high ranking men to chase after her. But St Agnes always answered that she belonged to Christ whom she called her Spouse. She loved God and hated sin more than death.

St Agnes was brought before the Prefect's face, who tried to force her to deny God. The promise of marvellous gifts as well as the threat of putting her in prison, in chains, turned futile.

The enraged Prefect sent her to the place of sin. The legend says that going naked through the city, her thick long hair covered her from the sight of onlookers. Then a miraculous thing happened: an angel of God surrounded her with such immense light that no one could see or even touch her. Agnes was plunged into a thanksgiving prayer and a moment later a long white robe appeared before her. All who entered the building for unworthy purposes, seeing the unearthly light and feeling the supernatural atmosphere of prayer, converted and worshiped God. The place of sin became a house of prayer.

Eventually, she was beheaded and died a virgin-martyr at the age of 12 or 13 on 21st January 304.

St Agnes is the patron saint of chastity, young girls and rape survivors. She is often represented with a lamb and a palm branch to symbolize her virgin innocence and martyrdom.



■ St Agnes by Domenichino, circa 1620

On her feast day of 21st January the Pope customarily blesses two lambs. On Holy Thursday lambs' wool is removed and woven into the pallium, the liturgical garment. On 29th June, the feast day of St Peter and Paul, the Pope gives the pallium to newly-consecrated archbishops to emphasise their union with the Holy See.

CSMA office

What we can learn from the angels?

There are many reasons why we are interested in the mysterious world of the angels. I think it would be worth our while to concentrate our attention on the question of what we can learn from them, which, after all, should be the focus of our interest.

It may be good or even helpful to have background knowledge of the names and numbers of the choirs of angels along with our natural curiosity about the presence of our guardian angel. But there is little to be gained in our everyday lives if we lack understanding of what the angels can teach us.

An example, where there were no others to be

In her Diary St Faustina wrote of St Michael the Archangel that “He had no example to follow in doing the will of God and yet he fulfilled God’s will faithfully” (Diary 667). According to tradition, he was the first of the angels to advance against the rebellious angels. Yet there was no creature before him on whose example he could draw.

Generally we human beings, seldom act in this way. We are reluctant to step out into the unknown and to blaze a new trail. Such a decision demands effort and entails risks and dangers. Being the first to take the

initiative generally involves taking on the role of leader, which few people are prepared to undertake, given the responsibilities involved. We tend to observe, then consider and only get involved at a time that suits us.

For two thousand years the Church has canonised people as saints, and such people are to be our role models, showing us how to encounter God. There are now so many canonised saints that all their names could fill each day of the year even in as many as thirty calendars. They are to be found as patrons for every foreseeable eventuality. There is no cause without its own particular saint. Have you lost an important possession? Then intercede for help from St Anthony. If you have medical problems with your throat, then turn to St Blaise for his help. If you have given up hope for an important intercession being granted, then pray to St Jude the patron of hopeless causes. Should you or someone else be suffering from cancer, then pray for St Peregrine’s intercession to God. We can draw on an inexhaustible treasury of exemplars throughout all the circumstances of our lives.

There are times in our lives when we are faced with clear instances of injustice – which others also witness,

but fail to react. Our conscience should increasingly reproach us, particularly if we continue to do nothing. It is hard to be the first to take a stand in defence of someone who is falsely accused or whom others treat as a doormat, but this is something which St Michael himself teaches us to do. The angels under his leadership are our examples of how to behave in such situations, where – however paradoxical as this may seem – we have no examples to follow and we have to be the first to take the initiative in a given situation.

Feelings and emotions are bad counsellors

Another thing which we can learn from the angels is not to be led by our emotions. I remember that I had long puzzled over the many portrayals of St Michael in battle posture, his sword arm raised, on the point of vanquishing the enemy, yet his face appearing serene. This contrast has long intrigued me. The faces of those in battle show rage, fury, hatred and



■ The Wilton Diptych (c. 1395–1399)

other such emotions. But by contrast the face of St Michael is a reflection of calm and self-control.

However, all was made clear to me once I read the passage on the angels in St Augustine's "City of God" which said that they must "punish, yet without hatred or animosity, those whom the eternal God has sentenced to such punishment; without sympathy, support the unfortunate, and without fear of the danger which threatens those they love, be swift in coming to their assistance". St Dionysius the Areopagite, in describing the angelic hierarchy, concluded that the angels carry out these tasks, which can be

carried out, motivated by anger, sympathy or fear, but in their case, these actions are the result of the courageous energy of their reason, their unbreakable perseverance, steadfastness and maintaining the Divinely ordained order. Their actions are not motivated by emotions and are subordinated to their reason.

We, as human beings, know very well that our emotions and feelings are bad guides to action, even if this awareness is frequently eclipsed by irritation or despair. Relying on emotions to drive our actions can frequently lead us in to trouble. They cause us to make rash and unjust

judgements about other people. Emotions and feelings are fleeting and we would be well advised to base our judgements and actions on that which is eternal, unchanging and reliable. Every pilgrim will admit the truth of this and we are, after all, the Pilgrim Church.

It would be worth our while to hold the image of St Michael in our minds at times when we feel pulled in all directions. He reminds us of the fact that if we know what it is that God expects of us and follow it, we will then obtain peace and will have no need to get angry.

Humility, humility and once more, humility

The third thing which we can learn from the angels is their incredible humility and the fact that they do not seek acknowledgement or praise for their actions. Angels are spiritual beings, more perfect than we are, but nevertheless they serve us. And yet, this was a state of affairs which did not please them all, hence the rebellion of Lucifer and one third of the angels. Despite that, the majority did decide (as they do of course have free will) to accept the mission to which God had appointed them.

I certainly have nothing but admiration for my guardian angel - though he does not have to do so, as he follows my every step, observing all that I get up to, and, what's more, he is there for me whenever I call on him, because I've got myself into trouble and need his help. Is it not the best possible example of his humility

and devotion to accompany someone all this time, despite being frequently ignored, goes almost unnoticed and yet to assist them whenever they remember that he is there?

I recall my first ever encounter with volunteers. It was in Cracow during the Festival of the Enchanted Song, organised each year by a well-known foundation for people with disabilities. I remember how impressed I was with the way the people with their name badges and wearing the green shirts with the logo of the foundation, helped both the disabled participants and the organisers in overseeing the event. They made their way among the crowds, checking on everything, always ready to help whenever assistance was needed. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves while doing so, the smiles never leaving their faces.

I've not met with a better example to represent the way in which the angels go about their duties. I had the impression – however pathetic it may appear, that – in the same way as God created the angels in order that they may help the world to function behind the scenes on His behalf, so also various organisations and foundations accept volunteers to help them change the world. Their motives and modus operandi are actually very similar. It was the first time that I considered volunteers as people who, in a heroic manner and often unseen, hold up the world. We therefore see that it is possible to imitate the angels very faithfully.

This is only part of what we can learn from the angels. Observing them from this standpoint, we can certainly learn much from them and from which we can benefit.

Tomasz Powyszyński

Holy Mass has tremendous value during life and after death.



Secrets of the Holy Mass

At the hour of death the Masses you have heard will be your greatest consolation.

Every Mass will go with you to Judgement and plead for pardon.

At every Mass you can diminish the temporal punishment due to your sins more or less according to your fervour.

Assisting devoutly at Mass you render to the Sacred Humanity of our Lord the greatest homage.

He supplies for many of your negligences and omissions.

He forgives you all the venial sins which you are determined to avoid.

He forgives you all your unknown sins which you never confessed.

The power of Satan over you is diminished.

You afford the souls in purgatory the greatest possible relief.

One Mass heard during your life will be of more benefit to you than many heard for you after your death.

You are preserved from many dangers and misfortunes which would otherwise have befallen you.

You shorten your purgatory by every Mass.

Every Mass wins for you a higher degree of glory in heaven.

You receive the priests blessing which our Lord ratifies in heaven.

You kneel amidst a multitude of holy angels, who are present at the adorable sacrifice, with reverential awe.

You are blessed in your temporal goods and affairs.

When we hear Mass and offer the Holy Sacrifice in honour of any particular saint or angel, thanking God for favours He bestowed on him, we afford Him a great degree of honour, joy, love and happiness and draw his special love and protection on us.

Every time we assist at Mass we should, besides our other intentions, offer it in honour of the saint of the day.

Imprimature +
Michael, Abp. Syd.
Sydney, 19th March 1915

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

In 1901 Blessed Fr Bronislaw Markiewicz wrote about the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Catholic magazine “Temperance and Work.” During the same year a certain spiritual awakening began in a small Bible prayer group in Topeka, USA. It is thought to be the beginning of the Charismatic movement which also developed in the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).



The Charismatic movement expresses the experience of the Holy Spirit and His gifts in the life of the faithful and the whole Church.

St Paul enumerates these gifts: “There are many different gifts, but it is always the same Spirit; there are many different ways of serving, but it is always the same Lord. There are many different forms of activity, but in everybody it is the same God who is at work in them all. The particular manifestation of the Spirit granted to each one is to be used for the general good. To one is given from the Spirit the gift of utterance expressing wisdom; to another the gift of utterance expressing knowledge, in accordance with the same Spirit; to another, faith, from the same Spirit; and to another, the gifts of healing, through this one Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the power of distinguishing spirits; to one, the gift of different tongues and to another, the interpretation of tongues. But at work in all these is one and the same Spirit, distributing them at will to each individual” (1 Cor 12:4-11).

In his article Fr Markiewicz emphasised the need to strive for “ordinary gifts” such as mutual love, humble simplicity and truly Christian

life as a way to sainthood available for everyone who wished it. He warned against careless search for extraordinary spiritual gifts because it may result in a loss of the ordinary ones which were crucial in giving glory to the Lord and as well as serving other people on a daily basis. Blessed Father Markiewicz stressed the proper order and importance of gifts.

This point of view seems accordant with what St Paul said about the virtues: “These remain: faith, hope and love, the three of them; and the greatest of them is love” (1 Cor 13:13).

However, there is a trap in thinking that these gifts of apostolate, prophecy, healing, tongues, working miracles and others are to be unique and reserved only for “saints”. St Paul even begged the Corinthians to seek such gifts with determination but always keeping unity within their community: “Make love your aim; but be eager, too, for spiritual gifts” (1 Cor 14:1).

Among early Christians prophecies or speaking in tongues were regular gifts given by the Holy Spirit according to the willingness of the believers.

The Apostles passed on their faith not only by words. Their words were often supported by the revealing of God’s power: this was seen in healing, resurrecting, and casting out demons.

Their words became powerful and believable via signs with which the Lord confirmed the Good News. It was a personal experience of St Paul who had failed in Athens. He said, “What I spoke and proclaimed was not meant to convince by philosophical argument, but to demonstrate the convincing power of the Spirit, so that your faith should depend not on human wisdom but on the power of God” (1 Cor 2:4-5).

How did St Paul understand the gift of tongues and prophecy?

He referred the gift of tongues as building up oneself and talking to God in mysterious words. Prophecy did not mean telling the future but speaking to people from God’s inspiration to build them up, to encourage and comfort them. St Paul stressed that the use of gifts was the Lord’s command.

What about the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Church in present times? Well, it seems that we are invited to practice and develop those gifts like our brothers and sisters in early Christian times. Nowadays, the gifts and signs of God’s power still confirm the truth about Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who died for us on the Cross as well as the authenticity of the Church established by Christ Himself.

Joanna Krzywonos

Mary's Song

*Impoverished Mother and Child they seem-
Behold this work of art!
A closer look reveals that Love
Unites them from the start.*

*True God, true man, her tender Child,
His every breath divine.
In awe she hands Him back to God-
"He is forever Thine."*

*In her little Child, the Mother sees
The presence of her Lord.
Her heart meets His in joy and pain.
They sing with one accord.*

*His life will be a sacrifice
Performed for all the earth.
She knows, and joins her song to His
The moment of His birth.*

*As He goes forth through the darkened world
She waits for light to shine.
"All glory and praise be Yours, my Son,
But let Thy pain be mine."*

*All mock her Child, His song of love,
"You've raised a foolish Son!"
They fail to see God's mercy
In the work He has begun.*

*The human form He lives within
Conceals their God and King.
With heavy heart she sighs and sees
The tears their sin will bring.*

*Each time they strike Him with their whips
Her Mother's heart is torn.
She weeps with every stumbling fall,
With every word of scorn.*

*But what if He chose not to suffer here,
And from the Cross came down?
And so she blesses each piercing nail,
Each thorn within His crown.*

*"Soon all will be free, my Blessed Child.
From sin You'll break the strings."
And as His soul to heaven soars,
Her heart both grieves and sings.*

J.S., USA

■ The Madonna of the Lilies by William-Adolphe Bouguereau, 1899



Angels in the liturgy

When preparing for a Spirituality Day for parish ministries, we chose the theme ‘Angels and their role in the Liturgy’. The Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* tells us that:

“In the earthly liturgy, by way of foretaste, we share in that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the only city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as Pilgrims, and in which Christ is sitting at the right hand of God... we sing a hymn to the Lord’s glory with all the warriors of the Heavenly army...”

That short reference to the “warriors of Heavenly army” reminds us that in the liturgy we join in the praise and worship which is unceasingly offered to God by the angels and the saints. So every liturgical action performed by ordained celebrants or lay ministries such as acolytes, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, musicians, altar servers and any other liturgical action, offered by the faithful, is only a small part of that reality in which the spiritual world is honouring and glorifying God, our Creator.

Being conscious that our liturgical worship which we offer at a Eucharistic celebration and other devotions is only a fraction of what the host of angels and saints are constantly offering to God, this should help us to conform to the rhythm of that supernatural reality. In other words, we should try to follow the example of the angels and benefit spiritually rather than insist on implementing our own ideas and performance. If only we realized the magnitude, beauty



■ Five dancing angels by Giovanni di Paolo, c. 1436

and sacredness of what is happening in the liturgical action especially in the Holy Eucharist we would do our best to ‘tap into’ that beautiful harmony of angelic worship and create as little distraction as possible.

The Bible makes us aware that angels are always in the presence of God, therefore, in our churches wherever Our Lord is present in the Blessed Sacrament, the angels are offering the same praise and adoration as they offer in heaven.

Angels are there when we are not present and they are there when we gather for our worship. Angels are aiding us in our prayers, they are singing with us when we sing our hymns, helping us to listen and understand the

Word of God in the scriptures, they are there when we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus helping us to adore Him. Angels remain in the church, continuing the liturgy while we leave the church to proclaim the Gospel values with our guardian angel accompanying and protecting us. When we return to the church to worship, let us be mindful that what Jacob only dreamed about and Jesus prophesized, becomes a reality: “Truly I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” (John 1:51).

Fr **Janusz Bieniek** CSMA
Hurstville Parish, Australia

Angelic revelations within dreams

Dreams have always inspired our imagination and the mental processes through which they arise continue to defy scientific understanding. The average human being spends about 20 years of his/her life asleep. A significant part of our lives is therefore spent in a dream world. I am obviously speaking metaphorically, as our souls do not then leave our bodies to enter a different world (although this was at one time thought to be the case). The entire content of our dreams is played out within our minds.

What is curious, however, is that the Bible recounts situations where angels, sent by God, granted revelations to human beings. While they formed part of these persons' dreams, they were formed, not by the activity of neurons within the brain, but as a result of beings outside the human mind. We could term this specific form of angelic revelation 'oniric angelophany'.

God communicating with people by means of dreams

The Bible, however, does not treat dreams and the possibility of their being used as the means of an encounter with God, lightly. God has made use of dreams in order to reveal Himself and entrust human beings with particular missions or to deliver particular messages. We see this in the extract from the Book

of Numbers: "If there is a prophet among you, I reveal myself to him in a vision, I speak to him in a dream" (Numbers 12:6). In his turn, the author of the Book of Job concludes that: "God speaks first in one way, and then in another, although we do not realise it. In dreams and in night-visions, when slumber has settled on humanity and people are asleep in bed" (Job 33:14-15). We could cite many more such examples of dreams sent by God (such as Genesis 28:10-17, Genesis 31:10-13, Genesis 37:5-10, Numbers 12:6 and many others).

When God made use of night visions in order to send people messages, those people had the feeling that such dreams were out of the ordinary. God warned King Abimelech that Sarah was the wife of Abraham (Genesis 20). When Jacob was fleeing from Esau, he truly dreamt of a ladder, placed on the earth while reaching up to heaven, together with angels, ascending and descending. What he saw was symbolic in character, but he also heard the word of

God addressed clearly to him and promising him protection (Genesis 28:10-22). His son, Joseph experienced dreams, which, in an allegorical manner, prophesied that he would be exalted above his brothers. He had a dream in which their sheaves (of corn) bowed to his own (Genesis 37: 5-8) as well as one in which he saw the sun, the moon and eleven stars, also bowing down to him (Genesis 37:9-10). He was later sold into slavery in Egypt and himself interpreted dreams sent by God to others (Genesis 40:9-11, 16-17 and Genesis 41:1-7).

Daniel was also given the gift of being able to interpret the dreams of King Nebuchadnezzar. The Babylonian king did not wish to describe the content of his dream (Daniel 2:1-3), but thanks to his night visions, Daniel was able to reveal that the king had dreamt of a great and terrible statue, made of gold, silver, iron and earthenware, shattered by a mysterious stone. It was intended as a prophecy of the future fate of the world and the coming of the

Messiah. We do not know, on the other hand, and are not told, whether other night visions described in the Bible (for example Isaac's vision in Genesis 46:2, the young Samuel's in 1 Samuel 3:1 or that of the prophet Nathan in 1 Kings 17:15) should be treated as dreams or as visions which took place after they had wakened.

The dreams of St Joseph

In contrast to the Old Testament, the New Testament very seldom mentions the dream state as the occasion of the receipt of a divine message. The Greek word "onar", meaning 'to dream' occurs only six times in Matthew's Gospel – once, of Pilate's wife's dream, of which she sent him news as a warning, during the trial of Jesus and five times in the narrative of the Nativity. These five occasions were all angelic revelations. The Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph to inform him that Mary was with child by the Holy Spirit: "The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins'" (Matthew 1:20-21). An angel also warned Joseph about Herod's plans and told him to take Mary and the Child to Egypt. (Matthew 2:13). He was later told in a dream of the death of Herod and asked to return (Matthew 2:19). It was also in a dream that he was informed that he

should settle in Galilee rather than Judea (Matthew 2:22).

It is noteworthy that the Angel of the Lord should always appear to Joseph in a dream, in contrast to Mary who experienced angelophany in the full light of day. The experience of the Annunciation was a one-off occurrence, while Joseph's contact with the angel was ongoing in nature. Why did he have so many dream encounters with the messenger from God? As head of the family, all major decisions fell to Joseph. It was his responsibility to care for the safety and welfare of his wife and child. We could say that the angel contacted Joseph, rather than Mary, because these matters were 'a man's business'.

It is also worth noting that the messages which Joseph received were clear and unambiguous. His dreams did not require interpretation, as was the case with some dreams had by pagans in the Old Testament, which was why they had sought out those serving the One True God to interpret them, such as the patriarch Joseph (Genesis 41:1-43), or Daniel (Daniel 2:1-45). The foster father of Jesus was a man of integrity (Matthew 1:19), analogous to other just and upright Israelites – patriarchs, judges and prophets, to whom God had made known His purposes and who also did not require anyone to interpret their dreams for them (see Genesis 15:12-21, Judges 6:25, 1 Samuel 3, 1 Kings 3:5-15, Zachariah 1-6 and Daniel 2 and 7). St Matthew also mentions the dream of the Magi (Matthew 2:12) in which they were given a clear message not to return to their own countries by way of Jerusalem, where Herod awaited for news of the New-Born King. These Wise Men, who acknowledged the Child as the Messiah, also needed



■ The dream of St Joseph
by Anton Raphael Mengs, circa 1773-1774

no one to interpret their dreams as the angel gave them a very clear message.

The night visions of St Paul

Of the remaining books of the New Testament, only the Acts of the Apostles makes several mentions of night visions. St Paul, among others, had such experiences at crucial moments of his missionary activity. Some consider these to have been dreams, while others see them as mystical visions. St Paul experienced these before taking up new missionary challenges: the journey to Europe, symbolised by a Macedonian (Acts 16:9), before preaching in Rome (Acts 23:11) or the disaster with the ship on the coast of Malta (Acts 27:23). The content of Paul's dreams was always very clear. Through His messenger, God

prepared Paul for what awaited him, encouraged him to take up new challenges and gave him courage in the face of dangers and difficulties.

St Paul's first vision was particularly significant: "A Macedonian appeared and kept urging him in these words, 'Come across to Macedonia and help us'" (Acts 16:9). Paul and his companions took this as a divine call as Luke noted: "Once he had seen this vision we lost no time in arranging a passage to Macedonia, convinced that God had called us to bring them the good news" (Acts 16:10). The Fathers of the Church regarded the Macedonian who called Paul in his dream as being in reality, an angel, sent by God.

Biblical prohibition against using dreams to foretell the future

Some people attribute great significance to dreams and attempt to interpret the things they have seen and felt in their dreams as warnings of danger or sources of advice in making decisions. We need to point out that interpreting dreams in this way was strictly forbidden in the Law (Leviticus 19:26, Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and 18:9-14) and censured by the Prophets (Jeremiah 29:8).

The Book of Ecclesiasticus gives us this warning: "Vain and deceptive hopes are for the foolish, and dreams lend wings to fools. As well clutch at shadows and chase the wind as put any faith in dreams. Dreams are no different from mirrors; confronting a

face, the reflection of that face. What can be cleansed by uncleanness, what can be verified by falsehood? Divinations, auguries and dreams are nonsense, like the fantasies of a pregnant woman. Unless sent as emissaries from the Most High, do not give them a thought; for dreams have led many astray, and those who relied on them have come to grief. Fulfilling the Law requires no such falsehood, and wisdom is perfected in veracity" (Ecclesiasticus 34:1-8).

To conclude, human beings spend a lot of time dreaming, and that the content materialises and is structured in our minds. God may, at times, use dreams to communicate with human beings about important events, for example, a mission He wants them to undertake or a particular message He wants to convey to a person. In such situations those people who encountered God or His angels in this way knew that these 'dream messages' or 'night visions' were out of the ordinary.

'Dream messages' were much more prevalent in the Old compared to the New Testament. Also, in the case of the Old Testament 'dream messages' may have required interpretation by those of the One True God, a gift or form of discernment, such as the case with Joseph or Daniel. Zajac notes that in the New Testament the mention of 'dream messages' or 'visions' from God are located in either Matthew's Gospel or the Acts of the Apostles. The Bible has cautionary messages about using dreams; and they should be treated with great caution because they can lead us astray if we use them to make important decisions in life.

Roman Zajac, Poland

"For the whole creation, submissive to your commands, had its very nature re-created, so that your children should be preserved from harm. Overshadowing the camp there was the cloud; where there had been water, dry land was seen to rise; the Red Sea became an unimpeded way, the tempestuous waves, a green plain; sheltered by your hand, the whole nation passed across, gazing at these amazing prodigies. They were like horses at pasture, they skipped like lambs, singing your praises, Lord, their deliverer" (Wis 19:6-9).

The reading from the book of Wisdom was very precious to the Israelites for it recalled God's care for His people when He delivered them from Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The angel of death came from Heaven to slay the first-born of the Egyptians as punishment for their continual enslavement of the Israelites and their refusal to release them after Moses had confronted Pharaoh. The rabbi who authorised Wisdom described this angel of God's "all powerful Word" (Wis 18:15).

To this learned and devout rabbi, the Israelites' exodus from Egypt was analogous to the creation of the heavens and the earth described in the book of Genesis. Even nature, in the form of a pillar of cloud and the splitting of the Red Sea, joined forces to protect the Israelites, God's own children, during their flight from Egypt (Wis. 19:6-8). In gratitude for God's deliverance, the Israelites praised God with enthusiasm.

So central to Hebrew worship is the Passover that Jewish people all

God who freed His people answers our prayers

over the world recount God's deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt as if it happened to them personally. God's pastoral care for His beloved people is what the author of Wisdom wanted the people to remember and treasure.

This particular reading from Wisdom is used by the Church at Christmas time when God's Word, Jesus His Son, came to our world to deliver us from Satan and death. There is no greater gift than to know that God loves and rescues us. He brought us new life in His Church. Our freedom from servitude to sin and fear of death should lead us to worship God with thanksgiving for His deliverance of us.

How often have we heard people say, 'God never answers my prayers'? This implies that He is deaf to our cries for help – but is He? Far from it! He is a loving Father who cares for us when we need Him most. Sometimes the things we ask God for may not be for

our good. It is like a youth on leaving school who begs his parents for a motorbike. They are not prepared to give him one. They have good reasons. They know he is reckless, and they can see that a motorbike in his hands would be like a lethal weapon. They refuse his request because they love their son.

Sometimes the things we ask God for are very good. We may pray that there will be no more starvation in the world and, of course, God doesn't want to see any of His children starving. But many are hungry as the result of civil war, and because money that should have been spent on feeding the people is spent on arms. God has given those who are in power free will. It is they who tie His hands.

There are times when we ask God to cure a sick relative or to have a successful operation, and this doesn't happen. Why not? What we must remember is

that God is in charge and He cannot do anything wrong. He has His own good reasons why the sick person is not cured and the operation not successful. When we pray we should take all our problems and worries to God but our attitude should be like the leper in the Gospel, "Lord, if it is your will, you can cure me". And we should add, 'I know Your will for me will be best'. A plea like that has to be the right approach to God!

The Church following the dictate of Jesus always concludes her prayers, "Through Jesus Christ Our Lord". That is how we too should pray. Our Father in Heaven will always grant whatever we ask of Him when it is according to the mind of Christ.

In the parable of the persistent widow Jesus teaches us that His Father listens to our prayer, but He may not grant it straightaway for, often, our hearts are not ready to receive His gifts. That is why persistence is so important. If we pray without giving up, we should become more convinced that God will answer our prayers, which is a necessary condition for God to answer them.

Lord Jesus, may we be persistent in our prayers and may our hearts be ready to receive whatever You send us, which will always be for our good.

Fr Francis Maple

The Franciscan Friary, Pantasaph,
Holywell, Flintshire, Wales
www.fatherfrancismaple.co.uk



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Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

Our English speaking guide will be Agnieszka

DAY 1 – DAY 1 Arrival into Tel Aviv. Bus transfer to Tiberias an Israeli city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Evening meal.

DAY 2 – Nazareth and Nazareth village, the Basilica of the Annunciation, Church of St Joseph, Old Synagogue, Mt Tabor, visiting Cana. Basilica of the Transfigurations with breath taking views. Dinner, overnight stay.

DAY 3 – Boat ride on the Sea of Galilee – Mt Beatitudes, Capernaum, followed by the Church of the Primacy of St Peter located in Tabgha: it commemorates the spot of Jesus' reinstatement of Peter as chief among the Apostles, visiting the Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fish. Dinner, overnight stay.

DAY 4 – Journey to Jaffa the oldest part of Tel Aviv – panoramic views, visiting Haifa: Israel's third largest city beautifully set on the slopes on the Monastery of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Dinner, overnight stay.

DAY 5 – Jerusalem – Mt of Olives – the Basilica of the Agony, the Ascension chapel and the churches of the Pater Noster and Dominus Fleuit Chapel, Palm Sunday way. Wailing Wall. Mount Zion. The Cenacle, also known as the "Upper Room", is a room in the David's Tomb Compound in Jewish quarter, traditionally held to be the site of the Last Supper. Dormition Abbey, Church of Saint Peter in Gallicantu located on the eastern slope of Mount Zion, just outside the Old (walled) City of Jerusalem. Dinner, overnight stay.

DAY 6 – Bethlehem – the Nativity Church, St Catherine Church, the Shepherds Fields. The Church of the



Visitation in Ein Karem, Jerusalem, built on the site believed to have been where Mary met her cousin Elizabeth and where Mary sung the song of gratitude, Magnificat. The Church of St John the Baptist is a Catholic church belonging to the Franciscan order. It was built at the site where St John the Baptist was believed to have been born. Dinner, overnight stay.

DAY 7 – The Jordan river: Christian tradition marks this site as the place of the "spiritual birth" of Jesus. Highlights of Mount of Temptation reached by cable car from the ancient town of Jericho, Church of the Good Shepherd followed by a short visit to a centuries-old sycamore tree: the oldest existing sycamore, and possibly even the one that Zacchaeus climbed, the Judean Desert, a desert in Israel and the West Bank that lies east of Jerusalem and descends to the Dead Sea, where group will have opportunity to float. Dinner, overnight stay.

DAY 8 – Jerusalem – Holy Sepulcher Basilica / Holy Tomb and Calvary / Via Dolorosa Stations of the Cross. The Bethesda Pool, where Jesus heals the paralytic man in the Gospel of John. St Anna's Church and St John Baptist Church. Free time in the Old City.

DAY 9 – Departure

For Further information

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P.O. Box 4332, Harlington,
Dunstable, Beds LU6 9DG. England
Phone: +44-7795-318-605
Email: noreenbavister@btinternet.com

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ENGLAND 2018**21st – 23rd September 2018****Talks: Holy Angels and Divine Mercy
St Michael of All Angels****Belmont Abbey**

Ruckhall Lane,

Hereford HR2 9RZ

Contact: Geraldine Downing

Phone: +44 (0)1978-357-367

Email: dgdown@dgdown.plus.com

9th – 11th November 2018**Holy Angels and Knighthood
of St Michael with Eucharistic
Healing Hour****Sandymount House of Prayer**

16 Burbo Bank Road

Liverpool, L23 6TH

Contact: Stuart

Phone: +44(0)756-488-2006

Email: sandymount@

mountford.org.uk

www.sandymountcrosby.co.uk

SCOTLAND 2018**5th National Divine
Mercy Conference****20th October 2018****9:00 am – 5:00 pm****Theme: Forgiveness Matthew 6:14-15****St Augustine's Church,**

12 Dundyan Road, Langloan,

Coatbridge, ML5 1DQ

Contact: Helen Border

Email: Helen.Border@glasgow.ac.uk

IRELAND 2018**6th September 2018****7:30 pm Holy Mass****Talk: The Knighthood****of Michael the Archangel****Church of Immaculate Conception**

Convent Hill, Mitchelstown, Co. Cork

Contact: Fr Michael Fitzgerald

Phone: +353(0)86-258-4062

Email: michaelstownparishoffice@eircom.net

7th September 2018**7:00 pm Holy Mass****Talks: St Michael the Archangel
and St Faustina****Pallottine Retreat Centre**

Kickham Street (Opposite Topaz),

Thurles, Co. Tipperary

Contact: Fr George and Br Stephen

Email: pallthurles@gmail.com

8th September 2018**5:00 pm Teaching on St Michael****and The Knighthood including
private devotion and prayers****7:30 pm Holy Mass and homily****followed by Holy Hour****St Eunan's Cathedral**

Sentry Hill, Letterkenny,

Co. Donegal.

Contact: Fr Eamonn Kelly

Email: eamonnkellys@eircom.net

9th September 2018**Noon: Holy Hour followed by****Talk: St Michael the Archangel****St Cloumba's Church**

Knocknabollan, Termon,

Co. Donegal, F92 X4D6

Contact: Fr Pat McHugh PP

Phone: +353-74-913-9016

Email: frpatmchugh@ircom.net

www.gartantermonparish.ie

9th September 2018**5:00 pm Holy Mass****Talk: St Michael the Archangel****Ards Friary**

Creeslough,

County Donegal, F92 P2E1

Contact: Frances Ford

Email: francesjford@yahoo.ie

11th September 2018**7:30 pm Holy Mass****Talk: St Michael the Archangel****and St Faustina**

St Anne's Church, Cranmore Road,

Abbeyquarter North,

Sligo City, County Sligo, F91 C3YT

Phone: +353(0)71-914-5028

Email: stannesparish@eircom.net

Contact: Fr Pat Lombard PP

12th September 2018**6:30 pm Adoration****7:00 pm Divine Mercy Chaplet****7:05 pm Confessions****7:15 pm Rosary****7:30 pm Holy Mass****8:30 pm Veneration of the relic****Talks: St Michael and St Faustina****The Oratory of Mary****Mother of God**

7 Main Street,

Newtownstewart

Co. Tyrone, Northern Ireland

Contact: Fr Roland Colhoun CC

Phone: +44(0)2881-661-445

Email:roland@derrydiocese.org

13th September 2018**Talks: St Faustina and St Michael****7:30 pm Holy Mass****St Patrick's Chapel**

6 Tullinval Road,

Cullyhanna, Newry,

Co. Down, BT35 0PZ

Contact: Fr Gerard Tremer

Phone: +44(0)28-3086-1235

14th September 2018**8:00 pm Holy Mass****Talks: Knighthood of St Michael****Corpus Christi Prayer Group**

Killadoon Louisburgh,

Westport. Co. Mayo.

Contact: Jim Brown

Phone: +353-87-258-2154

USA 2018**24th May 2018****5:45 pm Holy Mass****Our Lady of the Greenwood****Queen of the Holy Rosary****Catholic Church**

335 South Meridian St

Greenwood, Indianapolis,

IN 46143

Followed by talk**on St Michael and the holy****angels in Madonna Hall**

Contact: Kathy Denny

Email: mariancncr@aol.com

25th May 2018**7:30 am Holy Mass****Holy Rosary Parish**520 Stevens Street,
Indianapolis IN 46203**Followed by talk on St Michael
and the holy angels**

Pastor: Fr Ryan McCarthy

Contact: Kathy Denny

Email: mariancncr@aol.com

26th - 27th May 2018**Divine Mercy****The Holy Cross Catholic Church**2300 Main Street
Batavia, Illinois 60510 – 7625

Contact: Fr James Parker

Phone: +1-630-879-4750

Email: frparker@holycross-batavia.org

1st – 3rd June 2018**Walking in the Spirit of Mercy
and the Holy Angels retreat****St Clare's Retreat Centre**

2381 Laurel Glen Road, 95073

Soquel, California

Phone: +1-831-423-8093

Email: stclaresretreatcenter@
gmail.com

www.stclaresretreatcenter.com

8th June 2018**Start time: 7:00 pm****Talk 1 St Michael the Archangel****Talk 2 The power of powerlessness****St Thomas Korean****Catholic Center**

412 Crescent Way-Room "B"

Anaheim, California 92804

Contact: Lourdes Carroll

Phone: +1-714-624-6561

Email: IODM4life@gmail.com

9th June 2018**Afternoon Retreat****St Michael the Archangel and his
role in the world today****St Maximilian Kolbe Catholic****Polish Mission Church**

1736 Grand Avenue

San Diego, California 92109

Contact: Justyna Ponulak

Email: justyna.ponulak@
gmail.com**26th – 27th September 2018****Divine Mercy****Holy Spirit Church**

355 E. Champlain Dr.

Fresno, CA 93730

Contact: Marie Farley

Phone: +1-805-878-6902

Email: mariefarley@live.com

28th – 30th September 2018**25th Annual Marian Conference****Theme: Jesus is calling,
are you listening?**

Fresno, California

Contact: Christy Villas

(Adult registration)

Phone: +1-559-824-0732

Further info:

www.holycrossministries.net

USA 2019

July 31st - August 4th 2019**22nd Annual Conference****St Thomas Aquinas Society****Theme: TBC****Pikes Peak Center**

190 South Cascade Ave

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

Contact: Therese Lorentz

Email: thereselorentz@aol.com

Phone: +1-719-448-0020

SCOTLAND 2019

26th October 2019**Time: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm****6th National Divine****Mercy Conference****Theme of conference: TBC****St Augustine's Church**

12 Dundyvan Road,

Langloan, Coatbridge,

ML5 1DQ

Contact: Helen Border

Email:

Helen.Border@glasgow.ac.uk

“Mary, Immaculate Virgin, take me under Your special protection and guard the purity of my soul, heart and body. You are the model and star of my life.” (Diary, 874)

* * *

“Oh, if only the suffering soul knew how it is loved by God, it would die of joy and excess of happiness! Some day, we will know the value of suffering, but then we will no longer be able to suffer. The present moment is ours.” (Diary, 963)

* * *

“May You be blessed, O God, for everything You send me. Nothing under the sun happens without Your will. I cannot penetrate Your secrets with regard to myself, but I press my lips to the chalice You offer me.” (Diary, 1208)

* * *

“All the good that is in me is due to Holy Communion. I owe everything to it. I feel that this holy fire has transformed me completely. Oh, how happy I am to be a dwelling place for You, O Lord! My heart is a temple in which You dwell continually.” (Diary, 1392)

* * *

“The moments which are most pleasant to me are those when I converse with the Lord within the center of my being. I try my very best not to leave Him alone. He likes to be always with us.” (Diary, 1793)

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St Therese of Lisieux's thoughts and words about... love of God



Charity gave me the key to my vocation. I understood that the Church being a body composed of different members, the most essential, the most noble of all the organs would not be wanting to her; I understood that the Church has a heart and that this heart is burning with love; that it is love alone which makes the members work, that if love were to die away apostles would no longer preach the Gospel, martyrs would refuse to shed their blood. I understood that love comprises all vocations, that love is everything, that it embraces all times and all places because it is eternal!

Story of A Soul, Chapter XI

Until two days before her death Therese wished to be alone at night; however, notwithstanding her entreaties, the infirmarian used to rise several times to visit her. On one occasion she found our little invalid with hands clasped and eyes raised to Heaven. "But what are you doing?" she asked; "you should try to sleep." "I cannot, dear Sister, I suffer too much! then I pray..." "And what do you say to Jesus?" "I say nothing, I love Him!"

Story of A Soul, Chapter XII

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.