

The Angels

Messengers from a loving God



**Why is
St Michael
so unique?**

**10th anniversary
of The Angels
magazine**

**Sickness as
a lesson of love
and mercy**

**Entrusting
yourself to God**

**Pope Francis
to the Michaelites:
"Your charism is
as current as ever"**



Defensive role of St Michael

Looking at my photograph you see only a priest. God sees two more beings, St Michael, and also my holy guardian angel who is with me.

Saint Michael always appears armed with his sword because of his defensive role.

St Michael, although he belonged to the choir that is second from bottom, became the leader of the heavenly army. How was this possible? We need to go back to the beginnings of creation.

The world that God created can be compared to a skyscraper that has many floors. In God's world on each floor we meet creatures of a different degree of perfection. In the middle there are human beings. We are composed of matter and the spirit. The matter is our body. It needs to be dressed, fed, and treated in case of illness or disease.

Below us, on the lower floors, there is only the matter: animals



that have only instincts, plants - the whole world of inanimate matter. But above us are the upper floors inhabited by purely spiritual beings called angels. These beings are divided into choirs, hosts and legions. When God created the world, He said to the angels: "Look, this is a man. He is lower than you but I love him so much. I want him to be my child. You are to serve him. You are to call me Lord. He may call Me Father. I want him to be at the very top of My house, My Father's house".

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.

God bless you,

Fr **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA
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A Catholic Quarterly Magazine on Holy Angels

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The editors reserve the right to modify and edit submitted articles with a view to brevity, clarity and style.

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Imprimatur: General Superior of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel

Circulation: 2 700

ISSN 2081-5077

Printed in Poland

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The Angels Magazine



Your charism is as current as ever

Pope Francis asks the Congregation to keep spreading devotion to St Michael the Archangel.

In a message released 27th Sept. 2020, the pope congratulated members of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel on the forthcoming centenary of their approval by Church authorities.

“I hope that your Religious Family can continue to spread the apostolate of St Michael the Archangel, mighty victor over the powers of evil, seeing in this a great work of mercy for the soul and body,” he said in a message dated July 29th and addressed to Fr Dariusz Wilk, the congregation’s superior general.

Blessed Bronisław Markiewicz founded the congregation of St Michael the Archangel, also known as the Michaelite Fathers, in 1897. He wanted to spread devotion to the archangel, while following the teachings of St John Bosco, founder of the Salesians, which he had joined 10 years earlier.

The pope noted that Markiewicz died in 1912, almost a decade before the institute was officially approved by Archbishop Adam Stefan Sapieha of Kraków on September 29th, 1921.

He praised the order’s members for living out the founder’s spiritual legacy, while “adapting it wisely to

reality and to new pastoral demands.” He recalled that two of them - Blessed Władysław Błaziński and Adalbert Nierychlewski - were among the Polish martyrs of World War II.



Bl. Fr B Markiewicz, the founder of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel

“Your charism, as current as ever, is characterized by your concern for poor children, orphaned and abandoned, not wanted by anyone and often considered the discarded of society,” he said.

He encouraged them to hold fast to the order’s motto, “Who is like God?” - the Hebrew meaning of “Michael” - which he described as “the victorious cry of St Michael the Archangel which preserves man from selfishness.”

The pope’s message to the Michaelite Fathers was issued the day after he celebrated Mass for the Gendarmerie Corps of Vatican City State, marking the feast of St Michael, patron and protector of the body that oversees security at the Vatican, which falls on Sept. 29th.

This was not the first time that Pope Francis has highlighted devotion to the archangel. In July 2013, he consecrated the Vatican to the protection of St Michael and St Joseph, in the presence of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

“In consecrating Vatican City State to St Michael the Archangel, I ask him to defend us from the evil one and banish him,” he said, after blessing a statue of the archangel in the Vatican Gardens.

Taken from
www.catholicnewsagency.com

Interested in becoming a Devotional Knight of St Michael?



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

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

Devotional Knights are people of quiet prayer, confirmed Catholics, who are open to the Holy Spirit and give themselves to Christ, unite with Him, and help the Church by keeping demons away from Her. The main duty of the Knights is the continuous effort to be in a state of grace, in friendship with God so they can exclaim about Satan: "He has no power over me" (John 14:30).

All Knights must respect the Holy Father, bishops, priests and all the

teachings of the Church. An attitude of humility and obedience towards God and the Church should be an obvious feature of every Knight.

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

The Promise

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

My weapons are:

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

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

For your daily Bible reading, choose any passage from the New Testament. It is good to start with

Matthew or Luke. Read the words and ask God to let the passage speak to you. Pay special attention to anything that strikes you and ask God what he wishes for you to draw from that message.

The Knighthood Coat of Arms

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

For further information on the Devotional Knights of St Michael please write to me personally or view our website:

www.stmichaelthearchangel.info
or www.stmichaelthearchangel.us

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The Angels magazine is 10 years old

We are celebrating the tenth anniversary of the first issue of The Angel magazine published in March 2010.

As you may be aware, over twenty years ago Father Peter Prusakiewicz, CSMA served for four years as chaplain to the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Warsaw. Because of this he was invited to preach in English speaking countries and subsequently became a well-known international speaker promoting the Divine Mercy. This was the reason we decided that both subjects should be included in this new magazine.

In many English speaking countries so little is known about the holy angels and whilst on these trips Fr Prusakiewicz was asked if there was anything written in English.

It is perhaps the only magazine dedicated to the topic of the Holy Angels and the Divine Mercy from a Catholic perspective. Our information comes from Holy Scripture and the traditions and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

It includes compelling articles on the Holy Angels based on the Bible and the teachings of the Early Fathers. There are regular special features on angels in the lives of

saints, frequently asked questions, testimonies, angelic prayers and current events. Topics also include angels in films, in liturgy, in art, angelic shrines, good and fallen angels.

These days people read The Angel magazine to gain more knowledge on the spirituality of the angels and have a better understanding of the holy angels and St Michael the Archangel.

Since the publication many readers say there is a renewal to St Michael the Archangel, many have become Knights of St Michael and wear the St Michael scapular. There was a demand for the angelic chaplet which is on the back page of almost every magazine.

From that small seed we have seen readers from as far away as Australia, Aruba, America, Canada and Europe become regular subscribers to our magazine.

Since the publication of this magazine there have been numerous pilgrimages to the heavenly shrine in Italy, the Divine Mercy shrine in Krakow including other holy shrines; day and weekend retreats and missions on St Michael and the holy angels.

A wide range of booklets that have been published in English due to the apparent desire for Catholics to want to learn more.

Through the grace of God we now have a custodian of a pilgrim statue of St Michael the Archangel at St Columba's Church, Long Tower in the Diocese of Derry, Northern Ireland which travels on missions to all parts of Ireland.

Readers are finding the awesome power of St Michael the Archangel and turning to him in prayer for help and protection, especially in these days.

To this day our loyal proofreaders, who are still helping Fr Peter, seek no recognition or attention giving of their time and skills for the glory of God.

Noreen Bavister, England



There are lots of talks and writings about angels. You will also find a lot of interesting recordings on the Internet, especially on the YouTube channel. The topic of angels is quite popular these days. However, there is one unique angel among so many angelic hosts – it is St Michael the Archangel.

Parents often choose the name Michael for their sons in the Sacrament of Baptism, as it is a popular name and young people choose it in the Sacrament of Confirmation. But who is St Michael? He is a very mysterious being. We know very little about him but still it is enough for us. This little piece of knowledge about St Michael, and other angels, that God shared with us is enough for us to be happy and live our lives fully.

Civilisation of purely spiritual beings

Another civilisation exists: we do not have to look for it on other planets. It exists right next to us. We can't see it but, it is as real as we are. It is the civilisation of purely spiritual beings; the civilisation of angels. Although there is no scientific proof, we can be sure other civilisations exist because the Bible says so. If we believe that the Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit, we can be sure that each word there is true because it comes from God. So, the

SCAPULAR INVESTITURE

Rite of blessing and investiture of the Scapular of St Michael the Archangel.

Any priest or deacon can conduct the ceremony of blessing and bestowing of the Scapular of St Michael the Archangel according to the following ritual.

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R. Who made heaven and earth.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

Almighty, everlasting God, who dost graciously defend thy Church from the wiles of the devil through St Michael the Archangel, we humbly implore thee to bless + and sanctify + this scapular introduced for arousing and fostering devotion among thy

faithful toward this great protector. And do thou grant that all who wear it may be strengthened by the same Holy Archangel, so as to vanquish the enemies of body and soul, both in this life and at the hour of death. Through Christ our Lord.

P. Let us pray.

Lord, look upon us praying and kindly hear the supplication of your servant dedicated to the special protection of St Michael the Archangel that through his intercession s/he may avoid any offence against you and may reach holiness in this life and after death the prize of eternal life. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen

Why is St Michael so unique?



existence of angels is not a matter of science and tangible proofs but rather it is a matter of faith and trusting God and trusting in His Word.

God also exists and is the author of both the material world and spiritual civilisation. God is like oxygen. There is no place on this planet not to be in His presence: “It is in him that we live, and move, and exist” (Acts 17:28).

God pours His own holiness on St Michael

The Bible mentions angels almost three hundred times. There are holy angels and fallen angels. St Michael the Archangel is one of the holy angels. Why do we call him St Michael and not only Michael? We call him saint because God pours His own holiness on him; He fills St Michael with His Holy Presence and glory. When we call St Michael, he comes and brings the holiness, the presence and the glory of God to us. St Michael is filled with God’s presence to the fullest. That is why sometimes it is difficult to distinguish whether it is God or an angel who works. St

Michael and other angels always announce God’s presence.

Like a shadow

Why are angels invisible? Because they do not want to draw our attention to themselves. They are like the moon: it shines with the light reflected from the sun. Angels shine with the beauty reflected from God. They announce a loving God. They are His messengers. They act on behalf of Him. That is how we should understand St Michael.

St Michael is not hungry for fame. He does not say ‘Who is like me?’ He says ‘Who is like God’. St Michael wants to be in the shadow of God, hidden but present at the same time, assisting and supporting us.

It’s not easy to talk about angels. On the one hand, they are very close to us. On the other, they are very distant.

Angels accompany us like a shadow, constantly, step by step. However, at the same time they are distant due to their mysterious nature. You can see the picture of me and you see only a priest. Yet God sees two more beings, St Michael and also my Holy Guardian Angel who is here with me and makes sure that this article is of the greatest benefit.

Jesus never described angels

Johannes Tauler, a well-known Dominican mystic, wrote: “I’m not sure what words to use to speak about these pure spirits because they have no arms, legs, shape or matter. Our mind and thoughts are not able to know a being that lacks everything. That is the reason we do not talk about their essence but about their influence on us”.

These are very wise words. Angels lack bodies. They are pure spirits; it is impossible to imagine them in a material way. We need to focus on their impact on our lives more than on their nature.

When Jesus Christ talked about angels, He never described them. He did not say anything about their nature. He only said He would come back with their assistance; not a single word of who, what or how they looked.

If Jesus needed angels while living on earth, we also need them. If Our Lady needed St Gabriel the Archangel, we also need him. If St Joseph got a message from God by an angel, we also need him. We need both our guardian angels and St Michael the Archangel.

Reason, free will and an ability to love

Who is St Michael like? First of all, he is equipped by God with the same three basic gifts each person has; reason, free will and ability to love. We also have these gifts but our reasoning is distorted, by our inability to make the right decisions. This weakens our ability to love which is hurt by egoism and sin.

St Michael is a person of importance and authority. Sometimes we say “Someone tells me this or that...” No, not someone, but St Michael. Angelic inspirations are not fluids or energies that we bring down to earth by means of some seances or spells. The difference between an angel and a human is that an angel’s free will was not distorted by sin and egoism. An angel is a supernatural being and does not have a body because he was not born but created. Being an angel they possess these three gifts and we need a personal relationship with him

If I say “St Michael”, he would say “Are you calling me, Peter? What is the matter? How can I help you? Why are you calling me?” It is a meeting of two hearts. That is how each person should pray to the angels.

Angel’s names

Secondly, an angel has a name. All angels have names but the Bible reveals only three of them, the names of the archangels: Gabriel, Raphael and Michael. The rest of the angelic names by the will of God, are unknown to us.

We should not ask our guardian angels about their names because we

cannot be sure who would answer. Evil spirits often imitate good angels to have access to our hearts.

Can we give names to our guardian angels? Well, I do not recommend you do that. Angels are not our pets. We do not have any power over them. They are far beyond us regarding majesty and authority, intelligence and love. If they do not reveal their names to us, we need to accept that, because we do not need to know each and every angel by name. The same with people we meet every day: good people always help us and occasionally we do not know their name.

How to describe an angel

Apart from reason, free will and the ability to love, St Michael the Archangel has outstanding power. Look at this statue in this picture. I wonder how he looked when he appeared to the people.

We can read about it in the Book of Daniel. The prophet Daniel had an extraordinary vision: an encounter with an angel. He writes: “As I stood on the bank of that great river, the Tigris, I raised my eyes to look about me, and this is what I saw: A man dressed in linen, with a belt of pure gold round his waist: his body was like beryl, his face looked like lightning, his eyes were like fiery torches, his arms and his face had the gleam of burnished bronze, the sound of his voice was like the roar of a multitude” (Dn 10: 4-6).

It is a great challenge for the prophet to use poor human language to describe the majesty of a heavenly being. He used words “like” to make comparisons but even those comparisons are imperfect.

Let me focus on the last one: “his voice was like the roar of a multitude”. Those of you, who are fans of your favourite sports team, you know the difference between the cheering of one person and voices of lots of fans. The impact of many voices has far greater power than the one made by just a single person. That is how the powerful voice of St Michael was described there.

Choirs of angels

St Michael belongs to the choirs of archangels. This is what the title “Archangel” means, that he is above all the others in rank. The Bible tells us about angels being divided into choirs? Let me give you the names of angelic choirs: if we imagine the angelic choirs on a ladder - Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones – these are first three choirs at the top. The fourth choir: Dominations. The fifth choir: Powers. The sixth choir: Virtues. They belong to the middle choirs. The last three are: Principalities, Archangels and Angels – these choirs are on the lowest levels of hierarchy and that is why they are closest to us, in the world. St Michael belongs to the archangels, the second choir from the bottom. That does not mean that this particular choir is worse than others. Angels do not envy one another belonging to this or that particular choir. Angels from the Dominations do not envy angels from the Thrones. Angels from the Powers do not envy angels from the Cherubim despite the Cherubim being closer to God. Each angel is happy with the place God put him in. It is like a staircase and each step is needed, the first one, the second one and so on. Each step is important, there is no division on who is better or worse. If you have not got onto the

second step, you will never put your foot onto the ninth step.

Angels are the Army of God

We associate angels with singing, at times they are depicted in paintings with instruments. During the Holy Mass we join them with the singing of the preface “Holy, Holy, Holy”. But angels are not only vocalists and instrumentalists. They are also soldiers. St Michael is also depicted as a soldier.

Angels are the Army of God. The human army usually divides into platoons and companies and the army of angels into choirs, legions and hosts. St Michael generally appears armed with a sword in hand. I will speak about his defensive role in another issue. The fact that St Michael, although he belonged to the choir that is second from the bottom, became the leader of the heavenly army. How come? How did it happen? We need to go back to the beginnings of creation.

The world that God created can be compared to a sky scraper that has many floors. In God’s world there are creatures of different degrees of perfection on each floor.

In the middle there is man. We are composed of matter and the spirit. The matter is our body. It needs to be dressed, fed, and cared for in case of disease.

Below us, on the lower floors, there is only matter: animals with instincts, plants and the whole world of inanimate matter such as a rock, that is dull, lifeless or without spirit. But above us there are the upper floors inhabited by purely spiritual beings called angels. And these beings are divided into choirs, hosts and legions. And when God created

the world, He said to angels: Look, this is man. He is lower than you but I love him so much. I want him to be my child. You are to serve him. You call me Lord. He may call Me Father. I want him to be at the very top in My house, and into the Father’s house.

This decision of God required extraordinary humility among the angels who were beings much more intelligent than man. The stronger ones were to serve the weaker ones.

Who said yes, who said no?

This decision of God caused a rebellion among the angels. The leader of the opposition was Lucifer (whose name means “Carrying Light”) and this was the proper name of the devil before his fall from grace; once in hell he was named Satan. He belonged and still belongs to the Seraphim choir, which is one of the closest to God. He said: ‘I will not serve.’ That was his answer to God’s plan. Unfortunately, he was joined by a number of other spirits. Since that time fallen angels have been in hell. St Michael the Archangel became the leader of the good angels. He belonged to the choir of archangels, the second from below and was the first who called: ‘Who is like God!’ That was his answer to God’s plan. Fortunately, he was joined by other spirits.

God rewarded his decision. Through God’s grace he was lifted up from one of the lowest choirs into the position of leader of the heavenly army. He became the Prince of Angels and all the angels are at his disposal. His leadership is emphasised in the Bible - the Apocalypse says: St Michael and his angels. He is the top angel, angel number one, the

leader. Not only because he is higher than we in the hierarchy of creation but also because God granted him a greater grace of wisdom and power. This is the teaching of the Fathers of the Church. Pride closed heaven for Lucifer. Humility lifted St Michael up: “He that humbles himself shall be exalted; and he that exalted himself shall be abased” (Luke 14:11). St Michael uses his power with wisdom and love.

St Michael acts with the power of God

In the prayer of Pope Leo XIII, we say: “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.” I emphasise “by the Divine Power of God” because we need to understand this clearly.

At different statues of St Michael, we can see that St Michael has great power and the Evil is surrendering to him. We need to remember that St Michael does not act with his own power but with the power of God. He always humbles himself before God who is his Lord and Creator. St Michael would like us to know him, to share the power with us and, lead us to happiness - understood as living in a deep, intimate relationship with the Living God.

Think of these words. Look around you. Open the eyes of your soul and notice your invisible friends and allies given to us by God that are saintly angels and, particularly, St Michael the Archangel.

God bless you.

Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA



■ Icon of the Black Madonna, Jasna Góra, Częstochowa, Poland

Our Lady and St Michael's help during the plague

“While Mary holds your hand, you cannot fall; under her protection, you have nothing to fear. If she walks before you, you shall not grow weary; if she shows you favour, you shall reach the goal.” *St Bernard of Clairvaux*

This beautiful prayer shows the sense of our life here on earth: it is a pilgrimage and we are pilgrims. Today we are here at the Shrine of the Black Madonna in Jasna Góra, Poland. We are by the heart of Our Mother together with St Michael.

I'd like to draw your attention to a fact that the most crucial events of the history of salvation took place on mountains. Firstly, because you have a better perspective and, secondly, you

are closer to heaven. Many famous churches are situated on mountains including this one, the Shrine of the Black Madonna, and the Shrine of St Michael the Archangel in Italy.

Humility and obedience

I would like to say a few words about Our Blessed Mother and St

Michael. We can learn humility and obedience to God from them.

When God, through St Gabriel the Archangel, invited Mary to be the Mother of Jesus, She said, “Let it happen to me as you have said” (Luke 1:38). Her answer was, ‘Yes’.

Stirred up with envy and revenge, the deceiver, Lucifer, the brightest and most beautiful of the angels, led a mutiny against the power and rule of God. St Michael said, ‘Who is like God!’ He said ‘No’, for a creature cannot be God.

Our Blessed Mother's request

The changing of water into wine at the wedding at Cana is the first miracle attributed to Jesus in the Gospel of St John. In the Gospel account, Jesus, his mother, and his disciples are invited to a wedding, and when the wine runs out, Jesus shows a sign of his glory by turning water into wine. Mary said, "Do whatever He tells you" (Jn 2:5). There must have been something special in her voice and her look that the servants just did what she recommended without hesitation.

A cry for help

Let us go to the 17th century and the miracle God worked at the request of St Michael on the peninsula of Gargano, Italy. The plague spreading through Europe at that time took a terrifying death toll (we are in a similar situation with the COVID-19 virus). The plague epidemic hit southern Italy hard. Archbishop Alfonso Puccinelli, finding no human means to oppose the advance of the epidemic, turned to the Archangel Michael with prayers and fasting. The archbishop wrote a petition, which was a cry for help for the entire city. He put the petition on the statue of St Michael in the heavenly grotto.

Dazzling splendour

At the break of dawn on 22nd September 1656, while he was praying in a room at the bishop's palace of Monte Sant'Angelo, tremors abruptly

began and it felt like an earthquake was happening. Then St Michael appeared to him in dazzling splendour and ordered him to bless the stones carved from the cave and to sign the stones with the cross and the letters M.A. (Michael Archangel). Anyone who devotedly kept the stones would be immune from the plague.

The archbishop did as he was told. Soon not only was the city liberated from the plague, according to the promise of the archangel, but also those who asked for such stones, wherever they were.

Wonder and eternal gratitude

As a perpetual reminder of the wonder and his eternal gratitude, the archbishop erected a monument to St Michael in the city square, where it still is, in front of the balcony of the apparition room. The following inscription in Latin reads:

The Prince of Angels
Vanquisher of the Plague
Patron and Guardian
Monument in eternal gratitude
Alfonso Puccinelli.

There must have been something special in St Michael's presence for Archbishop Puccinelli listened and obeyed without hesitation. Soon a miracle happened: owners of the stones recovered from the plague.

Plague of the soul

Since then St Michael has been called the Vanquisher of plague. How much we need him now! It is not only the matter of illnesses of the body and

the plague of COVID-19. It is also the matter of the plague of the soul that may cause eternal death.

Helping souls

God sends Our Lady and St Michael to protect us. He wants to pour His graces through Mary and the archangel so that we can live with in His strength.

The scapular of St Michael expresses this simple truth of co-operation between Mary and St Michael in helping souls. The most powerful angel accompanies the most powerful human being. Moreover, they both like each other's company.

God's grace and healing

How do you feel in the company of Mary? How do you feel in the company of St Michael? If we are here today, it means we have the courage to tell Mary and St Michael about our lives, our sins, our wounds, and to ask them for intercession for God's grace and healing.

If we entrust our affairs to Our Lady and St Michael, we can be sure of God's response. They both wish us to live our lives with dignity and to meet them in heaven when our time comes. Amen.

Who is like God!

Fr **Robert Ryndak** CSMA
Moderator of the Fraternity of the Scapular of St Michael the Archangel
Homily at the Shrine of the Black Madonna in Jasna Góra, Częstochowa, Poland, 4th July 2020

Waiting for the Lord during Advent with St Faustina

Advent is a time of preparation and a time of waiting for the coming of the Lord. Most of us, perhaps, focus mainly on the first coming of Our Lord and Saviour, the Infant Child Jesus, born of Mary in Bethlehem and cared for by Joseph, Mary's spouse. But the Church also asks us to prepare for the Second Coming of Christ, the Word Incarnate, as King and Just Judge.

St Faustina gave a lot of attention to the latter. In fact she was given a most extraordinary mission by Jesus, "You will prepare the world for My final coming" (Diary, 429).

Mary, Mother of God – Help to St Faustina

St Faustina sought the help of Mary, Mother of God during Advent. In December 1936, she wrote in her diary, "I will spend this Advent in accordance with the directions of the Mother of God: in meekness and humility" (Diary, 792).

In keeping with the mission given to her by Jesus, she draws our attention to being in the company of His Mother during this season of Advent whilst bearing in mind the state of mankind and its need of the Lord's great mercy in these times, "I am reliving these moments with Our Lady. With great

longing, I am waiting for the Lord's coming. Great are my desires. I desire that all mankind come to know the Lord. I would like to prepare all nations for the coming of the Word Incarnate. O Jesus, make the fount of Your mercy gush forth more abundantly, for humankind is seriously ill and thus has more need than ever of Your compassion. You are a bottomless sea of mercy for us sinners; and the greater the misery, the more right we have to Your mercy. You are a fount which makes all creatures happy by Your infinite mercy" (Diary, 793).

Earlier that year, March 19, 1936, Mary, the Mother of God, tells Faustina of the new congregation that is to prepare the world for the second coming, "In the evening, when I was praying, the Mother of God told me, 'Your lives must be like mine: quiet and hidden, in unceasing union with God, pleading for humanity and preparing the world for the second coming of God'" (Diary, 625).

This was confirmed on March 25, 1936, "...I saw the Mother of God, who

said to me, 'Oh, how pleasing to God is the soul that follows faithfully the inspirations of His grace! I gave the Saviour to the world; as for you, you have to speak to the world about His great mercy and prepare the world for the Second Coming of Him who will come, not as a merciful Saviour, but as a just Judge. Oh, how terrible is that day! Determined is the day of justice, the day of divine wrath. The angels tremble before it. Speak to souls about this great mercy while it is still the time for [granting] mercy. If you keep silent now, you will be answering for a great number of souls on that terrible day. Fear nothing. Be faithful to the end. I sympathize with you'" (Diary, 635).

Nearness of the Second Coming

Advent is a time for us to reflect on the fact that we do not know the day nor the hour when the Lord may call us from this life to the next (Rev. 3:3).



■ *Divine Mercy icon by Vivian Imbruglia, USA*

Watchfulness and prayer should be central to our Advent vigil before Christmas. Jesus tells us, “Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Watch therefore – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning – lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Watch” (Mk.13:33-37).

St Faustina reminds us that we should be aware of the nearness of the Second Coming of Christ. During Holy Mass on the morning of February

17, 1937, she saw the suffering Jesus (Diary, 964). “Jesus looked at me and said, ‘Souls perish in spite of My bitter Passion. I am giving them the last hope of salvation; that is, the Feast of My Mercy. If they will not adore My mercy, they will perish for all eternity. Secretary of My mercy, write, tell souls about this great mercy of Mine, because the awful day, the day of My justice, is near’” (Diary, 965).

Sacred Scripture warns us many times to be prepared for the second coming of the Lord: St Paul wrote these words to the Church in Thessalonika: “But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, ...you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When people say, ‘There is peace and security,’ then

sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape. But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober... and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up...” (1Thess.5:1-11).

Signs of the Second Coming

Scripture teaches us about the need for discernment and draws our attention to the signs of the Second Coming (Mt. 24; Mk. 13). St Faustina is given the mission by Jesus of reminding the world of His coming as Just Judge and a sign that will be given that this is imminent: “Write this: before I come as the Just Judge, I am coming first as the King of Mercy. Before the day of justice arrives, there will be given to people a sign in the heavens of this sort:

All light in the heavens will be extinguished, and there will be great darkness over the whole earth. Then the sign of the cross will be seen in the sky, and from the openings where the hands and the feet of the Saviour were nailed will come forth great lights which light up the earth for a period of time. This will take place shortly before the last day” (Diary, 83).

How to prepare for the Second Coming

In December 1936 St Faustina records the following in her diary: “While I was saying the chaplet, I heard a voice which said, ‘Oh what great graces I will grant to souls who say this chaplet; the very depths of My tender mercy are stirred for the sake of those who say the chaplet. Write down these words, My daughter. Speak to the world about My mercy; let all mankind recognize My unfathomable mercy. It is a sign for the end times; after it will come the day of justice. While there is still time, let them have recourse to the fount of My mercy; let them profit from the Blood and Water which gushed forth for them’” (Diary, 848).

Six months later in June 1937 the following message was recorded: “Let the greatest sinners place their trust in My mercy. They have the right before others to trust in the abyss of My mercy. My daughter, write about My mercy towards tormented souls. Souls that make an appeal to My mercy delight Me. To such souls I grant even more graces than they ask. I cannot punish even the greatest sinner if he makes an appeal to My compassion, but on the contrary, I justify him in My unfathomable and inscrutable mercy. Write: before I come as just Judge, I first open wide the door of My mercy. He who refuses to pass through the door of My mercy must pass through the door of My justice...” (Diary, 1146).

St Faustina reminds us that God does not want to punish, but to heal mankind of all its ills and appeals to us to seek His Mercy before it is too

late. She quotes Jesus, “In the Old Covenant I sent prophets wielding thunderbolts to My people. Today I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My Merciful Heart. I use punishment when they themselves force Me to do so; My hand is reluctant to take hold of the sword of justice. Before the Day of Justice I am sending the Day of Mercy” (Diary, 1588).

St Faustina's Prayer

The following prayer of supplication from St Faustina offers a guide for our own reflection and prayer to the Merciful Jesus as we await His final coming.

“O Greatly Merciful God, Infinite Goodness, today all mankind calls out from the abyss of its misery to Your mercy – to Your compassion, O God; and it is with its mighty voice of misery that it cries out. Gracious God, do not reject the prayer of this earth's exiles! O Lord, Goodness beyond our understanding, Who are acquainted with our misery through and through, and know that by our own power we cannot ascend to You, we implore You: anticipate us with Your grace and keep on increasing Your mercy in us, that we may faithfully do Your holy will all through our life and at death's hour. Let the omnipotence of Your mercy shield us from the darts of our salvation's enemies, that we may with confidence, as Your children, await Your final coming – that day known to You alone. And we expect to obtain everything promised us by Jesus in spite of all our wretchedness. For Jesus is our Hope: Through His merciful Heart, as

through an open gate, we pass through to heaven” (Diary, 1570).

Deeds of mercy

In October 1936 St Faustina writes in her diary that Jesus demands, through her, that people revere His mercy and carry out deeds of mercy:

“My daughter, if I demand through you that people revere My mercy, you should be the first to distinguish yourself by this confidence in My mercy. I demand from you deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to your neighbours always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it.

I am giving you three ways of exercising mercy toward your neighbour: the first – by deed, the second – by word, the third – by prayer. In these three degrees is contained the fullness of mercy, and it is an unquestionable proof of love for Me. By this means a soul glorifies and pays reverence to My mercy” (Diary, 742).

Many references in the Diary offer explanations of deeds of mercy, such as Faustina's own deeds of mercy (280, 1312, 1694, 1695), ways to carry out deeds of mercy (742, 1156, 1157, 1158, 1316, 1317) and, prayers to ask for help in performing them (163, 1242).

According to St Faustina Jesus emphasises the importance of sacrifice as a deed of mercy. On October 1, 1937 she wrote Jesus' message to her, “Daughter, I need sacrifice lovingly accomplished, because that alone has meaning for Me. Enormous indeed are the debts of the world which are due to Me; pure souls can pay them by their sacrifice, exercising mercy in spirit” (Diary, 1316).



■ *St Faustina*

St Faustina understood the exercise of mercy in the spirit and what the Lord expected of her, but Jesus wished for others to know and understand what it meant for them too:

“I know, My daughter, that you understand it and that you do everything within your power. But write this for the many souls who are often worried because they do not have the material means with which to carry out an act of mercy. Yet spiritual mercy, which requires neither permissions nor storehouses, is much more meritorious and is within the grasp of every soul. If a soul does not exercise mercy somehow or other, it will not obtain My mercy on the day of judgement. Oh, if only souls knew how to gather eternal treasure for

themselves, they would not be judged, for they would forestall My judgement with their mercy” (Diary, 1317).

St Faustina encourages us to take advantage of God’s mercy as we await His coming: “God’s floodgates have been opened for us. Let us want to take advantage of them before the day of God’s justice arrives. And that will be a dreadful day!” (Diary, 1159).

Therefore, the best ways to prepare for the coming of the Lord is to avail of His Divine Mercy, which is readily available to us in the Sacraments, especially the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. And to offer sacrifice through deeds of mercy, by merciful words and by prayer for our neighbour.

The Soul’s Expectation of the Coming of the Lord by St Faustina

I do not know, O Lord,
at what hour You will come.
And so I keep constant
watch and listen
As Your chosen bride,
Knowing that You like
to come unexpected,
Yet, a pure heart will
sense You from afar, O Lord

I wait for You, Lord,
in calm and silence,
With great longing in my heart
And with invincible desire.
I feel that my love
for You is changing into fire,
And that it will rise up
to heaven like a flame at life’s end,
And then all my wishes
will be fulfilled.

Come then, at last, my sweet Lord
And take my thirsting heart
There, to Your home
in the lofty regions of heaven,
Where Your eternal life perdures.

Life on this earth is but an agony,
As my heart feels it is created
for the heights.
For it the lowlands of this
life hold no interest,
For my homeland is in heaven
– this I firmly believe.
(Diary, 1589)

Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA



Kelly Sikkema, www.unsplash.com

Sickness as a lesson of love and mercy

There are times in my pastoral work when I need to keep quiet and just be present as a silent witness of others' weakness.

Each first Friday of a month I visit ill parishioners who cannot attend Holy Mass on their own. Each time I notice various reactions to an illness among my parishioners. Some people turn to God when suffering; others turn their back on God, faith and the Church. For some people faith makes their suffering bearable; others succumb to despair and allow suffering to break their spirit.

The believers are happy to receive Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion I bring. Those visits are their consolation and strength.

Why does it happen?

Any attempt to define the meaning of suffering ends in disappointment and does not make it easier to endure the disease.

Once a lady asked me: "Father, what's the point of my suffering? What's the sense?" When I could not answer the question, she just smiled and said: "Well, you cannot understand it because you do not experience it."

I was devastated when visiting a children's psychiatric hospital a few years ago. I had never seen such situations before. I asked God why innocent children struggled with such serious diseases. There was no answer. I thought of innocent Jesus who suffered passion and tortures on the cross. The sense of suffering apparently remains

the mystery of God who looks at it in a different way than we do.

Different perspective

There are lots of stories about sick people brought to Jesus in the Gospel. This was not only a reality during the earthly life of Jesus. The same has been happening through the centuries: all those suffering people from the Gospel symbolise people of all ages and nationalities who have suffered from evil that entered the world after the original sin.

Jesus paid special attention to sick people: a woman with a haemorrhage, a paralysed man, a man with the withered hand, a man suffering for thirty-eight years at the Pool of Bethesda.

He was not indifferent to people's pain and illness in the Gospel. He is not indifferent today in our lives. The only thing He requires from people is faith. He often said: "Your faith healed you," as if He wanted to remind us that we, human beings, are able to view illnesses from a different perspective.

How to deal with a disease?

An illness, powerlessness, loneliness, abandonment, each kind of suffering is usually treated as a curse. Hopefully, God can turn a curse into a blessing. The more suffering, the more graces God pours on the faithful. But God needs our cooperation. First of all, we need to accept our disease. It means to say 'yes' to the fact that I am sick and say 'yes' to all the consequences my disease or illness. Jesus gives us an example of humble and mild acceptance: "He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was suffering he made no threats but put his trust in the upright judge" (1 Peter 2:23). There are people who consciously follow Christ and endure their disease in meekness and humble humility. Sometimes they do not understand their disease as the will of God but still they accept it as a gift for themselves, for their family and friends and for the whole world.

What about carers?

St Faustina wrote: "Suddenly I heard the bell in the next room, and I went in and rendered a service to a seriously sick person. When I returned to my room, I suddenly saw the Lord Jesus, who said, 'My daughter, you

gave Me greater pleasure by rendering Me that service than if you had prayed for a long time.' I answered, 'But it was not to You, Jesus, but to that patient that I rendered this service.' And the Lord answered me, 'Yes, My daughter, but whatever you do for your neighbour, you do for Me'" (Diary 1029).

Those words make us consider how we treat sick people. On the one hand, care for the sick is always a mental and physical challenge. On the other hand, our presence, our visit at the hospital, a gentle touch, become deeply human and Divine gestures of love and mercy. They make us more human and bring us closer to heaven.

Having a sick person at home also is a challenge. If we are carers, we need strong Divine motivation to do both – taking care of the beloved one and live our own life. God blesses both the sick and their carers.

What helps?

The Church offers spiritual help by the Sacrament of Anointing the Sick. It is worth reminding ourselves of the words of the rite: "Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, by the grace of your Holy Spirit cure the weakness of your servant N. Heal his/her sickness and forgive his/her sins; expel all afflictions of mind and body; mercifully restore him/her to full health, and enable him/her to resume his/her former duties, for you are Lord for ever and ever. Amen." May those words become a consolation and encouragement for the sick. God is always present by a suffering person. They are never alone when they join their disease with God even if their family and friends are away.

Fr **Mateusz Szerszeń** CSMA

The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

1499 By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them. And indeed, she exhorts them to contribute to the good of the People of God by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and death of Christ.

Illness in human life

1500 Illness and suffering have always been among the gravest problems confronted in human life. In illness, man experiences his powerlessness, his limitations, and his finitude. Every illness can make us glimpse death.

1501 Illness can lead to anguish, self-absorption, sometimes even despair and revolt against God. It can also make a person more mature, helping him discern in his life what is not essential so that he can turn toward that which is. Very often illness provokes a search for God and a return to him.

In brief

The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick has as its purpose the conferral of a special grace on the Christian experiencing the difficulties inherent in the condition of grave illness or old age.

1528 The proper time for receiving this holy anointing has certainly arrived when the believer begins to be in danger of death because of illness or old age.

1529 Each time a Christian falls seriously ill, he may receive the Anointing of the Sick, and also when, after he has received it, the illness worsens.

1530 Only priests (presbyters and bishops) can give the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, using oil blessed by the bishop, or if necessary, by the celebrating presbyter himself.

1531 The celebration of the Anointing of the Sick consists essentially in the anointing of the forehead and hands of the sick person (in the Roman Rite) or of other parts of the body (in the Eastern rite), the anointing being accompanied by the liturgical prayer of the celebrant asking for the special grace of this sacrament.

1532 The special grace of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick has as its effects:

- the uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church;
- the strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age;
- the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance;
- the restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul;
- the preparation for passing over to eternal life.

Taken from the Catechism
of the Catholic Church



POEM

Joshua Hanks, www.unsplash.com

Take care of your soul

*You can take a weekend break these days in a luxury hotel.
You can get wrapped up in mud and muck, take seaweed baths as well.
You can get your wrinkles, ironed out, remove some fat or a mole.
But what about your inner-self?
What about your soul?*

*You can change the colour of your skin, the colour of your hair.
You can make it seem like your hair is growing,
when there's really nothing there.
You can curl it, crease it, frizz it, grease it or shape it like a bowl.
But what about your inner-self?
What about your soul?*

*You can carefully watch the food you eat, count calories, mind your size.
You can drink fresh water for your skin, eat carrots for your eyes.
You can soak in a bath of lavender oil, and dream of Tír na nÓg.*
But what about your inner-self?
What about your soul?*

*For while we must mind our bodies, we must mind our spirit too,
and recognise the loving God, who created me and you.
For when he looks down on us, he looks into our souls,
to see if love and kindness, have been our lifetime goals?*

*So, next time you look in the mirror, and frown at the reflection you see,
look for the kindness, the smile, and the service, the way God wants
you to be. And every night before you sleep, take time to be alone,
and ask that the Lord will dwell in your heart,
and help you take care of your soul.*

* Mythical land of eternal youth.

Spiritual poetry from a book
Prayer of The Seasons by Fr **Brian Boyle**
Priest of the Diocese of Cloyne, Ireland and Vocations Director

At times I'm just sad that I've left it so late

Each person has their own road to God. My own was long and hard. Someone said that God does not open the door to wisdom to those whose hearts are closed. That is just so true of me – for a very long time my heart was totally closed to God.

I was born and brought up in a peasant family, but certainly not a godless one. My loved ones did believe in God, each in their own way. My generation, grew up in a world of atheism at a time when religion was forbidden by the state and we were taught in school that God does not exist except in the sick imagination of the illiterate.

However, new times arrived, and with them the possibility to learn about religion – of the lives of Jesus, Mary and the saints. People could deepen their spiritual life and participate in religious services. Only I was somehow in no particular hurry to open the door of my heart and to attend Holy Mass. Yes, I would look into the church or chapel at times, but only to light a candle. But I admit this was done without much thought.

Life took its course: study, work, marriage. I had two daughters, who now have their own families. By now I had grandchildren. In other words, life wasn't bad, with no sign of trouble. Until, the day

before New Year, my husband died unexpectedly. It was hard to come to terms with this – how can you overcome the loss of someone so close? My life became divided into “before” and “after.” I shut myself off from other people, I was overcome with sadness, loneliness, fear and a sense of grievance: why had this happened to me?

It was then that my neighbour came to my aid. She encouraged me to come to church with her. When I opened the door to the church, I also opened my heart to God. A new era began as my life changed and took on new meaning. With the help of Fr Krzysztof Poświata CSMA (now in Poland), I began seriously to prepare for my first Confession and Holy Communion. Not long after, I received the Sacrament of Confirmation. I discovered the fellowship of believers, the value of the spiritual life – all the things which had been lacking in my life for so many years...

God is love. These are the most important words in the Bible and



■ Hanna with her granddaughter, Gatowo, Belarus

they confirm the fact that God's eternal love isn't indifferent to us. Neither is He indifferent to me. During a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Budslav, patron of Belarus, I prayed and walked on my knees round the church, unable to hold back my tears. I felt as if I was the happiest person in the world. Why? In order to understand that, you would have to come here.

I try to attend to church every day. I know that Someone is always waiting for me there. I'm happy that I can pray with Fr Jan Juszko, Fr Aliaksander Oszmianczuk and Sr Alberta and others, that I am able to praise God and learn His Word.

Yes, I came to God as a very mature person. And at times I am sad that I discovered so many amazing things so very late in life. I now try to pass on what is important to my children and grandchildren. I have learnt gratitude to God and other people.

Hanna Kishkurna,
A parishioner from Gatovo, Belarus

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

And he came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren, for with God nothing will be impossible."

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her (Luke 1:26-38).

This is something we should indeed learn on the day of the Immaculate Conception: the person who abandons himself totally in God's hands does not become God's puppet, a boring "yes man"; he does not lose his freedom. Only the person who entrusts himself totally to God finds true freedom, the great, creative immensity of the freedom of good.

The person who turns to God does not become smaller but greater, for through God and with God he becomes great, he becomes divine, he becomes



■ The Annunciation by John William Waterhouse, 1914

Entrusting yourself to God

truly himself. The person who puts himself in God's hands does not distance himself from others, withdrawing into his private salvation; on the contrary, it is only then that his heart truly awakens and he becomes a sensitive, hence, benevolent and open person.

The closer a person is to God, the closer he is to people. We see this in Mary. The fact that she is totally with God is the reason why she is so close to human beings.

Mother of every consolation

For this reason she can be the Mother of every consolation and every help, a Mother whom anyone can dare to address in any kind of need in weakness and in sin, for she has understanding for everything and is for everyone the open power of creative goodness.

Mary thus stands before us as a sign of comfort, encouragement and hope. She turns to us, saying: "Have the courage to dare with God! Try it! Do not be afraid of him! Have the courage to risk with faith! Have the courage to risk with goodness! Have the courage to risk with a pure heart! Commit yourselves to God, then you will see that it is precisely by doing so that your life will become broad and light, not boring but filled with infinite surprises, for God's infinite goodness is never depleted!"

Let us thank the Lord for the great sign of his goodness which he has given us in Mary, his Mother and the Mother of the Church. Let us pray to him to put Mary on our path like a light that also helps us to become a light and to carry this light into the nights of history. Amen.

From **Pope Benedict XVI's** homily for the Immaculate Conception, 8th December 2005

Prayers to St Joseph for our priests

Attributions for Cenacle prayers

The Prayer to St Joseph for Priests, Litany for Clergy, Chaplet of Reparation for Priests from Silverstream Priory (vultuschristi.org). The Scriptural Rosary meditations and Prayer for Dying Priests are used by the expressed permissions of the authors. The Divine Mercy Chaplet is used with permission of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

(Intercessionforpriests.org)
are in the public domain

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, eternal High Priest. You offered Yourself to the Father on the altar of the Cross and through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit gave Your priestly people a share in Your redeeming sacrifice.

Hear our prayer for the sanctification of our priests. Grant that all who are ordained to the ministerial priesthood may be evermore conformed to You, the Divine Master.

May they preach the Gospel with a pure heart and clear conscience. Let them be shepherds according to Your own Heart, single-minded in service

to You and to the Church and shining examples of a holy, simple and joyful life.

Through the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Your Mother and ours, draw all priests and the flocks entrusted to their care to the fullness of eternal life where You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

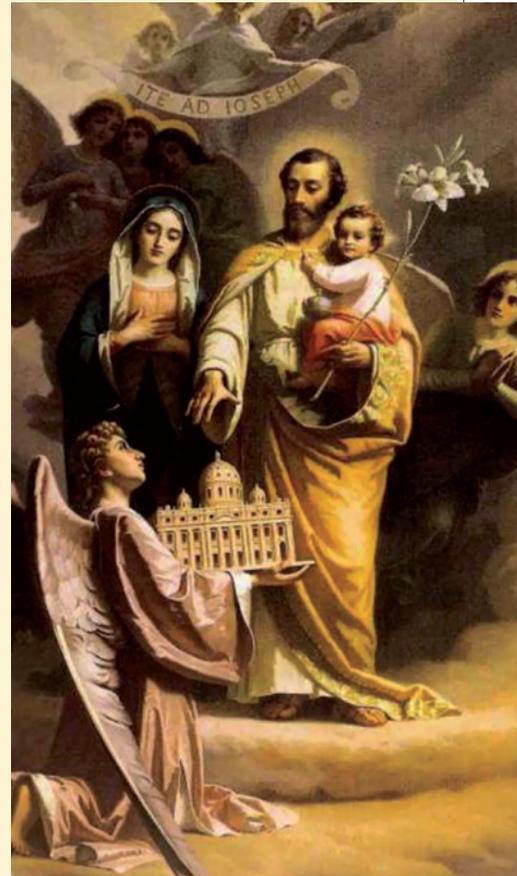
Prayer by **Pope Benedict XVI**

Prayer to Saint Joseph for priests

O glorious Saint Joseph, thou who, on the word of the angel speaking to thee in the night, didst put fear aside to take thy Virgin Bride into thy home, show thyself today the advocate and protector of priests.

Guardian of the infant Christ, defend them against every attack of the enemy, preserve them from the dangers that surround them on every side. Forget not Herod's threats against the Child, the anguish of the flight into Egypt by night, and the hardship of thy exile.

Stand by the accused; stretch out thy hand to those who have fallen; comfort the fearful; forsake not the weak; and visit the lonely. Let all priests know that in thee, God hath given them a model of faith in the night, of obedience in adversity, of



chastity in tenderness, and of hope in uncertainty.

Thou art the terror of demons and the healer of those wounded in spiritual combat. Come, then, to the defence of every priest in need; overcome evil with good. Where there are curses, put blessings, where harm hath been done, do thou good. Let there be joy for the priests of the Church, and peace for all under thy gracious protection. Amen.

Silverstream Priory: vultuschristi.org

Invocation to the Holy Spirit

Come, then, O Holy Spirit, come, come, O come, Most Merciful Comforter, come, Blessed Paraclete; come, Celestial Fire, come, Purifier of sins, Healer of wounds, come, Upholder of the falling, Lifter-up of the fallen, come, Teacher of the humble, Destroyer of the proud, come, Friend of the friendless, Hope of the hopeless, Consoler of the sorrowful, Haven of the weary, Physician of the sick, come, Glory of the living, only Salvation of the dying, come, O Thrice-Holy Spirit,

come, and have pity on me, direct me and defend me, strengthen me and comfort me, confirm me and gladden me, mold me to Yourself; and having molded me, dwell in me forever, and grant that my littleness may be acceptable to Your Greatness, my weakness to Your Strength, according to the multitude of Your compassion, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who with the Father lives and reigns in Your Unity forever and ever. Amen.

www.ibreviary.org

– Invocation of the Holy Spirit



Litany for the Clergy (for non-liturgical use)

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

R: have mercy on us.

God the Father, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named. **R:**

God the Son, Eternal High Priest and Sovereign King. **R:**

God the Holy Ghost, Source of sanctity, Guide of shepherds. **R:**

Holy Trinity, one God. **R:**

R: hear us, O Lord, and have mercy.

For the Pope, Vicar of Christ,

For all the cardinals

of God's Holy Church,

For all the bishops

of God's Holy Church,

For all the priests

of God's Holy Church,

For all the deacons

of God's Holy Church,

For all the seminarians

of God's Holy Church,

R: precious Blood of Jesus, fortify them.

For clergy faithful to their promises,

For clergy striving to be holy,

For clergy reverent in liturgy,

For clergy orthodox in doctrine,

For clergy courageous in preaching,

For clergy generous with Confession,

For clergy devoted to works of mercy.

R: precious Blood of Jesus, console them.

For disoriented clergy,

For demoralized clergy,
For exhausted clergy,
For unappreciated clergy,
For calumniated clergy,
For persecuted clergy,
For silenced clergy.

**R: precious Blood of Jesus,
wash over them and convert them.**

For abusive clergy,
For ambitious clergy,
For irreverent clergy,
For heretical clergy,
For cowardly clergy,
For vindictive clergy,
For tepid clergy.

Lamb of God, who takest away
the sins of the world,
spare and save Thy priests.

Lamb of God, who takest away
the sins of the world,
heal and purify Thy priests.

Lamb of God, who takest away
the sins of the world,
multiply Thy holy priests.

V. Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting
place: Thou and the ark, which Thou
hast sanctified.

R. Let Thy priests be clothed with
justice: and let Thy saints rejoice.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, be merciful unto
Thy Church and let the light of Thy
countenance shine upon us, that we
who dwell in the valley of the shadow
of death may be delivered from the
evils that afflict us, and may receive
many shepherds after Thy Sacred
Heart, who will lead Thy flock in ho-
liness to the pastures of grace and glory,
where Thou livest and reignest with the
Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost,
God, world without end. Amen.

Silverstream Priory: vultuschristi.org



■ *The Dream of St Joseph by Anton Raphael Mengs, between 1773-1774*

Prayer to Saint Joseph for a particular priest

O glorious Saint Joseph, I present to thee this day Father N., priest of Jesus Christ, and beg thee to be to him advocate and defender, counsellor and friend. Open thy heart to him as thou didst open thy home to the Virgin Mother in her hour of need.

Protect his holy priesthood as thou didst protect the life of the Infant Christ threatened by cruel Herod. In darkness bring him light; in weakness, strength; and in fear, the peace that passeth understanding.

For the sake of the tender love that bound thee to the Virgin Mary and to the Infant Christ, be thou for him, Saint Joseph, a constant intercessor

and a shield against every danger of body, mind and soul so that, in spite of his weaknesses and sins, his priesthood may bring glory to Christ and serve to increase the beauty of holiness in His bride the Church. Amen.

Silverstream Priory: vultuschristi.org

Prayer for the dying clergy past, present and future (For Private Prayer)

Merciful Jesus, through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, a man becomes an *alter Christus*, another Christ. You have called generations of men to the formidable responsibility of carrying the weight of souls on

their shoulders to lead them towards Your Kingdom.

We intercede today on behalf of Your clergy whose lives are coming to an end. For those that have been faithful to you, strengthen them in their last hours. May the agony of these holy men rise up like sweet incense as their final priestly act of oblation for the sins of mankind and the flock they served. Let the first words they hear when they cross the threshold of life be, “Well done, good and faithful servant....enter into your master’s joy” (Mt 25:21).

But a terrible judgment awaits those that have betrayed You. We implore You to pour out Your abundant graces in their last hours to assist them in overcoming the Accuser’s temptations that would lead them to despair. Let their final moments be lived in humble repentance and sorrow through their hope in Your Divine Mercy for You will never spurn a contrite heart. Let the final words on their lips be, “Jesus, I trust in you.” Stir up in their hearts the memory of their ardour and longing to serve You on the day of their ordination because You have called them to be a priest forever.

We pray this in profound gratitude for all the clergy You have called to lead Your faithful for it is through their hands that we receive Your precious Body and Blood. It is through their hands that we receive the sacraments that You entrusted them to lead us to eternal life.

We offer our prayers and mortifications for the salvation of all those You have chosen to serve Your people through their priestly ministry.

Mary, Mother of Priests, be their consolation and intercede for them at their hour of death. Amen.

Patricia S. Gonzalez

St Joseph Cenacle – Holy Hour of prayers for our priests

Requests for a free booklet in both English and Spanish are available in the US only, and reader and printer copies are available to all that wish to receive them by email.

Contact:

StJosephCenacle07@gmail.com

Legion of Mary
Our Lady of the Nativity
Praesidium, Menlo Park,
S. San Mateo Curia
San Francisco Senatus

St Joseph, Patriarch of the Church, protect our Holy Mother Church. Watch over her priests protect them from the evil one, and guide them.

Endorsements

The booklet, “*St Joseph Cenacle – Holy Hour of Prayers for Our Priests*”, is a beautiful compilation of powerful prayers, calling down graces from heaven, through the intercession of St Joseph, Patron of the Church and Mary, Mother of Priests, on behalf of all priests around the world. These prayers are drawn from the rich tradition of the Catholic Church and are designed to be prayed within the context of a Eucharistic Holy Hour. I pray that this timely booklet of prayer be disseminated far and wide. The priesthood is being attacked by the Evil One at every turn. Through

the intercession of St Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary, may these prayers be a source of strength, protection and encouragement to priests everywhere, building up an army of strong, holy and joy-filled priests.

The Most Reverend
James D. Conley, D.D.
Bishop of Lincoln, Nebraska

Love for the Church was the inspiration behind this compilation of prayers, *St Joseph Cenacle - Holy Hour of Prayers for Our Priests*. It meets an urgent need for all Catholic faithful today.

Rev. **Lawrence Goode**
Pastor at St Francis
of Assisi Church, E Palo Alto, CA
Spiritual Director, Legion of Mary,
San Francisco Senatus

I recommend the use of the prayers found in the booklet, “*St Joseph Cenacle - Holy Hour of Prayers for Our Priests*”. It is crucial that the faithful support the holy priesthood by praying for the healing and for the sanctification of all priests. The prayers in the “St Joseph Cenacle” booklet, many of which are taken from the book, *In Sinu Jesu: When Heart Speaks to Heart*, by a Benedictine monk, may fittingly be used in the context of adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, since Eucharistic adoration is a most important source of strength and healing. Priests will be most grateful to know that the faithful are praying for their sanctification.

His Eminence **Raymond Leo
Cardinal Burke**
Patron of the Sovereign
Military Order of Malta

Jesus Christ the bearer of the water of life

A Christian reflection on the “New Age”

Part 2

New Age and Christian faith in contrast

It is difficult to separate the individual elements of *New Age* religiosity – innocent though they may appear – from the overarching framework which permeates the whole thought-world on the *New Age* movement. The gnostic nature of this movement calls us to judge it in its entirety. From the point of view of Christian faith, it is not possible to isolate some elements of *New Age* religiosity as acceptable to Christians, while rejecting others. Since the *New Age* movement makes much of a communication with nature, of cosmic knowledge of a universal good – thereby negating the revealed contents of Christian faith – it cannot be viewed as positive or innocuous. In a cultural environment, marked by religious relativism, it is necessary to signal a warning against the attempt to place *New Age* religiosity on the same level as Christian faith, making the difference between faith and belief seem relative, thus creating greater confusion for the unwary. In this regard, it is useful



to remember the exhortation of St Paul “to instruct certain people not to teach false doctrine or to concern themselves with myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the plan of God that is to be received by faith” (1 Tim 1:3-4). Some practices are incorrectly labelled as *New Age* simply as a marketing strategy to make them sell better, but are not truly associated with its worldview. This only adds to the confusion. It is therefore necessary to accurately identify those elements which belong to the *New Age* movement, and which cannot be accepted by those who are faithful to Christ and his Church.

The following questions may be the easiest key to evaluating some of the central elements of *New Age* thought and practice from a Christian standpoint. “*New Age*” refers to the ideas which circulate about God, the human being and the world, the people with whom Christians may have conversations on religious matters, the publicity material for meditation groups, therapies and the like, explicit statements on religion and so on. Some of these questions applied to people and ideas not explicitly labelled *New Age* would reveal further unnamed or unacknowledged links with the whole *New Age* atmosphere.

Is God a being with whom we have a relationship or something to be used or a force to be harnessed?

The New Age concept of God is rather diffuse, whereas the Christian concept is a very clear one. The New Age god is an impersonal energy, really a particular extension or component of the cosmos; god in this sense is the life-force or soul of the world. Divinity is to be found in every being, in a gradation “from the lowest crystal of the mineral world up to and beyond the Galactic God himself, about Whom we can say nothing at all. This is not a man but a Great Consciousness” (Cf. Benjamin Creme, *The Reappearance of Christ and the Masters of Wisdom*, London, Tara Press, 1979, p. 116). In some “classic” New Age writings, it is clear that human beings are meant to think of themselves as gods: this is more fully developed in some people than in others. God is no longer to be sought beyond the world, but deep within myself (Cf. Jean Vernet, *Le New Age*, Paris (P.U.F.) 1992 (Collection Encyclopédique *Que sais-je?*), p. 14). Even when “God” is something outside myself, it is there to be manipulated.

This is very different from the Christian understanding of God as the maker of heaven and earth and the source of all personal life. God is in himself personal, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who created the universe in order to share the communion of his life with creaturely persons. “God, who ‘dwells in unapproachable light’, wants to communicate his own divine life to the men he freely created, in order to adopt them as his

sons in his only-begotten Son. By revealing himself God wishes to make them capable of responding to him, and of knowing him, and of loving him far beyond their own natural capacity.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 52). God is not identified with the Life-principle understood as the “Spirit” or “basic energy” of the cosmos, but is that love which is absolutely different from the world, and yet creatively present in everything, and leading human beings to salvation.

Is there just one Jesus Christ, or are there thousands of Christs?

Jesus Christ is often presented in New Age literature as one among many wise men, or initiates, or avatars, whereas in Christian tradition He is the Son of God. Here are some common points in New Age approaches:

- the personal and individual historical Jesus is distinct from the eternal, impersonal universal Christ;
- Jesus is not considered to be the only Christ;
- the death of Jesus on the cross is either denied or re-interpreted to exclude the idea that He, as Christ, could have suffered;
- extra-biblical documents (like the neo-gnostic gospels) are considered authentic sources for the knowledge of aspects of the life of Jesus which are not to be found in the canon of Scripture. Other revelations about Jesus, made available by entities, spirit guides and ascended masters, or even through the *Akasha Chronicles*, are basic for New Age Christology;

- a kind of esoteric exegesis is applied to biblical texts to purify Christianity of the formal religion which inhibits access to its esoteric essence (Cf. Alessandro Olivieri Pennesi, *Il Cristo del New Age. Indagine Critica*, Vatican City (Libreria Editrice Vaticana) 1999, especially pages 13-34. The list of common points is on p. 33).

In the Christian Tradition Jesus Christ is the Jesus of Nazareth about which the gospels speak, the son of Mary and the only Son of God, true man and true God, the full revelation of divine truth, unique Saviour of the world: “for our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died and was buried. On the third day he rose again in fulfilment of the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father” (The Nicene Creed).

The human being: is there one universal being or are there many individuals?

“The point of New Age techniques is to reproduce mystical states at will, as if it were a matter of laboratory material. Rebirth, biofeedback, sensory isolation, holotropic breathing, hypnosis, mantras, fasting, sleep deprivation and transcendental meditation are attempts to control these states and to experience them continuously” (Michel Lacroix, *L’Ideologia della New Age*, Milano (Il Saggiatore) 1998, p. 74). These practices all create an atmosphere of psychic weakness (and vulnerability). When the object of the exercise is that we should re-invent our selves, there is a real question of who “I” am.

“God within us” and holistic union with the whole cosmos underline this question. Isolated individual personalities would be pathological in terms of *New Age* (in particular transpersonal psychology). But “the real danger is the holistic paradigm. *New Age* is thinking based on totalitarian unity and that is why it is a danger...” (*Ibid.*, p. 68). More moderately: “We are authentic when we ‘take charge of’ ourselves, when our choice and reactions flow spontane-

1.27) and God takes great consideration of them, much to the relieved surprise of the Psalmist (cf. Ps 8). The human person is a mystery fully revealed only in Jesus Christ (cf. GS 22), and in fact becomes authentically human properly in his relationship with Christ through the gift of the Spirit (Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, §§ 355-383). This is far from the caricature of anthropocentrism ascribed to Christianity and rejected by many New Age authors and practitioners.

For Christians, salvation depends on a participation in the passion, death and resurrection of Christ, and on a direct personal relationship with God rather than on any technique. The human situation, affected as it is by original sin and by personal sin, can only be rectified by God’s action: sin is an offence against God, and only God can reconcile us to himself. In the divine plan of salvation, human beings have been saved by Jesus Christ who, as God and man, is the one mediator of redemption. In Christianity salvation is not an experience of self, a meditative and intuitive dwelling within oneself, but much more the forgiveness of sin, being lifted out of profound ambivalences in oneself and the calming of nature by the gift of communion with a loving God. The way to salvation is not found simply in a self-induced transformation of consciousness, but in a liberation from sin and its consequences which then leads us to struggle against sin in ourselves and in the society around us. It necessarily moves us toward loving solidarity with our neighbour in need.



ously from our deepest needs, when our behaviour and expressed feelings reflect our personal wholeness” (Edwin Schur, *The Awareness Trap. Self-Absorption instead of Social Change*, New York (McGraw Hill) 1977, p. 68). The Human Potential Movement is the clearest example of the conviction that humans are divine, or contain a divine spark within themselves.

The Christian approach grows out of the Scriptural teachings about human nature; men and women are created in God’s image and likeness (Gen

Do we save ourselves or is salvation a free gift from God?

The key is to discover by what or by whom we believe we are saved. Do we save ourselves by our own actions, as is often the case in *New Age* explanations, or are we saved by God’s love? Key words are *self-fulfilment* and *self-realisation, self-redemption*. *New Age* is essentially Pelagian in its understanding about human nature (Cf. Paul Heelas, *The New Age Movement. The Celebration of the Self and the Sacralization of Modernity*, Oxford (Blackwell) 1996, p. 161).

Do we invent truth or do we embrace it?

New Age truth is about good vibrations, cosmic correspondences, harmony and ecstasy, in general pleasant experiences. It is a matter of finding one’s own truth in accordance with the feel-good factor. Evaluating religion and ethical questions is obviously relative to one’s own feelings and experiences.

Jesus Christ is presented in Christian teaching as “The Way, the Truth and the Life” (Jn 14:6). His

followers are asked to open their whole lives to him and to his values, in other words to an objective set of requirements which are part of an objective reality ultimately knowable by all.

Prayer and meditation: are we talking to ourselves or to God?

The tendency to confuse psychology and spirituality makes it hard not to insist that many of the meditation techniques now used are not prayer. They are often a good preparation for prayer, but no more, even if they lead to a more pleasant state of mind or bodily comfort. The experiences involved are genuinely intense, but to remain at this level is to remain alone, not yet in the presence of the other. The achievement of silence can confront us with emptiness, rather than the silence of contemplating the beloved. It is also true that techniques for going deeper into one's own soul are ultimately an appeal to one's own ability to reach the divine, or even to become divine: if they forget God's search for the human heart they are still not Christian prayer. Even when it is seen as a link with the Universal Energy, "such an easy 'relationship' with God, where God's function is seen as supplying all our needs, shows the selfishness at the heart of this *New Age*" (*A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission 1994, chapter 3.)

New Age practices are not really prayer, in that they are generally a question of introspection or fusion with cosmic energy, as opposed to the double orientation of Christian

*prayer, which involves introspection but is essentially also a meeting with God. Far from being a merely human effort, Christian mysticism is essentially a dialogue which "implies an attitude of conversion, a flight from 'self' to the 'you' of God" (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Orationis Formas*, 3). "The Christian, even when he is alone and prays in secret, he is conscious that he always prays for the good of the Church in union with Christ, in the Holy Spirit and together with all the saints" (*Ibid.*, 7).*

Are we tempted to deny sin or do we accept that there is such a thing?

In *New Age* there is no real concept of sin, but rather one of imperfect knowledge; what is needed is enlightenment, which can be reached through particular psycho-physical techniques. Those who take part in *New Age* activities will not be told what to believe, what to do or what not to do, but: "There are a thousand ways of exploring inner reality. Go where your intelligence and intuition lead you. Trust yourself." (William Bloom, *The New Age. An Anthology of Essential Writings*, London (Rider) 1991, p. xvi). Authority has shifted from a theistic location to within the self. The most serious problem perceived in *New Age* thinking is alienation from the whole cosmos, rather than personal failure or sin. The remedy is to become more and more immersed in the whole of being. In some *New Age* writings and practices, it is clear that one life is not enough, so there have to be reincarnations to allow people to realise their full potential.

*In the Christian perspective "only the light of divine Revelation clarifies the reality of sin and particularly of the sin committed at mankind's origins. Without the knowledge Revelation gives of God we cannot recognize sin clearly and are tempted to explain it as merely a development flaw, a psychological weakness, a mistake, or the necessary consequence of an inadequate social structure, etc. Only in the knowledge of God's plan for man can we grasp that sin is an abuse of freedom that God gives to created persons so that they are capable of loving him and loving one another." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, § 387). Sin is an offence against reason, truth and right conscience; it is a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods. It wounds the nature of man and injures human solidarity... (*Ibid.*, § 1849). Sin is an offence against God... sin sets itself against God's love for us and turns our hearts away from it... Sin is thus 'love of oneself even to contempt of God'" (*Ibid.*, § 1850).*

Are we encouraged to reject or accept suffering and death?

Some *New Age* writers view suffering as self-imposed, or as bad karma, or at least as a failure to harness one's own resources. Others concentrate on methods of achieving success and wealth (e.g. Deepak Chopra, José Silva et al.). In *New Age*, reincarnation is often seen as a necessary element in spiritual growth, a stage in progressive spiritual evolution which began before we were born and will continue after we die. In our present lives the experience of

the death of other people provokes a healthy crisis.

Both cosmic unity and reincarnation are irreconcilable with the Christian belief that a human person is a distinct being, who lives one life, for which he or she is fully responsible: this understanding of the person puts into question both responsibility and freedom. Christians know that “in the cross of Christ not only is the redemption accomplished through suffering, but also human suffering itself has been redeemed. Christ – without any fault of his own – took on himself ‘the total evil of sin’. The experience of this evil determined the incomparable extent of Christ’s suffering, which became the price of the redemption... The Redeemer suffered in place of man and for man. Every man has his own share in the redemption. Each one is also called to share in that suffering through which the redemption was accomplished. He is called to share in that suffering through which all human suffering has also been redeemed. In bringing about the redemption through suffering, Christ has also raised human suffering to the level of the redemption. Thus each man in his suffering can also become a sharer in the redemptive suffering of Christ” (John Paul II, Apostolic Letter on human suffering “Salvifici doloris” (11 February 1984), 19).

Is social commitment something shirked or positively sought after?

Much in New Age is unashamedly self-promotion, but some leading figures in the movement claim that it is unfair to judge the whole movement

by a minority of selfish, irrational and narcissistic people, or to allow oneself to be dazzled by some of their more bizarre practices, which are a block to seeing in New Age a genuine spiritual search and spirituality. (Cf. David Spangler, *The New Age*, op. cit., p. 28.) The fusion of individuals into the cosmic self, the relativisation or abolition of difference and opposition in a cosmic harmony, is unacceptable to Christianity.

Where there is true love, there has to be a different other (person). A genuine Christian searches for unity in the capacity and freedom of the other to say “yes” or “no” to the gift of love. Union is seen in Christianity as communion, unity as community.

Is our future in the stars or do we help to construct it?

The New Age which is dawning will be peopled by perfect, androgynous beings who are totally in command of the cosmic laws of nature. In this scenario, Christianity has to be eliminated and give way to a global religion and a new world order.

*Christians are in a constant state of vigilance, ready for the last days when Christ will come again; their New Age began 2000 years ago, with Christ, who is none other than “Jesus of Nazareth; he is the Word of God made man for the salvation of all”. His Holy Spirit is present and active in the hearts of individuals, in “society and history, peoples, cultures and religions”. In fact, “the Spirit of the Father, bestowed abundantly by the Son, is the animator of all” (Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Missio* (7 December 1990), 6, 28, and*

the Declaration Dominus Jesus (6 August 2000) by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 12). We live in the last times.

Conclusion to Part 2

On the one hand, it is clear that many New Age practices seem to those involved in them not to raise doctrinal questions; but, at the same time, it is undeniable that these practices themselves communicate, even if only indirectly, a mentality which can influence thinking, and inspire a very particular vision of reality. Certainly New Age creates its own atmosphere, and it can be hard to distinguish between things which are innocuous and those which really need to be questioned. However, it is well to be aware that the doctrine of the Christ spread in New Age circles is inspired by the theosophical teachings of Helena Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner’s anthroposophy and Alice Bailey’s “Arcane School”. Their contemporary followers are not only promoting their ideas now, but also working with New Agers to develop a completely new understanding of reality, a doctrine known by some observers as “New Age truth”. (Cf. R. Rhodes, *The Counterfeit Christ of the New Age Movement*, Grand Rapids (Baker) 1990, p. 129.)

Taken from:
Jesus Christ The Bearer of The Water of Life: A Christian Reflection on the “New Age”. Pontifical Council for Culture and Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, 2003.
www.vatican.va



■ Raphael self-portrait, between 1504-1506

This year is the 500th anniversary of death of Raphael, a famous Italian Renaissance painter. His life is connected with the artistic history of the Vatican.

Raffaello Sanzio (1483-1520), known later as Raphael, was born in a town called Urbino. It seems he inherited his father's talent who was an artist at the court of a local duke.

He mastered his talent in Perugia and Florence, where he quickly established himself as a great painter of portraits. At the age of 25 he went to Rome and worked for the pope for the rest of his life. Despite his early death at the age of 37, Raphael was a highly prolific artist leaving a large body of work. His most known masterpieces are *The School of Athens* and *The Sistine Madonna*.

Agata Pawłowska, Poland

His works still touch our hearts



■ St Michael Vanquishing Satan by Raphael, 1518

First millennial to be named 'blessed'

Pope Francis beatified 15-year-old Carlo Acutis on 10th October 2020 in Assisi, Italy.

Bl. Carlo was born on 3rd May 1991 and died of leukaemia on 12th October 2006. He offered his sufferings for “the pains of the Pope and the Church.” His tomb remains on display in Assisi, due to the huge number of pilgrims visiting before and following his beatification.

Bl. Carlo was renowned for his remarkable computer programming skills. His website is dedicated to Eucharistic miracles. He also deeply loved the Eucharist and Our Lady. He prayed the Rosary and went to Mass every day.

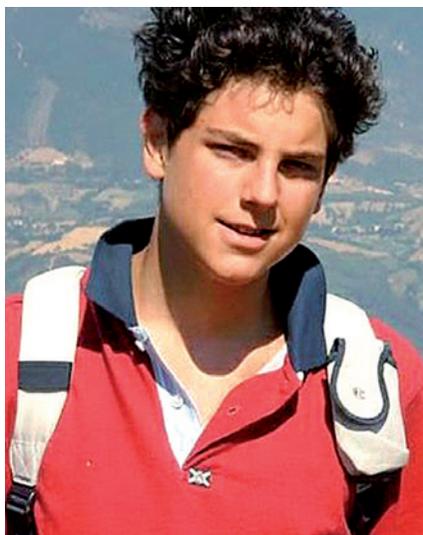
Inspirational Quotes from Bl. Carlo Acutis

“The Eucharist is the highway to heaven.”

“Our soul is like a hot air balloon. If by chance there is a mortal sin, the soul falls to the ground. Confession is like the fire underneath the balloon enabling the soul to rise again... It is important to go to confession often.”

“Continuously ask your guardian angel for help. Your guardian angel has to become your best friend.”

“All people are born as originals but many die as photocopies.”



“I am happy to die because I lived my life without wasting even a minute of it on anything unpleasing to God.”

“The Virgin Mary is the only woman in my life.”

“I offer all the suffering I will have to suffer for the Lord, for the Pope, and the Church.”

“Do not be afraid because with the Incarnation of Jesus, death becomes life, and there’s no need to escape: in eternal life, something extraordinary awaits us.”

“The more Eucharist we receive, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven.”

“When we face the Sun we get a tan... but when we stand before Jesus in the Eucharist we become saints.”

“By standing before the Eucharistic Christ, we become holy.”

Bl. Carlo Acutis, pray for us!

Noreen Bavister, England

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**Details of Churches / shops
and distributors – see subscription
form inside middle of magazine**

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

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.

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.

