



A Catholic Magazine on the Holy Angels | Vol 14 • issue 3 • 2023 | £ 2,50 € 3,00 \$ 7,00 | ISSN 2081-5077

# The Angels

Messengers from a loving God



**Divine Mercy  
as a way of life**

Jesus shows the Father's love

Under one roof with St Michael

Apparitions of the Archangel in Mexico

What is the short exorcism?



# Michael is a name that calls us to seek God



**W**ho is like God! Michael is a name that calls us to seek God above all. St Michael is like a sermon for us. Who is like God! Each time we say the name Saint Michael, we pray and give glory to God. A short, three-word prayer is within the name of St Michael. We have another short three-word prayer 'Jesus, I trust in You' on the image of Divine Mercy.

Angels differ from one another more than we do. Each angel is a separate species. There can be only one angel in each species or form. That is why Saint Michael is distinct from other angels and St Michael's mission ordered by God is unique. He is so special that no other angel can replace him. He is an exceptional defender in spiritual warfare. No one has such power as Saint Michael. Nobody is so equipped by God for these special tasks. It is a great honour for St Michel to fight for God.

Christian tradition recognizes four offices of St Michael: (1) to fight against Satan; (2) to rescue the souls of the faithful from the power of the enemy, especially at the hour of death; (3) to

be the champion of God's people; and (4) to call away from earth and bring people's souls to judgment.

The archangels have a unique role as God's messengers to the people at critical times in history and salvation (Tb 12:6, 15; Jn 5:4; Rv 12:7-9), for example, as in the Annunciation and the Apocalypse. God chose one of the lowest groups of angels to hold the greatest honours, such as announcing the birth of Christ to Mary, of leading his army into battle against Satan.

Pray daily to St Gabriel for consolation, to St Raphael for healing and to St Michael for protection against the snares and wickedness of the Devil.

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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## The Angels

**Messengers from a loving God**

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# Divine Mercy as a way of life (part 1)

## The role of forgiveness, trust and mercy in our lives

Doctor Bryan S. Thatcher, MD, of Tampa, Florida, is a retired medical doctor who travels the world speaking on the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, the message of Divine Mercy and his personal conversion.

He and his wife, Susan, have seven children, aged between nine to thirty-three. In 1996 he founded the Eucharistic Apostles of the Divine Mercy (EADM), now a lay apostolate of the Congregation of Marians of the Immaculate Conception. EADM is now active in thirty-five countries worldwide and received three special Apostolic Blessings from the late Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, for its work. Dr Thatcher has travelled across the United States, Canada, as well as to South America, many countries in Africa, Europe, India, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and the Samoan Islands to speak on God's mercy and the great gift of the Eucharist. He hosted a series, "Cenacle of The Divine Mercy", that aired on EWTN, has done numerous

radio shows across the country and is a frequent speaker at conferences. He is the author of several books on Divine Mercy and the Eucharist. The ministry of Eucharistic Apostles promotes the notion that Divine Mercy is more than a message or devotion, rather it is a "Way of Life".

## Forgiveness

We have the beautiful devotional aspects of the Divine Mercy devotion, such as the Image of Divine Mercy, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and the Feast of Divine Mercy. These aspects serve as great instruments and signs of God's love, but we must let them change our stony hearts to hearts of love and kindness, and we should be a reflection of the Image of Divine Mercy to a hurting world.

When one thinks of Divine Mercy and living the message, the need for trust in God and being merciful to others comes to mind. However, forgiveness is also at the heart of the Divine Mercy message. It is an act of mercy towards others and oneself, and is often a condition for physical healing, but especially a condition for spiritual progress. Just as God forgives our sins, we are to forgive others of their transgressions. "And whenever you stand praying, forgive,

if you have anything against any one; so that your Father also who is in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses" (Mk 11:25).

The need for forgiveness is even more apparent in a society with so many ills; one does not have to look far to see people suffering from the ravages of divorce, violence, addictions, pornography and more. Forgiveness is not an emotion, but a decision. If forgiveness were not possible, God could not command us to forgive. Many people avoid and try not to think about those who have hurt them, and do not deal with the underlying issues and cannot find the healing that they desire. Somehow, many of us believe that we have forgiven if we don't speak negatively of someone, even though deep down we harbour much suppressed anger. This anger comes to the surface in a variety of ways, and effects our relationship with others, even those we love the most. What good does it do to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3 o'clock, and then yell and scream at one's spouse in front of the children at 4 o'clock?

Think about how many times we pray the Our Father: "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." (See Mt 6:12.) We are living in a time of great mercy, and yet cannot receive

the outpouring of God's mercy as long as we have not forgiven those who have offended us. How can we love the God we cannot see, if we cannot love the brother or sister we can see? (See 1 Jn 4:20.) In refusing to forgive our brothers and sisters, our hearts are closed and the hardness of our hearts makes us impervious to the Father's merciful love; but in confessing our sins, our hearts are opened to His grace (see Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2840).

I want to share with you a personal story of how lack of forgiveness is rampant in families. Some time ago, a friend said to me, "It is too bad Jane is going to her death-bed hating her mother!" I knew Jane, and I was shocked at what he was saying. I always saw her as a happily married, elderly woman who attended daily Mass. She loved her faith and did not seem to be a person full of anger and revenge. My friend told me that when Jane was engaged nearly 50 years earlier, her mother made a comment that she should marry someone like her sister's husband, an attorney. After all, Joe was just a common baker and would never be wealthy. This angered Jane so much that she never spoke to her mother again! And when her mother died, the sister and brother-in-law made sure that Jane did not get any inheritance money. This caused a rift between Jane and her sister, and the two did not speak again, even though they lived in the same city. And, yet, carrying all that anger for all those years, Jane was attending Mass and receiving Holy Communion daily. I sometimes wonder, how many more graces would she have received if she had only forgiven her mother

and sister, and sought reconciliation? How many times has God forgiven us?

## God is always there, ready to forgive

The rays in the Image symbolize the Sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation. The great Sacrament of Reconciliation is not to be looked on as a punishment, a time for scolding and flagellation, but rather as a vehicle for great healing. God is always there, ready to forgive. There are no limits to His mercy! Our Lord told St Faustina, "Apostle of My mercy, proclaim to the whole world My unfathomable mercy" (Diary, 1142). His mercy is so great that we will never be able to comprehend it; it is like an ocean that has no bottom. Yet, forgiveness is so difficult after someone has hurt us!

St Faustina wrote, "He who knows how to forgive prepares for himself many graces from God. As often as I look upon the cross, so often will I forgive with all my heart" (Diary, 390). And yet, the pain we all carry from injury can be like an open wound, festering with infection for years. Many of us carry anger and guilt, never resolving the situation internally. We seldom forgive and rarely forget, and yet we pray for God to forgive us as we forgive others. Even if the person who hurt us has no remorse, the one who harbours anger is the one bound in chains. It is by letting go of the anger and asking God for the grace of forgiveness that the chains are broken, thus setting one free. Sometimes it takes the support of a

Christian community to help untie the wrappings that bind us. By forgiving others, we are like Lazarus raised from the dead, alive but still needing help from those around us to unbind us and release the wrappings so we are truly free. And, the support system of a loving group of committed Christians will help keep us on the path of righteousness.

St Faustina wrote, "We resemble God most when we forgive our neighbours" (Diary, 1148). Forgiveness means more than avoiding interaction with those who have hurt us! It may not be wise to try to restore a friendship with someone who has seriously wronged you, lest you expose yourself to further harm or abuse. Even if you have to stay away from the person that hurt you, you still have to let go of anger and forgive. Scripture is clear that as our Heavenly Father loves us, we are to love others. Love is not an emotion, but a decision. "I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5:44). Our "enemies" are rarely those in a foreign land; more commonly, they are family members and co-workers who irritate and frustrate us and cause us much anger. Forgiveness is easier if we can avoid being judgmental. We should not be like the Pharisees, who saw serious faults in others but not in themselves. If only we could be as demanding of ourselves as we are of others! We are all so quick to criticize, condemn, and judge. And yet, how easily we overlook our own serious shortcomings by rationalizing our conduct and defects. "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" (Mt 7:3).





■ St Faustina and Merciful Jesus

[www.faustyna.pl](http://www.faustyna.pl)

Many struggle more with forgiveness of self than with forgiveness of others. Think of the millions of addicts who use drugs, alcohol, sex, a workaholic, overeating, gambling and other outlets and live in a world of isolation, shame and despair. How many of us continually beat up ourselves mentally, almost to the point of exhaustion. We focus on thoughts like “How could I?” and “Why did I do such a thing?” and “What a loser I am!” All the guilt, shame and self-doubt enter our mind, and we become so deeply troubled that we wonder if God could ever forgive such a miserable soul. And later on, the doubts re-enter our minds, and we continue to wonder if Jesus could forgive us for our sins, the same ones

we repeat over and over. For, in spite of our efforts, we fall again and again into the same faults. The God of mercy is ready to forgive and show us mercy. We can find comfort in the words Our Lord spoke to St Faustina, “The greater the sinner, the greater the right he has to My mercy” (Diary, 723). Even souls striving for sanctity stumble and fall. Like the prodigal son, all must come back to the God of Mercy.

Jesus spoke to St Faustina regarding a soul striving after perfection: “You see, My child, what you are of yourself. The cause of your falls is that you rely too much upon yourself and too little on Me. But let this not sadden you so much. You are dealing with the God of mercy,

which your misery cannot exhaust. Remember, I did not allot only a certain number of pardons. And the soul replied, ‘Yes, I know all that, but great temptations assail me, and various doubts awaken within me and, moreover, everything irritates and discourages me.’ And Jesus replied, ‘My child, know that the greatest obstacles to holiness are discouragement and an exaggerated anxiety. These will deprive you of the ability to practice virtue. All temptations united together ought not disturb your inner peace, not even momentarily. Sensitiveness and discouragement are the fruits of self-love. Have confidence, My child. Do not lose heart in coming for pardon, for I am always ready to forgive you. As



often as you beg for it, you glorify My mercy” (Diary, 1488).

Consider the story of St Mary Magdalene. An accomplished sinner, she initially washed, kissed and anointed the feet of Jesus out of contrition, and after his death, out of devotion. In spite of her past sins, she loved Jesus very much and stayed with Mother Mary during the crucifixion (see Jn 19:25). It was not

Peter, or his beloved disciple John, who was the first to the tomb and who announced the Resurrection. No, it was Mary Magdalene! What great hope that should give us!

We all know the story of the Prodigal Son as told in Luke chapter 15, verses 11-32. Each of us faces experiences in life where we have erred and can relate to the sinful son, as well as to our own need for

repentance. Knowing the Father as Love and Mercy can bring us much reassurance, for we know He will never reject our pleas for mercy. During our lifetime, we are sometimes placed in situations where we have to be humble and ask for forgiveness from a friend. Yet, at other times, we are not the repentant one, but more of an innocent bystander. We choose to act like the older



■ Mary Magdalene washing the feet of Christ by Jacob Andries Beschey, 1735

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brother, upset at the attention the younger brother received, especially when the fattened calf is slaughtered and a fine robe placed on him. “I never did anything like that, and no calf was ever slaughtered for me,” we moan. Have you ever looked with disdain on a repentant sinner, suspecting their conversion is a farce, lacking any forgiveness in your heart, and wondering why all the attention has not been directed toward you instead? The jealousy of the older brother is so apparent in today’s society. We should rejoice when a prodigal son returns, whether he or she is a murderer, a pregnant daughter, an alcoholic or an arrogant and pride-filled friend. Finally, there are times in our life where we are called to be like the forgiving father – ready to forgive and embrace those who have hurt us. We know what we need to do, but it is so difficult!

## Forgive those who have hurt us

Forgiveness is an act of the will. It is not a feeling. It does not erase the memories of what happened. But by making the effort to forgive, even if we cannot personally deliver the forgiveness to our neighbour, a slow healing process begins and deep internal wounds begin to heal. We start the long trek on “the long and winding road” to spiritual, psychological and emotional good health. Because we have fallen into sin, we can understand each other’s pain, and our woundedness allows us to be a vehicle and source of healing, an icon of mercy radiating love to

others. Let us strive for that inner peace, for we cannot be at peace if we are angry, anxious or discouraged. Let us open our hearts to the outpouring of Christ’s rays of Merciful Love, for we all want to know Him in a deeper way.

We must forgive those who have hurt us, and even ourselves, because this act opens the door to His Divine Mercy. It makes our stony hearts able to absorb the rays of the Son, that is, the rays of Blood and Water coming from His pierced heart.

## Trust

Trust is the foundation of those who desire to live the message of Divine Mercy. We are to be vessels of mercy, and how much the vessel can hold and radiate out to others depends on trust. Trust requires a conversion of the heart and is the basis of Our Lord’s message. It is written in Ezekiel 36:26, “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.” David wrote in Psalm 62, “For God alone my soul awaits in silence; He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly moved” (Ps 62:1-2). Yet, unfortunately, many of us lack trust in God and release our anger, frustrations, pains and anxieties in harmful ways such as alcoholism, drug abuse, sexual addiction, over-eating or a workaholic. Trust in God requires a relationship with God. Some of us did not have a healthy relationship with our parents, who were supposed to nurture and support us, and as adults we find it difficult to trust.

## Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life

Those with addictions have a pathological trust relationship with an object or event; they rely on alcohol or food or other things to give them peace and happiness. In the Twelve-Step Program, it is recommended that one develop a relationship with a “Higher Power.” However, Christians know that Jesus Christ is that “Higher Power,” for He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. “Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:9-11). Psalm 62 invites us to risk by trusting in God and committing ourselves to His care. Anxiety and trust in God are incompatible; anxiety about anything, especially things that are out of our control, reflects a certain disbelief and lack of trust in God. Many of us spend so much time and effort and energy worrying about what could, might and will happen that we lose track of the moment. We must stay in the present and focus on what we are doing now, and how we stand before the Lord today.

We do not need to worry about tomorrow; we can learn a lesson from the Israelites as the manna they ate in the desert was only good for one day (Ex 16). That is, each day they had to trust that the Lord would provide. Trust requires humility; the proud and successful person feels that his



material wealth and accomplishments come from his own efforts alone. When one is at the pinnacle of the mountain of success, there is little need for trust in God. But trusting in oneself and not the Lord will lead to failure. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight” (Prov 3:5).

## If we trust the more graces we will receive

The Lord made it clear to Saint Faustina that the more we trust in Him and try to live in His will and not ours, the more graces we will receive. He told her, “Tell [all people], My daughter, that I am Love and Mercy itself. When a soul approaches Me with trust, I fill it with such an abundance of graces that it cannot contain them within itself, but radiates them to other souls” (Diary, 1074).

Again, trust in God is easy when things are going well. However, in times of trial and suffering, doubt appears and we wonder, “where is God?” or “does He really exist?” Financial ruin, the sudden death of a loved one, divorce and drug-addicted children are just a few of the painful episodes in life that He can use to draw us nearer to Him. But trust in God is the key; we must let it be the life jacket to hold on to when we feel we are drowning.

Have you ever experienced the illness and eventual death of relatives? Involved loved ones may be very spiritual, yet, when faced with a crisis and trial we immediately forget all

about trust in God and are crippled by the trial. We must remember that these forms of suffering give us an opportunity to trust God and grow spiritually. And if we pray, discern, and believe we are doing His will, then we must ask for fortitude and strength and a deeper trust in Jesus – The Divine Mercy – in time of trial. Think about Job, who lost his family, health and wealth. Through his persistent trial, God never informed him why it was happening. Job didn’t curse God; instead, he marvelled at the wonders of God’s creation and knew that he should trust in the Creator in times of suffering. Just as with Job and his sufferings, trials in daily life – the experience of being diagnosed with cancer, losing a loved one in an accident, being fired from a job – make us realize how vulnerable we are and what little control we actually have. In times of struggle and frustration, we should have the attitude of Peter who said, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at Your word, I will let down the nets.” And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them” (Luke 5:5-7). This attitude obviously requires great faith.

## Our faith is tested in a crisis and trial

However, in times of trial our faith is tested, and that is when we must trust in Him. We must believe the reality that we are merely pilgrims on earth for a short time, and that all these temporary things will pass. As

spiritual warriors, we must “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor 5:7). On another occasion, the Lord told St Faustina, “Let souls who are striving for perfection particularly adore My mercy, because the abundance of graces which I grant them flows from My mercy. I desire that these souls distinguish themselves by boundless trust in My mercy. I myself will tend to the sanctification of such souls. I will provide them with everything they will need to obtain sanctity. The graces of My mercy are drawn by means of one vessel only and that is trust. The more a soul trusts, the more it will receive. Souls that trust boundlessly are a great comfort to Me, because I pour out all the treasures of My graces into them. I rejoice that they ask for much, because it is My desire to give much, very much. On the other hand, I am sad when souls ask for little, when they narrow their hearts” (Diary, 1578).

## A personal example of trust

Reading about trust and living it are two different matters. Many times in my life, even on a daily basis, I have not trusted in God. However, I would like to share with you a personal experience as I reflect back on and thank God for the grace of trusting in Him and His Divine Mercy. The day started out as a normal day in late 1996. Four years prior to that, I had hit my own personal “bottom,” and was in much need of healing. Our son John Paul was born on Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1995 and was a sign of healing and God’s love. Ever since John Paul was born, he had been a source of great



joy to both my wife and me. He always had a smile on his face, and was such a happy child. This was probably the case because my wife and I were at peace ourselves. I had returned from an exhausting trip to a conference in Denver the night before and was very tired. The following night we were having a Mass in the home, and my wife was also watching two foster children for a friend. While getting the home ready for the Mass, I stepped out on our back patio. I opened the gate to the swimming pool, and walked out to the backyard. While in the backyard, my son yelled for me to come in the front of the home to start the mower. I forgot that I had left the pool gate open. I then walked into the house, and my oldest daughter said, "Dad, it is time to get ready for swim practice." I forgot about leaving the pool gate open and took my daughter to swim practice.

Fifteen minutes later I received a call from my frantic 10-year-old son who said that John Paul was dead. He said that someone had left the pool gate open, and that he was blue and not breathing. His mom had already started CPR, and I told him to call 911 and that I was on my way and would be home in 10 to 15 minutes. On the drive home, I began praying with all my heart and asking Jesus to have mercy on John Paul and me. I realized that I had left the pool gate open, and asked Jesus why He would take John Paul from us at this time. He had been such a source of great joy, and was a sign of a healed marriage. He gave hope to many friends and other families that God's love can carry people through the greatest depths of sorrow.

On the way home, as I was praying to Jesus, Our Lady, and invoking

all the saints, I realized that at this moment I needed trust. I had been telling others about Divine Mercy and the need for trust for several years, and now the time had come for me to live what I had been telling others. As we came to a major intersection, we were stopped by a red light. While praying and imploring God's mercy, the Scriptural passage of Abraham being tested by God (Gen 22) came to my mind.

## I had to put my trust in God

I told God that I did not understand why He would take John Paul from us at this time, but that I had to trust in Him. I offered John Paul back to him and thanked him for the time He had given him to us, and told Jesus that I had trust in Him and wanted only that His will be done. I felt much at peace after doing this, and yet drove home all the faster to see what I would find. When I arrived home the emergency squad had just arrived, and paramedics were working on John Paul and loading him into the ambulance. He was semi-comatose, very sluggish, and unresponsive. Upon arriving at the hospital, I called my sister who lives three hours away, and told her to pray for John Paul that night at her prayer group.

Over the next several hours, John Paul's mental clarity improved slowly, and by the following morning he was out of danger and released later that day. I saw my sister four weeks later as she drove up to join our family for Thanksgiving. She said to me, "I never told you this story, but the

morning following prayer group, a friend called and said that she knew John Paul was going to recover. While praying in the morning, she saw a vision of Abraham offering Isaac back to God the Father, and Jesus, the Divine Mercy, stepped in the middle and gave him back." Tears began coming down my cheeks and I said to her, "Well, let me tell you the rest of the story!" Even if John Paul had not survived his near-drowning episode, I felt that I had placed my trust in God in a difficult time. Certainly at times I stumble and fall, but I look on this as a time of trial and one in which I had been faithful to Our Lord.

## A radiating beam of peace

At this time, John Paul is totally normal and now a 27-year-old man. Yet in other ways, he is atypical – he almost always has a smile upon his face and loves to play and laugh. He has a radiating beam of peace and happiness that can melt a heart instantly. The episode gave me a deeper appreciation for the gift of life, and I better recognize the fragility of life and the fact that God does not promise us tomorrow. I try to take things more on a day-to-day basis, realizing that God is in control. The lesson I learned from all this was to trust in God in all situations. The outcome may not be what we want, but God has a better plan and we all should pray for the grace to accept His will.

**Dr Bryan Thatcher**

Director of Eucharistic Apostles  
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# Jesus shows us the love of the Father

## A biblical meditation

When Jesus of Nazareth first appeared on the public scene, he was about 30 years old. He came to the river to be baptized by the prophet John, who wore camel's hair clothing, and lived in the desert on locusts and wild honey. John was clearly cut from the same cloth as some of the Old Testament prophets: he called the Israelites to give up their sinful ways, repent and gain a fresh start by being baptized in the river Jordan. Jesus came to the Jordan one day himself, but instead of humbly confessing his sins (for he had none to confess), he had a unique experience at his baptism. He felt the nearness of God his Father, and a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit like the gentle descent of a dove. Then he heard a voice saying to him, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased" (Lk 3:21-22). Here God made clear and explicit what Jesus had already experienced in the depths of his heart all his life (Lk 2:49): that God alone was his true Father, and he alone, in a special and unique way, was his "Son."

As a result, the central goal of his life, the main purpose of his mission, Jesus said, was "to do the will of [the Father] who sent me, and to accomplish his work" (Jn 4:34), "that the Father may be glorified in the Son"

(Jn 14:13). Indeed, his whole ministry in Galilee and Judea – proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, healing the sick, casting out demons, raising the dead – all flowed from the Father's love: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love" (Jn 15:9). As Jesus was dying on the Cross, his greatest agony was to feel as if he had been abandoned by his Father (Mk 15:34). And at the very last moment of his life, Jesus entrusted everything into his Father's loving providence with the words: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Lk 23:46).

In short, the gospels show that Jesus truly saw himself as "*the* Son of God," not just as "*a* son of God": totally beloved of his heavenly Father and totally devoted to him, from the beginning to the end of his life and ministry.

What does this title really mean, "the Son of God"? On the one hand, in the Psalms that title referred to the kings of Israel (e.g. Ps 2:6-9), and by prophetic extension, it might apply also to the Messiah, the true Son of David anointed by the Spirit, who would one day reign as king over all of God's people. Strangely enough, however, according to the gospels Jesus only rarely spoke of himself in those terms (that is, as "Messiah" and "Son of David": see for example, Mt 16: 16-17, 21:6-9; Lk 18:35-43,

19:37-40; Jn 4:25-26) – as if to do so might lead his followers to miss the deepest truth about himself.

## The mystery of our heavenly Father and His only Son

Here is a mystery in the story of Jesus that we come across in the gospels again and again.

On the one hand, Jesus invited the people of Israel to come to know God as their loving Father. For them God had always been *Adonai*, "the Lord" (a title used in place of God's ineffable name *Yahweh* from Ex 3:14); God was also their Creator, Redeemer, Bridegroom, Husband, Shepherd, and heavenly King. But now Jesus taught them to address God in prayer in a new, more intimate way, a way that only rarely occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, namely, as their own Father: "Our Father, who art in heaven" (Mt 6:9). Fountain of life and source of all created beauty, God the Father is the one who clothes the lilies of the field and feeds the birds of the air, Jesus said (Mt 6:25-34). He is the holy and infinite Father who calls all people into one family, so that they might live and pray together as children of one God (Lk 11:2-4; Jn





■ The Baptism of Christ by Pietro Perugino, circa 1482

11:52). Jesus also taught that God is a wise and compassionate Father who “knows what you need before you ask” (Mt 6:8), and provides generously for those who seek first to live righteously, for the sake of his Kingdom (6:31-33). If an earthly father knows how to give good gifts to his children, Jesus said, “How much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him?” (Mt 7:11). He knows the inmost hearts of his sons and daughters, and judges them according to whether or not they do his righteous will (Mt 7:21), yet he seeks out his wayward children with an offer of forgiveness, just like the father of the prodigal son in Jesus’ parable. When his penitent son was coming home, but still a long way off, that father “had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him” (Lk 15:20). (The phrase translated as “had compassion” here is the Greek phrase *splagna eleos*, which literally means he “had mercy arising from his guts”!). This is the amazing love of our heavenly Father that Jesus invited all of us to come to know and to experience personally.

Father Jean Galot, S.J., once wrote: “In thus imparting the Father and his love to us, Jesus gives us the very substance of his heart. The goal of his earthly existence is to make *his Father our Father*” (*The Heart of Christ*. Newman Press, 1955, p.33).

At the same time, we can only do so fully and completely through Jesus himself, our Lord said, because our Father in heaven is actually Jesus’ own Father in a unique way: “No one knows the Father except the Son, and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Mt 11:27; Lk 10:22).

This brings us to the deepest truth about our Lord’s identity, a truth that Jesus only rarely unveiled when he spoke to the crowds, although it was manifest clearly at important moments of his life (such as the Transfiguration; see, for example: Mt 12:5, 21:37, 22:45, 24:36; Mk 9:7, 12:6, 12:37, 13:32; Lk 9:35, 20:13, 20:44; Jn 8:58, 10:30). It was a secret he shared in-depth with his disciples, however, and revealed most clearly to them on the night of his arrest, when he prayed for them to his Father: “This is

eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, glorify me in your own presence *with the glory which I had with you before the world was made*” (Jn 17:-3-5). Later, after his death, resurrection and ascension, when his disciples wrote their gospel accounts, Matthew and Luke proclaim right from the start of their gospels the truth about who Jesus was all along. The Christ child was “*Emmanuel... God with us*” (Mt 1:23), “therefore the child to be born will be ... *the Son of God*” (Lk 1:35). And St John sums up the truth about Jesus as the divine Son incarnate in the prologue to his own gospel: “And the [divine] Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; *we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten Son from the Father*” (Jn 1:14).

Jesus is the divine Son in human flesh. That’s why he responded to the apostle Philip’s agonized question, “Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied,” with the words: “Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? *He who has seen me, has seen the Father*” (Jn 14:8-9). In other words: If you want to see and know what God our Father is like, you have only to contemplate the light of the Father’s love shining through Jesus himself, his only and beloved Son in human flesh. Father Galot wrote: “Christ offers men a perfect image of the goodness of the Father in his own goodness. Indeed, his Incarnation has for its aim to make known to men this fundamental truth: the love of the Father” (*The Heart of Christ*, p. 32).

The Father's compassionate love is manifest in Jesus' parables (again, most especially the story of the Prodigal Son, Lk 15: 11-32); the Father's radiant love is revealed in Christ's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, when our Lord shines with divine glory (Lk 9:32-35); and the Father's merciful love reaches out to embrace the whole sinful and broken world through his Son on the Cross, when Jesus prays to him: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34). In short, Jesus is the living icon of the love of God the Father, the human face of the Father's merciful love for each and every one of us.

## At the heart of the Gospel message

This is what makes the revelation of the love of the Father the core of the Good News that Jesus both preached and lived.

When our hearts are broken and wounded by grief and suffering, Jesus calls us to entrust ourselves and all our loved ones to our heavenly Father, who cares for all his creatures: "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. ... Fear not, you are worth more than many sparrows" (Lk 12:6-7).

If you are unemployed, or weighed down by debt, or just worried and anxious about how you can possibly continue to provide for your family and keep them out of poverty, Jesus invites all of us, without exception, to entrust to our Father even our most basic, earthly needs: "And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be of anxious mind. For all the nations of the world seek

these things; and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things shall be yours as well" (Lk 12: 29-31).

If you are tired out from a shallow, dissipated life – caught in the rat-race of busy-ness and complexity forced upon us by the modern world; fretting and panting and rushing about – then, Jesus calls us to take the higher road, trusting in our Father's wise providence in this life, and centring our hearts on heaven, the only place where ultimate peace of heart and true joy may be found: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide for yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Lk 12: 32-34).

If you have been seeking what Jesus promised to us even for this present life – a deep peace of heart which "passes all understanding" (as St Paul put it; Phil 4:7; cf. Jn 14:27) – then even in his youth Jesus showed us where to find it. Father Galot wrote: "Does he not abandon his parents at the age of twelve in order to remain in his Father's house, the temple? Jesus is filled with joy because he is aware of the divine presence. His Father is there; with him there is complete contentment. When he enters the building he finds himself, as it were, again in heaven. He lifts his face and his heart to the Father and lets them share in that devotion which has existed from all eternity. In allowing his eyes to be filled with the sight of the Father, he feels that he is himself once more: 'Could you

not tell that I must be in the place that belongs to my Father?'" [Lk 2:49] (*The Heart of Christ*, p. 21-22).

If this is the peace and spiritual refreshment one could find in the Jewish Temple long ago, how much more can Catholics today find an oasis of peace, a spring of living water from the Holy Spirit, in the quiet of almost any Catholic church anywhere in the world, in the nearer presence of the Son of God in the tabernacle, the living sacrament for us of the Father's love.

Finally, if you have been deeply hurt by your loved ones – perhaps the hardest cross of all to carry – by your mother or father, your husband or wife, your son or your daughter, your brother or your sister, then Jesus teaches us to remember the universal love of the Father, who makes His sun shine on the good and bad alike, his rain fall equally on the just and unjust (Mt 5:45). By continually reaching out to sinful souls with undeserved blessings to the end of their days, our merciful Father seeks to draw them out of the dark prison of their self-centeredness, and into the marvellous light of his love and forgiveness, before it is too late (Mt 25:30). Hatred and bitterness only serves to imprison our souls in that very same darkness. Instead, set yourself free (in a way that may help set free the ones who wounded you as well): "Be merciful, as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).

## To be a child of the Father

How can we learn to walk like this, day by day, in the light of the Father's love? Jesus tells us clearly: "I thank



you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ... Truly I say to you, unless you become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 11:25-26; 18:3).

To be precise, the original Greek version of the passages quoted above, speak not just of the need to become as "children" of God, but as "little children". This was the great secret of "the Little Way" of spiritual childhood taught by St Therese of Lisieux, "The Little Flower"; the way of trust and absolute surrender. In his book *Spiritual Childhood*, Fr Vernon Johnson explains: " 'Unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven'... Our Lord did not merely say that she must be converted and become a child; He said she must become a *little* child. Now a child can have to a certain extent an independent life of its own, calling upon its parent only in moments of need. A *little* child cannot do this: it has no life of its own; it is completely dependent on its parent and so lives with perfect serenity and trust within that parent's protection. For St Therese the word "little," which many would like to eliminate from her teaching, is the key to everything. She has made the Fatherhood of God live afresh for thousands of the faithful by calling us back from being children with a more or less independent life of our own, to become, as Our Lord would have us, *little* children, with no independent life at all, but depending absolutely on our heavenly Father. In so calling us to a fresh realization of the

fatherhood of God, she enables us to move through life with serenity and confidence which is the prerogative of the childlike soul, for she makes known to us one of those secrets which God hides from the wise and prudent, and reveals only to little ones" (*Spiritual Childhood*. Ignatius Press edition, 2001, p. 10-11).

Thus, in one sense, as followers of Christ we do not need to "grow up", but to "grow down": St Therese taught that to know the Father's love we need to keep ourselves little, and become even more little as time goes by, entrusting ourselves more and more into our Father's care. On one occasion she was asked: "What do you mean by keeping little?" And she replied: "When we keep little we recognize our own nothingness, and expect everything from God, just as a little child expects everything from its father. Nothing worries us." In the same way, the secret of experiencing the Father's love is to entrust all our cares and worries, all our sorrows and joys to his wise providence, and let him use them all for the accomplishment of his good purposes – for his glory and for our salvation. When we do that, we place ourselves in the Father's arms, the safest place of all to be, and give him free reign to work in us and through us, as disciples of Jesus Christ, all that he wants to accomplish for his kingdom. We experience (perhaps for the first time!) what it is like to be the beloved sons and daughters of our heavenly Father, abiding in the heart of Christ his Son.

Father Galot sums up for us the love of the Father, offered to us through Jesus, and why it remains forever the heart of the gospel: "The heart of Christ is the perfect image



of the heart of the Father in all that makes it sublime and heroic, gentle and loving. We are sometimes inclined to believe that Jesus loves mankind with greater warmth and feeling than does the Father, who prefers to remain aloof. ... [But] it is the Father who constantly pours forth his goodness in Christ. There is nothing in the love of Jesus for mankind which does not derive immediately from the love of his heavenly Father. No discovery can be more thrilling than that of the heart of the Father in the heart of Christ" (*The Heart of Christ*, p. 295).

**Robert Stackpole, STD**

Director of the John Paul II

Institute of Divine Mercy,

an apostolate of the Congregation

of Marian Fathers

of the Immaculate Conception

# Under one roof with St Michael

**The most extraordinary place on earth; here where angels descend upon you and enter the lives of those who visit Mount Gargano.**

**T**he Sanctuary of St Michael the Archangel is a Roman Catholic shrine on Mount Gargano, part of the commune of Monte Sant'Angelo, Italy.

It is worth travelling hundreds and thousands of kilometres to be in this sacred location: the Grotto of St Michael the Archangel, Monte Sant'Angelo, Italy.

I have recently turned 60. By God's Providence, I have been to many sanctuaries in the world, but there is no place like the one at Gargano, Italy.

## St Michael is waiting for you

It is called the Heavenly Basilica. Pilgrims arrive and usually do not want to leave, they desire to return here time and time again. Because here is someone who loves us, who waits for us, who invites us. It is St Michael the Archangel, the custodian of the location chosen by God Himself.

God is everywhere. We pray to Him on the bus, in the car, at home. Yet He chooses certain places where

He allows Himself to be felt more, where people experience His love and grace. He is here. God has chosen this place to be His home and ordered St Michael to guard it.

When we look into the history of the apparitions in this place, it needs to be re-read, because it is not just a story.

Unprecedented things have happened here. Once a bull knelt at the entry to the grotto, (the first apparition, known as *the bull episode*, dated AD 490). If this event was to happen today, all the television stations would be reporting on it.

## In these times St Michael's promises are still valid

A rich lord went in search of a bull from his herd, lost in the Gargano area; at last he found it on the top of the mountain kneeling down at the opening of a cave. Filled with anger, he shot an arrow against the rebellious animal, but instead of hitting the bull the arrow unaccountably wounded the foot of the wealthy man.



■ The main entrance to the Shrine of St Michael in Monte Sant'Angelo, Italy

Upset by the event, he went to see the bishop who, after listening to the account of the extraordinary adventure, ordered three days of prayers and penance. As the third day ended, St Michael appeared to the bishop and spoke to him: *"I am the Archangel Michael and I am always in the presence of God. The cavern is sacred to me, I have chosen it; I myself am its watchful custodian... There where the rock opens wide the sins of men can be forgiven... What is asked here in prayer will be granted. Therefore, go to the mountain and dedicate the grotto to the Christian religion"*.

It is the very place St Michael appeared and spoke to the people. His promises are still applicable to our times because he is faithful to his word.

## He poured hope and courage into hearts

The second apparition, known as *the victory episode*, is linked to a memorable victory of the town of Siponto against the enemy troops. The situation was hopeless. Defenders turned to St Michael for help and he intervened. He poured hope and courage into the



hearts of the defenders. Unusual phenomena appeared in the sky and the enemies fled in terror. A complete victory took place on 8<sup>th</sup> May and the Longobards attributed it to the intercession and help of the archangel.

What seemed to be impossible from human perspective became reality. We all face many situations in life that seem unsolvable. In our homes, at work, on the streets we have various difficult situations. One of the most tragic thing is the loss of faith. There are people who have lost their faith or left it on their own. A great treasure of spiritual heritage has been thrown away and now they have lost their spiritual eyes, through which they can admire God and the beautiful spiritual world.

## Eternal sermon

This spiritual part in our heart cannot be filled by anything else - neither success, wealth, fame, pleasures, nor even friends. Our heart cries out for God: "God, you are my God, I pine for you; my heart thirsts for you, my body longs for you, as a land parched, dreary and waterless" (Psalm 63:1). And here in this grotto one eternal sermon takes place, reverberating along the rock walls: 'Who like God!' These words are uttered by St Michael with his whole being: Mi-cha-el. Every cry of "Michael" is a praise of God. People's hearts yearn and seek something more than the material world. The sooner we become aware of this, the greater and quicker our happiness.

The third apparition, also called *the Dedication episode*, is linked to the beginning of the cult on the Gargano when all the Apulian bishops went in procession to the holy grotto and

they found that a primitive altar had already been erected, as announced by the archangel to Lawrence Maiorano; moreover, according to the legend, they found St Michael's footprint in the rock. Its size resembles that of a child; it is now incorporated into the plinth on which the statue of St Michael stands.

Why a child's size? A child reminds us of simplicity, of innocence, of zeal, of gazing into the mystery with an open mind. A child knows how to rejoice in little things. We need to have something of the child in us.

## Stones are the power of grace

During the pandemic in 2020 a lot of people wrote to us asking for St Michael's stones. We sent the white stones housed in delicate reliquaries, explaining that they are not amulets or magical objects but sacramentals. Today the pandemic is defeated, probably with the help of St Michael. I firmly believe that St Michael has saved the lives of many, has brought good immunity to their bodies, but has also helped the dying to be reconciled with God.

The stones also speak of the power of grace. We distribute them throughout the world, and sometimes due to the huge demand we have to wait ourselves to receive them, which means that the action of St Michael is still alive and present in the world. St Michael has promised graces provided we pray through his intercession.

Although the world of angels, including St Michael, is a great mystery, they allow us to immerse ourselves in this mystery. When St Michael

comes, he always comes in the authority of God. He is special, unique. There is no other like him, a champion of justice, a healer of the sick, patron of the military and police forces, St Michael is a fierce warrior and defender of the children of God and the guardian of the Church. His very expressive angelic personality influences others.

He attracted the angels during the rebellion against God. His example of zeal delighted the entire world of heavenly spirits.

## Where St Michael is, there is the Holy Spirit

St Michael is the breath of the Holy Spirit. Where St Michael is, there is the Holy Spirit. Let us allow ourselves to be permeated, to breathe in the Holy Spirit. To meet St Michael is a great life adventure. It's not like a quick visit to McDonald's, if you want to get to know someone, you have to stay with them, establish a relationship. It takes time and engagement.

On the third apparition St Michael prepared an altar inviting people for the Holy Mass. He leads us deeper into the encounter with Jesus Christ who did not become an angel but a human being in order to give us his body in the form of bread to feed us with it.

St Michael, thank you for being with us. Grant us the graces we need. Work in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. We count on you. Amen.

Fr **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA  
Homily at Shrine of St Michael,  
Mont Sant'Angelo, Italy,  
18 Feb 2023

# Scapular of St Michael is my spiritual shield

An interview with Paulette, a woman who is a police officer in Poland.



■ Paulette presents the Scapular of St Michael

**We are at the Shrine of St Michael the Archangel in Monte Sant'Angelo, Italy with 97 pilgrims from Denmark, Norway, U.K and Paulette Porada who came with a group from Poland. What has brought you here Paulette?**

Recently friends of mine went on a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St Michael. On their return they shared their testimony and I felt St Michael

was personally inviting me to go there. It is my first visit and I am one hundred percent positive this will not be my last time in Monte Sant'Angelo.

**Had you heard of St Michael before?**

Previously I had not prayed to St Michael but since my conversion around two years ago I have got to

know him more and more. Friends and family have seen the change within me. Now my parents, my sister and her children pray to St Michael along with me.

**When you pray to St Michael, what do you ask for?**

Mainly I pray that St Michael will help to find me a good husband (laughs). I have also come here to pray for my whole family, for the grace of total conversion for all of my relatives. I pray especially for the hatred and the gossip to stop within my family and my work colleagues.

**How did your conversion start?**

There was no sudden life-changing moment in my life. I had just ended a relationship and started to evaluate and analyse my life and the choices I had made. It was around the 8th of September, Our Lady's birthday, that I prayed the Novena to our Lady of Pompeii.

I believe it was through Our Lady who helped and guided me on my conversion journey. Our Lady still takes care of me, whenever I put my trust in Mary, and she helps to change my life in an instant, just like



the speed of light. Through Mary I see God as my true, heavenly Father.

It's so wonderful to know how God takes care of me and protects me. I feel that He treats me as His cherished, a beloved daughter. Each day I praise Him for every second of my life, in every situation and through the good and bad moments, through the tough conversations, and the difficult people I am required to deal with. When situations are really problematic I try to pray, "Father, if this is Your will, fine, I will bear it, but please remember that You're going to have a crying child."

### **The change must have been seen by your work colleagues. How did they react?**

I pinned pictures of the Black Madonna, St Joseph and the Merciful Jesus on a corkboard by my desk. At first, people stared at the pictures not knowing what to say. Some of them made comments, some said nothing. After a while everyone at work just got used to it. Not every police officer believes in God and I just need to remember that fact. Today they see a change in me and there is less and less judging and whispering when I am around. I pray that one day they will receive God's grace and healing, like myself.

### **Could you tell us more about your job?**

I now work in the logistics department. However, when I was working on the streets, it was a challenge because each day I was exposed to immoral situations, often childish and irresponsible behaviours among adults that were often drunk, full

of rage and under the influence of drugs.

I really believe it was God's plan to have me employed as a police officer. I started my job on 29th of September, the feast day of the Three Archangels. For the last fifteen years working in the police force I can clearly see I would have never managed to deal with so many difficult situations but for St Michael's help and intervention.

### **Do you think police officers need St Michael?**

Yes, of course. It is a difficult job. My spiritual shield is the scapular of St Michael, I wear it every day. We never know who the suspect is, or how they are going to react or behave. Will they be calm or start attacking us? Each situation is potentially dangerous and unpredictable. That is why all police officers need so much prayer and Divine protection. We are often in the front line of crimes and violence where human life and health often means little. So please pray for all police officers throughout the world.

Wearing the blessed Scapular of St Michael I often pray for the Archangel for his intercession for strength, and guidance. If I cannot solve a given problem on my own, I ask him for help. I really feel his presence and protection over me. I also believe he grants me a lot of patience and a grace not to judge a book by its cover.

### **What do you mean?**

Well, when you deal with suspects, one should always be competent and professional. We shouldn't judge

someone or something based only on what you see on the outside or only on what you perceive without knowing the full situation. These days I try not to be judgemental because of how a person looks, their behaviour or their criminal records.

I learnt to pray for each and every one I come into contact with instead of having critical thoughts. I am sure that if we pray for these individuals, Jesus will eventually direct them onto the right path.

I had a funny life lesson on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje. There was a man covered in tattoos all over most of his body. I thought, "Sweet Jesus, is that gangster coming with us?!" In the days that followed on my pilgrimage I had many conversations with this man and did not even notice his tattoos. Instead Our Lady showed me his heart full of love and compassion.

### **How do you see God in people with criminal records?**

This may be really hard even for us who have faith and belief in God. What helps me is the thought that we are all children of one God who loves us with the same amount of love. God is present in each person, even in criminals but He is deeply hidden due to their behaviour. God's grace will touch them sooner or later.

There is no one like God. He is everything, He is love and gives life. Discovering God and seeing him in little things makes me feel irresistible joy.

**Paulette Porada** a police officer,  
was interviewed  
by Fr **Peter Prusakiewicz** CSMA



■ St Michael and the Angels at war with the Devil by Domenico Ghirlandaio, 1448

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# What is the short exorcism prayer of Leo XIII?

**There have already been many scientific and historical studies on the subject of the short exorcism prayer, which was composed by Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903). Today we observe a growing interest in the content of this prayer.**

**I**n many dioceses, the custom of reciting 'St Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle...' after Pope Leo XIII prayer after Mass has been restored. In September 2018, the Holy Father asked that the recitation of the Holy Rosary during the month of October conclude with the prayer written by Leo XIII, in connection with the crisis that the Church was experiencing over clerical sexual

abuse. Exorcism is known to a wide range of believers and in many testimonies its effectiveness and sense have been referred to. By analysing the successive phrases of the text of this prayer, I would like to discover its spiritual meaning and touch on the reality that is behind it.

Only in this way will we arrive at the essence of this prayer, which aims to strengthen us all in good and to protect him from evil.

## St Michael the Archangel

The prayer of exorcism begins with the invocation of the person of the holy angel, who is known in tradition and biblical literature. The *Book of Daniel*, the *Letter of Jude* and the *Apocalypse of Saint John* come to mind in particular.



In all these texts, Michael the Archangel is shown as a warrior who defends the sanctity and orthodox worship of God. The essence of the mission is hidden in his name. It refers to the basic truth that tells us to be guided in life by the principle: *Nothing above God*. The invocation of St Michael's help is an entrance into the spiritual world, where heavenly beings carry out their service. Invoking the spiritual presence of angels intensifies God's action in the world. The faith-filled cry raised to heaven does not go unanswered. Especially that Michael the Archangel is chosen by God in a special way to fight against evil.

By beginning the prayer with the name of the Prince of Heaven, we express our trust in the existence of the supernatural world and our conviction that God will not remain unanswered. The figure of the archangel directs our thoughts to God, who is the source of goodness and holiness. At the same time, it takes us into the space of angels, where constant adoration of God's face continues. Thanks to this, the first words of exorcism make present what is rejected in the world and at the same time hated by the evil spirit.

## Support us in the fight

Another part of the exorcism is an expression of faith in the fact that there is a constant struggle for our salvation. The founder of the Michaelites, Blessed Bronisław Markiewicz, called this fight *a bloodless battle*. This is a reference to the words of St Paul, who wrote about the fight against *spiritual elements*. Thus, we are dealing

with a confrontation of certain forces that are not visible to the naked eye. However, the effects of this struggle are being felt by us. First of all, this struggle takes place in the conscience of every human being. In this inner sanctuary there is a spiritual tension that urges us to do good and warns against evil. The help of St Michael the Archangel seems necessary here.

In fact, sometimes there is a situation when we weaken spiritually and even kill our own conscience. Then we experience spiritual schizophrenia, we call evil good and good evil. The spiritual battle we engage in is to be fought *with fear and trembling*, for our salvation depends on it. To downplay this matter is to encourage us to invite the evil one into our lives.

## We can count on God's help and angelic intervention

For there is nothing more deplorable than Christian lukewarmness. Christ said "So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth", (Revelation 3:16). A bloodless battle is the reality of everyday life, the basic choices we face. Fortunately, humanity is not alone in this fight, but can count on God's help and angelic intervention.

St Raphael's name means "God heals". This identity came about because of the biblical story that claims he "healed" the earth when it was defiled by the sins of the fallen angels in the apocryphal book of Enoch.

In the Old Testament, Tobit tells the beautiful story of the healing power of St Raphael the Archangel. Tobit was a righteous and faithful man of God who lost his sight in later years. As in every battle, we also need someone to heal our wounds and give us a remedy for our spiritual illnesses.

## Pride is the driving force of the evil one

The wickedness of the evil one was manifested even before humanity appeared on earth. It was then that Satan rebelled against God and chose pride as the source of its driving force. Lucifer's wickedness was evil against good, he and his angels fought against God and were cast out of heaven. Since Lucifer was a highly intelligent creature with an intimate knowledge of God who had a superabundance of spiritual gifts, was also endowed, as we are, with the gift of free will. God left him free to choose good over evil, and, as we know, turned away from the Creator and declared a deadly war on Him.

Today, Satan's wickedness is manifested chiefly in a great aversion to the divine. Pride has driven Satan to hatred and contempt. It is written in Genesis 1:27 'God created man in his own image'; meaning that the human race was granted a particular likeness to God. This implies that humans have a unique relationship with God and are to reflect His character in their lives.

Man, as the image of God, is on the front line between God's love and Satan's pride. Satan's desire is to draw as many people as possible away from

God and appropriate them. To this end, he uses certain ambushes that he sets for people.

We are talking primarily about the lie he uses. Christ Himself called him the *father of lies* (John 8:44). He comes to society as a false friend. God gives him a choice, invoking his freedom. However, what would be beneficial becomes a trap for the individual and ultimately enslaves the person. But then the evil spirit reveals its true face and changes from a friend into an accuser. It makes a person feel powerless and doubtful of God's mercy. He seduces with more promises that ultimately bring only temporary comfort. Such a person's condition deteriorates, and he eventually forgets God, and his thought is focused only on sin. Whoever falls into this trap needs immediate help and defence.

## The essence of the Pope Leo XIII prayer

Only in this way will we arrive at the essence of this prayer, which aims to strengthen men and women in good and to protect them from evil.

The image of the warrior does not refer only to Saint Michael the Archangel. In the Old Testament, God too appears as a soldier defending believers. Thanks to this, the fight we are fighting makes sense. For we do not win with our own power, but with the presence of God in our lives. Then the words are realized: *If God is for us, who can be against us?* Christian life is connected with the expectation of an event that will ultimately destroy evil (both personal and metaphysical).

We await a new creature that will be free from the curse that came upon it after the sin of the angels and the first humans. In this the wisdom and power of God are revealed, who does not abandon man and woman, but with iron consistency realizes his salvific plan. With such a God, we can sleep peacefully. We should not dramatise and doubt, but live honestly in this world, do everything for the greater glory of God.

Satan looks in horror at God. He knows that it is from there that the final defeat will come upon him. There is no turning back from it, because evil itself is weak. He sinks into his own iniquity and cannot measure himself against God's love and mercy.

## We humbly ask

Agatha Christie in one of her detective stories put the following words into the mouth of her hero: *"It is said that humility is a Christian virtue, now I understand why. Humility allows us to preserve reason and humanity."* Without humility, man rubs his mind and, what is worse, he may even cease to be human. We are aware of our place and our position in the world in relation to God. Humility seems to flow naturally from the human situation. It is not something belittling. On the contrary, thanks to it we are really ourselves. It was thanks to humility that Mary accepted the word and became a symbol of victory over evil. Only in humility are we able to accept the fruits of redemption. We stop believing in our own strength and start trusting God.

A humble request is an expression of love that a person can

address to God and that he is prepared to fight against the pride that Satan proposes. The evil spirit hates humility. The most powerful weapon to conquer the devil is humility. For, as he does not know at all how to employ it, neither does he know how to defend himself from it and becomes powerless against it. Because what seems to be weakness perfects us in power.

## They circulate to the destruction of human souls

Satan's desire is the death of all humanity. It is not even a physical death, but a spiritual death. *Spiritual murder* is to drive humankind to hell, where Satan is the master. He thus creates his kingdom, where evil reigns. Humanity becomes a slave and, cut off from God, cries out in his despair. This "circulation" also suggests that evil is not a passive observer of reality, but makes an effort to attract people to itself. Those who see wickedness as more than just a manifestation of human weakness are right. We live in a world of evil at work. Through systems, ideologies and deception, evil poisons the world. Many people who are tired of spiritual struggle succumb to this poison. They distance themselves from God and eventually adopt the lifestyle of the evil one. They stop believing in God and at the same time begin to trust themselves. Under the guise of humanism, they take care of themselves, despise others, and at the same time curse God.



## By the power of God, cast down to hell. Amen

The last phrase of the prayer is a summary of the whole. The end of the spiritual battle is obvious. Evil is defeated, the choice has been made. Hell groans in anguish, and the power of God is manifested in the world. The awareness of choice and purpose should make us reflect and take concrete actions.

Of course, we choose between good and evil, but in the end we choose between victory (heaven) and defeat (hell). It is perhaps worth paying attention to the fact that the call from our exorcism directs our thoughts to the next archangel. Gabriel ("The Power of God") is the herald of the Good News – the Angel of the Incarnation.

It is through Archangel Gabriel that the glory of God comes into the world, which like a shadow covers those who trust in the Lord. For God willingly shares His power when He is certain that it will be used for good. Thanks to it, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the blind see and the dead are resurrected.

May we be able to see the signs of God's power in our lives, and then the exorcism prayer of Pope Leo XIII will become for us a very personal prayer and an expression of concern for our own salvation. It is something greater than it may seem at first.

Fr **Matthew Szerszeń** CSMA



www.michalici.pl

# He who loves, trusts

## Looking into the raspberry garden of the Michaelite founder.

A group of young people – very young people are walking in front of me down the street. Every now and then you can hear laughter, or rather horse neighing. Sometimes a more piquant expression reaches my ears. They behave very freely, as if there is no one else besides them. A woman passing by, carrying heavy packages, turns her head and, looking behind the group moving away with a look that would cut a fly in flight, says: "This youth of today! Hooligans!"

Youth – this problem is constantly present not only in history, but also in our everyday life. After

all, we meet them, we live under the same roof. They are very different: better or worse, liked more or less, some kind and well-behaved – the reason for our pride, others rude, growling, and repulsive – we are ashamed of being our children. What do we think? Before we start issuing any cards or sentences, let us look for a moment at the attitude of Fr Bronisław Markiewicz, the founder of the Michaelite family of religious congregations; he was a great educator, a priest who sacrificed his life in a bloodless battle for the salvation of the souls of children and young people.

In order to understand his approach to the young man, I would like to start from the history quoted by almost all biographers of Fr Markiewicz's life. Well, once an impatient educator asked the Rector (as he was called) what he should do with a wayward and "spoiled" boy, because he had exhausted all possibilities. He heard a surprising reply: "Go to the garden, collect raspberries and give them to him... This measure rarely fails."

Collect raspberries and treat the child. This simple way helped. Fr Bronisław used it successfully during his life dedicated to God. He spared no fruit to give to children and young people. What raspberries were they? Strange and at the same time wonderful that an educator can give to his pupils fruit. Let's look into Fr Markiewicz's garden.

## First raspberry – understanding

"The best is the upbringing that applies most closely to the personality of each child, to his age, talent, health, living conditions and destiny in this world and in eternity" – this quote says a lot about Fr Markiewicz's attitude towards children. The founder of the Michaelites did not treat the pupil as a standard patchwork of advantages and disadvantages. Each child was an individual to be properly treated and understood. Understanding is an objective, critical, not emotional view, characterised by both a lack of aversion and an excessive glorification of the person. Bl. Bronisław Markiewicz did not

approach children with a cold understanding. It was not a function of reason alone. He understood them with his heart. To say that he was with him is definitely not enough. The most accurate would be from the romantic poet Norwid's term "compassion". It gave great strength to this great educator – flexibility to individual needs. It allowed us to look with love.

## Second raspberry – acceptance

Modern psychology, among the many needs necessary for the proper upbringing of children, mentions the need for acceptance. In order for a child to develop properly physically and mentally, he must feel, realize that he is accepted by the environment, accepted as it is at the moment with all the ballast of good and bad qualities. He must know that he is loved.

Bl. Bronisław Markiewicz knew this need for children thirsting for warmth, although perhaps sometimes unruly. He often reminded us of this and instilled in the minds and hearts of his young educators a sensitivity to this very important matter. He wrote: "When you encounter difficulties in your educational work, when sometimes a child admitted to an institution will poison your life so that you would want to get rid of him as soon as possible, think then what you would do if this child were sent to you to be brought up by a king or prince, and by our great benefactor. Markiewicz wanted the education in his institutions to resemble education in the family as much as possible.

"Let us not forget the family does not choose children, they are given to them by God. He must accept them as they are, polite or not, healthy or sick. It is the duty of parents to give their children everything they need for proper psychophysical development, first of all love. "And yet every boy admitted to us, even the poorest





and let us say 'the worst', is a child of God, the supreme King and our greatest Benefactor.

"He has directed him to us to make him a Christian fit for the kingdom of heaven; to use all the resources of our love and patience so that this child does not perish temporally and eternally. Will we not do for God what we would do for an earthly king or some influential person?"

Let us remember that every child is a gift from God, a gift of Love (cf. 1 Jn 4:16). We are to welcome children and young people as they are.

This does not mean, however, that we should leave them behind, like a "wild river" that becomes a catastrophic element at high tide. This point of acceptance is only a springboard to further with patient educational work, the regulation of the "river", the basis of which are requirements. These "dams" just pile up a strong and good character.

## Third raspberry – an open heart

For outsiders it seemed not so strange as ridiculous to see a little boy going to Fr Markiewicz and solemnly declaring that he was going to him with a matter of conscience. Maybe it was funny, but most of all it was real. This boy had an unshakable confidence that he would be accepted and listened to, and most importantly taken seriously.

Our blessed Founder knew how to listen. This ability flowed from openness to one's neighbour. He absorbed the interlocutor with all his being. Everyone who came knew that the case presented was

no longer just his. This openness to the other was not only manifested in the ability to listen.

Fr Bronisław was extremely perceptive. His keen eyes did not miss any detail. He saw every sorrow, pain, grief, illness. He also had a suitable word for everyone, imbued with kindness. He did not pass anyone by indifferently without saying a word. He had an "open heart" for everyone, he had love.

## Fourth raspberry – forbearance

In every community there are tense, sensitive situations. Markiewicz was not free from them either. How did Fr Bronisław react to such moments? He wrote: "It is not nerves that are to rule us, but we are to rule our nerves.

"The soul that loves God above all things keeps calm in its heart and face and balances in all events..." He constantly reminded educators to "treat your subordinates with the utmost gentleness."

Blessed Bronisław was full of loving understanding, but far from the shallow and short-sighted indulgence which a good educator should avoid. Markiewicz based his gentleness on faith in the good intentions of his pupil. Each of them had unlimited credit. Here are his words: "In fact, in the face of guilt, sometimes stronger words must be used, but in the end it is necessary to add a polite word, full of conviction that the subordinate will want to correct himself and repair the damage."

Where does this trust come from? He who loves, trusts.

## The raspberry bush – summary

Among these considerations, like the chorus in the song, there is a constantly dominant element – **love**. This living Word was the driving force behind all the actions of Bl. Bronisław, whose life was centred around the living Word of Christ – the Gospel.

It was the living Word of Christ that was Markiewicz's "raspberry bush" from which he picked his raspberries. His every gesture, smile, whole life were "raspberries" that he gave to others, especially young people. I think that without any special fears the motto of his life: "Who like God!", following St John, we can write: "Who like love!"

The "raspberry bush" lived in the everyday life of Fr Bronisław, he constantly wrote the 'fifth Gospel'. He knew that without an internal, personal commitment on the part of the Gospel, he would do nothing. And he did much! The strength of action was given to him by the authenticity of a simple life immersed in Christ's Love.

Someone will say that everything is beautiful in theory, but life has its rights. Ideals are ideals – realities are too strong. But who of us will remain without these ideals? Is it just dryness and busyness?

Someone will add an argument that what education needs above all is authority, not love. This is true, but what authority? Blessed Markiewicz wrote: "Authority is in no case gained by 'importance', but by wisdom and goodness."

The late Fr **W. Balewski** CSMA

# San Miguel del Milagro

## The Apparition of St Michael in Mexico

The state of Tlaxcala, in Mexico, lies in a broad valley with distant views of active volcanoes. Steep hills tower over fertile farmlands where orchards, cornfields and cattle ranches dot the landscape. The long history of this part of Mexico can be seen to this day in the impressive ruins of Indian pyramids and beautiful Spanish colonial architecture.

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the Tlaxcalan Indians for centuries embraced idolatry and superstitious practices. When Hernán Cortés arrived in 1521, the Tlaxcalans at first resisted, but later became his staunchest allies and united with him to conquer the Aztecs. As new friends of the Spanish, the Tlaxcalans themselves destroyed their idols and temples.

The Tlaxcalans became the first tribe in Mexico to embrace Catholicism. As a result, the hand of Divine Providence blessed Tlaxcala abundantly through the centuries. No greater manifestation can be found than in the year 1631, when the great warrior archangel was sent to save the people from mortal danger and shower blessings on future generations.

## Mexico and Rome – a celestial connection

St Michael's apparition in Mexico is directly connected with another of his apparitions many centuries earlier. On the other side of the globe in the year 590, St Gregory the Great was elected pope. Rome and all of Italy was suffering from a terrible plague. The holy pope ordered public processions through the streets to beg for an end

to the epidemic. An icon of Our Lady painted by St Luke the Evangelist was carried at the head of the papal court.

As the procession wound along the Tiber River, the Litany of Saints was intoned. At the conclusion of the litany, St Gregory looked up and saw the heavens open. St Michael with his fellow angels descended. A heavenly perfume filled the air. The angels began singing to Our Lady, seated high above on a throne:

*Regina Coeli, laetare, Alleluia!  
Quia quem meruisti portare, Alleluia!  
Resurrexit sicut dixit, Alleluia!  
(Queen of Heaven, rejoice, Alleluia!  
For the Son whom thou merited  
to bear, Alleluia!  
Has risen as He said, Alleluia!  
Pray for us to God, Alleluia!)*

St Gregory, overwhelmed at the sight, concluded the angelic chorus, singing out: *Ora pro nobis Deum, Alleluia!*



■ A view of the valley of Tlaxcala, with La Malinche volcano towering overhead. Inset: Map of Mexico showing Tlaxcala State in relation to Mexico City.



Concluding the vision, the great pope witnessed St Michael sheathing his sword, and the plague at once came to an end. Castel Sant'Angelo was built at the site where St Michael and his fellow angels appeared. April 25<sup>th</sup>, the date of the apparition, became the fixed date for the annual procession that would come to be known throughout the Catholic world as the Greater Litanies.

## Meanwhile in Tlaxcala, the processions continue

More than a millennium later, the year 1631 saw the people of Tlaxcala, Mexico also ravaged by a plague. Called “cocoliztli” by the inhabitants, the horrible disease left few alive after immense sufferings. As had been done throughout the Catholic world since St Gregory’s time, on April 25<sup>th</sup> the people of Tlaxcala took part in the procession of the Greater Litanies.

It was here that St Michael chose to manifest himself again. Instead of the Vicar of Christ, this time the great archangel appeared to a lowly Indian. Diego de San Lazaro, only seventeen years old at the time, saw St Michael in a vision at the conclusion of the procession. The heavenly warrior addressed him thus:

*“I am Saint Michael the Archangel, and I have come to tell you that it is the will of God and mine that you tell the inhabitants of this place, and everywhere around, that near a valley between two mountain ridges you will find a miraculous spring of water that will cure men of their ills. You will find it beneath a great boulder. Do not doubt what I have told you and do not neglect what I have sent you to do.”*



■ Mural in the shrine church depicting the apparition of St Michael. A light descending from heaven and the expulsion of demons marked the first of a series of miraculous events showing St Michael’s great favour.

## Why me?

As St Michael disappeared, Diego was filled with holy joy, which soon changed to confusion and anxiety. Astounded by the celestial vision, this young man asked others in the procession if they had seen St Michael. The puzzled looks on the faces of those around him made it clear he was the only one who had seen the celestial prince. Diego became convinced that he imagined the whole encounter, as he could not fathom why he of all people would be chosen for such an honour. Returning home that evening, Diego decided to tell no one about his vision of St Michael, not even his own family.

After a few days, the great archangel appeared to Diego again. This time, this heavenly and terrible guest was quite displeased. The great prince towering over him thundered, “Why

*did you doubt what I have told you? Because you have not done as I requested, you too will be stricken with the plague that is devastating your people.”*

Immediately Diego fell back, taken violently ill. He remained in this state for some time, unable to move or speak, with his condition worsening quickly. Over the course of two weeks, this poor Indian stricken with the dreaded cocoliztli appeared to be wasting away. Diego’s family, convinced he was on the point of death, called for the priests. The Franciscans arrived and administered the Last Sacraments. Family, friends and clergy prayed aloud the prayers for the dying as Diego continued in his sufferings.

## St Michael to the rescue

Just when everyone was convinced the end was near, St Michael appeared yet again. This time, everyone present saw

him, surrounded by dazzling light. Taking Diego by the hand, St Michael and Diego soon disappeared.

A short time later, Diego appeared again in the same room, standing and completely restored. He announced to everyone:

“St Michael transported me to the place he had told me about before. With St Michael going before me through the night, everything was illuminated as the great prince passed, as if it were midday. Rocks and branches split apart as he passed, clearing a path for us. As we reached a certain spot, I saw St Michael holding a golden staff topped with a cross. *‘From the place I touch with this staff will flow the miraculous spring I told you about during the procession. Make it clear to everyone that the illness you have suffered is a fruit of your disobedience.’*

“Having said this, a great whirlwind rushed in amid the din of screams, wailing and moaning, as if a great crowd were being driven from the place. I shook with fear. It appeared the entire mountain ridge would tumble down on top of me during the turmoil. *‘Do not fear,’* said my heavenly protector, *‘these are the sounds made by the demons, thine enemies, because they know the great benefits that through my intercession the faithful will receive in this place from Our Lord. Many, seeing the marvels worked here, will convert and do penance for their sins, and all will give thanks to God for His mercies. Those who approach with lively faith and sorrow for their faults will, with the water from this spring, obtain relief in their labours and needs, and find a comfort in these waters for the sick on the point of death.’*

“This being said, I saw a brilliant light descend from heaven, piercing the ground at the site of the spring. St

Michael then said, *‘This light that you have seen descend from heaven is the virtue God in His Divine Providence gives in this spring for the health and relief of the sick and needy. Make this known at once to everyone. That they may believe your testimony, I promise to work a great prodigy through you.’* With that, St Michael disappeared, and I found myself here once again, completely restored.”

## Making the miracle known

Diego’s family stood in awe as he recounted his tale. His sudden transformation thrilled them to no end. Remembering Saint Michael’s command to spread the devotion, Diego went at once to the superior of the Franciscans. The priest listened with interest as Diego recounted the story, uncertain what to make of it. He decided to send Diego to the Governor of Tlaxcala, Don Gregório de Nazienzen, who was known for his learning and discernment.

Diego was received by the governor and recounted the entire story of St Michael’s appearance to him. The governor listened, growing more sceptical as Diego continued. How could the Prince of the Heavenly Armies choose to appear to an uneducated Indian like Diego? There were scholars, doctors of theology, skilled orators and other dignitaries living in the vicinity. Why would St Michael not choose from among their number?

After asking a few questions, Don Gregório concluded that the tale was false. He commanded Diego to return home at once, warning that he did not want to hear any more about

apparitions. Diego did as he was told, disappointed but undaunted in his quest to promote devotion to his heavenly prince.

Diego then summoned his family and led them to the place where St Michael had revealed the spring. As they approached, they saw the great boulder blocking the spot. The men toiled in vain to remove the great stone, but the half-ton monolith would not budge. It was here that Diego remembered St Michael’s words: *‘I promise to work a great prodigy through you.’* Asking everyone to stand back, he said a prayer for St Michael’s assistance. He then walked up and lifted up the massive rock as if it were made of paper. The promised spring gushed forth with crystalline water. No one there doubted the truth of Diego’s words, and word began to spread of the miraculous water.

A young girl stricken with the dreaded *cocoliztli* saw a vision of St Michael in a dream, bidding her to avail of the water. A relative brought the requested water, and she was restored to health. Hearing this, Diego begged her to give testimony to the governor. This she refused, fearing a harsh treatment. In a neighbouring village, another miracle followed soon after, this time a young lady cured of the same dread disease by the miraculous water. Again, Diego failed to find help from her or anyone in the family.

## Help from above

Feeling discouraged, Diego considered the task before him impossible. A year had gone by and he still had little support. His heavenly intercessor, seeing his plight, once more appeared to him and said, *“Why do*





■ The chapel of the spring, where pilgrims have come for centuries to partake of the miraculous waters blessed by St Michael himself.



■ The shrine church of San Miguel del Milagro, enlarged over the centuries, continues to attract pilgrims from near and far.



■ The sanctuary of the shrine church of San Miguel del Milagro. Our Lady Queen of Angels stands above the baldachino.

*you act cowardly, and are negligent in what two times now I have commanded you? Do you want to be punished once again for your disobedience? Arise, and have diligence in making known what I have commanded.”*

Diego at once went to the spring, and filled a jug with water. Bypassing the hostile governor, he went with haste to the Bishop of Puebla, Don Quiróz. The same archangel facilitated his entrance before the bishop. Diego recounted all concerning St Michael's manifestation. He came to seek the aid of the bishop in completing St Michael's command of spreading the devotion. The bishop listened with great interest. He ordered the water taken to the hospital. All who drank from it were cured of their maladies.

Others soon came to testify before the bishop in the official investigation. Two recently arrived Spaniards went to the spring and were overwhelmed by a heavenly fragrance that permeated the place. Taking water with them back to Puebla, they testified to the many sick that drank and were cured. Officials sent to the spring testified to the great number

of cures as well as the devotions to St Michael that were flourishing. Based on the numerous testimonies and verified miracles, Don Quiróz gave ecclesiastical approbation, and ordered the first chapel erected, just as St Michael requested.

## A constant flow of blessings

Since 1631, the number of pilgrims to what came to be known as San Miguel del Milagro continually increased. The first chapel became too small, and larger churches have since been built at the site. Diego de San Lazaro, faithful to St Michael's commands, spent the rest of his life spreading the devotion and is today buried behind the church's high altar.

Processions continue to our own day. The faithful flock to the shrine on April 25<sup>th</sup>, the day St Michael first appeared during a procession, and September 29<sup>th</sup>, his glorious feast day. Just as St Michael promised, conversions have taken place due to the

marvels worked here over the centuries. Pilgrims from Tlaxcala, other parts of Mexico and beyond come to avail themselves of the water and to honour the celestial prince. Though physical cures are rare today, great numbers leave strengthened, secure in St Michael's assistance for life's many battles.

The Prince of the Heavenly Armies manifested himself in 1631 in this remote part of Mexico to show forth his great power. An epidemic came to an end and a source of miraculous water now flows continuously.

Like St Gregory the Great and Diego de San Lazaro before us, let us have confidence in the celestial archangel. With trust in his powerful help, a great victory in our days is assured.

**Ben Broussard**

[www.americanneedsfatima.org](http://www.americanneedsfatima.org)

**Bibliographical Note:** The primary source for this article was the book *Narracion de la maravillosa aparicion que hizo el Arcángel San Miguel a Diego Lazaro de San Francisco* by Fr Francisco de Florencia, SJ, published 1898 in Puebla, Mexico.



## CONSECRATION TO ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

St Michael the Archangel, invincible prince of the angelic host and glorious protector of the universal Church, I greet you and honour you for that splendour with which God has adorned you so richly. I stand before you in the company of my Guardian Angel, St Margaret Mary and all the Blessed and Saints. I take them as witnesses of my dedication and devotion to you.

St Michael the Archangel, I consecrate to you my soul and body, my family, my possession, my life and my death, my work, all my affairs and undertakings. I choose you as my patron and protector. Be my strength and the guardian in my life. Assist me by your powerful intercession so that I may imitate your courage and loyalty to God, that trusting in your kind help and protection, I may be victorious over the enemies of my soul and be united with God in heaven forever and ever. Amen.





## NORTHERN IRELAND 2023

**29<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**10:00 am – 3:30 pm Dangers of New Age**

**Termonbacca Retreat Center**

Southway, Derry, BT48 9XE

Contact: Aoife O'Neill

Retreat Facilitator

Phone: +44(0)2871-262-512

Email: termonbaccaderry@gmail.com

**Holy Mass**

**Eucharistic healing service**

**St Michael scapular investiture**

**Veneration of 1<sup>st</sup> class relic**

**of St Faustina**

**29<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**7:30 pm Holy Mass**

**St Columba Church**

Long Tower, Derry BT48 6QQ

**Eucharistic healing service**

**St Michael scapular investiture**

**Veneration of 1<sup>st</sup> class relic of St Faustina**

## SCOTLAND 2023

**7<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**11<sup>th</sup> National Divine Mercy Conference**

**St Augustine's Church,**

12 Dundivan Road, Langloan,

Coatbridge ML5 1DQ, Scotland

Contact: Helen Boarder

Email: Helen.border@glasgow.ac.uk

## CANADA 2023

**20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023**

**Theme: Divine Mercy**

**and St Michael the Archangel**

**St Patrick Parish**

2881 Main Street Vancouver

BC V5T3G1 Canada

Pastor: Fr Jarek Dziuba SDS

Contact: Ethelyn David

Phone: +1(604)-889-3842

## USA 2023

**23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**English and Polish Parish Mission**

**with life size Pilgrim statue**

**of St Michael**

**St Francis Borgia Roman Catholic Church**

8033 W Addison St, Chicago,

IL 60634. USA

Phone: +1(773)-625-1118

**Holy Mass**

**Eucharistic healing service**

**St Michael scapular investiture**

**24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**Parish Mission**

**Day 1: The mystery of the Divine Mercy**

**Day 2: The power and love of St Michael**

**Day 3: The Spirituality of St Faustina**

**and her encounters with the angels**

**St Mary of the Assumption**

**Catholic Church**

414 East Church Street,

Santa Maria, 94454 CA

Contact: Deacon Dennis Pearson

Email: spot1516@aol.com

**27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**Theme: Mary and the Eucharist**

**The Marian Eucharistic Conference**

**Clovis Veterans Memorial**

District 808 Fourth Street,

Clovis, California 93612

Contact: Christina Villas

Email: christyvillas25@gmail.com

**8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Theme: Spirituality**

**of St Faustina and her**

**encounters with the Angels**

**St Clares Retreat Centre,**

2381 Laurel Glen Road,

975073 Soquel, California

Contact: Sr. Vincent

Phone: +1(831)-423-8093

Email: stclaresretreatcenter@gmail.com

**11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**8:30 am English Holy Mass**

**Parish Bicentennial Celebration**

**Theme: Looking forward to Christmas**

**with the Blessed Mother, St Faustina**

**and the Angels**

**St Francis Solano Parish**

469 3<sup>rd</sup> St W, Sonoma, California 95476

Contact: Father Rowell, parochial vicar

Email: pastorstfrancissolano@gmail.com

**Eucharistic healing service**

**St Michael scapular investiture**

**Veneration of 1<sup>st</sup> class relic**

**of St Faustina**

**14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Theme: St Michael the Archangel**

**St Maria Goretti Church**

8700 Bradshaw Road,

Elk Grove, CA 95624

Contact: Fr Sylvester Kwiatkowski

Office: +1(916)-647-4538

Email: skwiat01@yahoo.com

**18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Theme: Advent and Christmas**

**with St Faustina Divine Mercy**

**Parish mission**

**St Thérèse Church**

Alhambra, CA 91801

Contact: Fr Thomas OCD

Phone: +1(626)-282-2744

Email: thomasofthetrinity@gmail.com

## PHILIPPINES 2024

**3<sup>rd</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

**Theme: Divine Mercy**

**and St Michael the Archangel**

Contact: Anton Gonzalez

Phone: +63-917-812-1228

Email: antonsongonzalez@gmail.com

## AUSTRALIA 2024

**Sydney Mission**

**13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

**Holy Mass with homily**

**by Fr Prusakiewicz CSMA**

**Holy Hour with Eucharistic**

**healing service**

**Blessing of Divine Mercy image**

**Holy Spirit Parish – North Ryde, Sydney**

**St Michael's Parish – Hurstville, Sydney**

**Our Lady Parish – Horsley Park, Sydney**

**St Kevin Parish – Eastwood, Sydney**

Phone: +61-298-882-569

Phone: +61-407-937-615

Email: parish@holyspiritnorthryde.org.au

www.stmichael.com

## PAPUA NEW GUINEA 2024

**19<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

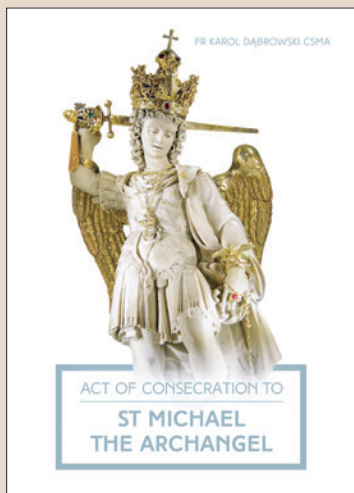
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## An Act of Consecration to St Michael

A deeper understanding of St Michael the Archangel



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## St Faustina and St Michael

St Faustina is full of wonder, respect, reverence and admiration for St Michael the Archangel. The fundamental and only reason behind such an attitude is, as she is at pains to stress, the fact that he did the will of God. He is for her the angel resplendent in his wonder and boundless humility towards the Creator. He is the angel who gazes at God with love, who learns the will of God and courageously carries it out.



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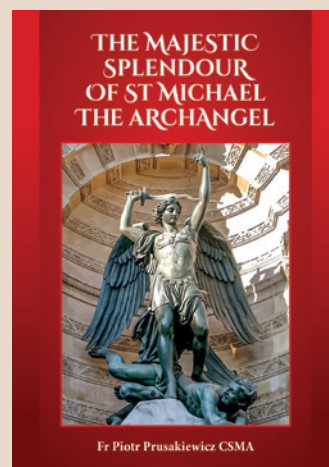
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### PLEASE NOTE:

### NO POSTAL ORDERS

ALL CHEQUES OUTSIDE OF CANADA AND USA SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO PIOTR PRUSAKIEWICZ

## The Majestic Splendour of St Michael the Archangel



**£5.00 / €6.00 plus postage**

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People have often asked me about St Michael, the patron saint of my congregation. Due to the great interest in St Michael, I looked into the scientific and systematic study of many English, Italian and Polish authors throughout the ages internationally. My information also came from Holy Scripture and the traditions and teachings of the Doctors of the Roman Catholic Church whose works are true and timeless. I express my deep appreciation and gratitude to those who have spoken and written about Saint Michael the Archangel and helped me to discover and understand his greatness and splendour. This has enabled me to write articles and this new booklet about the Prince of the Heavenly Host. I hope that you discover St Michael the Archangel and hear his strong call from the bottom of his heart: Who is like God?

Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA



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**Details of churches / shops  
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form inside middle of magazine**

# The Holy Spirit is moving

**O**n 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023, Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA had a well received and spirit filled mission at the Blessed Sacrament Shrine, 4 Dawson Street, Liverpool, L1 1LE.

Fr Peter proclaimed and explained the Divine Mercy devotion, St Faustina and her encounters with the angels and the power and love of St Michael the Archangel.

## God's healing touch

People are thirsty for the spiritual food and to gain more knowledge. Through the grace of God many hearts were touched during the Holy Mass and eucharistic healing service. This appeared to have a powerful effect on them and everyone joined in, especially with the hymns led by Fr Peter.

Fr Peter has been invited to return to the Blessed Sacrament Shrine in Liverpool, the Wirral in Merseyside and Manchester to name but a few near the feast of St Michael the Archangel in September 2024.

Angela Buckley was given a plaque of St Michael the Archangel by her parish priest and this was placed in front of the altar during the two day Divine Mercy mission.

**Noreen Bavister, U.K**



■ Angela Buckley with a plaque of St Michael the Archangel

## Come Holy Spirit, Purify my heart

Come Holy Spirit,  
sanctify my heart.

Come Holy Spirit,  
fill me with your Love.

Come Holy Spirit,  
fill me with your Peace.

Come Holy Spirit,  
fill me with your Joy.

Come Holy Spirit,  
fill me with your Strength.

Come Holy Spirit,  
fill me with your Light.

# 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)*



■ St Michael by Albrecht Dürer, woodcut, date unknown

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

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

*Recite on the next four beads:*

1 Our Father in honour of St Michael

1 Our Father in honour of St Gabriel

1 Our Father in honour of St Raphael

1 Our Father in honour of our Guardian Angel

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

## Prayer of Pope Leo XIII

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