

From the Pastor
October 24, 2021
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

THE HOLY ANGELS

The month of October is the month of the Holy Angels and so this week I would like to write on an important truth of our Catholic faith, the Holy Angels.

Each Sunday when we come to Holy Mass we pray the Nicene Creed or the Profession of Faith. This prayer goes back to the year 325 and we should all rejoice in the fact that we profess the same faith that our ancestors have professed for centuries before us. In fact, many in our Church today may count among their ancestors the Holy Martyrs who shed their blood for the faith which we now profess.

Each week we say that *I believe in One God, the Father almighty creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and **invisible***. What is meant by the phrase **invisible**? We know that God Our Lord has made everything that we see...all the animals, plants, and minerals of the visible order. But he has also created a vast creation that is invisible, that we cannot see. This is the order of the Angels.

Angles are intelligent creatures of the spiritual order. They do not have bodies and thus do not change. They are pure intelligence. They are purely spiritual and thus are invisible. That angels exist we are certain. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament speak constantly of the presence and work of the angels. God promised Moses that he need not fear about leading the Chosen People from Egypt, because *My angel will go before you*. And it was the Holy Angels who ministered to Our Divine Savior during His fast of forty days in the desert.

Since the angles are pure spirits without a body they may not be seen. The Holy Angels are invisible but when God gives them a mission on earth they appear in a visible form. Often, they are seen as young men as they were at the tomb of Our Lord on the first Easter morning. In art they are pictured with wings simply to remind us of how they may travel in speed from one place to another. Since the angels cannot change, they were not given the grace of the redemption as was humanity. The wonder of our glorious human nature is that we can change; we can

repent. The angels cannot change and thus once they chose between Good and evil their choice was final. The devils are angles, but evil angels who are forever in rebellion against the goodness of God.

To each of us has God assigned a Guardian Angel. The guardian angel is our dearest friend who inspires us with good thoughts and protects us both in body and soul. Not only do individuals have angels but God has assigned guardian angels to protect cities, villages, nations and parishes. (Please pardon the personal reference,). On April 29, 2013, I arrived for the first time at St. Paul. I had been appointed Pastor only the previous week and it would be my first visit ever to St. Paul and to visit my beloved predecessor Monsignor Clerkin. Monsignor had invited me for lunch at noon (which was delicious). But I arrived at 11.30 to walk the grounds and to invoke the Guardian Angel of St. Paul' Parish and of all our beloved parishioners, especially the Guardian Angels of our dear young people, of the sick, and of the elderly. Only then was I ready to ring the bell of the parish office. (I no longer ring the bell since I now have a key).

May I encourage all of you to be on intimate and friendly terms with your guardian angel. The Holy Angels will do great services for us both in the material and spiritual order. Parents should invoke the Guardian Angels of their children so that the Angels may watch over and protect them. *Holy Guardian Angels pray for us and protect us.*

One of the great services of the Guardian Angles is that they serve as ambassadors. If we are not getting along with anyone, we should invoke the Guardian Angel of that person and ask him to sort things out. We may ask our own Guardian Angel to work in concert with the other's Guardian Angel to make peace and relieve tension, friction, and strife.

VISIT OF BISHOP MURPHY: Bishop William F. Murphy is the Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, having served as Bishop from 2001 until 2017. It was while he was Bishop that the renovation of the Church began. The Bishop had been scheduled to visit St. Paul's on Sunday August 22nd, but due to Tropical Storm Henri, the visit was rescheduled. Bishop Murphy will be coming to St. Paul next Sunday, October 31st. He will celebrate the 10.30 Mass during which he will place

the Relic of St. Paul the Apostle in the Altar. Please make every effort to greet the Bishop next Sunday.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS: As we are all aware the Covid-19 virus seems to ebb and flow. Most of us know very little of these matters. But out of an abundance of caution, we ask our parishioners to follow our diocesan protocols which have been explained here and in every parish since the churches opened in June 2020. At the time of Holy Communion, those receiving on the hand may continue to come forward as usual. May we ask those who would like to receive on the tongue (which is laudatory and perfectly fine) to come to the corners of the Sanctuary where the green kneeling cushions are placed after the others have received. Please line up there and individually come forward to kneel or stand to receive on the tongue. As pastor, I am very disposed to grant a dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass for those who may be paralyzed by fear to attend. If coming to Mass will cause one stress or anger, please simply stay home. Attending Mass should not cause a meltdown. Such should not be the fruit of the sacraments. Remember shortly before holy Communion the priest prays, *“Deliver us Lord...that we may be free from sin and safe from all distress...”* Please remember that per the Bishop’s instructions the clergy and staff (including the ushers) of the parishes are not enforcers of these guidelines. We are here to serve, not to be police. Therefore, there is no need to call the pastor at 9:01 on Monday morning (the office opens at 9.00) to tell on other parishioners. God bless you all, and remember the teaching of St. Augustine, *“in omnia caritas- in all things charity.”*

FINAL FIGURES FOR GOLF OUTING AND AWARDS DINNER: I am most deeply grateful to all of you who made our Golf Outing such an unprecedented success. The final figures were \$101, 275.58. May God bless and reward all of you and particularly our honorees Tom and Irene Principe and all on the Committee.

LOOK TO MARY: *Look to the star of the sea, call upon Mary...in danger, in distress, in doubt, think of Mary, and call upon Mary. May her name never be far from your lips, or far from your heart...If you follow her, you will not stray; if you pray to her, you will not despair; if you turn your thoughts to her, you will not err. If she holds you, you will not fall; if she protects you, you need not fear; if she is your guide, you will not tire; if she is gracious to you, you will surely reach your destination.* – St. Bernard of Clairvaux

In Jesus and Mary,
Monsignor James F. Pereda