

FROM THE PASTOR
SEPTEMBER 24, 2023
TWENTY FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE HOLY ANGELS

This week I would like to write on an important truth of our Catholic faith, the Holy Angels. I do so because Friday of this week (September 29th) is the Feast of the Holy Archangels Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael and a week from tomorrow (October 2nd) is the Feast of the Holy Guardian 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 maker 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 angels 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 the human race. 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.

BLESSING OF ANIMALS: On Wednesday October 4th we celebrate the Liturgical Memorial of St. Francis of Assisi. On **Saturday October 7th** we will have the traditional blessing of the animals in honor of the saint who loved the animals so dearly. Please bring your animals to the lovely plaza in front of the Church at **1.00PM** so the priest may say the prayer of blessing over all the animals. Please keep the dogs on leashes.

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