

***Third Sunday in Lent***  
***March 7, 2021***  
***Year of the Eucharist and Parish (Sermon #9)***

*“Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God’s love commits me here, ever this day (or night) be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.” (Prayer to your Guardian Angel)*

Last weekend I mentioned the nine choirs of angels. Of these nine, we profess the Cherubim and Seraphim to reside closest to God, while the angels, particularly guardian angels, are intertwined with mankind. We might consider the role of “guardian” to be beneath the dignity of an angel. This is quite understandable for even the presence of guardian angels operating in the lives of men can stagger the mind. Yet, in fulfilling this role, the angels give praise to God. Now, let us consider two points: “Why do we need guardian angels?” and “How do the angels guard and guide us?”

We believe that God has created for each person an angel to accompany them. Medieval theologians believed this companionship began the moment a person took their first breath and ended when they breathed their last breath. Let me go one step further by proposing to you this relationship began before we took our first breath. It would begin with the moment of our conception, our coming into existence. I profess this knowing that there are some children in the womb who will never, for varied reasons not the least the grave sin of abortion, take their first breath. God still crafted an angel to be with them. He did this because He knew we would need their great assistance as we walked through this life. We adults know this life is filled with physical dangers; therefore, we warn our children and other young people. However, without the influence of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus’ holy catholic Church, would we perceive of the spiritual dangers which are far worse for us? God, because He is God and He loves all of His creation, has provided an angel to guide and guard us lest we succumb to any of these pitfalls.

And how do they guide and guard us? The simple answer is by the use of their blazing intellect set alight by their love of God. Angels are, however, limited by both God and man in their ability to guard and guide us. An angel, either good or bad, was never given, by God, the power to force a person towards a virtue or a vice. They can never say: “Do this, choose this or I’ll turn you into a newt!” Predominately, guardian angels use their mastery of the physical world to influence our senses, stir up our emotions, enliven our imagination, and awaken our memories to protect and guide us. While at the same time, fallen angels use these same things to lead us down the road toward our eternal damnation. Although it is an imperfect image, the idea of an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other really does portray what takes place at every moment around each one of us. Without the constant protection and guidance of our angel, I cannot begin to imagine just how terrible the onslaughts if the devils would be. As much as our angel wants to lead us towards God, we, through our freedom, can become the obstacle which prevents this from occurring. Our God given Freedom of Will, allows us the ability to always choose no matter how strongly our guardian encourages us towards the good. Our prayer, this day and every day, should be that we humbly listen to their quite encouragement and choose, to the best of our ability, those people and things which they point toward; persons, objects, or actions which strengthen our relationship with both God and these faithful companions. Our prayer will only be complete when we are joined in heaven, no longer by an angel to guard us, but by an angel, a true friend who will worship God beside us.