

Friday, September 29th is the Dedication of St. Michael or Michaelmas.

It is also the feast day of St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael.

What is Michaelmas?

- During the Middle Ages the Church considered the feast so important that it was a holy day of obligation. Though its stature as a feast has diminished over time, there has arguably never been a better or more important time to seek the patronage of the Prince of the Heavenly Host. (onepeterfive.com)



St. Michael
PROTECTOR

Come to my aid, fight for all my loved ones, and protect us from danger.

St. Raphael
HEALING ANGEL

Take my need for healing and that of everyone I know, lift it up to Your throne of grace and deliver back to us the gift of recovery.

St. Gabriel
MESSENGER OF THE GOOD NEWS

Help me clearly hear God's voice and teach me the truth.

THE ARCHANGELS

"In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord." (Ps 138:1)

DID YOU KNOW?

Angels at Your Parish

WE know and remember, in relation to the holy angels, that Almighty God uses them in the government of the world; that nations, places, and persons are under their special guardianship. We piously believe that many of them are the protectors of our churches, as they were the protectors of the temple of Jerusalem.... How zealous the angels are for the honor of sacred buildings.... Should we not, then, believe that a multitude of angels surrounds the tabernacle wherein resides their Creator and Lord?

In order to help our piety and strengthen our faith in the presence of these heavenly spirits, we see that almost every church contains, in painting or statuary, representations of angels ministering to men, adoring Jesus Christ, surrounding the throne of God, etc. The early Christians believed that angels were present in the assemblies of the faithful and carried their petitions to the throne of God; wherefore respect for their presence should induce females to appear veiled in such assemblies (see 1 Cor 11); and if at all times "we are made a spectacle" to the angels (1 Cor 4:9), more attentively do they watch over us when we are in the sacred buildings where their Lord and Master resides.

When, therefore, you visit the Blessed Sacrament, after adoring in silence Him Who is there living, eternal, immortal, all-merciful, all-powerful, you might request the angels who surround the altar, but especially your guardian angel, to adore Him with you, and to obtain for you an increase of that love and veneration for Him which penetrate their whole being; or you might imagine yourself before the throne of God and of the Lamb, and unite your adorations and thanksgivings to theirs. During the parish Mass on Sundays, if you will but attend to the ceremonies and prayers of the Church, you will not fail to understand that Christians have really "come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels" (Heb 12:22).

—Bp. Louis de Goesbriand, Christ on the Altar



CLASSIC CATECHESIS

The Angels



From A Dogmatic Catechism (1842)

148. How do you define the angels?

They are created, spiritual, complete, and intelligent substances. They are called created substances, because in the Creation of the world they were drawn out of nothing. They are called spiritual, because they have no bodies, not even a most subtle body of air or light, as some of the ancients supposed. No Catholic can now have any doubt on this head, the Fourth Lateran Council having expressly declared in favor of the entire spirituality of the angels.¹ They are called complete, as differing from the human soul, which is designed, not by itself alone, but in union with a body, to form a whole—that is, the person of man. They are called intelligent, because they have great force and subtlety of understanding; so that they are called simply intelligences.

149. What does the name angel signify?

Angel means “messenger”; therefore, the name *angel* is given to the celestial intelligences, not as the proper name of their nature, but as the proper name of their office, when they are sent by God to discharge some embassy, or to give some counsel.

150. Is it an article of the Faith that angels exist?

Undoubtedly it is, as is apparent from innumerable passages of Holy Scripture, and from the chapter *Firmiter*, of the Fourth Lateran Council.²

151. **Is the nature of angels superior to human nature?**

It is superior, as appears from Scripture and the holy Fathers.

152. **Do the angels know our thoughts and the secrets of our hearts?**

They conjecture them from signs and indications which we give, even without reflection; they have not, however, a certain knowledge of them. They have certain knowledge of them, when we will that they should know our thoughts and the secrets of our hearts; and also, when God, for His own ends, reveals these to them, even without our willing it.

153. **How can you affirm that the angels have not bodies, since they have often appeared in visible forms?**

On such occasions, they adapted to themselves a body which was not their own; they assumed it when needful, and laid it aside as soon as they had executed the commissions which God sent them to accomplish among men.

154. **Have the angels power over material things?**

They have greater power over them than men have; with their most subtle intelligence and strength they can produce wonderful effects even in material things, such as no man is capable of. They can move the winds, cause storms, produce earthquakes and pestilences, and heal diseases, humanly speaking, incurable.

155. **May we not believe that all these things proceed immediately from natural causes, as philosophers teach?**

We do not say that every wind that blows, that every storm that rages, and that every destroying pestilence comes immediately from the action of some angel; such things happen ordinarily by the immediate concurrence of natural causes, subject to the government of God, as we have already said; but philosophers will never be able to prove that at times angels do not cooperate in such things. Moreover, it is apparent from many passages of Holy Scripture, from the tradition of the holy Fathers, and from the sentiment of the entire Catholic Church that

they do concur in them; hence, sound philosophers do not refuse to attribute this power over material things to the angels.

156. **Were the angels created in a state of grace?**

Certainly; they did not however enjoy the vision of God, and it was in their own power to preserve or to lose grace, according to the good or bad use they made of their liberty.

157. **Did they all preserve themselves in a state of grace?**

Many preserved themselves in grace; but a great part speedily fell into the sin of pride, were excluded from the Kingdom of God, and condemned to hell. I say speedily, because, when Adam sinned, the angels had already sinned, and had been transformed into demons. Meanwhile, the good angels who remained humble, were admitted to the clear vision of God, and became impeccable.

158. **Who was the chief of the bad angels, whom we now call demons?**

Lucifer, who in this way is the chief or prince of all the proud.

159. **What punishments followed on the sin of the angels?**

Four: 1) Blindness of mind in regard to supernatural things; for a great knowledge of natural things they retain; 2) obstinacy of the will in evil; 3) privation of paradise; 4) and the torment of eternal fire.

160. **Can the evil angels induce us to evil?**

They can tempt us in various ways, but they cannot do violence to our will.

161. **Is it true that enchantments and sorcery can be wrought by the power of demons, and by their power over natural things?**

It is most true, as appears from many passages of Holy Scripture, as many undeniable facts demonstrate, and as is manifest from the sentiment of the Church in all ages. It is rash and ridiculous to venture to deny such a truth, which, moreover, in our days is made even more manifest

and palpable by the wonders of table turning and spirit rapping, and by magnetism, the abuse of which has been condemned by the Church in two decrees, emanating from the supreme holy Roman and Universal Inquisition, of the 28th July 1847, and the 30th July 1856. Hence, we may consider it certain that the devil, by permission of Almighty God, has power in many ways over the persons of men, and over natural causes.

162. Are there any obsessed by evil spirits?

Although more than once impostors have pretended to be obsessed by evil spirits, it is most certain that, even after the death of Christ, persons have been obsessed by the devil; this has been proved by incontrovertible evidence, and cannot be denied without accusing the Catholic Church of prejudice and ignorance; for she uses exorcisms over obsessed persons, and confers an ecclesiastical order and consecrates ministers for this purpose.

163. Still in our days many doubt it.

St. Thomas, speaking of those who in his time doubted these things, feared not to assert that this doubt sprang from a principle of unbelief.³ What forbids our saying the same of those who doubt them in our own days? We add, moreover, that such men are lacking in logic, in criticism, and in erudition.

164. How many orders of angels are there?

There are nine, which constitute three hierarchies or choirs; the highest containing the seraphim, the cherubim, and the thrones; the next, the dominations, the virtues, and the powers; the last, the principalities, the archangels, and the angels.

165. Does God destine the angels to be the guardians of men?

It is a truth, clearly expressed in Holy Scripture, that men are guarded by the angels; but we cannot say that it is absolutely of Faith that each individual has his guardian angel: such, however, is the sentiment of all the holy Fathers, and of all the faithful, in opposition to the heretic Calvin. Moreover, theologians agree that there are angels deputed

to be the guardians of the various kingdoms of the earth, and of the different churches or dioceses which constitute the Catholic Church. The archangel St. Michael, who formerly was the guardian angel of the synagogue, is now the guardian of the universal Church.

166. What is the office of the angel guardians in regard to the men confided to them by God?

They guard them from perils and imminent evils; they hinder the demons from injuring them; suggest holy thoughts, pray for them, and offer their prayers to God; console the souls in purgatory, and, when they are fully purged, conduct them to paradise.

—*Tradivox Catholic Catechism Index, volume 8*

Endnotes

- 1 See Fourth Lateran Council, const. 1.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 "It proceeds from a root of unbelief or incredulity, that they believe that demons exist only in the estimation of the vulgar." *Summa Theologie*, III-Sup., q. 58, a. 2, c. Even Cudworth does not hesitate to assert that only the impious, and men suspected of atheism, doubt of such matters.