

St. Matthew 18:1-10
The Feast of the Holy Guardian Angels, 2019 A.✠ D.

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The word “angel” simply means “messenger”. The holy angels bring God’s message, doing His will. They were there on the first Sabbath when God rested. They too were very good, indeed perfect. Those sinless spirit beings stayed Abraham’s hand, sparing his son. Then they went with Abraham’s servant to bring that same son a wife. They saved Lot out of Sodom before it was destroyed. They met with Jacob.

They were there for Israel, a heavenly army sent by God. They appeared to Nebuchadnezzar. God’s angelic host has been active throughout history since the creation, doing the bidding of their Creator, as heralds to man of God’s will, as holy sent-ones protecting and defending His Church.

They called Mary blessed. They consoled Joseph with the Divine message that the child Mary bore was the very Son of God. They gave Zechariah his son’s name. Filling the sky they sang “Glory to God in the Highest” when God became flesh. They ministered to the Son in the desert. They strengthened Him at Gethsemane. In a blinding flash of white, they announced that He who died was not to be found among the dead. They prophesied His return.

They revealed the future to Cornelius. They freed Peter from prison. They told Paul he would appeal to Caesar. They brought the revelation of Jesus Christ to St. John, a revelation full of angels. And you might have entertained them as guests without knowing it.

As a baptized child of the living God, the angels are here for you. Those holy angels that behold the very face of God in heaven serve you in the same way they served the saints of old. They rejoiced over you when you repented and were added to the Church. They are real and active, ministering spirits doing the will of God in the world. They serve God by protecting His beloved, blood bought children. They are God’s messengers, for that is what the word “angel” means.

But beware. Not all angels are good. The evil angels do the work of their banished captain in the world to draw souls away from the One True God. And although the angel seen by St. John the Divine forbade it, nonetheless the evil angels want you to worship them. They want you to take their master for your God.

They’d even settle for you worshipping good angels. Or praying to them. Or treating them as good luck charms, as if you could manipulate them to control the outcome of your life. But to do so, like any other sin you have committed, is to break the first commandment.

To do so is to worship a false god. To do so is to surrender to the powers and principalities of darkness, willingly being taken captive by that dark army for a lustful or angry moment, for a selfish or covetous or jealous act, which is to yield to sin and surrender to darkness.

But beware. The peril exceeds that of earthly battles, for the consequences are eternal. But your victory, O Christian, was won for you on that cruciform battlefield of 33 A.D. It was won for you by the Lord of the Angels, Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

For after hell's minions had their torturous way with Him, even beyond what God allowed them to do to Job, the Lord of the angels died on that cross and was buried. But then the Victor King took up His life, descended into hell, and preached His triumphant sermon to those dark angels and their master, a sermon which will ring in their ears for eternity.

Having conquered sin, death, the devil and all his angels, it was the angels that brought the Gospel to the women, it was the angels that spoiled the work of those who brought the embalming supplies to the tomb.

And you, believing as do the holy angels, freely given and holding the faith of the One Holy catholic Church, the eternity Christ won is yours. And as He died and rose for your benefit, so too does He send His angels for your benefit.

And today, you are surrounded by the holy angels. For where Christ is there are His angels. And Christ is here this day for you. You eat the same Body and drink the same Blood given and shed on the cross. In the Blood are forgiveness and life. In Christ you too are holy, just and pure before God. So the vision of God that the angels have now is soon yours also in Christ Jesus.

For as His angels promised at the ascension, He will return to take you, His Church, home. His angels will swing the sickle, and you will be like the angels, you will join the angels around the throne of God, and you will judge the angels

As you kneel this day and speak the Words of that angelic hymn, as you say with the angels "Holy, Holy, Holy" today before this altar, you add your praises to the heavenly choir of

holy angels before the throne of the Lamb, a choir in which you will soon stand because Christ won a place there for you.

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.