

## **Homily For Tuesday of the 26th Week of Ordinary Time- Year II**

**St Peter's 8:30am Mass- Oct. 9, 2018**

### **Feast of the Archangels**

**Rev. 12:7-12** "The deceiver of the world was defeated and thrown to the earth with his angels."

**Psalms 138:1-5** "Before the gods (and) in the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord."

**John 1:47-51** "You will see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

### **God's Messengers, the Angels**

#### **Introduction**

Someone has said: If you fear the Lord, you will not fear anything else. But, if you don't fear the Lord, you will live in fear of everything else. Here is the major issue of the day, then. We live in terror of that which can hurt the body, but we do not fear God who, from the beginning, invites all creation to live now and in eternity without fear.

This is a wonderful week in the Catholic liturgical calendar. No one has feasts like we do. We celebrate St. Jerome and St. Therese. But we also celebrate the angels and our relationship with them twice: today the archangels and on Friday our guardian angels. If we take this feast seriously, today we have every reason to lay down our fears.

#### **Angels**

I think of angels by the usual definitions. First is anyone who brings good news can be called an angel. But, primarily, it refers to those created spiritual beings who live with the 'beatific vision'. They see already what we only hope for. We are physical beings who also have a spiritual nature, expressed in our souls. Angels are, by their nature, pure spirit, but can, at times, enter into our reality. They are many.

St. Gregory the Great says that those who deliver messages of supreme importance are called archangels. We know their names. Raphael means 'God is

my healer'. This mission Raphael fulfils in the book of Tobit. Gabriel means 'God is my strength'. Before Gabriel announces the birth of Jesus to Mary, he appears to Zechariah. When : Your wife Elizabeth will bear you and son and you shall name him John How can I be sure of this?" Zechariah asked the angel. "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to bring you this good news."

Michael means 'Who is like the Lord God'. Michael is the captain of all of God's angels in the battle against evil. Michael is the special protector of Israel, but also of the Church.

In today's alternate reading, Daniel has a vision of heaven where he sees ten thousand times ten thousand angels worshipping. If we had this vision in our hearts, our fears would melt away and we would be in awe of God who inspires the worship of those great spiritual beings, the angels.

Twenty years ago, a movie called 'City of Angels' portrayed angels as jealous of our experience through senses. How like us to think that we the ultimate measure and that our physical enjoyment is the highest thing there is. What a lie. No, the angels don't envy us. They live in the presence of the source of the highest joy possible. They see everything that is good, everything that is true, everything that is beautiful.

Where is the Devil's last stand more evident than in the City of Angels, Los Angeles, where the entertainment industry pumps out movie after movie and show after show, mocking God, despicable deceitful images of God the Father, of Jesus the Saviour and of Satan as a lovable and misunderstood.

Like Daniel, John also has a vision of heaven. In that vision, he sees Michael and his angels battle against the dragon, the serpent, the Devil, Satan. John sees Satan and his angels defeated and thrown down. In the world we are outnumbered but in the big picture there are many more good than bad angels.

### **The Devil and his angels**

And who is Satan? Satan is the deceiver, the one who lies about everything. He is also called the accuser. Zechariah believed the lie that God could not work the

miracle of John's birth. For his lack of understanding, Gabriel struck him silent and unable to speak.

The psalm says: I will sing your praises. What happens when no one is allowed to sing God's praises in community. Remember Israel sang their joy many many times. They did not sing when they were slaves in Egypt. The yoke of their slavery made that impossible. Then, in the exile in Babylon, they did not sing because they had lost the land and the God to whom they would sing in times of victory.

### **John**

Jesus called Nathaniel to be one of the twelve. Even when they first met, Jesus said of Nathanael that there was no deceit in him. Because of this, he is able to see without deception, that Jesus is Son of God and king of Israel. Jesus promised Nathanael that he would see angels ascending and descending.

This is a reference to Jacob's dream where he saw angels ascending and descending in and out of our worldly existence, by means of a ladder between heaven and earth. Now Jesus foretells that he will be that ladder, that bridge, that gateway between heaven and earth.

### **Call To Action**

Since God often sends us his inspirations by means of his angels, we ought frequently to call on them and honour them, and ask their help in all your affairs, temporal as well as spiritual. In a world where deceit is rampant, we ought to pray:

Holy Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle.

Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil.

May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do you,

O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God

cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits

who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls.

Amen.

## **Key Scripture Verses**

**Revelation:** *Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels. There was no longer any place for them in heaven. That ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, was thrown down to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice proclaim: Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to life even in the face of death. Rejoice, then, you heavens and those who dwell in them!*

**Psalms:** *Before the gods I sing your praise. All the kings of the earth shall sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord. In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord.*

**John:** *When Jesus saw Nathanael, he said: Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit! Nathanael asked him: Where did you get to know me? Jesus answered: I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you. Nathanael replied: Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel! And Jesus said: Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.*