

Homily for October 2nd 2020

Our heavenly travelling companions

In the Collect for today's Mass we are given a prayer that helps us to clearly understand why the Lord has gifted us with Guardian Angels. The Collect begins:

O God, who in your unfathomable providence

Unfathomable means "incapable of being fully explored or understood" or it is impossible to fully measure. So when it comes to God's providence, which means his care and guidance of us, we cannot fully understand it. But what we can understand is that in his unfathomable providence he has been pleased:

to send your holy Angels to guard us,

This idea of their guarding presence is what we read from Exodus. In this passage the Lord is telling the Israelites that the angel will guard them on their way. Having been delivered from slavery in Egypt he is going to lead them through a wilderness land so that they will finally arrive in the Promised Land. It is put this way:

I am going to send an angel in front of you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared.

So guardian angels are those who go in front of us to guard us as we journey, not to the Promised Land in Canaan, to our final home of which Jesus speaks in John 14 this way:

In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

So this is the first thing to know about our guardian angels, they are accompanying us as we journey through this world as our spiritual traveling companions so as to guard us on our way to the place Jesus has prepared for us in heaven.

Next we pray:

hear our supplication as we cry to you,

Supplication is the action of asking or begging for something earnestly or humbly. How important it is in this world to cry out to God, because life is really hard and in this world we can feel overwhelmed by life's challenges. Supplication is part of the same word group from which is derived the word "to supply". So we are asking for God to supply for our needs on this desert journey. But not only do we offer supplication, Jesus makes it clear that so too our guardian angles. We are all Jesus' little one who cry out to our daddy in heaven and say help us.

Listen to what our angels are doing:

Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.¹

Jesus understands we are little ones and in heaven as they see the face of the Father our guardian angels are requesting the Father supply what we need for the journey.

Next we pray:

that we may always be defended by their protection

This makes it clear to us that while on this earthy journey it is a perilous road, All around, as the Israelites experienced, as they journeyed through the Sinai dessert and arrived in the Promised Land, there were those forces so opposed them and so the Lord says to us in Exodus:

Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him.

Does this mean that the Lord is unforgiving? No, the Lord is always forgiving but he is cautioning us here that as we travel through this world we can become so hardened that we turn away from God and we forget that life in this world is a sacred journey and so end up profaning life. Note that the Holy Name of God is associated with our angels and if we turn away from them, our hearts can turn away from God and so we ask, protect us angels from such faithlessness!

Our prayer ends with these words

and rejoice eternally in their company.

Once day when we get to the place the Lord has promised we will join with them in heavenly worship. Later in Matthew Jesus will say that. "In the resurrection we are like angels in heaven". In other words we too will behold the face of God as we rejoice in their company.

We do give thanks this day, for our guardian angles, our heavenly travelling companions.

***Angel of God, our Guardian Dear
To whom God's love commits me here.
Ever this day be at my side,
To light to guard, to rule and guide.***

¹ [The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition](#). (1993). (Mt 18:10). Washington, DC: National Council of Churches of Christ.