



# THE RAY

*The newsletter of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center*

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Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center  
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## *From the Desk of Mary...*



Advent greetings from Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center.

As the Church prepares for Christmas, we can expect to hear Gospel accounts that include multiple visits from angels who played a special role in ushering in the joy of Christ's birth. Our Lady, Zechariah and Saint Joseph all received these heavenly visitors, as did the shepherds while tending their sheep on that most Holy Night.

But what about the rest of us? We too have a wonderful story to tell. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches (§336) that each of us has a holy guardian angel who was assigned to us from birth who will usher us into eternal life.

This issue of *The Ray* is devoted to our guardian angels who are powerful intercessors for us throughout our lives. Included here is an article entitled "To Light, to Guard, to Rule and Guide" to help us gain a deeper appreciation for our guardian angel. You will also find interspersed throughout the newsletter various quotes from the writings of the saints that invite pondering on angels along with the powerful prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel that is often recited at the conclusion of the Rosary, and in some parishes after the final blessing at daily Mass.

Many Catholics were introduced to their guardian angel early in life but left him behind as they approached adolescence and adulthood. It's time to reclaim him. When better than now to befriend our guardian angel and invoke his intercession for our personal needs and the great needs of the world? We don't have to go anywhere or do anything to find him. He's already at our side and at our service.

This year let's welcome the joys and the blessings of the Christmas season together with our guardian angel, that wonderful, faithful friend whose sole mission on earth is to unceasingly help us to prepare to see Jesus face to face in heaven. And of course, let us remember to frequently thank him.

Speaking of gratitude, we are so very grateful for all the many ways you have supported the Center throughout the year. It is a great privilege to share this sacred mission with you. May our precious Savior and Lord bless you many times over for the sacrifices you have made so that the work of spiritual direction and vocational discernment can flourish here. And it does.

From all of us at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center, from our hearts to yours, I wish you and those you love a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peace-filled New Year.

*"If you find it impossible to pray, hide behind your good angel and charge him to pray in your stead."<sup>1</sup>*

Saint John Vianney

<sup>1</sup>[The Dictionary of Quotes from the Saints](#) by Paul Thigpen. Servant Publications, Ann Arbor, MI c. 2001,p.14.

## *Masses for Your Intentions in 2024*

In gratitude for your support, Holy Mass will be offered in 2024 at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary for all of our benefactors, directees and volunteers on the following days: February 12<sup>th</sup>, May 31<sup>st</sup> (the Visitation of Holy Mary), September 9<sup>th</sup> and December 8<sup>th</sup> (the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception).

*"Our weakness is such that, if the guardian angels had not been given to us, we could not resist the many and powerful attacks of the evil spirits. For this purpose, we had need of a higher nature...That is why God has taken these spirits out from among His treasures and has given through them an aid to human weakness, so that this divine assistance might help us against the powers of this world of darkness to attain the heritage of salvation."<sup>2</sup>*

Saint Hilary of Poitiers

<sup>2</sup>ibid.,13.

## *Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel*

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, 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.



*"Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd, leading him to life."<sup>3</sup>*

Saint Basil the Great

<sup>3</sup>Op.cit.,14.

## *To Light, to Guard, to Rule and Guide*

Throughout Sacred Scripture we find powerful and beautiful examples of God's Holy Angels intervening in human affairs to enlighten, protect and guide His people through the joys and perils of their earthly pilgrimage. The greatest story ever told was to Mary by the Angel Gabriel announcing that she would become the Mother of the Savior, Jesus Christ.

In Our Lord's own life, on the night of His birth, an angel appeared to poor shepherds proclaiming "good news of great joy... and suddenly there was a multitude of heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests." (Lk 2:10,13-14). Before Jesus entered His public life, he went into the desert for forty days to fast and pray. When the devil tempted Him there, the angels came to minister to Him. The night before Jesus died, during His agony in the garden, an angel appeared to Him and strengthened Him in His great distress. And finally, in the Resurrection accounts of Saints Matthew and John, we encounter angels at the tomb of Jesus on that first glorious Easter morning.

In the life of Saint Joseph, an angel appeared to him in a dream and said, "Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home." (Mt. 1:20) Later, he was instructed by an angel to take Mary and the baby to Egypt to protect them from Herod's plot. When it was safe for them to return home, an angel again advised Saint Joseph to travel by a different route.

The Church's teaching on Guardian Angels emanates from Our Lord's own words of instruction when he says in defense of children, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father."(Mt 18:10)

Each year on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Church celebrates the memorial of the Guardian Angels. Included in the Office of Readings for that day is an excerpt of an uplifting sermon by Saint Bernard, abbot, in which he reflects on Psalm 91:11, "He as given his angels charge over you to guard you in all your ways." He writes:

These words should fill you with respect, inspire devotion and instill confidence; respect for the presence of angels, devotion because of their loving service, and confidence because of their protection. And so the angels are here; they are at your side, they are with you, present on your behalf. They are here to protect you and serve you.<sup>1</sup>

Blessed Carlo Acutis advised his students to treat their Guardian Angel as their best friend.<sup>2</sup> A beautiful way to invoke

and honor our Guardian Angel is with the following traditional Catholic prayer:

Angel of God, my guardian dear,

To whom God's love entrusts me here,

Ever this day be at my side,

To light, to guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

<sup>1</sup>The *Liturgy of the Hours*, Vol. 4, Catholic Book Publishing Corp., New York, 1975. p.1454.

<sup>2</sup>*My Son Carlo* by Antonia Salzano Acutis, Published in English in 2023 by Our Sunday Visitor, p.139.

*"When tempted, invoke your angel. He is more eager to help you than you are to be helped! Ignore the devil and do not be afraid of him: he trembles and flees at the sight of your guardian angel."<sup>4</sup>*

Saint John Bosco

<sup>4</sup>Op.cit.,15.

*"The world of pure spirits stretches between the Divine Nature and the world of men. Because Divine Wisdom has ordained that the higher should look after the lower, angels execute the divine plan for human salvation: They are our guardians, who free us when hindered and help to bring us home."<sup>5</sup>*

Saint Thomas Aquinas

<sup>5</sup>Op.cit., 14.

 *As Always...* 

This newsletter is made possible through the generosity and skills of Miss Nicolette Bardele.

We are so grateful for any donation to the Center. All donations are tax-deductible and may be made payable to **Our Lady of Grace** and mailed to:

**Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center  
c/o Josh Gentine  
1912 NW 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
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