



# The Angels

Messengers from a loving God

**The year  
of St Joseph**

**God is rich in mercy**

**New Age Doctrines  
and Teachings Glossary**

**What do we know  
about the angels**

**St Michael – patron  
of the military, a testimony**

# God's grace in suffering

**Although it is the time of pandemic, it is also the time of proclaiming the Good News.**

At the moment masks are covering our faces but, for God this is not a problem. His graces and unconditional love penetrate through all masks directly into our hearts and minds.

God exists in eternity as a pure spirit. However, He wants to be closer to each and every one of us incarnated into the flesh and body in the person of Jesus Christ. Like we do, He had an identity, cried, suffered, was betrayed by a friend, had friends and danced at a wedding.

God is perfect, the omnipotent, omniscient originator and ruler of the universe. God is holy and pours His holy life into our hearts. Holiness is a journey; holiness cannot be bought for example at a market. It cannot be sold. It cannot be given away. Holiness is a journey to God's presence that we must make. We can pray for someone to be holy, but he's the one who has to work towards holiness not me. Walk in God's presence, in a faultless way. Holiness can only be attained with the help of four essential elements; courage, hope, grace and conversion.



It is not God who is responsible for tragedies, wars, poisoning the climate and food, broken relationships at home and at work but men who abuse their freedom.

God is fair to all and he forgives those who say sorry for their actions. God is just, which means He is always just. He cannot be unjust, and He defines and sets the standard for justice. God rewards those who keep His commandments and punishes those who transgress them is one standard that runs through the whole of the Bible. "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you" (Psalm 89:14).

I assure you of the constant daily prayers of the priests of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel for all our readers and their families. God bless you,

**Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA**  
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## The Angels

**Messengers from a loving God**

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# Pope Francis proclaims “Year of St Joseph”

**In a new Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris Corde* (“With a Father’s Heart”), Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father, a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.**

**T**he Letter marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX’s declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To celebrate the anniversary, Pope Francis has proclaimed a special “Year of St Joseph”, beginning on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception 2020 and extending to the same feast in 2021.

The Holy Father wrote *Patris Corde* against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, which, he says, has helped us see more clearly the importance of “ordinary” people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble Saint Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence”, who nonetheless played “an incomparable role in the history of salvation.”

## A beloved, tender, obedient father

Saint Joseph, in fact, “concretely expressed his fatherhood” by making an offering of himself in love, “a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home”, writes Pope Francis, quoting his predecessor St Paul VI.



■ Pope Francis

And because of his role at “the crossroads between the Old and New Testament”, St Joseph “has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people” (PC, 1). In him, “Jesus saw the tender love of God”, the one that helps us accept our weakness, because “it is through” and despite “our fears, our frailties, and our weakness” that most divine designs are realized. “Only tender love will save us from the snares of the accuser”, emphasizes the Pontiff, and it is by encountering God’s mercy especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation that we “experience His truth and tenderness” – because “we know that God’s truth does not

condemn us, but instead welcomes, embraces, sustains and forgives us.”

Joseph is also a father in obedience to God: with his ‘fiat’ he protects Mary and Jesus and teaches his Son to “do the will of the Father.” Called by God to serve the mission of Jesus, he “cooperated... in the great mystery of Redemption”, as St John Paul II said, “and is truly a minister of salvation.”

## Welcoming the will of God

At the same time, Joseph is “an accepting Father” because he “accepted Mary unconditionally” — an



important gesture even today, says Pope Francis, “in our world where psychological, verbal and physical violence towards women is so evident.” But the Bridegroom of Mary is also the one who, trusting in the Lord, accepts in his life even the events that he does not understand, “setting aside his own ideas” and reconciling himself with his own history.

Joseph’s spiritual path “is not one that *explains*, but *accepts*” — which does not mean that he is “resigned”. Instead, he is “courageously and firmly proactive”, because with the “Holy Spirit’s gift of fortitude” and full of hope, he is able “to accept life as it is, with all its contradictions, frustrations and disappointments.” In practice, through St Joseph, it is as if God were to repeat to us: “Do not be afraid!” because “faith gives meaning to every event, however happy or sad” and makes us aware that “God can make flowers spring up from stony ground.” Joseph “did not look for shortcuts but confronted reality with open eyes and accepted personal responsibility for it.” For this reason, “he encourages us to accept and welcome others as they are, without exception, and to show special concern for the weak.”

## A creatively courageous father, example of love

*Patris Corde* highlights “the creative courage” of St Joseph, which “emerges especially in the way we deal with difficulties.” “The carpenter of Nazareth” explains the Pope, “was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting in divine providence.” He had to deal with “the concrete

problems” his Family faced, problems faced by other families in the world, and especially those of migrants.

In this sense, St Joseph is “the special patron of all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty.” As the guardian of Jesus and Mary, Joseph cannot “be other than the guardian of the Church”, of her motherhood, and of the Body of Christ. “Consequently, every poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirm person is ‘the child’ whom Joseph continues to protect.” “From St Joseph”, writes Pope Francis, “we must learn... to love the Church and the poor.”

## A father who teaches the value, dignity and joy of work

“A carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family”, St Joseph also teaches us “the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one’s own labour.” This aspect of Joseph’s character provides Pope Francis the opportunity to launch an appeal in favour of work, which has become “a burning social issue” even in countries with a certain level of well-being. “There is a renewed need to appreciate the importance of dignified work, of which Saint Joseph is an exemplary patron” the Pope writes.

Work, he says, “is a means of participating in the work of salvation, an opportunity to hasten the coming of the Kingdom, to develop our talents and abilities, and to put them

at the service of society and fraternal communion.” Those who work, he explains, “are cooperating with God himself, and in some way become creators of the world around us.” Pope Francis encourages everyone “to rediscover the value, the importance and the necessity of work for normality from which no one is excluded,” especially in light of rising unemployment due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In his letter, Pope Francis notes how, “Every day, for over forty years, following Lauds [Morning Prayer]” he has “recited a prayer to Saint Joseph taken from a nineteenth-century French prayer book of the Congregation of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary.” This prayer, he says, “expresses devotion and trust, and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph”, on account of its closing words: “My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power.” The Pope calls everyone to “review our priorities” and to express our firm conviction that no young person, no person at all, no family should be without work!”

## A father “in the shadows”, centred on Mary and Jesus

Taking a cue from *The Shadow of the Father* – a book by Polish writer Jan Dobraczyński – Pope Francis describes Joseph’s fatherhood of Jesus as “the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father.”

“Fathers are not born, but made”, says Pope Francis. “A man does not



■ St Joseph with Baby Jesus by an anonymous painter, 18<sup>th</sup> c.

become a father simply by bringing a child into the world, but by taking up the responsibility to care for that child.” Unfortunately, in today’s society, children “often seem orphans, lacking fathers” who are able to introduce them “to life and reality.” Children, the Pope says, need fathers who will not try to dominate them, but instead raise them to be “capable of deciding for themselves, enjoying freedom and exploring new possibilities.”

This is the sense in which St Joseph is described as a “most chaste” father, which is the opposite of domineering

possessiveness. “Joseph”, says Pope Francis, “knew how to love with extraordinary freedom. He never made himself the centre of things. He did not think of himself, but focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus.”

Happiness for Joseph involved a true gift of self: “In him, we never see frustration, but only trust”, writes Pope Francis. “His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust.” Joseph stands out, therefore, as an exemplary figure for our time, in a world that ‘needs fathers’ and not ‘tyrants’; a society that ‘rejects those who

confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction.’

True fathers, instead, ‘refuse to live the lives of their children for them’ and instead respect their freedom. In this sense, says Pope Francis, a father realizes that “he is most a father and an educator at the point when he becomes ‘useless’, when he sees that his child has become independent and can walk the paths of life unaccompanied.” Being a father, the Pope emphasizes, “has nothing to do with possession, but is rather a ‘sign’ pointing to a greater fatherhood”: that of the “heavenly Father”.

## A daily prayer to St Joseph... wand a challenge

At the conclusion of his Letter, he adds another prayer to St Joseph, which he encourages all of us to pray together:

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed  
Virgin Mary.*

*To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy,  
and courage, and defend us  
from every evil.  
Amen.*

**Noreen Bavister, UK**

Taken from: [www.vaticannews.va](http://www.vaticannews.va)





# SOS Chaplet Association

**The initial idea of the Chapel of Mercy began in time for the Year of Mercy and became a focus of prayer and outreach to those imploring mercy for themselves and by showing mercy to others.**

Having the popular chapel, which is open each day, approved as a Diocesan Shrine came as a result of the enthusiasm of the parish priest, Canon Jason, and the then assistant priest, Fr Andrzej. Both priests have a strong devotion to the Divine Mercy and take an annual parish pilgrimage to the Shrine at Krakow.

The Shrine has available the first-class relics of St Faustina, St John Paul, St Teresa of Kolkata and Blessed Sopocko. The Shrine has also received recognition from the Vatican's Sacred Penitentiary as through the year various Indulgences are able to be obtained.

Canon Jason is also the chaplain at the local general hospital which has a 24-hour A&E department.

In 2017 the Shrine began an SOS Chaplet association now comprising of hundreds from the UK and Ireland and indeed across the whole world plus the parishioners who promise to pray the Chaplet when they receive a text message of the name of a person who has been given the last rites. Members also receive another set of Indulgences and importantly one at their own death for fulfilling this Work of Mercy for the dying.

The SOS association has taken on greater urgency at this time of the

pandemic especially when in some situations it is not possible for some priests to be with the dying.

During the close of the Holy Year of Mercy, Pope Francis wanted there to be permanent reminders of Mercy in each Diocese; these would serve as a focus for mercy. One fruit of the Holy Year was the Day of the Poor, and so it was a fitting way on its first celebration to designate the Church of the Sacred Heart as a Shrine of Divine Mercy for the Diocese of Menevia so as to serve as a continuous reminder of the Holy Year and for the need to pass on the Divine Mercy to others through the Works of Mercy.

If you request prayers at the Hour of Mercy devotion for the sick or another intention or to have a name of a dying family member prayed for by the SOS Chaplet, then email Canon Jason: [morrison1@menevia.org](mailto:morrison1@menevia.org)  
Facebook – Menevia Diocesan Shrine of Divine Mercy  
For Ireland Fr Marius  
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# God is rich in mercy

**An American by birth, Robert Stackpole earned a B.A. in History from Williams College in Massachusetts in 1982, and a Masters degree in Theology from Oxford University in England in 1988. He received his Doctorate in Theology from the Angelicum in Rome in 2000. Upon returning to North America, in 1997 he began work as the Research Director, and later Director, of the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy based in Stockbridge Massachusetts, a position he continues to hold. He has written several books on the Divine Mercy message and devotion, and regularly contributes articles to the official Divine Mercy website in the USA. ([www.TheDivineMercy.org](http://www.TheDivineMercy.org))**

## **What is the image of God in whom you believe and to whom you pray?**

The Merciful Jesus himself is our best image of God, as he tells us in St John's gospel, "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn 14:9), the Father who is "rich in mercy" (Eph. 2:4). For me, that means that God loves us more than we can ask or even imagine, more than we can desire, and not according to what we deserve. God's love for us, expressed above all through the merciful Heart of his incarnate Son, always seeks us out, whenever we are lost or broken, like a good shepherd searching for his beloved, lost sheep until he finds them.

## **What influenced you to study theology in England and become a theologian instead of following a different career, such as acting, lecturing or teaching?**

It was the apologist C.S. Lewis (author of *Mere Christianity* and *The Screwtape Letters*) who first fired my interest in the study of the Christian faith. He showed me that the more we learn about the love of God, the more we are inspired to love him, and the more we love him, the more we want to know about him!



■ Dr Robert Stackpole with his wife in our office, Poland

## **How did you meet your wife? What was so special about this Polish lady?**

I met her in a Catholic bookstore in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, where she was working as a sales assistant. We got into some great conversations, and I quickly came to know that here was someone whose faith was central to her whole life, someone who had defected from Communist Poland when it was under martial law, and made her way in the West just by walking by faith, and not by sight, as St Paul

bids us all to do (2 Cor 5:7). Besides, I thought she was really sweet and beautiful too!

## **What can world learn from the Polish people?**

For many centuries, Poles have remained strongly committed to the Catholic Faith and to civil liberty, despite the onslaughts of Swedish and Turkish invaders; Russian, Austrian and Prussian occupations; the brutality of the Nazis, and decades of oppression by the Communists. Above all, it was trust



in God that enabled their commitment to faith and liberty to survive, and to rise from the ashes again and again. This is an example that can inspire all Christians, as we face an increasingly anti-Christian world.

**You were an Anglican priest ordained in England, did your faith journey start there?**

No. My Father was a Reformed Church pastor (and a very good one), and I learned a great deal from him growing up. I am also grateful for all that I learned about the Faith from my friends and colleagues, in the Traditional Anglican Communion, and the Anglican Catholic Church, with whom I remain in close contact and fellowship.

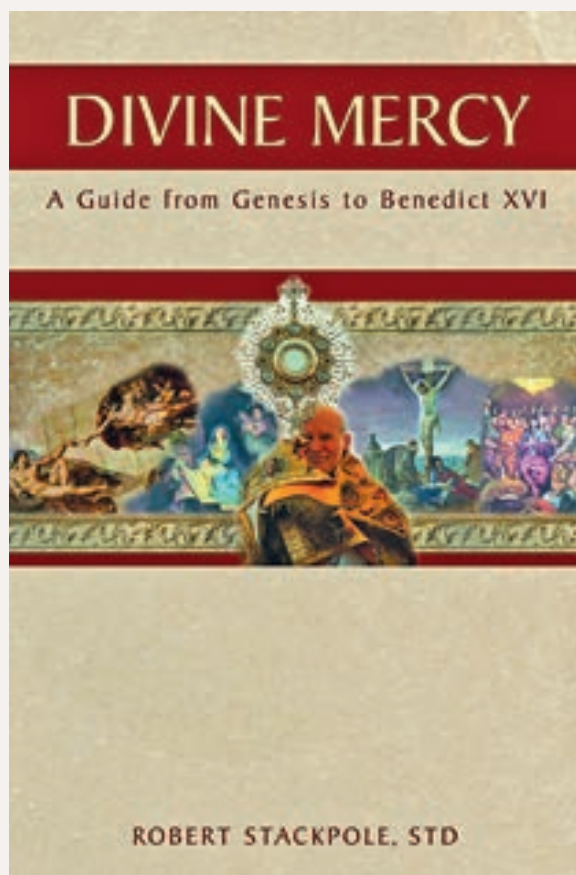
**In what year did you have your conversion to the Catholic faith and what influence did that have on your life?**

I became a Roman Catholic in 1995, because the Roman Catholic Church opened up to me for the first time the beauty of such mysteries as the Real Presence of Jesus in Blessed Sacrament (transubstantiation), the role of Mary as our Spiritual Mother, and the ways in which the Petrine Ministry (the papacy) can serve the unity of all Catholic Christians. Ever since my conversion, finding daily strength and refreshment from visiting or receiving Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and turning to Mary for her example, encouragement, and prayers, has been a spiritual lifeline for me. They

have kept me from drowning in discouragement when life got tough, and refreshed my heart with joy in times of grace and blessing. How can people live without having Jesus and Mary at the centre of their heart? I can no longer imagine it!

**How did you discover the Divine Mercy? How did your adventure with the Divine Mercy start?**

so in 1997 I got in touch with the Marian Fathers at the U.S. National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to help me with my research. Before the year was through, they had “reeled me in,” so to speak, to become the research director, and then full director, of the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy — and I have been serving in that capacity ever since.



■ The front cover of the book by Dr Robert Stackpole

**What was so special in the Divine Mercy that you started writing books and articles about the Divine Mercy?**

For me the Divine Mercy is the theme that, like a hidden thread, ties the whole of the Catholic Faith together. Every single one of the mysteries of the Faith can be viewed from this angle — something I explored in depth in my book *Divine Mercy: A Guide from Genesis to Benedict XVI* (second edition, 2010).

**What do you find so fascinating about St Faustina and Bl. Fr Michał Sopoćko that interests you?**

Perhaps the most amazing thing to me is that here was a religious sister with only three semesters of elementary school education, and a priest with *two* doctorates in theology (!), and yet, by the Holy Spirit, they understood each other's heart and mind, and both saw the merciful love of God as the key to the renewal of the Catholic Faith in our time. In short, it doesn't matter how educated or uneducated you are: our Merciful Lord can fill your heart and mind with his Merciful

As I was doing research for my doctoral thesis on the theology of the Sacred Heart at the Angelicum in Rome, quite by accident (or so I thought!) I came across some passages in St Faustina's *Diary* that spoke of our Lord's desire for her to “console” his Heart (e.g., see Diary entries 367, and 1210-1229). This became the main subject of my thesis, and



Love, and use you as an instrument to spread it!

**In the Diary, 667, Sister Faustina wrote she had a close relationship with her guardian angel and greatly admired St Michael. We are finding people are keen to develop a greater awareness of St Michael, is this the same in the US?**

Most people in America are familiar with St Michael only from the prayer of Pope Leo XIII, sometimes recited in our parishes at the end of Mass: “St Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil...” I think there is a desire to know more about him, and given the social and political crisis in the USA at the moment, now would be a good time to start!

**Do you pray to St Michael the Archangel and your Guardian Angel? Have you ever experienced angelic help or intervention?**

I often pray to my Guardian Angel, but apart from the traditional prayer to St Michael, at the end of Mass, I have rarely paid close attention to him. It is my wife Katarzyna who has developed a special devotion to St Michael, and so in this (as in so many other areas of life!) I am following her lead.

**Is it important to be in touch with the holy angels?**

Yes, now more than ever. The more the world slides into atheism — and as a result, abortion, family collapse, violent crime, substance abuse, suicide, and the social and

legal persecution of Christians runs rampant — the more we need to realise that we cannot rely on our own strength to struggle against these terrible evils, but must turn to the angels and saints for supernatural help. By their prayers, they can open the floodgates for us to receive all the graces that our Saviour longs to pour out upon the world from his Merciful Heart.



■ Divine Mercy by Eugeniusz Kazimirowski, 1934

**What are you going to ask God when you meet Him personally in heaven?**

I am going to ask him, with some sorrow, why I did not trust him more, which prevented me from becoming the saint he always meant

for me to be — unless, of course, by his grace, I am able to do much better in this regard in the time in my life I have left!

**You work in the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy based in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Can you tell us more about your job there? What do you do on a daily basis?**

I do a lot of editing and review work for most of the Divine Mercy books and web articles produced by the Marian Fathers — I also write some web articles and books myself (my most recent one, published in 2019: *Divine Mercy and Divine Justice: why both are essential to a Catholic understanding of God*).

I help instruct the Marian Novices in their Divine Mercy studies, and occasionally speak at conferences or parishes on the Divine Mercy message and devotion. Recently, in collaboration with the Marians and with Ascension Press, I just finished a project which I would call a life-long “dream come true”: a Divine Mercy Study and Devotional Bible (it is slated to be released in February). So, my work has many dimensions, and I am blest indeed to be able to help spread the merciful love of God in all these ways. When I reach 65 (I am 61 now) my wife and I intend to retire in Poland, so I hope and pray I will be able to get to know the Michaelite Fathers better here in Poland in the years to come.

Interview by  
**Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA**  
with **Dr Robert Stackpole**

# St Faustina and the angels

**St Faustina was aware of the presence of the angels and thankful to God for them.**

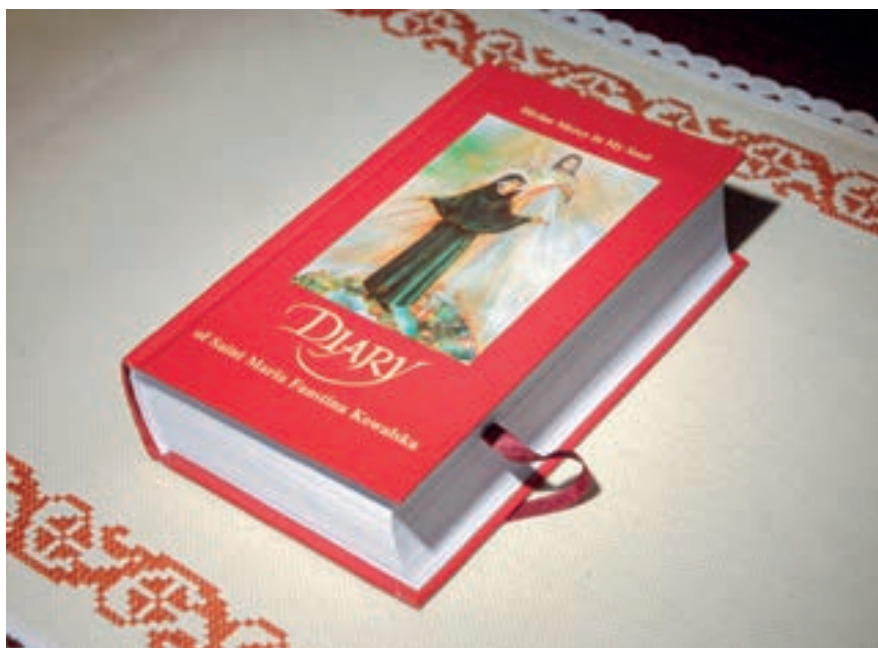
**S**t Faustina wrote “I thank God for his goodness that He gives angels for our companions. How little people reflect on the fact that they have always beside them a guest and at the same time a witness to everything. I thank God for the angels” (Diary, 1200).

St Faustina was a mystic and had supernatural gifts like St Padre Pio, those of bilocation, prophecy and reading human souls, but even so she had to contend with spiritual conflict. Daily life was a battle for her, for us this is our way forward to grow in the Divine Mercy devotion.

## Ask for assistance

To be fighters for God we have to call and ask for assistance, we can never fight with our own strength alone. It is impossible and we will be defeated. When we are weak we receive the strength from God and the Holy Spirit. The poverty of the heart and then the Holy Spirit will come.

St Faustina received a great help from St Michael, her Confessor and also her guardian angel. I was actually surprised to find there are more



■ Diary of St Faustina Kowalska

than 70 places in the Diary where the angels are mentioned. Consequently it means a lot, because when we read the Diary we encounter the angels. They introduce themselves to us.

St Faustina prayed to her guardian angel and the prayer to St Michael each day - the exorcism prayer by Pope Leo XIII. She often experienced the protection of her guardian angel. She saw him at her side in many circumstances of her life, she saw him praying and contemplating. “The next morning, I saw my guardian angel, who accompanied me throughout the journey as far as Warsaw. He disappeared when we entered the convent gate...

When we took our seats on the train from Warsaw to Cracow, once again I saw my guardian angel at my side. He was absorbed in prayer and in contemplating God and I followed him with my thoughts” (Diary, 490).

## Radiant spirit

She described the differences between the angels whom she saw: “Then I saw one of the seven spirits near me, radiant as at other times, under a form of light. I constantly saw him beside me when I was riding on the train. I saw an

angel standing on every church we passed, but surrounded by a light which was paler than that of the spirit accompanying me on the journey, and each of these spirits who were guarding the churches bowed his head to the spirit who was near me" (Diary, 630).

The reason why the fallen angels whose names we do not know are present and mentioned in the Diary is because they were disturbing, interrupting, discouraging and it was their intention that St Faustina would give up writing the Diary. St Michael said "You are hated by evil and the Devil". Sometimes Satan himself would come to her.

## Prince of the heavenly hosts

The most brilliant of the angels mentioned in the Bible is St Michael. The Holy Church gives to him the highest place amongst the angels. She refers to him as "Prince of the heavenly hosts". He is considered to be the guardian angel of Jesus Christ. Saint Michael was the protector and defender of God's chosen people. Now he is the defender of the Church.

St Michael the Archangel was sent to us by God for him to be closer to us and offer us graces. We know from the Diary that St Michael was the defender of St Faustina. She described her experience in the following words: "On the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, I saw by my side that great leader, who spoke these words to me: 'The Lord has ordered me to take special care of you. Know that you are hated by evil; but

do not fear – Who is like God.' And he disappeared. But I feel his presence and assistance" (Diary, 706).

## Special protection

St Faustina had the special protection of St Michael because of her mission, and this protection was also given to her confessor Bl Fr Michael Sopoćko who received the Divine Mercy in his soul first. He was a bright intelligent man, a professor of theology and the right man to find out if it was true what was going on in St Faustina's heart.

In another moment of her life she confessed: "I have great reverence for Saint Michael the Archangel, he had no example to follow in doing the will of God, and yet he fulfilled God's will faithfully" (Diary, 667).

## Courage for the spiritual fight

Jesus wanted St Faustina to become a knight and fight for the salvation of souls. If you become more advanced in the Divine Mercy spirit, it makes you more courageous and you know then this is a spiritual fight and it is not easy. Initially, it is pleasing for our hearts to be in the fight for souls but afterwards we realise that this is a spiritual battle. One of the most beautiful sentences in the diary, she said "I begin my day with battle and end it with battle" (Diary, 606).

Call on your guardian angel and St Michael the Archangel several times during the day for help, assistance and protection.

Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA



## A prayer of trust

Holy Spirit, give me the grace of unwavering trust when I think of Our Lord's merits, and of fearful trust when I think of my own weakness.

When poverty comes knocking at my door. Jesus, I Trust in You.

When sickness lays me low, or injury cripples me. Jesus, I Trust in You.

When the world pushes me aside, and pursues me with its hatred. Jesus, I Trust in You.

When I am besmirched by calumny, and pierced through by bitterness. Jesus, I Trust in You.

When my friends abandon me, and wound me by word and deed. Jesus, I Trust in You.

Spirit of love and mercy, be to me a refuge, a sweet consolation, a blessed hope, that in all the most trying circumstances of my life I may never cease to trust in You. Amen.

Blessed Michael Sopoćko



# May, the month of Our Lady and St Michael

**Our Lady and St Michael the Archangel celebrate one feast day together in May. Here is a brief history of how this came about.**



■ Our Lady of the Rosary venerated in Pompeii, Italy

There is one special date when a feast day dedicated to St Michael the Archangel and the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary of Pompeii are both traditionally observed in Italy, and that is 8<sup>th</sup> May.

Let us begin with St Michael, whose interventions in human affairs on Mount Gargano are described in historical sources.

The beginnings of the Sanctuary of St Michael date back to the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> and first decades of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest written sources proving the antiquity of this place are two letters of Pope Gelasius I, written at the turn of AD 493 and 494; the first one to Bishop Giusto of Larino, and the second one to Bishop Herculentius of Potenza.

There is also a brief mention in the Geronimian Martyrology on September 29<sup>th</sup>. Another written source is “Liber de apparitione sancti Michaelis in Monte Gargano”. This hagiographical text from the early 9<sup>th</sup> century shows in detail evocative miraculous events that gave rise to the devotion of St Michael the Archangel on Mount Gargano.

The devotion is based on four apparitions of St Michael that have taken place over the centuries. The first apparition called the Lost Bull Episode occurred in AD 490. The second apparition of St Michael, known as the Victory Episode, is traditionally dated to the year 492.

According to today's historians the events took place during the war between the Lombard prince, Grimoaldo, and the Greeks in 662-663. The third apparition happened in AD 493 and the last one during the plague in 1665.

According to the Victory Episode, the victory over the Greeks, won on 8<sup>th</sup> May, was attributed to St Michael's intercession. Tradition says that the city of Siponto was close to surrender during the siege by the enemy troops. Bishop St Lawrence, obtained a three-day ceasefire and at that time he turned for help to the leader of the heavenly army. After three days of prayers and fasting he saw St Michael the Archangel who predicted a speedy and complete victory. This promise poured hope into the hearts of the beleaguered inhabitants of Siponto. Encouraged, the defenders left the city and took part in a fierce battle, accompanied by thunderbolts, flashes and bangs of extraordinary power. As St Michael promised, their victory was complete.

The triumph date of 8<sup>th</sup> May quickly spread throughout the Church and soon was established as the feast of St Michael's apparition within the whole Church.

The Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary of Pompeii came later. When Bartolo Longo promoted a festival in honour of Our Lady of the Rosary in Pompeii, Italy, he also started building a church. The cornerstone for the construction was laid on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1876.

Young Fortunatina Agrelli was miraculously cured on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1884, after reciting the 54-day Novena to the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary of Pompeii. Her case increased



■ The main entrance to the Shrine of St Michael, Monte Sant'Angelo, Italy

faith in the power of the Rosary prayer. A young woman, Concetta Vasterilla, who was dying in agony, was also cured when similar promises were made. During the day when the cornerstone of the new church was laid, 8<sup>th</sup> May 1876, Fr Anthony Varone, who had received the Last Sacraments and was dying of a gangrenous condition, was likewise healed. He celebrated Holy Mass the following morning and acknowledged his miraculous cure from the pulpit on the feast of the Holy Rosary.

The church was consecrated by Cardinal La Valletta, Papal Legate for Pope Leo XIII, in May, 1891. In 1934, at the express command of Pope Pius XI, a great new basilica was begun. Completed in 1939, it was opened in the name of Pope Pius XII

by Cardinal Magliones, Secretary of State to His Holiness. Pope St Pius X had earlier expressed support for the Sanctuary and devotion to Our Lady of Pompeii.

The Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Pompeii is one of the most well-known rosary sanctuaries in the world. Each year, on 8<sup>th</sup> May, the papal delegate leads the Holy Mass in the Shrine, where he also solemnly prays the Supplica ("Petition") to Our Lady of Pompeii for the needs of the whole world and this is transmitted throughout Italy. It is a day of great rosary graces!

Pray on this blessed day in May to honour Our Lady and pray to St Michael for his help and intercession for the many graces you will receive.

Below is the full text of the "Supplica":



# PETITION TO THE VIRGIN OF THE ROSARY OF POMPEII ("Supplica")

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O August Queen of Victories, O Sovereign of Heaven and Earth, at whose name the heavens rejoice and the abyss trembles. O Glorious Queen of the Rosary, we, your devoted children, assembled in your Temple of Pompeii, pour out the affection of our hearts and with filial confidence express our miseries to You.

From the Throne of clemency on which You are seated as Queen, turn, O Mary, your merciful gaze on us, on our families, on Italy, on Europe and on the whole world. Have compassion on the worries and trials which embitter our lives. See, O Mother, how many physical and spiritual dangers and how many calamities and afflictions press upon us.

O Mother, implore the mercy of your Divine Son for us and conquer the hearts of sinners with your benevolence. They are our brothers and your children who cause the heart of our sweet Jesus to bleed and sadden your sensitive heart. Show us all what You are, the Queen of Peace and of Pardon.

Hail Mary...

It is true that, although we are your children, with our sins we are the first to crucify Jesus again in our hearts and pierce your heart anew.

We confess that we deserve the most severe punishments, but remember that on Golgotha You received, with the Divine Blood, the testament

of the dying Saviour, who declared You our Mother, the Mother of sinners. You then, as our Mother, are our Advocate, our Hope. And we raise our pleading hands to You with sighs crying, "Mercy!"

O good Mother, have pity on us, on our souls, on our families, on our relatives, on our friends, on our deceased, especially on our enemies, and on so many who call themselves Christian and yet offend the heart of your loving Son. We implore mercy for today's misguided nations, for all of Europe, for the whole world, so that, repentant, they may return to your heart.

Have mercy on us all, O Mother of Mercy!

Hail Mary...

Deign kindly to hear us, O Mary! Jesus has placed in your hands all the treasures of His Grace and His Mercy.

You are seated crowned Queen at the right hand of your Son, resplendent with immortal glory above all choirs of angels. You extend your dominion throughout heaven and earth and all creatures are subject to You.

You are omnipotent by grace and therefore You can help us. Were You not willing to help us because we are ungrateful children and undeserving of your protection, we would not know to whom to turn.

Your Mother's heart would not allow seeing us, your children, lost. The Infant whom You hold on your lap and the mystical Rosary on which we gaze at your hand, inspire confidence in us that You shall hear us. We confide totally in You and abandon ourselves to You, like helpless children into the arms of the tenderest of mothers, and on this very day, we expect from You the longed-for graces.

Hail Mary...

Let us ask for Mary's blessing. One last favour we ask of You, O Queen, which You cannot deny us (on this very solemn day). Grant us all your steadfast love and in a special way your maternal blessing.

We shall not leave You until You have blessed us.

Bless, O Mary, at this moment, our Holy Father. To the ancient splendours of your Crown, to the triumphs of your Rosary, whence You are called Queen of Victories, add also this, O Mother: grant the victory of the Faith and give peace to human society. Bless our bishops, priests and particularly those who work zealously to give honour to your Shrine. Finally, bless all those who are associated with your Temple of Pompeii and all those who cultivate and promote the devotion of the Holy Rosary.

O Blessed Rosary of Mary, sweet chain which binds us to God, bond of love which unites us to the angels, tower of salvation against the assaults of hell, safe haven in the universal shipwreck, we shall never abandon You.

You will be our comfort in the hour of agony. For You is the last kiss of our dying life. And the last word on our lips will be your sweet name, O Queen of the Rosary of Pompeii, O Dearest Mother, O Refuge of Sinners, O Sovereign Consoler of the Afflicted. May You be blessed everywhere, on earth and in heaven, today and forever. Amen.

Hail, Holy Queen...

The prayer is to be said only on 8<sup>th</sup> of May and the first Sunday of October.

**Agata Pawłowska, Poland**

Sources: [www.vaticannews.va](http://www.vaticannews.va)

[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

[www.anielskimiecz.pl](http://www.anielskimiecz.pl)





■ Assumption of the Virgin by Francesco Botticini, 15<sup>th</sup> cent.

# What do we know about the angels?

**Angels are spiritual beings of extra-terrestrial origin. They are real beings with supernatural power and live beyond the universe.**

Angels are certainly real; the Bible repeatedly tells us about them and the work God has given them to do. God “will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways” (Psalm 91:11).

Because angels are spiritual and not physical beings, the angels usually are invisible and unseen by us. Angels exist, they are among us.

As you look at me now, you only see Fr Peter Prusakiewicz. But it is not only me that God sees. He sees me, my guardian angel and St

Michael the Archangel. This statue reminds us that the archangel is here and wants us to know him better.

We’re not alone in the world created by God. Next to us there are beings called angels.

Meeting someone from another town or city is something new, interesting and fresh. Meeting someone of a different nationality can be something unusual.

Meeting someone of extra-terrestrial origin is exceptionally unusual. Angels are of extra-terrestrial origin. They live beyond the universe. Although they do not have bodies, they are living beings, not things. What we share with angels is reason, the ability to love and free will. Of course, these attributes are far more advanced and

are not weakened by sin in angels. In human beings these attributes are weakened by sin. That is why we are not able to discern good and truth as easily and purely as angels.

## Angels are God’s servants and messengers

In spite of the fact that angels are far more developed and perfect than human beings, they are not children of God. They are His servants and messengers. Although human beings are imperfect and sinful, only they are called children of God. Only human

beings have the right to call God their Father. This was God's decision to make us His children. He takes care of us so much that He gave us angels to protect and help us. Each of us has his or her own guardian angel.

## The role of angels

In the Gospel of John we read, "In all truth I tell you, you will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending over the Son of man" (John 1:51). The picture of ascending and descending angels define their roles. They descend from heaven into earth and bring God's blessings, God's help and support to us. They also ascend from earth into heaven and bring our requests, praise and thanksgiving as well as our tears and suffering to God; they intercede for us. They serve and carry messages in two directions: up from heaven to earth and the other way round.

## Invisible mysterious messengers

We cannot see many things but they exist. No one can see the wind, but fallen trees or a hat falling to the ground indicates that some force works here. No one sees the rays in the microwave, but if we were to put a cold meal inside, we would have hot food after two minutes. A microwave is a form of electromagnetic radiation with wavelengths ranging from about one metre to one millimetre; with frequencies between 300 MHz and 300 GHz.

If we were to have an X-ray, in a hospital it would be done by trained

specialists called radiographers. X-rays are a type of radiation that can pass through the body. They can't be seen by the naked eye and you can't feel them. As they pass through the body, the energy from the X-rays are absorbed at different rates by different parts of the body. A detector on the other side of the body picks up the X-rays after they've passed through and turns them into an image. We know they work but it is invisible.

It is similar with angels. Although we cannot see them, they are present and work among us. Their service does not depend on whether we see them or not or whether we are aware of their presence or not. Angels are happy when we think of them the same way we are happy knowing our family and friends think of us. Angels are happy when we keep in touch with them via prayers the same way we are happy when our friends keep in touch with us via meetings, calls, letters, texts, emails etc.

## The invisible power of God

We need angels and we need to communicate with them. Today we are experiencing a renewal of faith in angels. Just go to the nearest gift shop; it is usually full of angelic figures and pictures.

Poets make an attempt to capture the angelic world, that is in fact elusive and intangible. Their world is so mysterious that it is often depicted by symbolism or imagery. Angels are presented in a simplified way. We imagine an angel as an innocent and delicate being with wings that we see in a

colouring book for children. Innocence and mildness are emphasised to make angels more appealing for children. But this is not the whole truth about angels. We cannot stop only at those angelic attributes. We cannot forget about their power. Angels are equipped with the invisible power of God. God is the source of their power. God is also the source of our power.

We cannot say that angels are good only for children; that angels protect only children and the prayer "Angel of God, my guardian dear" is reserved only for children. That kind of thinking is a mistake. Angels do protect each and every one of us from the moment of conception to a natural death. We all should call on our guardian angels daily, regardless of our age.

## Who is St Michael?

We need to remember that St Michael is not a thing; he is a living being equipped with free will, reason and the ability to love that became perfect in the time of trial. In the face of rebellion in heaven he was the first to call, 'Who is like God! St Michael works with great power among us. It should not matter that we cannot see him. His mighty power does not depend on our sight but, of course, he wants us to be conscious and aware.

## This is Saint Michael

This is not just Archangel Michael, this is Saint Michael the Archangel. He cannot 'produce' holiness on his own. God makes him holy, a saint. God pours His holiness into St Michael. God fills him with His





■ The statue of St Michael in the Divine Mercy Shrine, Łagiewniki, Kraków, Poland

presence, grace and extraordinary power. St Michael is close to God constantly and makes us aware of God's closeness and presence.

Saint Michael the Archangel is a mysterious being. He is mysterious because we are not able to know him by reason. We know various natural laws and phenomena by our reason. We cannot do the same with St Michael because he is out of this world. He is a supernatural being that our reason has to acknowledge with humility: "You're a mystery to me".

We often tend to think that someone strange and unusual may be a kind of threat to our world and life. That is not the case with St Michael. He helps us find our lost wings, our motivations to do better. He helps us rise from great falls.

## The Sacrament of Confession

When appearing at the grotto in the Gargano Mountains he said: "Here, where the rock is open, sins are forgiven." He made this miraculous grotto a genuine shrine of Divine Mercy. There, in the heavenly shrine people find their lost values and purity of their souls that are cleaned by the Blood of the Lamb in the sacrament of confession.

St Michael, the great prince, is the guardian of the Children of God, the protector of the Church. You are a child of God; you belong to the Church so you can be sure of His constant assistance.

## The source of happiness

We are unique. There are differences between us that make us unique, like fingerprints or the iris in our eye. That is the reason no other person is like me or like you. Everyone is priceless in the eyes of God.

The same with angels: each angel is unique, each angel is individually created and loved by God. Angels experience God's love to the deepest extent.

Look at the statue from Gargano, St Michael is extremely happy. Where does his happiness come from? From being in God's presence. This is what St Michael wants to tell us – that it is God's sweet presence that makes us happy inside. And when it flows out of us it makes people around us happy, too.

There is a part inside of us that does not belong to the earthly world – it is God's life in us. And this very part makes us happy. We experience it as love, peace, the sweet presence of God. It makes us happy already in this life. St Michael the Archangel wants to say: 'Find your happiness within yourself, for God living in you is the source of happiness.'

## Meaning of a name

The name Michael is a Hebrew name appearing in the Bible and is attributed to the most powerful angel St Michael. Mi-cha-el means 'Who is like God'. The letters 'el' indicates God. Names with the letters 'el' determine the relationship between their bearers and God: for example, Israel means 'Warrior of God'; Micha-el



means 'Who is like God'; 'Emmanu-el' – 'God with us'; 'Elisha' – 'God gave help'; 'Elkanah' – 'God brought to life'.

There is a conviction that to some extent a name expresses the personality and character of its bearer.

The etymology of the name Michael indicates that the bearer is associated only with God. He belongs to God. He is fascinated with God to such an extent that he forgets about himself. He is devoted to God completely.

## Totally Yours

St John Paul II used to say *Totus Tuus* ('Totally Yours') to express his devotion to Mary. St Michael says *Totus Tuus* ('Totally Yours') to God. The 'Totally Yours' attitude is included in his name.

Who is like God! Michael is a name that calls us to seek God above all. St Michael is like a sermon for us. 'Who is like God!' Each time we say the name Saint Michael, we pray and give glory to God. A short, three-word prayer is within the name of St Michael. We have another short five-word prayer 'Jesus, I trust in You.' on the image of Divine Mercy.

On the opposite side there is Lucifer. His name means "Carrying the light" (from Latin 'lux' meaning 'light'). It was the light of God that he was supposed to carry to the universe. Unfortunately, he became an opponent of God and some angels supported him.

The Christian tradition perfectly reflects the story of Lucifer with the words of the prophet Isaiah: "How did you come to fall from the heavens, Daystar, son of Dawn? How did you come to be thrown to the ground, conqueror of nations? You

who used to think to yourself: I shall scale the heavens; higher than the stars of God I shall set my throne. I shall sit on the Mount of Assembly far away to the north. I shall climb high above the clouds, I shall rival the Most High. Now you have been flung down to Sheol, into the depths of the abyss!" (Isaiah 14:12-15).

It is his pride that pushed him off heaven. His motto is "I won't serve". The motto of St Michael is: "Who is like God!". His name expresses what is most important: Who is like God. We need to imitate Him.

## Exceptional defender

We are made of matter. Thanks to the matter our human species procreates. Our genes are copied like a letter in a photocopier.

It is worth remembering that each angel is different. Angels differ from one another more than we do. Each angel is a separate species. Angels don't have a material element. There can be only one angel in each species or form. That is why Saint Michael is distinct from other angels, distinct from St Raphael the same way St Raphael is distinct from St Michael. And St Michael's mission ordered by God is unique. He is so special that no other angel can replace him. He is an exceptional defender in spiritual warfare. No one has such power as Saint Michael. No one is so equipped by God for these special tasks. These particular gifts he obtained from God make him so unique and original. It is a great honour for St Michael to fight for God.

Not a single spirit can replace Saint Michael. Therefore, if you make friends with him, you will gain something completely different from what you

may gain from St Raphael or St Gabriel or your guardian angel. He gives us something special and unique.

## Angels and saints seek our Company

We do not really find angels, they find us: the same with saints, they find us. One may have a special devotion to St Anthony, St Mother Teresa of Calcutta, St Teresa of Avila, St John Vianney, St John Paul II. Others prefer to pray to Padre Pio or Theresa of Lisieux.

Everyone has their own particular spiritual path. If you read these articles, this is not a coincidence. It is St Michael the Archangel who invites you to make friends with him. He offers his friendship to you. It means that you probably need his friendship.

According to the proverb: he who lives among wolves learns to howl. If you stay with him, you'll become like him: more focused on God, stronger, wiser, uncompromising and spiritually beautiful.

## Discover St Michael

I hope that you discover St Michael the Archangel: hear his strong call from the bottom of his heart: Who is like God? There is no one like our good, loving, omnipotent, just and infinitely merciful God. St Michael, thank you for being among us. Keep us close to Jesus' loving heart. Lead us on a good spiritual path. We count on you. Amen.

God bless you.

Fr Peter Prusakiewicz CSMA

# Patron of the Military, Mariners and Police Officers



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## Guardian of Souls and of the Church – Protect us!

It has been a long time since I have thought about my first exposure to St Michael the Archangel. Although I grew up Catholic, I do not recall ever having been exposed to any devotion or prayer to him. Nevertheless, I can say without a doubt, that in retrospect, my life has certainly been replete with the influence of his intercession.

Back in January 1982, while I was a corporal with the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, a reserve army regiment out of Toronto, Ontario and, as I was finishing up my Basic Parachutist Course at the Airborne Centre in Edmonton, Alberta, that I can first recall being introduced to St Michael the Archangel. It came by way of another paratrooper of the then Canadian Airborne Regiment during some time in the mess over a beer or two... And he showed us

his Paratrooper Medal of St Michael. "Cool" was quickly heard around the small group and "Where can we get one of those?" The trooper was quick to tell us that it was not something that you can purchase for yourself but must have it given to you by another paratrooper. I can say that no little amount of excitement showed in our eyes.

## I felt different, special and protected

A few days later, during the graduation festivities, each of us received one of these medals, but it was not a simple matter of just getting it handed to you. We had to drink from the chrome helmet that was suspended from the parachute riser straps, then jump and do a proper airborne roll, off the platform. Upon jumping up and screaming "AIRBORNE", we were handed a St Michael's Airborne Medal from our Course Warrant

Officer. When I received mine, I was quick to put it on the chain of my dog tags. It was the first time I have ever worn anything religious around my neck in a permanent way. I felt different – special – protected. I have never been without that St Michael's Medal since.

## Brotherhood of soldiers

The following August of 1983, I completed my 'Maroon Beret' course, and it was at that time that I had the privilege of giving one of these medals to another airborne trooper. It was a great feeling to welcome someone, as I had been welcomed, into a brotherhood of soldiers who had their own special ritual. So many organizations have rituals that are demeaning and base, but this was something completely different.

It would be a decade later before I would again have a feeling that I was being taken care of. In February of 1992, I was at St Peter's Seminary

in London, Ontario. I was in my third year of theology and looking towards the summer and pastoral placement in the Diocese of Sault Ste Marie, for which I was studying. I had been going through a rough patch and was doubting and questioning a lot of things. My emotions were a complete wreck, and it was not lost on my spiritual director or a number of the other seminarians. I needed to go to confession, but I did not want to go to a priest in the seminary... I do not know why; it was just what I was feeling.

## Confession of my life

When the fateful day came, I decided to head up the street to the local parish. I knew where it was but did not know the name of the parish. I grabbed my Chaplet of St Michael, which I had found on a passing visit to the Mustard Seed Religious Goods Store in London, Ontario, a moment that, too, was 'cool' because, when I saw it, it reminded me of my days as a soldier and airborne trooper and I thought, "I have to have that." I put the chaplet in my pocket, took a few prayer cards, including the litany and adjuration of the Holy Angels, and down the road I strolled. I recall the anxiety I was feeling as I was preparing myself, all the more, to go to confession. I felt that I needed to make a 'Confession of my life', and that caused even more trepidation. Nevertheless, I continued on. When I arrived at the front of the church, I looked up and saw "The Parish of St Michael the Archangel". Really! It made me giggle and squirm all at the

same time. I went in, found a pew, and began my ritual of prayers. I know, in retrospect, that I was delaying the inevitable, because I read the prayers and prayed the chaplet extremely SLOWLY. Is it not funny how our emotions can drive us to act?

## The most spiritually cleansing experience

The time came and into the confessional I went. Father was very good with me. I told him that I was a seminarian and what it was that I wanted to do with my confession, and he took me through it. It was by far, the most spiritually cleansing experience I had had up to that point in my life - literally! Upon giving my Act of Contrition and, as Father began the Prayer of Absolution, I began to cry... *I can feel it now as I type this too...* I had a feeling of warmth all over me and my mind was telling me that I was confused. I certainly felt that way for sure. Why do I feel so warm and calm, yet am crying my eyes out? Father knew immediately what was going on. "Holy Tears," he said, "Holy Tears!" "What the heck are Holy Tears?" I asked. As Father explained it to me, I realized how blessed I was. I thanked him for hearing my confession, giving me counsel and being so generous with me. Then I asked his name so that I could pray for him too. "Michael," he said. Yeah... Breathe in, breathe out! He smiled back at me and I went out into the church to pray my penance. I am not sure if I actually did, I doubt it,

but I felt like I skipped all the way back to the seminary.

## Promoted overnight with St Michael's help

My devotion to St Michael increased exponentially that day. I gave myself over to his guidance and protection. It would prove to be a challenging moment for me. Two weeks later, having been made to know, with perseverance in my heart, that the priesthood was for me, I was asked to leave the seminary, being told by the faculty that they did not think priesthood was for me at that time. It was the end of February 1992 and I felt completely defeated. It would take St Michael's help and a few weeks for me to become undaunted in my call to priesthood. With resolve, I contacted St Paul's University in Ottawa, where I had completed my first year of theology before being asked by my bishop to switch over to St Peter's in London. I enrolled in the Fall and graduated in April 1993.

In August 1995, I transferred from the Reserve Army, into the Regular Forces. I went from being an airborne army Warrant Officer and Sergeant Major to a Captain and a lay Pastoral Associate Chaplain, overnight.

## Posted overseas and a miracle

In January 1998, I was posted overseas to Bosnia-Herzegovina





■ Medal of St Michael

with the 1 Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group. I had been with 1RCR since September 1995. I was located in a small town called Ključ and was responsible for visiting troops located throughout our Area of Responsibility (AOR). This extended from Velika Kladusa to Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje.

In early February, after having had some serious snowfalls, I left Ključ for Drvar. The roads were in a horrific condition. Ruts on the road were the only way to drive, as the equipment in country for clearing the roads was poor, at best. As my driver picked his way along the road toward Bosanski Petrovac, where we would turn towards the “Tito Woods” for Drvar, we were passing through a completely destroyed village and

were on a large, blind curve to the right with an embankment on our immediate right and a field to our left that was known to be completely riddled with land and personnel mines. There were no guard rails whatsoever. Suddenly, just as I put my empty coffee cup into the holder, the vehicle, an Iltis by Bombardier/Volkswagen, spun out of control. I recall that I immediately blurted out, “St Michael help us NOW!” The vehicle stopped dead in the middle of the road. My driver was a bit freaked out and began telling me how amazing it was that, “You asked St Michael to help and, bam, we stop dead. Cool!”

However, something in the back of my head was telling me that we needed to move: that we could not sit there. I told him that we needed



to get going, but all he could do was talk excitedly about what had just happened. I had to cuff him in the chest and bark out, “MOVE NOW!” And, just as we got underway and had moved safely back to our side of the road, we had not gone more than 30 feet, when two tracker-trailers came roaring around the blind corner. He looked at me, I held my hand up and said, “Just drive!” For the next 45 minutes, silence reigned on our journey. As we came into the camp at Drvar, he asked me not to say anything about what had happened. He was worried that he would get into trouble for being a careless driver. I told him that my lips were sealed and that it was nothing to do with his driving skills. It was bad weather and poor road conditions.

## Whole camp was buzzing

An hour later, the whole camp was a buzz with St Michael and the miracle on the road. So much for me being silent! Apparently, my driver was not able to contain himself. LOL! As I spent the rest of the day visiting

with the troops, I processed all that had transpired. I was convinced without a doubt that St Michael had indeed interceded on our behalf. I could feel it in my bones. That evening, the Camp Commander, Major Howard Coombs, sat with me over a coffee, and we chatted about all of this. As a man of faith himself, he was certainly intrigued and, I would dare say, happy to know that help was available from above. Over the remaining five months of my tour I would distribute, with the gracious help of the Knights of Columbus, close to 1000 St Michael's medals and cards. I began saying his prayer every day during that time and now I recite it at least two or three times a day; certainly, when I feel uneasy. By the time I had left Bosnia-Herzegovina, I had purchased three two-foot pulverized marble statues of St Michael from my visits to Medjugorje.

Sadly, one was ruined but the other two are now given out as Humanitarian Awards. One for 1 RCR at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Petawawa, the other for the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada at Moss Park Armoury in Toronto, Ontario.

Fast forward to September 2000. I was posted to CFB Borden, Ontario. I had been a Pastoral Associate (Lay Chaplain) for five years and was waiting for the bishop to decide what he was going to do with my request for ordination. At that time, the Military Ordinariate of Canada had just received from Rome the previous November, the right to incardinate. Thus, the bishop was able to ordain priests for the Ordinariate, of which I was hoping to belong. I am unsure of the date that month when I received a call from the Commandant of the Chaplain's School in Borden,

requesting that I go to see him. He was a Lieutenant Colonel and a priest. During our meeting, I was informed that the bishop had brought to the Presbyteral Council, my request for ordination. This priest wanted to speak to me about this and to put me on a mentoring path towards ordination. Needless to say, I was quite excited and upon leaving the office, St Michael got a great big 'THANK YOU!' I then petitioned for him to assist me further and to ensure that the period would be short and fruitful and, if it was the Lord's will, that I be ordained on his feast day of 29<sup>th</sup> September.

In December 2000, I was called to Ottawa to meet the bishop. I was called to Holy Orders and asked that I do my jurisdiction at St Augustine's Seminary in Toronto. I made the call to the seminary the day after I returned to Borden and was enrolled for January. The bishop was informed, and the necessary arrangements were made. I happily completed my jurisdiction and exams in April 2001.

## My heart was beating

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2001, while I was at the Common Ground Conference for the Protestant Ladies Guild and the Catholic Women's League for the Military Ordinariate in Trenton, Ontario, the Vocations Director, Fr Jacques Cantin suddenly showed up. He was all excited and told me that the bishop was right behind him and wanted to speak to me. My heart practically beat out of my chest. Fr Jacques pulled me aside and told me that I needed to start thinking

about an ordination date. The bishop showed up and after a few quick hellos, asked for a private place for us to speak. Once settled, he told me that I was to be ordained and that I needed to pick a date for my Diaconate Ordination in June. JUNE? I was stunned. He pulled out his calendar and pointed to Holy Trinity Sunday – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2001. "How about that date?" "Uhhhh... Sure" I said. "But what about Candidacy, Lector and Acolyte? We can do them this weekend in Borden if you are free?" To which he quickly said, "Yes." Then he told me, "I will not keep you waiting for your ordination to the priesthood. A few months as a deacon would be sufficient. So sometime in the Fall," he said; to which, I quickly blurted out, "How about 29<sup>th</sup> September? The Feast of St Michael and the Archangels." He looked at me knowingly and stated, "I should have known you'd pick that date." We laughed and then looked at the calendar. It was a Saturday! I could not believe my eyes. It was perfect – the date was set! Again, a great big THANK YOU went up to St Michael.

## Ordained on the feast day

At 11:00 a.m. on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2001, the Feast of the Holy Archangels, Michael, Gabriel & Raphael, at Christ the King Cathedral in Hamilton, Ontario, in the presence of over 800 family and friends, I was ordained for the Roman Catholic Military Ordinariate of Canada; the first priest to be ordained by the Ordinariate, for the Ordinariate. It was an historic and beautiful day. In January 2002, I was deployed on the first Canadian



Forces rotation for operations in Afghanistan.

Over the course of the next 13 years, I would learn to lean heavily on St Michael, and it would be in 2008, while posted to CFB Greenwood, Nova Scotia, that I would take on my first Scapular. It just happened to be a St Michael Scapular. Imagine that! As I continued to promote devotion to him, my own devotion grew and grew. I kept a ready supply of medals and cards for handing out. I created a Military Mass Setting for his Feast Day for the Ordinariate to celebrate. The intention was to draw on the widespread, albeit not overly religious, devotion to St Michael and to have the 29<sup>th</sup> September as a day to celebrate the Patron of Soldiers. Sadly, it never came to much but, not to be outdone, I continued to share my devotion and to encourage the troops, whether at home or overseas and especially with deploying chaplains.

## St Michael medals and cards

During my last two years as a chaplain and during my tenure as the Wing Chaplain at CFB Trenton, the hub through which many, many deployments occurred, this afforded me the opportunity to put these medals and cards directly into the hands of our troops and chaplains. For me, it was but a small gesture, but one that I know was appreciated. Then, it would be in my last year, 2015 that I would be made to know again that St Michael was looking out for me.



■ Fr Timothy P. V. Nelligan

On a Thursday morning in mid-March of 2015, I was rushed to the hospital with viral encephalitis. When I was found at my home, I was barely aware of what was going on around me. I had not showed up for work for two days nor was I present for my team meeting that Thursday morning. I did have some lucid moments, but by and large, was quite confused and in a rather dishevelled way. I remember very little that transpired over the next few days. It was not until late morning on the Saturday, when a priest friend and colleague, Fr Paul Acton, showed up beside my bed to anoint me. I was more than a little surprised to see him and told him as much. After he anointed me, he said, “You are quite the topic of conversation around here. Apparently, you should be dead. The doctors and nurses are quite amazed at your recovery. Someone is definitely looking out for you upstairs, my friend,” as he pointed to the heavens. “He’s got plans for you!”

All I know is that I wanted to weep. It was not a happy moment for me, especially when I was told

that my parents had been notified by the Wing Commander that things were fatally serious and that funeral arrangements might need to be considered.

## I offered all my thanks through St Michael

My poor parents – was all I could think of. As I sorted my emotions out and I prayed with Fr Paul, I offered all my thanks through St Michael. I knew that in the prayers and promises of the devotion to him, that I would be safeguarded because of my devotion, as would my family. It is the biggest reason why I was so attached to the devotion to him, aside from being the patron of soldiers. I was released from the hospital at noon on the Monday. So, four days in the hospital with a near-death illness, and now I am home again. Amazing! On 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2015, I was officially released from the Canadian Armed Forces.



In retrospect of all this, and the numerous pilgrimages that I have been on, I can see St Michael walking along with me. He drew me to his shrines so that I could rejoice in God's favour to me and to him. I visited Mont-Saint-Michel in Normandy, France. I said Holy Mass at the Celestial Basilica of St Michael at Gargano, Italy. I have received and given out numerous statues of St Michael, along with countless medals and prayers cards. Now, as I sit here finishing this testimonial, a generous benefactor is in the process of obtaining, a four-foot statue of St Michael from the Shrine in Gargano, Italy for the parish of Blessed Sacrament here in Ottawa. I have met and begun working with the Michaelite Fathers here in Canada and have been given permission to promote devotion and to enrol the faithful into the Confraternity of the Scapular of St Michael. Additionally, I have started producing a booklet on the history of the Confraternity with prayers, litanies and novenas included. I hope to have this readily available sometime in 2021.

## Glorious Prince of the Heavenly Host

Marto Swords in Toledo, Spain agreed to reproduce the Sword of St Michael. It is a beautiful piece of art and I am grateful that we have been able to use it as a sacramental here at our parish.

Upon receiving it, our Archbishop blessed the sword for use as a sacramental and on the Feast of the Archangels, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020, we used it for

the first time. We processed with it to the church doors at the end of Holy Mass and prayed the 'Binding Prayers' to end the pandemic and to cure the sick.

It was a beautiful and glorious moment. And again, on the first Sunday of Advent, 2020, holding the Glorious Sword of St Michael up high, I consecrated the parish, all the parishioners and their families, to the protective care of St Michael, the Archangel. It is my further hope, too, that other parishes and shrines of St Michael will be able to purchase one of these beautiful swords for use. It is a visible reminder of Michael's desire to fight for the dignity of our souls and the Church.

In closing, I must say that it has been an amazing 38 years of my life that this Glorious Prince of the Heavenly Host has seen fit to stand by me. I owe him nothing short of my whole self, in gratitude for his protection and guidance in my life. Our Lord, in His generosity, has given St Michael as the protector of our Soul. Along with Our Blessed Mother Mary, to whose requests Michael readily responds, we have nothing in this life to fear. All we need do is trust. Turn to St Michael! Allow him to stand by your side and to protect you in all you do. Pray his prayer and wear his medal and/or scapular. Trust in him and the Lord: you will lack for nothing in this life nor the life that is to come.

St Michael the Archangel, pray for us!

Guardian of Souls and of the Church, protect us!

Fr Timothy P. V. Nelligan, Canada  
December 2020



■ Bl. Fr Bronisław Markiewicz,  
the founder of the Congregation  
of St Michael the Archangel

**The Congregation of St Michael the Archangel was founded by Blessed Father Bronisław Markiewicz. Born on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1842 in Pruchnik near Jarosław (south-eastern Poland), he was a priest of the Przemyśl Diocese and also a professor of the local major seminary and recognised from his writings as a prophet.**

Fr Bronisław began his ministry as assistant priest in a parish where he spent long hours in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament before the tabernacle.

He says "How should we worship and venerate the Blessed Sacrament? We should visit Him frequently, and talk with Him in prayer. Sometimes, when our hearts are too cold for Jesus who is concealed in the Blessed Sacrament, we should ask our guardian angel, our patron saints, but especially our Holy Mother to honour and worship Him on our behalf. The Most Blessed Sacrament is a gift of love. Jesus bestowed the Blessed Sacrament for no other reason, than

# Founder Bl. Fr Bronislaw Markiewicz and his love of the Holy Eucharist

to be a sign of His incomparable love; to teach us that the love He has for us is infinite.

As if it were not enough for the heart of Jesus to sacrifice His life for us, prompted by His overflowing love, He gave us the greatest gift, exceeding every other gift He has ever bestowed on us, the gift of Himself for our food. In this Sacrament, our Saviour makes this, the final effort of His heart.

Each time Jesus enters a soul, He also endows that soul with the boundless treasures of His grace. Jesus then brings us all good things. The Blessed Sacrament has the greatest power to sanctify our souls. Through Holy Communion, which is called 'the bread from heaven', the soul is enriched with grace which assures eternal life. The Lord's Flesh is a medicine that wipes out the stigma of our venial sins and protects us from mortal sins.

Holy Communion ignites in us the fire of God's love to such an extent, that forgetting the earth and all its creatures, we yearn only for that Holy Love. Nothing ignites in us more love towards God than in Holy Communion. God is Love, the fire of love and a 'Consuming Fire' (Deut 4:24). The Word of God descended upon the earth for this very reason; to ignite the fire of love. Jesus says very clearly, "I have come to bring fire

to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already" (Luke 12:49). How marvellous is the bursting flame to receive the Holy Eucharist.

"For wherever your treasure is, that is where your heart will be too" (Luke 12:34). Jesus is my treasure; Jesus is heaven and in the Holy Sacrament. Jesus is mine and in every moment, my heart is in Him. In Him I shall find shelter from every temptation. O my Jesus, allow me to Love You more, and more.

## Inspired by St John Bosco

Following the Divine Voice, Father Markiewicz went to Italy and was inspired by the work of St John Bosco. In 1892, seven years later, he returned to Poland and was put in charge of the parish in Miejsce Piastowe (South Eastern Poland). In addition, to his pastoral work, he dedicated himself in the spirit of St John Bosco, providing a widespread educational system, which not only included the academic but also dealt with the spiritual and physical development of the children in the houses and orphanages he established.

He had a great devotion to Our Blessed Mother and would take the

poor, abandoned orphaned boys in his care to her statue on the altar of his church and say "She is your mother, come to her with all your problems and she will answer you." This was a great comfort for the young boys. Fr Bronislaw Markiewicz felt a stricter order with firm principles was needed and soon thought of founding a new religious congregation.

To carry on his work, he decided to form a new religious congregation based on the spirituality of St John Bosco.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1897, he petitioned the Bishop of Przemyśl and the Pope to allow him to found the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel. In spite of intensive efforts on his part, Fr Markiewicz did not live to witness its approval and died on 29<sup>th</sup> January 1912.

On 29<sup>th</sup> September 1921, Adam Stefan Sapieha, Bishop of Cracow, issued the Erecting Decree of the Congregation. On 15<sup>th</sup> June 1966, the Congregation was affirmed under papal law. Fr Bronislaw Markiewicz's beatification took place in Warsaw on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

**Noreen Bavister**

Quotes from Daily Reflections with  
Blessed Bronislaw Markiewicz  
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# Jesus Christ the bearer of the water of life

## A Christian reflection on the “New Age”

### Part 3

### Concluding article

The New Age is revealed as a false doctrine and a false religion attempting to undermine our faith in Christ. Guidance and sound formation *are* needed.

### Christ or Aquarius?

*New Age* is almost always linked with “alternatives”, either an alternative vision of reality or an alternative way of improving one’s current situation (magic). (Cf. P. Heelas, *The New Age Movement. The Celebration of the Self and the Sacralization of Modernity*, Oxford (Blackwell) 1996, p. 138). Alternatives offer people not two possibilities, but only the possibility of choosing one thing in preference to another: in terms of religion, *New Age* offers an alternative to the Judaeo-Christian heritage. The Age of Aquarius is conceived as one which will replace the predominantly Christian Age of Pisces. *New Age* thinkers are acutely aware of this; some of them are convinced that the coming change is inevitable, while others are actively committed to assisting its arrival. People who wonder if it is possible to believe in

both Christ and Aquarius can only benefit from knowing that this is very much an “either-or” situation. “No servant can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn” (Lk 16.13). Christians have only to think of the difference between the wise men from the East and King Herod to recognise the powerful effects of choice for or against Christ. It must never be forgotten that many of the movements which have fed the *New Age* are explicitly anti-Christian.

Their stance towards Christianity is not neutral, but neutralising: despite what is often said about openness to all religious standpoints, traditional Christianity is not sincerely regarded as an acceptable alternative. In fact, it is occasionally made abundantly clear that “there is no tolerable place for true Christianity”, and there are even arguments justifying anti-Christian behaviour. (Elliot Miller, *A Crash Course in the New Age*, Eastbourne (Monarch) 1989, p. 122). This opposition initially was confined to the rarefied realms of those who go beyond a superficial attachment to *New Age*, but has begun more recently to permeate all levels of the “alternative” culture which has an extraordinarily powerful appeal, above all in sophisticated Western societies.

### Fusion or confusion?

*New Age* traditions consciously and deliberately blur real differences: between creator and creation, between humanity and nature, between religion and psychology, between subjective and objective reality. The idealistic intention is always to overcome the scandal of division, but in *New Age* theory it is a question of the systematic *fusion* of elements which have generally been clearly distinguished in Western culture. Is it, perhaps, fair to call it “confusion”? It is not playing with words to say that *New Age* thrives on confusion. The Christian tradition has always valued the role of reason in justifying faith and in understanding God, the world and the human person (Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio* (14 September 1998), 36-48). *New Age* has caught the mood of many in rejecting cold, calculating, inhuman reason.

While this is a positive insight, recalling the need for a balance involving all our faculties, it does not justify side-lining a faculty which is essential for a fully human life. Rationality has the advantage of universality: it is freely available to everyone, quite unlike the mysterious and fascinating character of



esoteric or gnostic “mystical” religion. Anything which promotes conceptual confusion or secrecy needs to be very carefully scrutinised. It hides rather than reveals the ultimate nature of reality. It corresponds to the post-modern loss of confidence in the bold certainties of former times, which often involves taking refuge in irrationality. The challenge is to show how a healthy partnership between faith and reason enhances human life and encourages respect for creation.

## Create your own reality

The widespread *New Age* conviction that one creates one's own reality is appealing, but illusory. It is crystallised in Jung's theory that the human being is a gateway from the outer world into an inner world of infinite dimensions, where each person is Abraxas, who gives birth to his own world or devours it. The star that shines in this infinite inner world is man's God and goal. The most poignant and problematic consequence of the acceptance of the idea that people create their own reality is the question of suffering and death: people with severe handicaps or incurable diseases feel cheated and demeaned when confronted by the suggestion that they have brought their misfortune upon themselves, or that their inability to change things points to a weakness in their approach to life. This is far from being a purely academic issue: it has profound implications in the Church's pastoral approach to the difficult existential questions everyone faces.

Our limitations are a fact of life, and part of being a creature. Death and bereavement present a challenge and an opportunity, because the temptation to take refuge in a westernised reworking of the notion of reincarnation is clear proof of people's fear of death and their desire to live forever.

Do we make the most of our opportunities to recall what is promised by God in the resurrection of Jesus Christ? How real is the faith in the resurrection of the body, which Christians proclaim every Sunday in the Creed? The *New Age* idea that we are in some sense also gods is one which is very much in question here. The whole question depends, of course, on one's definition of reality. A sound approach to epistemology and psychology needs to be reinforced – in the appropriate way – at every level of Catholic education, formation and preaching. It is important constantly to focus on effective ways of speaking of transcendence. The fundamental

difficulty of all *New Age* thought is that this transcendence is strictly a self-transcendence to be achieved within a closed universe.

## Pastoral resources that are helpful

In the principal documents of the Catholic Church can be found an evaluation of the ideas of *New Age*. In the first place comes the address of Pope John Paul II (AAS 86/4, 330). The Pope recognizes in this cultural trend some positive aspects, such as “the search for new meaning in life, a new ecological sensitivity and the desire to go beyond a cold, rationalistic religiosity”. But he also calls the attention of the faithful to certain ambiguous elements which are incompatible with the Christian faith: these movements “pay little heed to Revelation”, “they tend to relativize religious doctrine in favour of a



vague worldview”, “they often propose a pantheistic concept of God”, “they replace personal responsibility to God for our actions with a sense of duty to the cosmos, thus overturning the true concept of sin and the need for redemption through Christ” (Cf. John Paul II, *Address to the United States Bishops of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska on their ‘Ad Limina’ visit*, 28<sup>th</sup> May 1993).

## Practical steps

### **1. The Catholic Church has its own very effective networks, which could be better used.**

Ideally, the large number of pastoral centres, cultural centres and centres of spirituality could be used to address the confusion about *New Age* religiosity in a variety of creative ways, such as providing a forum for discussion and study. It must unfortunately be admitted that there are too many cases where Catholic centres of spirituality are actively involved in diffusing *New Age* religiosity in the Church. This would of course have to be corrected, not only to stop the spread of confusion and error, but also so that they might be effective in promoting true Christian spirituality. Catholic cultural centres, in particular, are not only teaching institutions but spaces for honest dialogue. (The Pontifical Council for Culture has published a handbook listing these centres throughout the world: *Catholic Cultural Centres* (3rd edition, Vatican City, 2001)).

### **2. Quite a few New Age groups welcome every opportunity to**

### **explain their philosophy and activities to others.**

Encounters with these groups should be approached with care, and should always involve persons who are capable of both explaining Catholic faith and spirituality, and of reflecting critically on *New Age* thought and practice. It is extremely important to *check the credentials* of people, groups and institutions claiming to offer guidance and information

will never seek to blur distinctions in a fusion of all religious traditions.

### **3. Some local New Age groups refer to their meetings as “prayer groups”.**

Those people who are invited to such groups need to *look for the marks of genuine Christian spirituality*, and to be wary if there is any sort of initiation ceremony. Such groups take advantage of a person’s lack of



Marica Romeo, www.unsplash.com

on *New Age*. In some cases what has started out as impartial investigation has later become active promotion of, or advocacy on behalf of, “alternative religions”. Some international institutions are actively pursuing campaigns which promote respect for “religious diversity”, and claim religious status for some questionable organisations. This fits in with the *New Age* vision of moving into an age where the limited character of particular religions gives way to the universality of a new religion or spirituality. Genuine dialogue, on the other hand, will always respect diversity from the outset, and

theological or spiritual formation to lure them gradually into what may in fact be a form of false worship.

Christians must be taught about the true object and content of prayer – in the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ, to the Father – in order to judge rightly the intention of a “prayer group”. Christian prayer and the God of Jesus Christ will easily be recognised (Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Orationis Formas*).

Many people are convinced that there is no harm in ‘borrowing’ from the wisdom of the East, but the example of Transcendental

Meditation (TM) should make Christians cautious about the prospect of committing themselves unknowingly to another religion (in this case, Hinduism), despite what TM's promoters claim about its religious neutrality. There is no problem with learning how to meditate, but the object or content of the exercise clearly determines whether it relates to the God revealed by Jesus Christ, to some other revelation, or simply to the hidden depths of the self.

#### **4. Christian groups which promote "care for the earth as God's creation" also need to be given due recognition.**

A great deal of what is proposed by the more radical elements of the ecological movement is difficult to reconcile with Catholic faith. Care for the environment in general terms is a timely sign of a fresh concern for what God has given us, perhaps a necessary mark of Christian stewardship of creation, but "deep ecology" is often based on pantheistic and occasionally gnostic principles. This is one area where lack of information can allow those responsible for education to be misled by groups whose real agenda is inimical to the Gospel message. It is particularly the case in schools, where a captive curious young audience is an ideal target for ideological merchandising. (Cf. the *caveat* in Massimo Introvigne, *New Age & Next Age*, Casale Monferrato (Piemme) 2000, p. 277f).

#### **5. The beginning of the Third Millennium offers a real "kairos" for evangelisation.**

People's minds and hearts are already unusually open to reliable

information on the Christian understanding of time and salvation history. Emphasising what is lacking in other approaches should not be the main priority. It is more a question of constantly revisiting the sources of our own faith, so that we can *offer a good, sound presentation of the Christian message*.

#### **6. Perhaps the simplest, the most obvious and the most urgent measure to be taken, which might also be the most effective, would be to make the most of the riches of the Christian spiritual heritage.**

The great religious orders have strong traditions of meditation and spirituality, which could be made more available through courses or periods in which their houses might welcome genuine seekers.

This is already being done, but more is needed. Helping people in their spiritual search by offering them proven techniques and experiences of real prayer could open a dialogue with them which would reveal the riches of Christian tradition, and perhaps clarify a great deal about *New Age* in the process.

## **Conclusion**

In a vivid and useful image, one of the *New Age* movement's own exponents has compared traditional religions to cathedrals, and *New Age* to a worldwide fair. The *New Age* Movement is seen as an invitation to Christians to bring the message of the cathedrals to the fair which now covers the whole world. This image offers Christians a positive

challenge, since it is always time to take the message of the cathedrals to the people in the fair.

Christians need not, indeed, must not wait for an invitation to bring the message of the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who are looking for the answers to their questions, for spiritual food that satisfies, for living water. Following the image proposed, Christians must issue forth from the cathedral, nourished by word and sacrament, to bring the Gospel into every aspect of everyday life – "Go! The Mass is ended!"

In Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* the Holy Father remarks on the great interest in spirituality found in the secular world of today, and how other religions are responding to this demand in appealing ways. He goes on to issue a challenge to Christians in this regard: "But we who have received the grace of believing in Christ, the revealer of the Father and the Saviour of the world, have a duty to show to what depths the relationship with Christ can lead" (n. 33). To those shopping around in the world's fair of religious proposals, the appeal of Christianity will be felt first of all in the witness of the members of the Church, in their trust, calm, patience and cheerfulness, and in their concrete love of neighbour, all the fruit of their faith nourished in authentic personal prayer.

Taken from: *Jesus Christ The Bearer of the Water of Life: A Christian Reflection on the "New Age"*.

Pontifical Council for Culture  
and Pontifical Council  
for Interreligious Dialogue, 2003  
[www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)



# New Age Doctrines or Teachings

**The differences between the New Age concept of Jesus Christ and the Christian understanding of Jesus as Christ were outlined in Part 2. Unlike the New Age concept of Christ as just one among many wise men, or initiates, or avatars, in Christianity Jesus is the Christ or Messiah, the Son of God, through whom all mankind is saved from sin and death. Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life**

Information about *New Age* doctrines or teachings that are commonly used is given in a select glossary in Appendix 7.2 of the 2003 report by the Pontifical Council for Culture and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

- Age of Aquarius
- Androgyny
- Anthroposophy
- Channeling
- Crystals
- Depth Psychology
- Enneagram
- Esotericism
- Evolution
- Expansion of consciousness
- Feng-shui
- Gnosis
- Great White Brotherhood
- Hermeticism
- Holism
- Human Potential Movement
- Initiation
- Karma
- Monism
- Mysticism
- Neopaganism
- *New Age* Music
- New Thought
- Occultism
- Pantheism
- Parapsychology
- Planetary Consciousness
- Positive Thinking
- Rebirthing
- Reincarnation
- Rosicrucians
- Shamanism
- Spiritualism

- Theosophy
- Transcendentalism
- Wicca

It is easy to be confused by the seeming inclusiveness of the *New Age* doctrines or teachings, which appear to include Christianity, but which are in direct opposition to the teachings of Christ and the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

Taken from: *Jesus Christ The Bearer of The Water of Life: A Christian Reflection on the "New Age".*

Pontifical Council for Culture and Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, 2003, Appendix 7.2.

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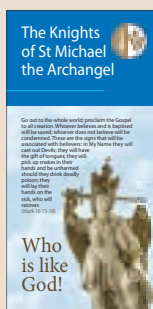
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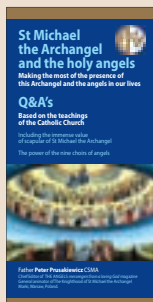
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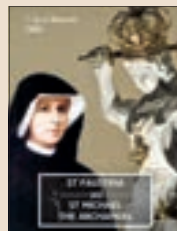
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St Faustina is full of wonder, respect, reverence and admiration for St Michael the Archangel. The fundamental and only reason behind such an attitude is, as she is at pains to stress, the fact that he did the will of God. He is for her the angel resplendent in his wonder and boundless humility towards the Creator. He is the angel who gazes at God with love, who learns the will of God and courageously carries it out.



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# Chaplet of St Michael

L. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

A. *Amen*

*Say the following prayer on the medal:*

*O God, come to my assistance.*

*O Lord, make haste to help me.*

*Glory be to the Father, etc.*

1. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Seraphim, may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. Amen.

*(1 Our Father on the first large bead, 3 Hail Marys on the next three small beads)*

2. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Cherubim, may the Lord vouchsafe to grant us grace to leave the ways of wickedness, to run in the paths of Christian perfection. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

3. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Thrones, may the Lord infuse into our hearts a true and sincere spirit of humility. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

4. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Dominions, may the Lord give us grace to govern our senses and subdue our unruly passions. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

5. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Powers, may the Lord vouchsafe to protect our souls against the snares and temptations of the Devil. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

6. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Virtues, may the Lord deliver us from evil and suffer us not to fall into temptation. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

7. By the intercession of St Michael and the Celestial Choir of Principalities, may God fill our souls with a true spirit of obedience. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

8. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Archangels, may the Lord give us perseverance in faith and in all good works, in order that we gain the glory of Paradise. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

9. By the intercession of St Michael and the celestial Choir of Angels, may the Lord grant us to be

## Prayer of Pope Leo XIII

Saint 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 Divine Power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

protected by them in this mortal life and conducted hereafter to eternal glory. Amen.

*(1 Our Father, 3 Hail Marys)*

*Recite on the next four beads:*

1 Our Father in honour of St Michael

1 Our Father in honour of St Gabriel

1 Our Father in honour of St Raphael

1 Our Father in honour of our Guardian Angel

O glorious prince, St Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King, and our admirable conductor, who shines with excellence and superhuman virtue, vouchsafe to deliver us from evil, who turn to you with confidence, and enable us by your gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day. Amen.



■ St Michael by Fra Angelico, circa 1424-1425