

# Guardian Angels

*by The Sisters of Saint Dominic*

*I will send My angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey: and bring thee into the place that I have prepared (Exod. 23:20).<sup>1</sup>*

*Holy angels, our guardians, defend us in battle that we may not perish in the dreadful judgment (Vespers).*

## 1



It is a teaching of our faith that the providence of almighty God cares for the souls of men by means of the angelic spirits. At birth each child of Adam receives as custodian and guide a prince of the heavenly court, a member of that celestial hierarchy who adore before the throne of God.

Our first obligation toward the angel whom God has assigned to us is reverence for his holy presence. This blessed spirit is witness to our every word and act. What we would not say or do in the presence of those we respect, we should hesitate to perform before our angel guardian. Let us cultivate an appreciation of the attention given us by a spirit who abides continuously before the face of God and strive to awaken in our souls a consciousness of the angelic presence.

"Glory be to God the Father, who protects through the angels those whom the Son has redeemed and the Spirit has anointed."<sup>2</sup>

## 2

Although the angel who abides before God with perpetual attention toward us is witness to our every word and act, he cannot know our thoughts unless we manifest them. God alone has entrance to the sanctuary of our soul.<sup>3</sup> Our angel presents good suggestions to our senses and imagination to strengthen our faith and increase our charity.<sup>4</sup>

The care with which God provides angelic guardians for our benefit and yet does not violate by their presence the dignity of our human nature should lead us to great respect for our own souls and for the souls of others. Toward those entrusted to our guidance we should manifest the same regard as that shown by God. Aware of the infinite worth of each soul and of its possibilities for union with God by divine grace, we should, in the manner of the angelic guardians, look upon each one with respect for God's presence within his soul. Let us examine the motives in our relationship with the souls to whom our apostolic vocation calls us. Let us ask ourselves whether our words and actions toward them merit the approval of their guardian angels.

"See that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you that their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father who is in heaven."<sup>5</sup>

## 3

St. Bernard teaches that we have toward our angels the obligation of grateful devotion and loving confidence.<sup>6</sup> Though our heavenly guardian, ever attentive to our welfare, is always watching over us, we are usually unaware of his presence and fail to appreciate his care.

How often do we call upon our guardian angel for assistance in our efforts toward holiness or for guidance in our apostolic work? Confidence in his help requires that we share with him our intentions and problems, our successes and failures. Let us

learn to cultivate the friendship of our guardian angel and to seek his cooperation in our efforts toward sanctity and in our work for souls.

"O God, who...didst send Thy hold angels to be our guardians, grant that we...may enjoy their eternal company."<sup>7</sup>

### Notes

1. Epistle.
2. Lauds.
3. *Summa theol.*, Ia, q.57, a.4.
4. Cf. *ibid.*, q.111, a.1, ad 1.
5. Gospel. Matt. 18:10.
6. Matins.
7. Collect.

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