

God, come to my assistance, Lord make haste to help me. In the midst of our troubles and crosses we may sometimes fall into despair. The Lord knows our prayers even before we give voice to them. God heard the prayers of Tobit and Sarah and sent the Archangel Raphael in human form to aid them both.

Tobit and Sarah each asked for relief from the burdens of life. They begged to die. The Lord did not send the angel of death but instead the healer, Archangel Raphael. The archangel did not try to shorten their lives, but rather he worked discreetly to help them find joy.

To help Tobit with his blindness, the Archangel Raphael instructs Tobiah to harvest medicine from the gall of a large fish. This medicine applied in due time by the hand of Tobiah will help restore sight to the blind Tobit. The joy of life returns with sight. The one thing that blinds every human, sighted or not, is sin. When we anoint with the oil of the infirmed, we also offer the sacrament of reconciliation. Through his priests, God seeks to offer healing to the sick, sight to the blind, and forgiveness of sins.

Sarah's life had been one of true tragedy. She sought joy in marriage. Plagued by the demon Asmodeus, she lost seven husbands, each killed in turn on his wedding night by the demon. Away on an errand for his father, Tobiah encounters Sarah in her hometown and is attracted to her truth, beauty and goodness. And he recognizes that God is stronger than the devil. The Archangel Raphael had advised Tobiah to use the heart and liver of the large fish to protect Sarah. "Tobiah, mindful of Raphael's instructions, took the fish's liver and heart ... and put them on the embers intended for incense. The odor of the fish repulsed the demon, and it fled to the upper regions of Egypt; Raphael went in pursuit of it and there bound it hand and foot" (Tob 8:2-3).

Marriage is a gift from God, a call to holiness, that unites a bride and a groom to the love of God. Aware of the sacred nature of marriage by their Jewish faith, Tobiah and Sarah consummated their marriage with a night of prayer asking for God's mercy and protection. "With fidelity I take this kinswoman as my wife. Send down your mercy on me and on her, and grant that we may grow old together. Bless us with children...Amen, amen!" (8:7-8).

We too may call out to God for mercy and protection. We too may invoke the Archangel Raphael to bring joy to our days.

O Raphael, lead us towards those we are waiting for, those who are waiting for us! Raphael, Angel of happy meetings, lead us by the hand towards those we are looking for! May all our movements, all their movements, be guided by your light and transfigured by your Joy.

Angel guide of Tobiah, lay the request we now address to you at the feet of Him on whose unveiled face you are privileged to gaze. Lonely and tired, crushed by the separations and sorrows of earth, we feel the need of calling to you and of pleading for the protection of your wings, so that we may not be as strangers in the province of Joy, all ignorant of the concerns of our country.

Remember the weak, you who are strong--you whose home lies beyond the region of thunder, in a land that is always peaceful, always serene, and bright with the resplendent glory of God. Amen.ⁱ

And let us not forget to say thank you for answered prayers. "I thank you, Lord, with all my heart; in the presence of the angels to you I sing" (Ps 138:1).

ⁱ catholicnewsagency.com/resource/55379/prayer-to-st-raphael-angel-of-happy-meetings