

Homily
26th Tuesday of Ordinary Time I 2001
Guardian Angels
Exodus 23:20-23, Matthew 18:1-5,10

Today we honor our guardian angels, heavenly creatures from God who serve, guide and protect each of us.

In Exodus, we have Moses addressing the people of the covenant at Mount Sinai. As they receive God's instructions, they are given help and hope in the promise of God's messenger, an angel.

Matthew speaks of angels in protection of "these little ones". Jesus presented a child as the example of these little ones. The child represents more than just young people. The child in Jesus' time had no status, that same position of women and slaves. "These little ones" are the low-cast and out-cast. Who among these do we despise? ... those on welfare? ... those with large families and only a single parent? ... those who worship God in the name of Allah?

Jesus' disciples, those twelve and we _____ sitting here, are instructed to make ourselves lowly, like these "little ones" ... to identify with them as Jesus does as He says whoever receives one child, really receives Him.

These instructions are not just for us individually in our daily lives. This excerpt is from Matthew's discourse on church administration where Jesus instructs Peter and the other disciples on how they are to serve. It is our responsibility ... and our responsibility as church leaders, to care for these "little ones" in a humble way.