

Feast of the Holy Guardian Angels



An indulgence of 300 days each time. A plenary indulgence once a month, on the usual conditions, if recited every day of the month, also on October 2nd, feast of the Holy Guardian Angels, and at the point of death if recited frequently during life.

**O Angel of God, who are appointed by Divine Mercy to be my guardian, enlighten and protect, direct and govern me this day (or: this night).
Amen.**

This feast, like many others, was local before it was placed in the Roman calendar. It was not one of the feasts retained in the Pian breviary, published in 1568; but among the earliest petitions from particular churches to be allowed, as a supplement to this breviary, the canonical celebration of local feasts, was a request from Cordova in 1579 for permission to have a feast in honour of the guardian angels. (Bäumer, "Histoire du Breviaire", II, 233.) Bäumer, who makes this statement on the authority of original documents published by Dr. Schmid (in the "Tübinger Quartalschrift", 1884), adds on the same authority that "Toledo sent to Rome a rich *proprium* and received the desired authorization for all the Offices contained in it, Valencia also obtained the approbation in February, 1582, for special Offices of the Blood of Christ and the Guardian Angels."

So far the feast of Guardian Angels remained local. Paul V placed it (27 September, 1608) among the feasts of the general calendar as a double "ad libitum" (Bäumer, op. cit., II, 277). Nilles gives us more details about this step. "Paul V", he writes, "gave an impetus to the veneration of Guardian Angels (long known in the East and West) by the authorization of a feast and proper office in their honour. At the request of Ferdinand of Austria, afterwards emperor, he made them obligatory in all regions subject to the Imperial power; to all other places he conceded them *ad libitum*, to be celebrated on the first available day after the Feast of the Dedication of St. Michael the Archangel. It is believed that the new feast was intended to be a kind of supplement to the Feast of St. Michael, since the Church honoured on that day (29 September) the memory of all the angels as well as the memory of St. Michael (Nilles, "Kalendarium", II, 502). Among the numerous changes made in the calendar by Clement X was the elevation of the Feast of Guardian Angels to the rank of an obligatory double for the whole Church to be kept on 2 October, this being the first unoccupied day after the feast of St. Michael (Nilles, op. cit., II, 503). Finally Leo XIII (5 April, 1883) favoured this feast to the extent of raising it to the rank of a double major.

Such in brief is the history of a feast which, though of comparatively recent introduction, gives the sanction of the Church's authority to an ancient and cherished belief. The multiplicity of feasts is in fact quite a modern development, and that the guardian angels were not honoured with a special feast in the early Church is no evidence that they were not prayed to and revered. There is positive testimony to the contrary (see Bareille in *Dict. de Theol. Cath.*, s.v. Ange, col. 1220). It is to be noted that the Feast of the Dedication of St. Michael is amongst the oldest feasts in the Calendar. There are five proper collects and prefaces assigned to this feast in the Leonine Sacramentary (seventh century) under the title "Natalis Basilicae Angeli in Salaria" and a glance at them will show that this feast included a commemoration of the angels in general, and also recognition of their protective office and intercessory power. In one collect God is asked to sustain those who are labouring in this world by the protecting power of his heavenly ministers (*supernorum . . . praesidiis . . . ministrorum*). In one of the prefaces, God is praised and thanked for the favour of angelic patronage (*patrociniis . . . angelorum*). In the collect of the third Mass the intercessory power of saints and angels is alike appealed to (quae [oblatio] angelis tuis sanctisque precantibus et indulgentiam nobis referat et remedia procuret aeterna" (Sacramentarium Leonianum, ed. Feltoe, 107-8). These

extracts make it plain that the substantial idea which underlies the modern feast of Guardian Angels was officially expressed in the early liturgies. In the "Horologium magnum" of the Greeks there is a proper Office of Guardian Angels (Roman edition, 329-334) entitled "A supplicatory canon to man's Guardian Angel composed by John the Monk" (Nilles, II, 503), which contains a clear expression of belief in the doctrine that a guardian angel is assigned to each individual. This angel is thus addressed "Since thou the power (*ischyn*) receivest my soul to guard, cease never to cover it with thy wings" (Nilles, II, 506).

For 2 October there is a proper Office in the Roman Breviary and a proper Mass in the Roman Missal, which contains all the choice extracts from Sacred Scripture bearing on the three-fold office of the angels, to praise God, to act as His messengers, and to watch over mortal men. "Let us praise the Lord whom the Angels praise, whom the Cherubim and Seraphim proclaim Holy, Holy, Holy" (second antiphon of Lauds). "Behold 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. Take notice of him, and hear his voice" (Exodus 23; capitulum ad Laudes). The Gospel of the Mass includes that pointed text from St. Matthew 18:10: "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." Although 2 October has been fixed for this feast in the Roman calendar, it is kept, by papal privilege, in Germany and many other places on the first Sunday (computed ecclesiastically) of September, and is celebrated with special solemnity and generally with an octave (Nilles, II, 503). (See ANGEL; INTERCESSION.)

From the Book of Heaven



Luisa's prayer from Vol. 1 - Most Holy Virgin, lovable Mother, come to my aid, obtain for me from your sweet Jesus and mine, grace and strength in order to do this obedience. Saint Joseph, my dear protector, assist me in this circumstance of mine. Archangel Saint Michael, defend me from the infernal enemy, who puts so many obstacles in my mind to make me fail this obedience. Archangel Saint Rafael and you, my guardian Angel, come to assist me and accompany me, and to direct my hand, that I may write nothing but the truth.

Volume 3 - April 24, 1900 - This morning, having received Communion, it seemed to me that the confessor was placing the intention of making me suffer the crucifixion, and at that very instant I saw my guardian Angel who laid me on the cross to make me suffer.

Volume 4 - December 9, 1902 - As I was in my usual state, I found myself outside of myself together with Jesus Christ, as though nailed with Him; and since I suffered, I was silent. In the meantime I saw the confessor with my guardian Angel, and the confessor said to him: "This poor one is in great suffering, to the point that she cannot speak. Give her a little bit of respite, for when two lovers pour out together what they have in their interior, they end up conceding what they want to each other."

Volume 6 - February 21, 1904 - In the presence of the Most Holy Trinity, of the Queen Mother, Mary Most Holy, of my guardian Angel and of the whole Celestial Court, and in order to obey my confessor, I promise that if the Lord, by His infinite mercy, should give me the grace of letting me die, when I find myself together with my Celestial Spouse, I will pray and plead for the triumph of the Church and the confusion and conversion of Her enemies; that the Catholic party may triumph in our country, and that the church of St. Cataldo may be reopened for service; that my confessor be freed of his usual sufferings, with a holy freedom of spirit and the sanctity of a true apostle of Our Lord; and that – always if the Lord permits it – I will go to him, at least once a month, to confer about celestial things and things pertaining to the good of his soul. I promise all this, for my part, and I swear.

Volume 6 - August 10, 1904 - As I was in my usual state, I found myself wandering around churches, making a pilgrimage to Jesus in the Sacrament together with my guardian Angel.

Volume 29 - April 16, 1931 - My life continues under the empire of the Eternal Fiat, that envelopes me, inside and outside of me, and makes me feel Its infinite weight; and I, like an atom, remain enveloped by this infinity that has no limits, and as much as I love It and long for It, I feel vividly the pain of my human will, crushed and almost dying under the empire of a Divine Will, immense and eternal. My Jesus, help me, and give me strength in the painful state I find myself in. My poor heart bleeds and seeks a refuge in so many pains—You alone, my Jesus, can help me. O please! help me, do not abandon me.... And while my poor soul was pouring itself out in sorrow, my sweet Jesus made Himself seen in my interior—crucified, with six Angels, three on the right and three on the left of His adorable Person. Each of these Angels held a crown in his hands, studded with most refulgent gems, in act of offering them to Our Lord.

I remained surprised in seeing this, and my beloved Jesus told me: “Courage, My daughter—courage is of souls resolute to do good. They are imperturbable under any storm; and while they hear the roaring of the thunders and lightnings to the point of trembling, and remain under the pouring rain that pours over them, they use the water to be washed and come out more beautiful; and heedless of the storm, they are more than ever resolute and courageous in not moving from the good they have started. Discouragement is of irresolute souls, who never arrive at accomplishing a good. Courage sets the way; courage puts to flight any storm; courage is the bread of the strong; courage is the warlike one that knows how to win any battle. Therefore, good daughter, courage; do not fear. And besides, what do you fear? I gave you six Angels for your custody; each of them has the task to guide you through the interminable ways of My Eternal Volition, so that you may requite with your acts, with your love, what the Divine Will did by pronouncing six Fiats in Creation. So, each Angel is entrusted one Fiat and what came out of this Fiat, to call you to requite each of these Fiats, even with the sacrifice of your life. These Angels gather your acts and form with them a crown, and, prostrate, they offer it to the Divinity as requital for what Our Divine Will did, so that It may be known and form Its Kingdom upon earth. But this is not all; I Myself am at the head of these Angels, guiding you and watching over you in everything, and forming in you the very acts and that love that is needed so that you may have sufficient love to be able to requite so many great works of Our Supreme Volition. Therefore, do not stop, you have much to do—you have to follow I who never stop; you have to follow the Angels, because they

want to fulfill their task entrusted to them; you have to fulfill your mission of daughter of the Divine Will.”

FIAT!