

The Holy Guardian Angels



Fr. AUGUSTO FERRETTI S.J.

Translation and adaptation by

R. VELLOZO

The Holy Guardian Angels

Fr. AUGUSTO FERRETTI SJ

Translation and adaptation by
R. VELLOZO

IMPRIMI POTES

Taubaté, Brazil. January 25, 1945.

Fr. Josephus Foggel SCJ

Præpos. Prov. Bras. Merid.

NIHIL OBSTAT

Taubaté, January 25, 1945

Fr. Frederico Bangder SCJ

IMPRIMATUR

Taubaté, January 25, 1945.

D. Francisco Borja do Amaral

Diocesan Bishop.

Part I

Dogmatic foundation and practical applications

INTRODUCTION

God has entrusted his angels to keep you in all your ways ", (Ps90.11) It is a truth of faith, says the theologian Francisco Suarez, that God, in his ineffable providence, entrusted men while they wandered through this world, in the custody of the Holy Angels. And it is also Catholic doctrine, that every man, from the first moment of his birth, is assigned an angel in particular as his particular keeper. "Singulis hominibus ab ortu nativitatis suæ singulos angelos ad custodatos deputatos, assertio catholica est". (1)

(1) De Angelis, lb. VI, ch. XVII. n. 68.

This teaching is founded on the authority of Sacred Scripture and the holy Fathers.

As for Scripture, one of the texts on which it mainly relies, is the verse, which we quoted from the ninetieth psalm a little while ago: "God entrusted his angels to keep you in all your ways.

Angelis suis Deus mandavit de te, ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis ". It is this verse rich in doctrine. Each of your words deserves to be considered. And we will do so following in the footsteps of the honeymoon doctor, S. Bernardo, who goes on to comment on them: "Who trusted? to whom? What was entrusted? about whom? Oh what great reverence must not inspire such a disposition of God's Providence, how much devotion to instill, how much confidence to bring! Reverence, as the presence of the holy angels requires, with certainty of faith; devotion in return for the benefits they give you, and confidence in the fact that you are in the care of such keepers ". (Sermo XII in ps. XC.)

Chapter 1

TO WHOM WE SHOULD THE PROTECTION OF ANGELS

Let us ask: the care given to angels, to watch over us, by whom was it given? Wanted mandapit? Only by the One whose angels are obedient and zealous ministers. But who is that, still questioning S. Bernardo, whose subjects are angels? And whose are ministers?

Of the Lord, God most high. It was therefore God who gave angels the command to protect us throughout our lives. And in this order, as the seraphic doctor S. Boaventura observes, his supreme power, his sublime wisdom, his paternal kindness is manifested.

1 - Number and power of Angels

According to the doctrine of the saints and doctors of the Church, each man, at birth, receives an Angel to guard him and his private protector. Each nation also has its Guardian Angel, each province, each city, each house, each family, each community, each temple, each altar. "Thousands of thousands served God," says the prophet Daniel.

So we count on the protection not only of our particular Angel, but also of those who preside over the communities of which we are members. It is precisely for this reason that the Scripture says: "To his Angels God commanded them to guard you, etc."

It says "your Angels" in the plural, because, as S. Roberto Belarmino explains, protects us not only our Guardian Angel, but also the Angels who protect our country, our province, our city, etc.

Therefore, there are innumerable multitudes of Angels deputies for the custody of men.

What if we still add to it those who are constantly watching before the throne of God?

(2) See Petavio, from Ang. 1. II, c. VIII. Suarez, from Aug. 1. VI, c: XVII, n, 22; Perrone, by Deo Creatore, part. I, c. III, n. 49.

Then they will reach the incalculable. Was indicating this number without number that the prophet Daniel said: "thousands of thousands ministered to him and one billion watched with Him: " *Millia Millium ministrabant hey, et decies millies hundred millia assistebant ei* " (Dn7,10)..

Portentous number, in fact, that, according to the author of the book on the Celeste Hierarchy, exceeds all human calculations and computations (3).

(3) Cael, Hier, chap. XIV. This book was generally attributed to S. Dionísio Æropagita by the scholastics, Critical studies show that we must attribute it to another author of the sec. V or the principle of sec. SAW. It is certainly a book of great authority. - Ver. 5, Tom. 1, P. q. 1 to 3.

Who can calculate the number of the stars in the sky and all the material beings that populate the universe: men, animals, plants, insects, fish, etc., etc.? Well, "the crowd of Angels, says S. Tomás de Aquino, is even superior to the crowd of material beings".

Such is the number of Angels. As for its power, Scripture exalts it at every step. "Bless the Lord, says the real Prophet, all his Angels, powerful in value, faithful executors of his word (Es. CI 20). And there are numerous examples in which such power shines, as can be seen in the second part of this little work. But in addition to this, his power is clearly shown in the same power as those

who were often his instruments - the saints. It causes astonishment, in the lives of the saints, the hatred with which the demons were armed against them, and the infernal coalitions that they made among themselves to lose them and ruin their work. We see them, however, impassive in the face of the assaults of the spirits of darkness and so powerful that in an instant it was enough for them to disperse and to flee the armies of the infernal madness.

Who was it, then, that gave them such great value? The Angels of God, to whose protection the saints always appealed. "Our weakness, as S. Hilário says, could not resist the perverse action of the infernal spirits if it were not comforted by the power of the Angels (4). "And beyond doubt, says S. Bernardo, that we cannot resist the urge of evil spirits, if good spirits depart from us" (5).

(4) In Psalm. CXXXIV, n. 17.

(5) Serm, VII in cant. n. 4.

It is a force, therefore, to confess, that Angels are very powerful, because they overcome as powerful enemies as demons.

And it is strength, too, to confess, that omnipotent is that Lord to whom so great a multitude of heavenly princes obeys, and whose mandate they promptly and faithfully carry out. "There is really no one who is like You, O Lord; you are great, and great in power is your name (Jr.10,6) ".

2 - The offices of the Angels

It is with care that a king or head of government considers his subjects, in order to elevate them, according to the capacity of each one, to the positions of the official administration. the excellence of the gifts that you discover in them. This is how he keeps some of them close to him, sending others as ambassadors; to some, the government of the provinces is in charge, to others the direction of cities; some entrust small counties, others communities and individuals. This prudent and wise distribution of positions, corresponding to the aptitudes of each one, results in the good government of the state and the satisfaction of the people.

Now, this is what God Our Lord does, with infinitely superior wisdom, in relation to his angels - his most excellent and most holy creatures. The crowd has nothing of disorder or confusion in them; nor could there be a place for disorder in the works of God.

According to the doctrine of the holy Fathers founded on the sacred Scriptures, the angels constitute a militia or army commanded by noble

generals (6): they are divided into three hierarchies and each one in turn consists of three orders or choirs.

The first hierarchy consists of the Seraphim, the Cherubim, the Thrones; the second of Dominations, Virtues and Powers; the third of Principalities, Archangels and Angels (7).

Each hierarchy, in turn, is decorated with peculiar gifts according to the position that God gives him in the distribution of the offices of his celestial kingdom.

(6) See São Tomás, I p. 7. CVIII; Suarez op. cit. 1. I, ch. XIII and XIV - Some names of these angelic generals are known to us, Miguel, a name that means "who as God? Gabriel = Fortress of God - Rafæl = Medicine of God".

(7) Sciendura, so says St. Gregory the Great, quod Angelorum vocabulum nomen. Est officii, non saturge, the ministry, so it can be used in a general way a relationship to all the choirs, and in particular, to the smallest.

At the moment, we are only interested in the third hierarchy, since it is entrusted to it, according to the doctrine of the angelic Saint Thomas, to the protection and custody of men in particular and of human society (8). This is how it is discriminated by the holy doctor: the custody of each particular man is entrusted to the last among the angelic choirs - in the choir of the Angels; the universal guard of the human community at the first choir - that of the Principalities, or perhaps of the archangels. (In pq CXIII, a 3).

It is not that God did so because he was not able to govern his creatures by himself ... This is true of sovereigns and heads of nations, but in no way with omnipotent, omniscient and infinite in all their attributes. So, however, He proceeds, because the different degrees of beings created by Him always carry this stamp of harmonious correspondence with each other. It has very high goals in mind that our mind does not achieve. But for the sake of these very high ends He also undoubtedly intends to make his government smoother and more in line with human nature. Heaven and earth like this - and this is another great and beautiful motive - form a single kingdom of perfect charity, in which superior and already blessed creatures, like angels, provide direction and help inferior and still pilgrim creatures in this world, paying them in return the homage of grateful love and docile submission (9). Ah! you have truly done everything wisely (Ps 103, 24); omnia in sapientia fecisti .

(8) And of noticing here with Suarez how much wisdom God reserves the task of guarding men to the choir of the Angels. This work, because it is the smallest, is what comes closest to man, and therefore has an immediate relationship with him. It is, therefore, according to the disposition of divine Providence, the most suitable for the custody of each man in particular, Op. Cit 1 VI, C. XVIII, n. 6.

3 - What are the angels of us

Angels are with us exactly what preceptors are with their disciples. Preceptors, as was customary in the past, had to transform the child into a perfect citizen: for this they had to give them manners, instruct them, accompany them on their travels, support them, comfort them. Before the Angels, very wise spirits, we are in fact children who must still be trained in good Christian manners, and who have much to learn from the divine doctrine that Jesus came to teach men.

That is why they are, in fact, our preceptors.

This is what the holy Church calls them in their hymns, so the holy Fathers, whether Greek or Latino, call them in their admirable works of apologetics or catechetical instruction.

(9) "We are with the Angels, says St. Augustine, one city of God ... of which one part, which is us, pilgrims through this world, and the other part, which is precisely the Angels, is ready" helping us ", - De civit, Dei, 1. X, 6 7.

S. Gregório Taumaturgo, S. Basílio and S. João Crisóstomo, say that they are the "educators and educators of children. S. Atanásio formally calls them preceptors of men and S. Bernardo is happy to call them" the constant followers of our soul ". So, to think, therefore, of these great representatives of the sacred eloquence of the primitive churches, Greek and Latin, are the holy Guardian Angels the guides, the guards, the tutors and the greatest help and most constant value of those who demand, in this world, the heavenly homeland.

"O immense love and all inspired by the purest charity! exclaims S. Bernardo: "Ó vere magna dilectio charitatis" "What a concern, that of our Father in Heaven for the children who err in this world far from their father's house! It is right, therefore, that we appropriate the words of the Archangel Saint Raphaël when he spoke to Tobias: "Bless the God of heaven, and give him glory before all the living, for he has caused mercy to shine upon you" (Tb12 , 6).

Admiration, therefore, praise and blessing is what you owe, dear young man, to God, for such a wonderful manifestation of his power, of his wisdom, of his fatherly kindness, bringing to you these princes of his court, these creatures of wonderful power and holiness, which are the angels.

And it reflects that this is a dogma of faith; day and night watch over you, day and night an angel, wonderful of power and sanctity, watches over you, ready to help you whenever the invoices are ready to help you whenever you seek protection.

Chapter II

THE ANGELIC NATURE

You would certainly like, dear young man, to see your guardian angel beside you. You would do everything to be able to contemplate him in his heavenly beauty, in his attitude as an inhabitant of the heavenly homeland, in that peculiar and majestic feature of higher beings.

If this, for now, is not given to you, nothing prevents you from contemplating it in the light of the teachings of Catholic theology.

What, then, are the holy Angels? - It is not easy to answer. But we know for sure that - they are pure spirits - that they are extremely privileged among all created beings - that they also have a history like ours.

1 - Angels are pure spirits

The Angel, says St. Gregory the Great, is spirit, and only spirit, whereas man is spirit and flesh (10). They are not, therefore, corporeal beings, like the creatures that populate this world we inhabit. They are also not composed of spirit and body, as we are men. They are simple and purely incorporeal beings without their physical constitution among matter of any kind, however light and ethereal it may be. Needless to say, they are inaccessible to our senses: we can neither see nor touch them. Thus, the IVth Lateran Council speaks, by the way: "With his omnipotent power he brought (GOD) out of nowhere, in the beginning, together with one and another creature, the spiritual and the corporal, namely, the angelic creature and the earthly creature, and then the human, as a post that is of spirit and flesh "(11). And in turn, the Vatican Council adopts the same doctrine, translating the aforementioned passage to one of its "Constitutions" (12).

(10) *Moralium* 1 TV, is, UI, 1. 8.

(11) Chap. *Firmiter*.

(12) Const, *Dei Filius* cap. I.

Notwithstanding enough, angels were shown in visible form. Abraham and Lot, Jacob and Tobias and countless other biblical characters were seen in this way. It was, therefore, to be able to speak to them, that they took on a human form, to be able to guide them (as in the case of Tobias), to be able to engage in a hard fight, as happened with Jacob. Such, however, was not his state Natural. S, Rafæl Arcanjo, for example, after revealing himself to Tobias, was careful to note this to him. "I seemed, he said, that I actually ate with you and drank with you. In reality another is my food, another my drink, both invisible to human eyes ". (Tb, 12.19).

For a similar reason we represent them in our images under a human figure. We give them the human form, to indicate how much these most noble spirits are kindly prone to men; we give them the features of beautiful young people, to indicate that their strengths and prerogatives are never tarnished or affected, and remain intact and whole; we give them wings to mean when these exalted ministers of the Most High God are ready to carry out their orders; and we dress them in very candid garments to designate, as S. Gregório Nazianzeno says, their natural purity, *ad designandam natu ralem ipsorum puritatem*. (Catechism of the Council of Trent).

2 - Privileges of angelic nature

We travel the scale of beings created by God: minerals, which only exist, but which do not live; vegetables, which live, but do not enjoy sensitive life (which would be provided by senses such as animals); the animals that see, smell, hear, etc. but who have no intellectual knowledge; man, who enjoys intellectual life, but who enjoys it dependent on the brain, which is matter; and finally the angels, who enjoy intellectual life regardless of matter. These are, therefore, the most perfect beings created by the hands of God, as well as the minerals, which open this scale of beings, are the most imperfect, or on the other hand, the ones that enjoy the least perfections. In everyone there is one or the same similarity with their Artificer: the simple being, the simple life, the cognitive life, the intellectual life, are similar to the being of life and the way of divine knowledge. But it is written only of man: he was created in the image and likeness of God. It is true that man among the beings of this world is the one who comes closest to God for his wonderful being, to a material and spiritual, but the angel still reaches greater perfection, and even more, therefore, resembles his Creator, - This is due to its very essence, which is quite simple and spiritual. And because of this simplicity of essence, God, better than man, reflects in the Angel his perfectly simple and spiritual nature. And, consequently, the intelligence of God, the intelligence of the Angel, can be closer to perfection. and to the power of God the wonderful power of the Angel.

As for intelligence, it is known that that of the greatest geniuses of humanity cannot even compare to yours; and as for power, an Angel is only more powerful than an army of men.

By the way, the expression of S. Gregório Magno is forceful, alluding to a passage from the prophet Ezekiel. If man, he says, is made in the likeness of God, the angel is a seal (and as if a seal) of likeness; in fact, the more immaterial to any nature, the more vividly the image of the supreme Artificer is stamped (there is the idea of a stamp): ... *signaculun silimitudinis dicitur* "(13).

They are, therefore, Angels, wonderful beings, superior natures, of unspeakable perfection, extremely privileged of God Our Lord.

But this is not yet the whole truth.

The angel, like man, was elevated to a supernatural order. And what does this mean? It means that the sanctifying grace, an ineffable gift, has infused him into being God Our Lord. In fact, sanctifying grace is such a great gift from God to his intellectual creatures, which elevates them above all created beings and above all natural perfection.

The creature that such grace receives becomes, ineffably, a participant and consort of the same divine nature, as the apostle St. Peter says (2,14). In her, from then on - as long as she remains in a state of grace - God N. Lord, present to her in a particular way. Who will then be able to measure the close union and intimate friendship of such a creature with its Creator? Since then, as a consequence, the whole creature remains, enriched by supernatural virtues and entitled to the contemplation of the same divine essence, to know God as he is in himself, as the apostle and evangelist St. John says : "videbimus Deum sicuti est " . Now, quidquid recipitur, ad modum recipientis recipitur: what is received is received according to the provisions of what is received. Therefore, no being would be more apt to receive sanctifying grace than the angel, for the excellence and natural gifts of his spiritual nature. And therefore, no being, like the angel, has risen over itself and as if transfigured under the wonderful influence of sanctifying grace.

(13) In Evang. 1 II, hom. XXXIV, n. 7.

In the morning of creation, angels are truly His first stars, giving God grace at the same time that He infused their being; " Simul lo , as S. Agostinho says, et condens naturam, et largiens gratiam ". (De Civit, Dei, I. XII and IX).

4 - The story of the holy angels

Do angels have their story, too?

"They have it, just like the man. How man was created, how man enriched with superb gifts of nature and grace, and how man subjected to a test, which would decide whether or not to accept God's intuitive vision.

What this proof was, we could only know by conjectures based on steps in Scripture.

But we know nothing for certain. It is the least. It is certain, however, that they passed this test. So demanded their intellectual and free nature, and through it God Lord wanted them to pass so that they deserved heaven. That

trial lasted for an instant, and that instant gave them eternal and unchanging bliss - as with those who succumbed to it, condemnation.

Here is what St. Gregory says: “seeing the holy angels that a part of them had fallen, the more firmly they resisted, the more humbly” (14). We know from Scripture that the good St. Michael the Archangel was captain, and the bad Lucifer, an angel of great beauty and enriched with wonderful natural gifts. At his cry of rebellion, the faithful angel opposed his *Quis ut Deus*: “who is like God?” ... He alone is the author of all beauty and power, of all greatness and excellence. This was what the Archangel proclaimed. Lucifer, on the contrary, deified in his own excellence, thought he could dispense with his Creator ... Being magnificently gifted by the creative hand, he thought, however, too big to confess himself a debtor to others for everything he had ... He thus refused to pay his praise to God, attributing his own being and his own predicates. He, therefore, would have in himself the reason for his existence and his greatness - he was God! ... And like Lucifer, his followers thought, as well as the same thinking that Miguel, had his followers - two thirds, it is conjectured, of the pure spirits created by God.

Therefore, humility saved them, which is the recognition of their own nothingness before the Creator.

It saved them recognition for God, for the benefits they recognized having received from his hand. And in return, says St. Augustine, they deserved to receive the due prize: “Your angels, says Our Lord in the Gospel, referring to children, always see the face of my Father.

(14) Dialog. 1. III, ch. XIV.

This was precisely the reward. And St. Gregory: “what human language is there that can express how, in the possession of beatitude, they are blessed; how, in contemplating eternity, they are eternal; how, together with true light, they have become light; how, in the view of immutability, have they become immutable?” ... (In. Ezech. À L hom. VII).

And the Church recognizes greatness, holiness and excellence, giving them, in the sacred liturgy, the first place after the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the one who is our King and is also King of the Angels.

And nothing, ever, can get you out of that excelsitude, nothing of that eternal and immutable bliss. It is part of their reward, says St. Augustine, the impossibility in which they are to be ungrateful to God and to sin: *præmium est non posse peccare*. (Contr. Two epist. Pelagii, 1, 3 and 7).

Chapter III

PURPOSE OF THE CARE OF SANTOS ANGELS

It is well that we reflect here: will man be a worthy object, of the assiduous solicitude of these most noble spirits?

It is true, in faith, that we are the object of such solicitude: “Deus mandavit de te” , an object, therefore, of his care, is our body with all its senses and our soul with its powers.

It's because? Because God wants to save us.

1 - Our soul

Let us draw our soul closer to the angel: what difference between one and the other? Only that the soul was created for the body and the angel was not. But she is as precious as he is, from the point of view of her origin - created in the likeness of God - and of her destiny, the vision of God, just like the angel. It is true that there is an essential difference between the soul and the angel: the angel is a complete being in itself, and the soul is not. The soul was created for the body, it says essential relation to the body that informs, that animates, that quickens. The soul constitutes, together with the body, a single being, which is man. The soul, therefore, is not a complete being in itself. It is as if it is part of a being - even if it is a primary part and it contains the specification of nature that it integrates.

The supernatural point of view, however, is what interests us most here. What difference is there, then, from this point of view, between the angel and the man? Its origin and its end, we have already said, are identical. There is, however, a profound difference between the prevaricating angel and the sinful man. The prevaricating angel is punished immediately after the prevarication, and is forever diverted from its end. For him there is no more forgiveness, nor the possibility of obtaining it. The sinful man is also punished immediately after his sin, but not with eternal punishment. Nor has it ever been diverted from its end forever.

For him there will still be forgiveness. A single word, spoken from the heart, expressing the pain of the soul for having offended God, can revive him. When David recognized his sin he said only this word: peccavi, I sinned. And immediately, the prophet: "and the Lord took away your sin". You are forgiven. You are on your way to heaven again.

It certainly contributes to this difference in God's treatment of the same nature as the angel and man. But, we cannot less deduce from this the preciousness of the human soul, which God is so committed to saving.

His Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord, has come to our rescue. And what a ransom! ... What a ransom he paid the heavenly Father to get us back!

But other considerations are more in line with the subject. The human soul is entrusted to the custody of a prince of the heavenly court. "Oh how great is the dignity of souls, exclaims St. Jerome, entrusted, from the first moment of his birth, to an angel, specially delegated to guard it!" (In Matth.).

How great is your dignity, and how precious is your walk! By the dignity and position of the guard, one can evaluate the preciousness of the guarded object. Heads of government are surrounded by the highest ranks in their army, and banks use every precaution to keep their strongholds safe, Why? Because a head of government is precious to a nation, and bank deposits give banks the value they have. So our soul. Countless are the precautions that the Holy Church takes to keep her in a state of grace and to be able to lead them to heaven, countless the help that the Creator himself grants her. It is up to you, young Christian, you, the Marian Congregation, to take advantage of these precautions and to help you with these aids. Do not ignore how precious your soul is. Well, if you alone cannot save it, you will save it if you want to take advantage of the means that God offers you for this. Among these, one of the most solid and fruitful is devotion to your guardian angel, who you know is constantly with you. What will you do to have true devotion to him? This is what we will tell you in another part of this booklet.

2 - God wants to save us

"More than yourself, says St. John Chrysostom, more than yourself, God wants you to live immune from sin; nor can you compare what you want. for the good of your soul, with what He strives to do for your salvation. And this, it is with the facts that He demonstrates it".

A passage from St. Paul, referring to the holy Angels, comes here on purpose: "Are not all of them, says the Apostle, spirits who administer (administratores spiritus), destined to the ministry of helping those who will receive the inheritance of salvation?". "Nonne omnes sunt administratores spiritus, in ministerium missi propter eos, qui hereditatem capient salutis?" (15) All are therefore committed to our salvation (omnes) the angels of God. We can appeal to all of them, to invoke all of them, certain that they will help us solicitously, and as if they are there in the mansion of their blessed one, waiting for our prayer, to come to our aid. This is not just a cold consideration. It is the word of the apostle S, Paul, and St. Paul wrote for the instruction of the early Christians: he therefore had a special assistance from the Holy Spirit, and therefore he could not go wrong.

(15) Hebr. 1, 14. - This step is one of the main ones with which the custody of the holy Angels is proven.

Therefore, we do not have to complain, when we feel the effects of the devil's temptations. There is no doubt, the power to trap us, to arouse representations in our imagination that seduce us, and an infinite number of ways to seduce us. insinuate with their wicked intentions.

But in our favor, we have the angelic armies, always ready to help us, if there are those who deserve to be the subject of a complaint in our falls, it is ourselves. We believe that sometimes the violence of temptation can excuse us a little. Be. But what is certain is that such violence cannot entirely exempt us from guilt. A sincere examination of our attitude in the struggle will tell us whether St. John Chrysostom was right, when he said that God is more committed to our salvation than ourselves.

How many times, in temptation is not the voice of God calling us, to move our will inwardly away from sin, and we resist this voice, we turn away the holy thoughts that He raises us in the soul, to give ourselves to thoughts sin and the consequent sinful acts!

“To the devil, says S. Pedro, we must resist strong in faith: strong in fide ”. It is to revive, therefore, in faith in that splendid truth of the existence of the holy angels, of their role as mediator between us and God, of their role as ministers of our salvation: in ministerium missi propter those who hereditatem capient salutis. Comforted by this faith, “even if an army rises up against us, it will not fear our hearts”.

3 - The inexcusable negligence of those who are lost.

One question: admitting that the angelic armies are working in our favor, that they are powerful, and this much more than the demons, how is it possible to believe that they can lead us to perdition?

First of all, we need to remember that we will never fall into hell if we do not walk there ourselves. “Who prays, is saved, who does not pray is condemned”, is the well-known statement of S. Afonso de Ligório. “Help yourself, that God will help you”, says popular wisdom. Therefore, if we ourselves do not cooperate with God and his saints and angels, it will be of no use to us that countless armies of blessed spirits are at our disposal in Heaven. And the reason for this is rooted in our very nature. We are rational and free beings, capable of determining ourselves in choosing this or that. Our nature, therefore, as such, cannot be constrained to choose this or that, to be determined by this or that path.

Creatures inferior to man on the scale of beings, these fatally fulfill their purpose, by the force of physical laws. It is not so with man. He must freely achieve his goal of complete happiness, in the glory of his Creator. The laws that must govern him do not inevitably induce him to walk the path that marked the hand of God, God presents them to him, he makes them aware of them through the intimate voice of conscience (Natural law), and also expressed externally, by the magisterium of his sent from their representatives on earth (the written law).

The regime and the government of the angels, therefore, over us, must conform to our nature as free beings. They cooperate with us, give us a hand, facilitating the way, when we want to walk the right way. Guardian angels are like executors of Divine Providence with respect to men, says S. Tomás: *Custodia Angeli est quædam executio divinæ Providentiæ, eirea homines facta* ".(1 because CXIII, at 6). Hence it follows that just as Divine Providence does not exclude the exercise of free will, nor does it physically require us to avoid sin, so it is not such a thing that we should expect from the ministry of Angels with us.

It is therefore inexcusable that anyone who, knowing that he lives constantly side by side with an Angel of God, lives and dies in sin. The same Angel who was to be his help, light, protection, becomes a witness and an accuser in the court of God.

Chapter IV

THE MANDATE THAT COMPLIES

What are our Guardian Angels engaged in precisely with us? What do they do for us? - They are concerned with what God has charged them with, they fulfill the mandate that God has given them. Is that mandate? "May they keep you in all your ways: *ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis*". May they keep you on your spirit's journeys through spiritual dangers - on your body's journeys through material dangers - finally, in everything, and always, throughout your life.

1 - Protection of the soul

The soul, as spiritual as it is, cannot be affected by the disasters and material accidents of this world. Its danger is the moral danger of sin and, as a consequence of it, eternal condemnation.

But, is there a real danger of condemning ourselves? And Jesus Christ says it: "wide is the door and spacious is the road that leads to perdition, and many are the ones who take it. How tight is the door that leads to life, which

narrows its road, and how few people walk through it "There is, therefore, a real danger of condemning ourselves. It is no wonder then that in such constant danger of treading the wrong path, Our Lord God has given us an angel from his heavenly court to protect us, guide us, lead us! In addition, it may be that we are not so spiritual that we prefer the supernatural life to the pleasures of the world, and that on the other hand we lack the courage to follow the narrow path of heaven. On the other hand, the experience of past efforts can discourage us. Always getting on the right track, and always getting away from him! Nevertheless, the divine Master's sentence remains: only those who endure to the end will be saved. Well, to encourage us on the right path, to lead us back to Him, when lost, God gave us the holy Guardian Angel, Those spiritual consolations that you feel in the practice of virtue, in the exercise of mortification, in the renunciation of desires of the flesh, who is it that infuses you? Your Guardian Angel, who wants to encourage you to continue on the right path. And whose voice is it that calls you when strayed, that rebukes you in the depths of your heart, that admonishes you and how it invites you to return to the right path? Your Guardian Angel. This is what makes your Guardian Angel close to your soul.

And it may be that you persevere on the right path but that you suffer terrible assaults from the devil. The devil, as the apostle St. Peter says, like a roaring lion prowls nearby, looking for prey to devour. Your Guardian Angel will do to you (as long as you do not give yourself to the enemy), will put you on the run, will fill you with fear for your supernatural virtue, will free you from your meshes, in short it will be your study, your defender, your liberator. Particularly charming, among the most common examples of Christian art, are the images of the holy Angels. What supernatural beauty does not shine through in these paintings, and how vividly expressed are the three offices of the holy Guardian Angel - guard, support and shield, that is, guide, protector and defender! It is a guide, as it points to and indicates the path that takes us there; he is a breadwinner, as he gives his inexperienced infant the support of his powerful arm; he is a defender and liberator, because with his simple glare he fulminates the horrible dragon that threatens them and crosses them on the way. (16)

(16) These Guardian Angels' offices are thus discriminated against by several authors: The Guardian Angel progressing in good - not to fall into sin - if he falls, his rises - if he does not rise, does not fall so often to own and others' ruin. This last effect of guarding the Angels is also noted by S, Tomás, I. p. q; CXIII, to 4. ad 3.

The Church's prayers mark these same three offices of the Angels. The prayer of the Guardian Angel, who teaches us catechism, is one of the most

beautiful that composed Christian piety - all filled with feelings of trust, recognition of the goodness of God and humble submission.

Trust: Holy Angel of the Lord, my zealous keeper; recognition of the goodness of God: since divine piety has been entrusted to you; humble submission: always governs, guards, governs and enlightens me, Amen. And there are expressed, at the same time, the three offices of the Guardian Angel; it is he, in fact, the zealous keeper, who rules, who rules, who illuminates. And lastly, let us say that, as a true guardian, guide and support, the angels of all will dedicate themselves and help you “taking you in their arms”, as energetically and beautifully it expresses it to S. Scripture, so that you will not be hurt on the stones of the road: *in manibus portabunt te, ne forte ad lapidem offendas* ask for tuum (Sl90).

2 - Body protection

Our body is also exposed to dangers in this world and for this reason it is also the object of the care of the holy Guardian Angels. Not only in the light of souls is his guard “*illuminatores animarum, custodes earum*” , ecclesiastical writers dubbed them, but also the caretakers of our bodies and defenders of our goods “*selatores corporum, defenders bonorum*” . (17) There are frequent steps in Sacred Scripture that angels appear to visibly protect the lives, possessions or fame of their devotees.

But this is not the most common way to protect us. They provide us with equal protection without being shown to the eyes of the body. And it is as effective and salutary as the one that dispensed by making itself visible and palpable. The sentence of Seneca is applicable to them, namely, that it is part of the benefit, the hidden and the secret in which it is done.

Indeed, our lives are filled with these hidden favors. How many and how many times, especially at our youngest age, do not carry us the dangers of which we do not yet know how we got out unscathed! To whom do you attribute it so manifest, even if it hides protection? That Angel of God who is with us to protect our souls and bodies.

And, of course, one of the greatest satisfactions that we will have in heaven will be to know this hidden and constant friend of our entire life, as well as the countless benefits that have done us. And how will our friendship with this blessed spirit grow! What a sweet and eternal friendship, under the eyes of Heavenly Father, in the company of all the saints of God!

(17) thus the author of the sermons *ad fratr. in er. serm* 46.

3 - Protection in everything, and always, throughout our life

The blossoming of a life! ... Great mystery, wonderful thing! ... To begin to exist is to begin to take part in the struggles of this life, to apply for a throne in heaven, to expose yourself to the danger of crossroads that can make us stray.

And it is at the beginning of the walk that the path to be chosen is chosen. It is clear that the child is not in a position to choose him. Parents choose us - oh what a great responsibility! Parents are the child's visible angels. The Guardian Angels are the invisible Angels, Both watch over this tender little life that begins - and may the parents know how to cooperate with the Holy Angel of God!

For them, there is no such inversion of values often adopted by parents, in which the child's interests, which have the greatest consequences for life and death, are postponed to the purely material and natural interests of life. The little one only opens his eyes to the light of the world, the loving protector stands beside him, surrounding him with the care that inspires his weakness and smallness. But it is not limited to protecting your body's life. He knows that there is an infinitely more valuable life: the supernatural life, which shares in the very life of God. He knows that that little child can participate in this life, incorporating himself through holy baptism, to Christ, who rightfully has him. For your part, do what you can so that, acquiescing to your inspirations, take your parents to the baptismal font right away.

But, behold, the light of reason has already emerged. It is then that the Angel of God is presented to you as a guide and illustrator of that little mind that then begins to reflect, as the guide of that little heart that begins to become aware that it loves. Your mind will seek the Author of Life, and your heart will love you with all your strength. The path your protégé takes is the path of goodness, which is always flanked by the barriers of an education of all solidly Christian.

And for the struggles of the spirit, which with the use of reason already begin, arm him with the weapons of Christ, spiritual weapons that are given to him in the sacrament of Confirmation, But the world is seductive, and today as in the days of Sodom the flesh corrupts the way of man ...

A natural impulse in man, rooted in the depths of his being, threatens the adolescent who still ignores the resources of life, which he has, and who can let himself be dragged into addiction and unruly life. Observing the Holy Angel all this, and to such an intimate danger he opposes an equally intimate remedy, which descends to the core of the human heart and there puts virtue and inclination to all good. And this remedy is the Eucharist.

And in addition to the Eucharist, there is devotion to Mary Most Holy. Inspiring the love of Mary, the Holy Angel inspires an equally intimate and durable remedy, which purifies his affections, transforms the interior of his soul into a tabernacle of Jesus.

There are the jobs, the troubles, the struggles for daily bread. It is already a comfort to know that we have an Angel of God by our side, and that he already has, what we will have after the work of life, But, besides that, what strength of spirit does not inspire the men of sincere faith to the Holy Angels of the Guard! What peace in old age, what serenity in the last illness, what conformity in death!

And this is the path where, from his youth, the Guardian Angel has taken his protégé: Proverbium est: adolescens iuxta via suam, etiam cum senuerit, non recedet ab ea. The teenager, even after he is old, will not stray from the path he took in his youth.

Happy, therefore, of those who have been on the right path since their youth, faithful to the inspirations of the Holy Guardian Angel!

Eloquently S. Bernardo: solicitous take part in our joys, comfort us in our sorrows, instruct us in our ignorance, in our risks protect us, the most attentive attend: sollicite congaudent, confortant, instruunt, protectunt, providentque omnibus, omnes in omnibus. (18)

Happy are we if we knew how to persuade ourselves of this truth! How fortunate to have them with us on our travels, as a companion, in sickness as doctors, as friends in adversity, as wise advisers in doubts and perplexities, a powerful help in the fatigue and discouragement of the road we walk, whatever it may be!

(18) Ep. LXXVIII, ad Sugerium.

Young Christian, young congregated, it is you, above all, that I address. Invoke your Guardian Angel in the difficulties of your studies, and to the rest of his titles for you, he will bring together this most celestial preceptor and your master!

But that is not all. During the day there is no occupation, in which the Holy Guardian Angel does not assist us. This was the order he received from God: to keep us in all our ways - in omnibus viis. At the same moment that you read, dearest young man, with you the Holy Angel leans on this pious reading, and helps you to make it profitable for your practical life. And after this reading, you will perhaps recreate yourself in some way: the Holy Angel will be with you. With you he will go to your school, with you he will be at the table, and watching over your sleep will remain when you go to sleep. And

you will sleep and wake up the next morning ... And on your knees on the ground, you will say your prayer. And who will take her to the throne of God? Your Guardian Angel, as seen by S. João in one of his visions. Prayer unites us to God and gives us the necessary graces for our salvation. For this reason, there is no act of ours in which the charitable heavenly spirit is most pleased. The saints tell us that when we pray we are never alone: the Angels of God assist us, rejoicing especially in the exultation of his heavenly joy! Therefore, the joy of the Angels will continue, if our prayer is continuous, according to the teaching of Christ our Redeemer: "it is always necessary to pray and never stop doing it". In fact, the Holy Angels desire nothing more, with such solicitude, than to transform our life into continuous prayer. (19)

CHAPTER V

REVERENCE DUE TO SAINT ANGELS

Our Guardian Angels are our guide, help, defense. Such a fact, so magnificent, so certain, so fruitful for our spiritual life, it is just that it has the necessary repercussions in our attitude towards them, and in general in our conduct. What, then, should our conduct be before the Holy Angels? S. Bernardo: we must revere their presence, respond with sincere devotion to their benevolent dedication, and have absolute confidence in their protection - "*reperentia pro custodia, depolio pro benevolentia, fiducia pro custodia*".

The Holy Doctor could not better summarize our obligations to the angels of God. What are they, really? In themselves they are very noble spirits; in relation to God, they are his supreme ministers - and for this we owe them reverence. With regard to ourselves, we saw that they are our guard, our support, our shield: and for this we owe them devotion and trust.

(19) Three "ways" distinguish ascetic authors: the purgative way, typical of beginners in the spiritual life; the enlightening one, typical of those who are already taking advantage in the paths of the spirit and the unitive, characteristic of the perfect ones. the Angels help them to men, to the incipient, purging them of their defects, to the proficient, to enlighten them with wise teachings, to the perfect ones, corroborating their perfection with their most valid comfort. Ah, it is true that they keep us in everyone. our paths! To these three ways, St. Dionysus mentions in Cael's book, Hierarch, in chapter III.

Three small paragraphs: continuous presence of the Holy Angel - reverence that presence requires of us - practical way of never lacking respect,

1 - Continuous presence of the Holy Angel

“It is not only by sight, says S. Bernardo, that we can verify the presence of things”.

This is precisely what is happening with the Holy Angels. They are present to us, always and everywhere, and we can never see them. But they are not less present for this reason! In fact, things that are still material - and not spiritual, like Angels - are unattainable to us! Who has never seen oxygen or hydrogen from the air? We feel them, it is true, passing on wild flights and harming our faces ... Nevertheless, we do not see them.

Often, too, the celestial spirits that descend to the earth in embassies of peace and love pass by us ... We do not see them. But we can perceive them with the faculties of our soul and the sensitivity of our psyche: now it is the inspirations to move in the good, now a certain fervor of faith, of hope, that tell us of the presence of the kind messengers of God .

There is, however, an Angel, whose mission is to be with us instantly: he is the Holy Guardian Angel. We do not perceive it, continuously, just as we do not perceive the still air that surrounds us. We would not, however, dare, for this reason alone, to deny the presence of one or the other. The existence of oxygen, we know from science. That of the Holy Guardian Angel, by faith - which is more certain than the same human science. In fact, how many, among those who admit the assertions of science, who do not admit them by a true act of faith in the word of science? How many people owe the truths that science proposes to them to ascertain their own reasoning? Now, the word of God is more credible than the word of man.

And, therefore, to consult the faith, What does the faith tell us? He tells us that the Angels are present to us, always and everywhere, because from God they were given the task of assisting us, and of assisting us in every time and place, why, such an task requires their presence. “ Quomodo , interrogates S. Ambrósio, far from stant, qui ad adiumentum sunt aitributi? ”How can beings who are given to us by God for our continued help and defense be far from us (In 1s.37, m.43).

Very short, in fact, is the vision of our spirit! Our faith is very languid! Praise God if she makes us more alive, What a magnificent spectacle, then, in the eyes of our mind! Wherever we see a man, there we would also see an Angel of God! Angels of God filling our home where we live with our parents and brothers, Angels of God filling their holy temples and altars, Angels of God in schools, as numerous as the disciples and teachers. Angels of God, saints of superhuman nobility wherever human creatures come together! Next to our

father an Angel, beside our mother, beside our brothers, beside our fellow students, beside our friends and companions.

What a magnificent spectacle, what a sublime vision of faith It is the case of saying with St. Paul: "You came to Mount Zion and to Jerusalem, city of the living God, and in the company of many thousands of Angels. Accessistis ad Sion montem multorum millium Angelorum attendentes". (Heb. XII, 22).

2 - Reverence that requires the presence of Angels from us

It is not difficult to understand our obligation to respect and respect the Holy Angels.

An act of faith in the presence of the excellent messenger of God with us will suffice for us to be obliged to compose ourselves and to revere his presence. Indeed, this is how we proceed before those who have a prominent place in the social hierarchy. On the other hand, holiness also imposes respect, reverence, devotion. Before the magnates of the world and before the saints of God, we instinctively show ourselves to be respectful, considerate, polite. Now, the Angels of our Guard occupy the most prominent place in the hierarchy of creation, and are of such excellent holiness that none of the great saints of the Church can compare to them.

The angels, the holy doctors tell us, are the servants of God, citizens of heaven, exalted in holiness, excellent in all science, very wise and very powerful. They form the blessed court of the Most High and are his ministers: *administratorii spiritus* - as S. Paulo has already told us - in *ministerium missi*.

What a profound respect, therefore, and what perfect modesty is not due to his presence! "Watch over you, says S. Bernardo, for you are the Angels present: *caute ambula, ut videlicet cui adsunt Angeli, in omnibus viis tuis*". In all your ways: therefore, always and everywhere, when alone or when accompanied, in public places, in the temples or in your home. Reverence your Guardian Angel wherever you are, whatever you are concerned: "*in quovis diversorio, in quovis angulo, Angelo tuo reverentiam habere*".

3 - Practical way to never lack respect for the Holy Angel

"*Cavenda nobis eorum offensa*", says S. Bernardo: we must avoid everything that can offend the Holy Angels. Now, there is only one thing that really offends their immaculate vision: sin (20). In fact, the offense done to our own father is the one who most offends us, and disrespect for the authority to which we dedicate ourselves, fills us with pain and indignation. Nothing, likewise, can offend the Holy Angels, apart from what offends that Most High Lord, of which they zealous ministers, therefore, to avoid sin, is to avoid the

offense of our Guardian Angels, it is to remain reverent and respectful of his presence.

(20) S. Pedro Damiano: "In Angelorum emspecto, one thousand sor dildum one thousand fostet obseenum, mist vitium ct poceatum".

Is it demanding too much? Certainly not paying attention to the means we have, in the Church, to avoid it.

Furthermore, the same faith, revived, in the presence of the "Holy Angels, is already a powerful pure means of avoiding any kind of sin. raising the eyes of your mind to heaven, consider that angels fill everything with their presence: the air, the land, the sea, the churches they preside over (21) ". "And will you dare, resumes S. Bernardo, to do in the presence of your Guardian Angel, what you would not dare to do before a high earthly character ... or even before any ordinary man?"

We must, therefore, flee from sin, not at this or that moment, not in this or that place alone, but always and everywhere, day or night, in a patent or dark place, in a solitary or populated place. It is always everywhere we can not fail to give the Holy Guardian Angel that reverence that is due to him, because always and everywhere we have him by our side, zealous for our good, as messenger of the Most High God: "in omné loco sedulus pedisequus ani mæ (22) ".

(21) Enpos. iu ps, CXVII, serm I. 9.

(22) Sermon. XXXI in cant. - With these words, Saint Bernard compares the Angel to a servant, following in his master's footsteps. And even this, according to what he says in another sermon, should not seem incredible, because the same Creator and King of Angels, comes to earth no longer to be served "but to serve and to give his life for men." (The S. Michaelis party).

CHAPTER VI

WHAT SINGULELY OFFENDS THE HOLY ANGELS

There is no sin, of course, that does not offend the Guardian Angels. There is no sin, therefore, that for us should not be avoided out of respect for the presence of the Holy Angel of God. There are, however, some sins that offend them most, gravely. It is necessary to bore them deeply and avoid them with great care so as not to dislike the kind protector of ours and the zealous guard of our soul.

It is easy to understand what these sins are, if we consider the Holy Angels of God in three following aspects: with respect to God, if: Creator and Lord, with respect to themselves, with respect to us, men.

With respect to God, they are very zealous ministers: spirit administrators ... All sin, therefore, that directly offends the majesty of God, is equally deeply insulting and deeply offends them.

With respect to themselves they are pure spirits. This means that, not being, like men, composed of flesh and spirit, they are at all exempt from the carnal and sensual acts inherent to human nature. Every sensual act, therefore not permitted by God Our Lord, every carnal act not directed by reason, totally dislikes its purest and all spiritual nature.

Finally, with respect to men, they are his guards and have nothing more at heart than their salvation: “missi propter eos qui hereditatem capient aulutis” , Now, there is a sin that opposes this mission of the Angels: it is the sin of scandal . The scandalous leads souls to perdition like Guardian Angels to salvation. Here, then, is the third kind of sin that the Angels greatly abhor.

1 - Injuries that directly offend the majesty of God

In two ways it is possible to insult the Majesty of God. First, indirectly, and as a consequence, deliberately violating its precepts or prohibitions, as in homicide, retraction, hatred towards others. Secondly, directly, and per se, with the same immediate sacrosanct divinity as the target of injury, or even the infinite attributes, as is the case with blasphemy or when with foolish daring his most wise providence is cursed. It makes fun of its holy religion, rebels against its holy dogmas. These are the latter, insults to the divine Divine Majesty, and are extremely offensive to the angels, zealous ministers of yours.

What, in effect, is the office of the Holy Angels with respect to God? As the same Greek word “angelos” indicatethey are messengers and ministers of God. Now, that minister truly loyal to his lord and requesting his interests, does not vibrate with indignation against the offense of those who insult him in his very presence, does not take the injuries done to his Lord as his own, does not fret full of zeal for the pressure from the offender and the revenge of the offended? So do the faithful servants of the lords of the land. How can they not, then, these supreme ministers of God most high?

It is sometimes untrue, unstable in any case, and interested, man's loyalty to man; but the Angels' fidelity to their Creator is loyal, sincere, constant, accompanied by ardent zeal.

On the other hand, it goes infinitely less than, servant to the lord, however great it is, from this land, than from the Angel to God, the infinite being that gave him being is all he has. It is, therefore, for the Angel, the divine Majesty, something tremendous, very high and most adorable. Hence all the zeal, of

these ministers and servants. Only in divine mercy, with which the Angels conform, can one find the reason why they do not avenge incontinently and relentlessly the offenses done to the divine Majesty. God, who is the Father of Mercy, still offers these sinners the help of his grace; the Angels also continue to provide assistance, and as compassionate doctors all strive to make the unhappy return to heaven. But who can say the supreme indignation of the blessed spirits, forced to be witnesses of such horrible excesses?

' Sanctum et terribile nomen ejus ": the name of the Lord is holy, terrible, says the Psalmist. Respect him, therefore, so that you do not come to offend his divine Majesty and that you do not cause the displeasure of watching the good Guardian Angel the horrendous injury to his Creator and Lord. "Do not even say before the Angel: there is no provision, lest the Lord be so angry with such a speech, do not perish all the works of your hands: neque tips blush Angelo nom is not providentia , ne forte iratus Deus against sermones luos dissipet cuncta opera manuum tua- vu"(Ecle.5,5) - Keep, therefore, from talking about it, as the Holy Spirit warns you. Do not say that your heavenly Father is not good or is not just. Do not make your holy religion the object of your jokes, let alone your mockery. Submit to your holy dogmas, which God deigned to reveal to you, your intellect, certain that God guides you on the path of truth, without the slightest danger of misleading you. Finally, everything that refers to God in a special way, is worthy of veneration and respect on your part: objects, places, people consecrate yourself to his divine worship or his sacred service.

Therefore, beware of any irreverence in the church and any disrespect for the ministers of the sanctuary or the sacred ceremonies that take place there. Angels, as St. Theodore the Studite are the guards who watch the altars and the temples of God: "per angelos Dei altaria custodiuntur et fidelium templa servantur" , is not, on the other hand, out of respect for the Angels, which St. Paul does it prescribe that women should keep the veil over their heads in the church? With what eyes will they not see, then, those Angels who watch there, the unfortunate man who makes the house of God not only theater for his amusement, but a place of license and scandal? (23).

There is, however, a moment when all respect on your part is little in the temple of God: it is the moment of Holy Mass. Remember that multitudes of profoundly reverent celestial spirits attend it, and as if filled with holy fear before the Most High mystery that is fulfilled there.

And as a conclusion to all these considerations, which you must take as inspired by your Guardian Angel, and as if coming out of your mouth, keep in your heart these words of St. Gregory Nazianzeno, which will make you

venerate and respect the priests of God, and maybe move you to follow their careers: “the same Angels, he says, pure worshipers of the most pure God, they are likely to venerate the priesthood as something well worthy of their worship: *sacerdotium ipsi quoque Angeli, puri purissimi Dei cultores, tquam ipsorum cultui mini odd me, fortasse veneratione proseguuntur* ”(24). And if you want a word of divine authority that raises the priest to one as an identification with Christ himself, keep this brief and profound word spoken to the apostles and their successors by the divine Master: “Whoever hears you, hears me; and whoever despises you is myself who despises you; *qui vos audit, me audit, qui vos spernit, me, spernit.* ”

(23) In the prayer in sonetos Angelos, n. 2, Migne Patrol, Grace. I take XCIX p. 730. - 8, Jerônimo comments on the text of S. Paulo to which we alluded in the Coment. in Math. 1, III.

(24) Orat XVII, n. 12.

2 - Sins contrary to angelic virtue

Such sins, as has been said, are extremely disgusting to the purest angelic nature. Consequently, they cannot help but abhor them.

Suppose a preceptor, with a singularly serene spirit, with constantly peaceful attitudes. It is beyond doubt that such a preceptor will endeavor above all to make his disciple equally patient, calm, peaceful. And the more you will love him the more he conforms to your example and teaching. And the reason for this is clear: we love those who have character traits similar to ours, and we feel an aversion for those who are remarkably dissimilar to us.

The Angels, therefore, must not bother more than sins contrary to the virtue of purity. This is for the reason explained. Their very pure nature leads them to love those who are like them, and to hate everything that is opposite them.

There is, therefore, a serious offense against the heavenly Angel that accompanies us, in every act of this nature.

He who wants to live off his faith, that is, to practically admit the constant presence of that blessed spirit, must therefore avoid everything that may affect the purity of customs.

S. Basilio uses a comparison that makes what we assert very sensitive. “Just as smoke, he says, chases away bees, and just as a bad odor disrupts candid doves, so this pitiful and sickening sin repels the Holy Angel of God, the guardian of our life (25).

(25) “*Lacrimonum pecostum*”, says Brasília: sin, which provokes tears ... - In Pa. XXXIII n. 5.

It is true that the Holy Guardian Angel does not abandon us, after we have offended him, just as God himself is still present in the sinful act, God remains present, as being Omnipotent, but not in that peculiar way, quickening us from your same divine life. The Guardian Angel is still present ... But it is clear that the bonds of charity that bind him to us become weaker ... On the other hand, the worse our dispositions are, the less he will be able to help us spiritually.

However, love is followed by compassion. And the good Angel of God, then, will endeavor to lead us back to the right path, through his inspirations and inner motions,

Young man who reads me, do to keep yourself worthy of the love of your Guardian Angel, making yourself similar to him by the purity of your customs. If, in the meantime, it happens that you will become unworthy even of their looks, pay attention to their inspirations, and return, hastily, to the arms of your pilgrim's kind and heavenly companion.

And if in this moment when you read me, you recognize that you are not worthy of the love of the holy Angel, perhaps give him, for the first time, the pleasure of seeing you again pure as he is, and worthy as he, of the love of God !

Oh, how happy is the life of the pure boy, kind to Angels, admired and respected by men! "The pure man, says S. Bernardo, makes himself a man, Angel. The Angel, and the man who leads an unblemished life, he says, are, of course, different; but not for virtue, but for the happiness or excellence of nature: "differunt ... sed felicitate naturæ, non virtute" (Epist, XXIV). We can, therefore, by virtue, be what Angels are by nature.

Let us be it, since it depends on us,

Let us be it, as true followers of Jesus, Lamb without spot, lily of the convales, as perfect children of Mary, most pure Mother, Queen of Virgins, conceived without sin,

3 - How scandal offends Angels

Much is said about scandal, but few know what is meant by that word. To give scandal is, in the definition of Catholic asceticism, nothing more than offering others an occasion for sin. "This, says S. Tomás, can be done in two ways; or directly, or indirectly "(2. 2. q. XLIII).

The scandal is straightforward when the scandalous is aimed at the spiritual ruin of others.

It is indirect when one does not have such a perverse intention in mind, but one only predicts that actions and words are to one's neighbor, an occasion of spiritual ruin, and regardless of whether such an action is taken or said words, without a just reason.

In both cases, however, the result or end, whether intended or not, of the scandalous act, is the ruin of the next. And so the scandal is the greatest evil that we can do to it.

And worse is to kill his soul and take away his supernatural life, which cost him the Blood of Christ, than to deprive him of natural life, which cost him, simply an act of his omnipotent will.

The scandalous is a murderer of souls and a waste of the Blood of Christ. The scandalous loses everything that Christ suffered from agonies and pains, torments and injuries, injustices and scorn.

If many dead souls could be seen, many of them would be covered with the wounds left by the murderous dagger of the scandalous.

Now, those who do not see our eyes, because they do not perceive what is spiritual, see the Angels of God, who are of the same nature as our souls. His horror, then, for those who scandalize the innocent, is very similar to that of Jesus Christ, who uttered very severe words in this regard. His disciples once asked him who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Then Jesus called a little child, placed him in the midst of them and told them that the greatest in the kingdom of heaven would be what he would do as that child. And, he added later: "whoever scandalizes one of these little children, it would be well to be thrown on the bottom of the sea with a millstone tied around his neck". The energetic expression of Our Lord Jesus, Christ, expresses well all the horror that holy souls feel for the scandalous. Now, the Angels, the most holy creatures that God has ever created except Mary Most Holy. How much, therefore, the sin of scandal offends them, it is well understood.

But, in addition, there are still other more particular reasons. whereby the scandal is offensive to the Angels. And these reasons are the means used by the scandalous, the boss whose services he puts himself in and the end he has in view. one, the Angel, wants man's salvation, another (the scandalous) his ruin and condemnation. One, for this purpose, suggests chaste thoughts, excites holy affections, encourages to flee from sin and to do good, and the other seeks to instill in perverse souls ideas, awakens the most shameful passions in hearts, does everything to mislead the good.

Finally, one is a messenger from God, his minister and ambassador, another minion from the prince of darkness, his agent and representative.

Therefore, flee, bore, abhor with all your might the sin of scandal, extremely insulting to Christ, and offensive to the holy Guardian Angel.

And beware, above all, of scandalizing the innocent, for, says Christ Our Redeemer: "Your Angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven: *Angeli eorum, in cœlis, semper vident faciem Patris mei, qui in cœlis est* (26).

(25) Mt18,10. - This place of Scripture is one of the most evident and effective to demonstrate the truth of the guardian of the Holy Angels. "Let every believer in Christ be assisted by an Angel, says St. Basil, as well as a preceptor and pastor who governs his life, no one can contradict him, if he remembers the words of the Lord, when he said: "do not despise " etc. - Cont. Kumon. I, III.

Chapter VII

THE LOVE WE GIVE TO THESE OUR HEAVENLY PROTECTORS

A true friend is not only one who does not offend us. It is above all the one who, with affectionate friendship, pays for the friendship we have voted for him. If we want to live by our faith and make the splendid dogma of the guardian of the Holy Angels a powerful support of our spiritual life, it is essential to pay them with love the friendship that they have given us. dedicate.

The three little paragraphs that follow - the love that the Angels have for us; what we owe you; and their joy at being matched - they intend to help you, with God's help, to pay that debt of love.

1— The love that Angels have for us There are

two kinds of love. The love of lust and the love of benevolence.

Concupiscence hair seeks, what it loves, not the good of the loved one, but the good, to its own advantage and usefulness. And for the sake of benevolence only the good, profit and advantage of being loved. Now, not even the Holy Angels (as Seneca used to say about God (benef. IV, c. 9) need our favors, nor can we do them.

"Nec ille collato eget, nec us ei quidquam conferre possumus".

In fact, the Holy Angels are already blessed in God, in heaven: what more can they need? what use or advantage of us, miserable mortals, can they gain? So your love for us is a very pure love of benevolence, and only love, on our part, can we give it to you. The Holy Angels love us, says St. Augustine, for three reasons or causes: because of God, because of us, and because of themselves. Because of God, because God loves us too, and with such extremes; because of us, because we are similar to them in rational nature;

because of themselves, because they want us sitting on those supernal thrones of the Angels who prevaricated (S. Ag. De dilig. Deo, ch. 3; S.

Bernardo, Sermo 1 in festo S. Michælis, n.4).

To these reasons for your love, we can add yet others. They love us, because they are so averse to demons, the enemy capitals of human nature. They love us because they see us so loved by Mary Most Holy, her dearest Queen. They love us, because Jesus, our Redeemer, and their beloved King intensely love us.

“If our King - so does Origen speak the Angels - the Only Begotten Son of the Father, came down from heaven and came down clothed with a human body, if he dressed in mortal flesh, carried his cross and died for men; what else do we, we (your angels), your ministers, expect? (Hom. Lin Ezech).

Wonderful spectacle in the eyes of those who know how to contemplate! Three purest sources of love, from which the love of Angels for men extends, intensely and vehemently! It is a love not of mere desires, not of sterile affections, but of works, “but constant, lasting as life, long as eternity! We will no longer insist on the facts that prove the love of the Angels towards men. We will only mention a deep observation by S. Tomás, which is summarized in this: All the salutary and meritorious works that we do, are so many other favors of the Holy Angels, because without his help and cooperation we would not be able to do them. But here are the textual words of the holy and angelic doctor: “man can, by himself, fall into sin, but he cannot produce meritorious works, without divine assistance, which is given to him through the ministry of the Angels. They therefore compete for all of our good works (l. pq CXIV a.3).

2 - Our love debt

It is something that the same nature teaches us (natural law) that he who loves and benefits others, must find love and recognition in the latter. And whoever violates such a sacred precept, manifests his own heart empty of affections, “sine affectione” , as S. Paulo says (11, Tim.). And without love, considered ungrateful, it is boring for everyone. Nothing, in fact, more natural. But Christian love encompasses not only friends but also enemies. And if enemies are to be loved, how much more to friends!

“If those, so argues St. Augustine, who are the object of our works of mercy or whose works we are the object of, are called just our neighbors, it is clear that in the precept, which was imposed on us, to love our neighbor, the Holy Angels are also included, as they daily perform innumerable acts of mercy with us ”(De doct. Christ).

We can go even further, and add that the precept includes especially the Holy Angels, since they are, after the blessed Mother of God and our Mother, Mary, our most assiduous and liberal benefactors.

Sometimes we see certain saints worshiped with a constant and never satisfied devotion, by certain devotees, who confess objects of the most assiduous and esteemed thanks and favors. more assiduous and industrious than that of us has that Angel who was destined by God to be with us, throughout our lives, our faithful guardian. It is right, therefore, that in our correspondence and love, our devotion and gratitude to the Holy Guardian Angel is in no way inferior to devotion and love towards any other of the saints of God.

But let's be practical. The proof of love is works. Now, the Epistle of the Feast of Guardian Angels offers us a beautiful piece of advice: in order to respond to the love of the good Angel of God, listen to his voice. This sums it up. But here's the lesson: "So said the Lord God: Behold, I will send my Angel; he will precede and protect you on the way and introduce you to the place that I prepared you. Respect him and listen to his voice, and beware of despising him; because he will not forgive you when you sin, for my name (authority) is in him. If you listen to his voice and do what I tell you, I will be the enemy of your enemies and I will afflict those who afflict you, for my Angel will walk ahead of you.

In fact, quite often the Holy Angel speaks to our hearts. So you need to hear your voice.

Living rays of light often pass through the obscurity of our mental faculties, and suddenly, the eternal truths and the nothingness of the earth are discovered to us: it is the voice of the Holy Angel.

At other times, they are inner motions that want to pull us out of sin, to move away from his occasions, to lead to the practice of good, to prayer, to the sacraments, to obedience, to study - there are so many other voices of the Guardian Angel. Let us hear them, because, as S. Ambrósio says, the inner voices of the Angels are as many invitations and orders from God, of whom they are obedient ministers: "Angelorum verba mandata sunt Dei" (De Virginit).

There is a case, above all, in which it is necessary to be attentive to that voice of the Holy Angel, and very docile to his motions: it is the case of the call to the priestly state or simply to the religious state.

Indeed, the Christian can be called to two states of perfection: simply the priestly, that is, the state of a secular priest (who does not belong to any

religious order or congregation), and that of religious, in religious congregations and orders.

In one as in another, man consecrates himself and holds God with special bonds. In the first state, in addition to making a vow of chastity, the priest contracts the obligation to work for the good of souls, under the obedience of the bishop of his diocese.

2 the state, religious (which can also be priestly or not), the three great evangelical councils, which are the condition of the religious state, and at the same time the safest paths to perfection, are fully embraced. That is, the religious immolates his own riches to God, with the vow of poverty; the body itself, with the vow of chastity; and the will itself with that of obedience. There is no doubt that the sacrifices that accompany these two states, and especially the second, are great. But whoever sees himself called by God Our Lord, be sure that the grace of the Lord and the assistance of the Holy Angel will come together to smooth out any difficulty, and to smooth out any sacrifice. Furthermore, if God asks for the sacrifice, it is because he can compensate it with the thousand most precious times: "whoever leaves his home, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or their lands, because of my name (because of me), will receive a hundredfold (in reward), and will possess eternal life ". (Mt.19,20) Now evaluate whether it is worth making such a sacrifice.

3 - Joy of the Holy Angel when we respond to his love

There is nothing that causes us so much sadness as seeing ourselves badly matched in our dedication by someone, and nothing that is more purely joyful than seeing that our dedication causes recognition and our affection correspondence.

A striking example is the joy of a father and mother who see their own children grow docile to their desires and mandates, buty and studious; and that of the master who sees growing more and more in knowing the disciples for which he is dedicated.

You know, those who experience it, how sweet it is to reap the fruits of fatigue and industry itself.

As for the joy of the Angels in seeing each other, Catholic theology speaks through the words of S. Tomás de Aquino, one of their most authorized spokesmen. * The joy of Angels, he says, can increase due to the salvation of those who are saved by their angelic ministry ... But this joy belongs to the accidental prize, and as such it can increase until the day of judgment "(27). Therefore, the Holy Angels of God rejoice with our spiritual good.

On the other hand, says NSJ Cristo, in the Gospel: "there will be joy in heaven, among the Angels of God, by the penance and repentance of a sinner who is".

(27) l. p q. LXII aq ad 3.

The Angels of God in heaven, therefore, enjoy two kinds of bliss: one essential, consisting of God's vision and love, and the other accidental, is the result of the knowledge they may have about other things outside of God. Such is the joy in the conversion of a sinner, such the joy of being met in his zeal with us.

Your life, therefore, reader friend, may be the cause of that accidental happiness of the Holy Angels.

It is certainly a great happiness to be another cause of happiness! What a joy to know that our parents, our teachers, our superiors, are happy because we are what they expected of us! Well, let us be sure, that if we are good, the Angels will also be happy, and that is because of us. What a source of joy for us!

There is yet another thing that you must reflect on, The master who sees his efforts matched, is even more encouraged to lead his disciple to ever greater knowledge, and to reveal the secrets of science that he does not reveal to his students. . In the same way, everyone who has the job of directing, guiding, educating, whether in the sciences, in the arts, or in life in general. The student who corresponds to the care of his educator, deserves the special care that he is subsequently given.

You may, therefore, deserve special care from your Guardian Angel, and you may not deserve them.

In the first case, you can count on a very special help in the dangers of our long walk on the face of the earth.

In the second, although the good Angel will certainly be ready to help you when you call on him, however, you will no longer deserve that special assistance that you may need.

Anyway, think about the following.

The Guardian Angel has the right to that joy of being reciprocated, in the same way that those who work are entitled to remuneration corresponding to their work. If you are not good, therefore, and do not respond to the care of your good Angel, you will deprive him of something to which he is entitled. And the evils to which you will be exposed then? Good trees bear good fruit, and bad trees bear bad. This means that evil does evil; and the good the good. This is natural. From your evil actions, only evil can follow, the

unhappiness of being killed supernaturally, the misfortune of losing yourself, perhaps, forever.

And from your good deeds good will follow, all sorts of good for your soul, - and it is in your soul that your true happiness resides, and not in your body. How happy the saints were, and how the caring Angels surrounded them! You have certainly admired this sign of your Guardian Angel's delight in your lives. Well, you can make yourself worthy of equal favors. Unless you want to be an enemy of your soul - *hostes animæ Mostræ* , said Archangel S. Raphaël - and then there is no need to blame your spiritual misery but yourself.

CHAPTER VIII

STILL OUR LOVE DEBT

Two parts comprise our love debt; love of recognition and love of reparation. We have already talked about the love of recognition in the previous chapter, The love of reparation remains.

Is it necessary?

Just do an examination of conscience using the reading we have done so far. Have we been towards the Holy Guardian Angel what we should be? Do we correspond, in due manner, to the benefit of your continued assistance? Have we loved you? Have we given you joy? Have we deserved your special care, or, on the contrary, have we neglected even your most common care? ... To repair is to pay or restore love. We owed the Angels love and did not pay it in due time; we will now pay you for the repair.

You will be trained in the need for this refund by thinking of our bad correspondence with the Holy Angels, their patience with us, and how we can practically give them satisfaction.

1.- Our bad correspondence in the care of the Guardian Angel

A quick look at our past life will convince us of one thing: that our sins were so numerous that it would be impossible for us to count them. It was easier for us to count the stars in the sky ...

But let's restrict the field of view of our past. Let us assure the goggles of our memory for the omissions of omission only. They will appear as huge holes in the bulk of our life, holes so numerous that they would have been enough to make us sink.

And in the meantime, there was someone who foresaw danger and tried to avoid it, tried to warn us, even tried to move us from our inertia with his inner motions: he was our good Guardian Angel. We don't listen to him. We did with

him what we would not do with our friends, when interested in our good. Because, at least, we listen to them, we pay attention to their reasons, But even with the Holy Angel we did not do this!

Other, even smaller, holes will be seen in the imperfections committed in good works, prayer, attendance at Holy Mass, and other pious duties. And if such imperfections were not simply the result of human weakness, but ill will, what an offense for the Guardian Angel! In fact, such a great offense is not to do a favor as to do it unwillingly.

But there is more to see in the lack of commission positive sins, thoughts, words, works. What a heavy load for our poor boat. Really, if it didn't crash, it was only due to God's mercy, and to our faithful keeper!

And the sins of scandal? How many times have we not been guilty of the sins of others, how many times have we not done enough to cause the spiritual ruin of our neighbor?

How great, therefore, is our debt of reparative love! How much joy we did not steal from those who justly deserved it! It is the case to say with the holy Job: peccavi et vere deliqui. Really! ... I have sinned, and I have sinned a lot! If my Guardian Angel were capable of sadness, I would have filled him with pain and weeping the days of his mission with me!

2 - The patient and benign love with which the Holy Guardian Angel tolerated us.

"I have sinned and sinned a lot, and I have not received what I deserved in punishment: et ut were dignus non recep? ",

We did not even lack, after so many faults, the friendship of the Guardian Angel. However, an injury is only enough to separate old friends, to turn the old friendship into hate.

And this why? Because human friendship is based on human motives, and these are unstable. Not so the friendship that Angels have for us. It is based on spiritual motives, such as the love of God, of whom we are adopted children, the price of our soul, which was the Blood of Christ - and these motives are constant, unchanging. Therefore, the friendship that Angels have for us is constant, despite our faults. There is no doubt that these weaken their friendship with us, all the more the greater our guilt, and the less the mitigating the lack.

However, what S. Pedro Damiano says is always true: "Every day it is in many ways that we offend our Guardian Angels, to the offense we often add neglect to repent. However, even though they often suffer so many injuries

from us, they tolerate us, nevertheless, and sympathize with us (28). It is well known that the patient doctor tolerates the injuries of the frantic who does not want to be treated, he often returns to him, despite the affronts, until he is completely cured. So the holy Guardian Angel proceeds for us: he assists us, exhorts us, moves us inwardly, and never leaves our side, putting our salvation before God. - "Oh a prodigy of charity, exclaims the same S. Pedro Damiano, a prodigy of all unprecedented among men! ..." Charity, says the Apostle, is patient, is benign: *caritas patiens est, benigna est*. Now, it is actually the charity of the Holy Angel towards us, patient charity, benign charity: *patiens est, benigna est*; Everything suffers, everything supports: *omnia suffert, omnia sustinet*.

3 - Practical way to repair our offenses

Repairing without a sincere desire not to commit the injuries again is not repairing. It is to aggravate the guilt.

Guilt is a robbery and the fruit of this robbery is irreplaceable. The repair is, therefore, the compensation that occurs in the face of the impossibility of the refund.

(28) Serm. 1 from Exaltat, Crucis.

It supposes the desire to return what was stolen, if possible. However, the disposition to return the stolen is incompatible with that of committing another theft. Hence the need for a resolution not to return to the offense, whoever really wants to notice.

This, in turn, supposes the repentance of the offense done, Repentance, therefore, and resolution of the amendment is a *sine qua non* condition in every true reparation.

But this, although indispensable, is only the condition. It is not so much the reparation itself, as the first step in the life of reparation or, even better, the cessation of the life of ingratitude.

The same reparation, says S. Bernardo, which will consist mainly of doing all those acts that we know are to the liking of the Angels: *in his mazi me exercendum nobis, in quibus novimus Angelos detectari*. In fact, only then will we compensate for the pain of the offense for the pleasure of the gift, the injury for the honor, the contempt for the most dedicated cult of devotion.

"There are many acts, continues S. Bernardo, that they like or that they like to see in us.

Such are sobriety, chastity, voluntary poverty (practiced by the religious), customers who are sighing for heaven (jaculatory, holy wishes), and prayer accompanied by tears and fervent affection from the heart. However, more than anything, the Angels of peace, harmony and peace that befits brothers and sisters demand from us "(29).

(29) 8. Bernardo there alludes to the words, "Angeli pacia" Angels of peace, which are read in the prophecy of Isaiah.33,7.

Angels are inhabitants of the celestial homeland, and live entirely on supernatural life, which is true life - just as we live entirely on natural life, which is not true life, for it is mortal life, and true life is perfect enjoyment., the perfect knowledge of the truth, the perfect love of goodness and all this, eternally and immorally. All acts, therefore, have true life value only as long as they participate in that supernatural life. Anything else that is not so is really lost. That is why St. Paul said: whether you eat or drink, do everything for the glory of God. The supernatural reason for our action is that it gives it value. All this is expressed in the words of Archangel S. Rafæl to Tobias: Prayer with fasting and almsgiving (all acts of value for the supernatural life) is better than the work of gathering treasures (acts that are merely natural, worthless, perishable)). If, therefore, you want to please the Angels, young man who reads me, above all esteem the supernatural life, practice charity, overcome your passions, pray, communion, listen to the Masses you can.

Whatever you do to your neighbor for the love of God, it will be almsgiving, every mortification, every sacrifice will be fasting, every elevation of the soul to God, all thinking about God and loving Him will be prayer, So say the holy doctors who with these three operations : prayer, fasting, almsgiving, man totally offers himself to God. With prayer he offers the goods of the soul, with fasting the goods of the body, with alms his outer goods of fortune. However, there is a time when you will be able to practice fasting within the meaning of this term. It is a time when the Church prescribes it. Avidly take advantage of this occasion to please the holy Guardian Angel, and enrich your soul with supernatural goods, make it always enjoy more of that life that is worth living, because it is the true life.

It gives the things of this world the appreciation they deserve. He knows how to discreetly renounce what is illegal, saying with S. Estanislau Kostka: "I was not born for the things of the earth, but for those of heaven; for these I will live, and not for those ".

Finally, be like Jesus, the great friend of all who suffer, of all the sick, of all the afflicted, bringing your comfort and help to them.

Be an apostle, make your words and your examples only lead to good. Above all, make sure that you have imitators in this solid devotion to Angels, share with your brothers in Christ the fruit you reap from it. Thus, many, by your industry, will render to the holy Angels the honor that you have stolen from Him with your offenses. Oh, then you will do worthy reparation, so you can be sure that seeing the holy Angel in you actions so contrary to those you had previously practiced, you will forget the past at all, as if the past never existed (30).

(30) Jm, 31.4 - This step refers to S. Paulo, Hb10,17.

Chapter IX

“HOLY ANGEL OF THE LORD, I HAVE TRUST IN YOU!”

The true devotee of the holy Guardian Angel has, of course, the same trust in him as the little child, in his Mom, It is superfluous to be exhorting a child to have confidence in his parents.

Likewise, whœver believes in the presence of his Angel, and knows by faith that this heavenly spirit watches over our souls with the affection and solicitude of a mother, it seems superfluous to us to still urge him to that trust.

Now whœver trusts surrenders. It is, therefore, our duty to give ourselves to the holy Guardian Angel and entrust ourselves to his solicitude. The Holy Angel is the best guard of our soul - the trust that we must place in him is without limits - with special trust we must resort to him on some occasions - this is what we will expose in this chapter.

1 - The holy Angel is the best guard of our soul

The best guard is the most faithful guard. That is why old Tobias said in his son when he sent him to the parents of the fears: go, and look first for a faithful man who will accompany you: *inquirere tibi alicando fidelem virum* (Tb.5,4). But fidelity must also be accompanied by prudence. The faithful but reckless guard can be lost, and what else he keeps.

Anyway, what is the use of being faithful, being prudent, but not having the necessary power to avoid the evil that prudence tells us to avoid, to do what faithfulness requires to be done?

Now, the Angels, says S. Bernardo, “are faithful, they are prudent, they are powerful”. Or rather, they are very faithful, very prudent, very powerful. Is it still necessary to insist on this? ... It is not enough, for this to convince us to remember what we have already said about the angelic nature, his love for

us, the solicitude with which they keep us, the love they have for God, whose we are creatures and images?

In dangerous journeys, a good father only surrenders his son to the best, the most prudent, the most powerful of the guards. So the heavenly Father. The dangers of this earthly life demanded from his paternal Heart a guard such that in fact he would be worth, defend, direct us. He then entrusted us to the Holy Guardian Angel.

“Those who invisibly keep the servants of Christ, says St. Ambrose, keep them more than those who keep them visibly”, (Epistolar. Classis 1. sermo c. Aux. N. 11).

1 - Unrestricted trust in the Holy Guardian Angel

Two things could undermine our confidence in the Guardian Angel: the excessive fear of danger and the doubt of his help.

In both attitudes we would do great harm to the Holy Angel. It would be to admit either lack of faithfulness on your part, or wisdom and prudence or power.

In fact, the offense is even more considerable. It will reach the same paternal heart of God, who would thus have entrusted us to a guard unable to protect us.

This is not the attitude of the true believer and devotee of the Holy Guardian Angel. On the contrary, he makes the words of S. Bernard his own “What can we fear under the protection of such great guards?” - Quid sub tantis custodib timeamus?

As S. Inácio de Loyola says in his “Spiritual Exercises”, the devil spreads his satellites all over the world, leaving no one person without his special tempter. This doctrine of a special tempter of each man is based on the opinion of some of the Holy Fathers (31). However, it should not frighten us at all, because, as S. Tomás de Aquino says, it may well be that the demons that try to us belong to a higher hierarchy than our Guardian Angel. But this power has more than those for the simple fact that they are instruments of the almighty divine justice (32).

(31), Origen, Hom. IV, et XXXV in S. Luc, - S. Gr. Nissen do vita Moysis, - See Suarez op, cit, 1 VIII, c, XXI n. 20.

(32) Angelus, says Tomás, qui est inferior ordine naturæ, præest dacmonibui, quamvis mpérieuribus. ordain. naturæ, virtua divinaa jutítiæ, out of action Doni Angel, potior est, q virtus naturatis Angelorum.

However, it is necessary not to confuse trust with presumption. He who, trusting in the power of his Guardian Angel, leaves, so to speak, the

whole initiative of fighting the Holy Angel, does not turn to him fervently, does not ask for his help in fervent prayer, - he has no confidence, has presumption .

In the same way, the confidence that leads us to expose ourselves to danger is not trust, it is presumption.

Let us repeat here that the protection of the Angels follows and imitates the divine Providence, of which it is an effect.

Now the Providence of God, even though it watches over us, nevertheless demands that we resort to it through prayer, as the free creatures that we are.

Ask and you will receive "says the Gospel.

And it is also written, although there is Providence watching over us: "Whoever loves danger will perish in it".

In the same way the Angels protect us, but they demand prayer and escape from the dangers. We are not automatons, who let themselves be blindly guided by others. Angels are not the chauffeurs of our souls: they are our protectors, our guards, our illuminators, but all according to our rational and free nature.

S. Bernardo says that God ordered his Angels to guard us "in all our ways" and not in our precipices. For this reason, he says that when the devil told Jesus to launch himself from the top of the temple, he quoted the verse of Scripture: "To his angels God commanded them to keep you", but he silenced the part that says: "in all your ways "(Sermo XIV in. Ps. XC).

It's because?

Because paths are not precipices. It is necessary that in life we walk on paths, but not on precipices. And whoever gets into them, will perish in them, by superb presumption.

Bad books and bad company, bad places and shows, occasions, in a word, of sin - these are the precipices to which you should not be exposed, dear congregation, dear young man who reads me. If in danger, however, you see yourself without your fault, call on your Guardian Angel and he will protect you in your ways, for it was not you who exposed yourself to danger, but it was danger that stood in your way. And your Angel, instrument of the almighty divine Justice, will put tempting demons to flight.

3 - Occasions when we must especially “turn to the Holy Guardian Angel

1st.) - There are times in life when we feel small, or, at least, suspicious of our strengths, before the company we are going to afford.

Of course, especially on these occasions, it is necessary to turn to the holy Guardian Angel.

Are you preparing to make Holy Communion?

Ask your Guardian Angel to help you.

Is it about choosing a state of life? Beg your Angel to enlighten you, guide you, keep you from the wrong path.

Do you want to perform well with your obligations in the job you chose or imposed on you?

Deserve, with prayer and gifts, the help of your Guardian Angel. Anyway, do it in a similar way if you find yourself grappling with a contest, an exam, or any other worthy task that makes you worried. It is always your best friend, the holy Guardian Angel, that you must turn to, and you are confident that in one way or another he will help you. For this he was given to you by God. And if he couldn't have helped you, he wouldn't have given you God.

2ª) - Second, are the times of tribulation and serious temptations other occasion in which you should appeal especially to the Holy Guardian Angel. Friends often leave us just when we need them most: at the time of tribulations. And they do so because they lack the fidelity that the holy Angels do not lack. Friends of this world often fear that our misfortune will be communicated to them and make them miserable as well. Either they are ashamed of us, or they still don't want to bother to help us. Your great sin, then, is lack of charity. If they had charity, and with St. Paul they would put themselves as sick on the side of the sick, and they would shed tears for the same reason that the friend sheds them.

Now, the Holy Angels of God are the loveliest creatures, they are all charity. In view of the joy with which the heavenly armies announced to the shepherds the birth of Our Savior, and the commiseration with which they assisted Jesus in his great tribulation in the Garden of Olives.

Why? Because your mission is a mission of charity, and it is both happy with our good and compassionate of our evils.

Let us therefore pray to God and his Angels, our tribulations, and the Angel of the Lord will comfort us, as did the Angel of the Garden, who comforted Jesus. “Therefore, says the great doctor we have been following, S. Bernardo, every

time that some unusual temptation assails you, some serious tribulation, invoke your guard, your guide, your help in the dangers, in the tribulation. Shout at him, and say, "Lord save me, for I am about to lose myself." Or even (this we add) say to them "Holy Angel of the Lord, help me! I have confidence in you! "

3ª) are angels holy said a peep author that lead to weeping of sorrow and penance . "Ipsi sunt per Quos ad contritionis fletum et inducimur Pœnitentia" ... (SERM fr in ether, XLVI).

This is the third time to invoke the Holy Guardian Angel, the time of return to God.

It may be that we have been exposed to danger, that we have omitted the pleading prayer to God and his Angels, and that we have thus fallen into sin. very dangerous state, especially for you, dear young people who live in the middle of the world, but have confidence and devotion to the holy Guardian Angel. He, despite the temptation to let you stay in such a state, will lead you to the right path, through the tears of penance, that is, the sincere repentance of your sins.

But the action of your Angel must be supported. Severe is the state you are in. Throw yourself into the arms of your good Guard, apologize for having insulted his presence, ask him to lead you back to God, and he will smooth the way for you, make you overcome the temptation of shame, of irresolution, and in turn will cast you into the lap of your Heavenly Mother, who will take you to Jesus. There are some prayers at the end of this work that will help you.

And Jesus will give you divine grace, and you will become, like your Guardian Angel, Son of God, heir to Paradise.

If this is your present state, know that your good Angel bends over you, hoping to hear you invoke him, to lead you back to the right path. Ah, don't make him wait in vain! Your best friend is waiting for you, do your will! He has in his hands the most precious gift on which your happiness depends - peace and the grace of God, Without peace you will not be happy in this world, nor without divine grace you will be able to save yourself. And if until today you have only repaid with injuries the benefits of your Guardian Angel, give him, at least this time, the joy that you know floods his being when "a sinner wants to repent of his sins". "Be an occasion for joy in the holy Angels, I will tell you with Saint Ambrose, they rejoice in seeing you return to God: est Angelis lælitiæ, gaudeant de reditu tuo ".

Chapter X

IN PARADISE SUNRISE

The day of eternity is approaching.

That day may be the most beautiful day of our existence, and also the most terrible. For the true devotee of the holy Angels, it will no doubt be the most beautiful.

And this is because the holy Guardian Angel disposes his devotee to the great ordeal, validly comforts him in the great conflict, charitably accompanies him in the great passage.

1 — .0 Holy Angel predisposes his devotee to the great trial.

Set your affairs in order, says the prophet Isaiah, because you will die and you will no longer have life: " *dispone domui tuæ, quia morieris fu et non vives* . " (27,1).

To the devotee of the Guardian Angel, as the saints assure , the day of passage into eternity always finds them forewarned, And why? The holy Angel warns them: "Set your soul in order ..." This feeling of the saints is quite reasonable. God has our Angels aware of our future. Now, what friend must know how to approach the great and fearful day for his friend, he does not prevent it, he does not urge to prepare, he does not help at all as far as your possibilities?

Now, this is what, precisely, in the words of saints, our Angels do when the hour of our death approaches, the day of our eternity,

The way they prevent and predispose us is difficult to specify. But, whether they are more or less clear manifestations, or more or less expressed inner voices, the fact is that the good Angel finds ways to make us feel that we have already inclined towards the sunset.

And they are not mere forebodings ... While suggesting that we prepare ourselves, the Holy Angel must be careful that the death of his devotee is really the dawn of Paradise and not the sunset that precedes an eternally dark night.

Blessed are the devotees of the holy Guardian Angels, for when he comes to visit the Lord, he will find him vigilant, ready to accompany him to the feast of Paradise.

Blessed once again, the devotees of the holy Angels, who had them, in this life, for friends, at all times, for comfort at the time of death, and for eternal diners in heaven!

2 - Valid comfort of the Guardian Angel in the great conflict.

Not without reason we call the time of death a great conflict. Great for the ardor that is fought in it, great for the adversaries that are engaged in it, great for the consequences that depend on it.

It is quite natural and logical that the devil does not want to lose this last battle. All the victories achieved in life, he would gladly trade for this one victory. Now, in a decisive battle like this, all the forces available are used. There is, therefore, a battle to be fought at the time of death. The Church is promptly prevented by the prayers of agony. And there were saints who sustained it extremely hard and terrifying.

In fact, they are adversaries, on the one hand, "Angel of God, the soul redeemed by Christ, and Christ himself and his saints, and on the other the spirit of darkness, a friend of all evil, the cause of all our ruin. The consequences of this struggle are such that the very value of existence depends on it, or, in vulgar terms, it depends on whether or not it was worth existing.

No danger, therefore, of our existence, can be compared to the dangers of the hour of death.

Useless and even expendable had been the help of the Guardian Angel in the dangers of life, if he could not avail us at the time of death. We admire the zeal of the saints in helping the dying, and how much they strive to obtain a holy death for them, And why? Because the saints knew the value of the soul, they loved it dearly, they did not want to see its eternal ruin. Now, Angels are even more holy and charitable than the saints themselves. What they will not do, for the salvation of their devotee! Comfort, resignation, consolation for the brevity of agony and eternity of joy, courage like the martyrs, like Mary Most Holy Painful, like Jesus Christ - these are the feelings that infuse the saints in their dying, often unknown people - here they are the feelings that, with far greater reason, infuse the holy Angels into devotees and friends of theirs for a lifetime.

The devotee of the holy Angel will not lack repentance for sins: he will inspire him, as well as a great confidence in the wounds of the Crucified Savior. He will bring you a priest and he will inspire the feelings and words to suggest to the sick. He will see to it that he receives the last sacraments and that, with hoarse sobs on his lips, he breathes gently into the Lord's kiss. It will be a precious death in the presence of God! *preliosa in conspectu Domini (Sl.115,5).*

4. The Guardian Angel accompanies his devotee in the great passage.

At the very moment when the soul separates from the body, the state of *via* (state of those in trial) ends for us, and with it, too, to speak rightly, the guardian of the holy Angels.

This does not need clarification when it comes to a soul that leaves this world deserving eternal condemnation. On the side where the tree falls, as Ecclesiastes (2.5) says, it will remain there forever. The holy Guardian Angel has nothing more to do with such souls. They are all abandoned, through their own fault.

As for souls who die in a state of grace, they are saved. The help of the Holy Angel is no longer necessary.

However, some charitable charges still form the Angels with respect to the souls of those they protected in life (33).

(33) See Suarez, *op. cit.*, 1. V, e. XIX n. 9.

First of all they accompany them at the judgment seat of Christ. How can he not be deeply disturbed, asks S. Bernardo, if he finds himself alone and helpless from his faithful guide, when he leaves his body?

What is the last mode of *turbare* *lur*, if *sola hinc egrederetur*? "In the parable of the rich glutton and Lazarus, the beggar says Our Lord: it happened that the beggar died and was transported by the Angels to Abraham's bosom. (Lc 16,22).

This is precisely what the Guardian Angel and other Angels do when the soul leaves the judgment seat of Christ without guilt.

And if she still has guilt to atone for in Purgatory, the Holy Angels accompany her there, visit and console her, and, for her relief and liberation, make prayers on earth for them.

"They do not let the Angels to help the elect, says Saint Beda, until they bring them into the heavenly homeland", (From Salomonis temple, ch. XHT) - Oh, what a joy that the holy Angel, when introducing into heaven the one he had protected throughout life! Finally, your efforts and solicitude are crowned with full success! And what a joy for the devotee of the holy Angel! He too will not cease to bless the smooth and solid devotion that had taken him to paradise. One can well imagine, then, the thanks of the soul to the Guardian Angel, and the congratulations and embraces of him.

Of all this, and of all that we have exposed, we must conclude with S. Bernardo: "It is not lawful for us to be ungrateful to the holy Angels, who,

obeying so charitably the order of God, are of help to us in such great need. . Let us therefore be devotees of the Holy Angels, let us be grateful to these our heavenly protectors. Let us pay them love with love, honor them as much as we can, as much as we see ... We nurture very much affection for the Angels of the Lord, as well as for those who will one day have us as their joint heirs in heaven, and for now they are with us tutors and mentors given to us by the Father in Heaven, so that they may defend and govern us ”.

II PART

EXAMPLES OR VISIBLE MANIFESTATIONS OF ANGELS, IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT AND IN THE ECCLESIASTIC HISTORY

Chapter I

ANGELS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

There are many steps in Sacred Scripture that refer to the favors and benefits that the Angels of God did to men, who are, says the same Scripture, “slightly inferior to Angels: *minuisti eum paulo minus ab Angelis* ”.

More than forty manifestations of Angels enumerate in the holy books Fr Cornélio a Lápide, who is one of the most learned interpreters of Scripture. And the Roman Catechism says: "The history of the saints of this kind of examples is full ..." (P. IV, ch. 9). We will choose, among these many examples from the Old Testament, some more interesting and more edifying, summarizing them when convenient.

1 - An Angel helps Hagar and her little son Ishmæl, already faint from thirst

Hagar, being forced to leave Abraham's house, fled into the desert. But the Angel of the Lord appeared to him by a fountain, on the road from Sur and said to him: "go back to your lady's house and submit to her orders". Then he told him to put the name of Ishmæl on the son who was about to give birth, and to predict that he would one day be a great man, robust, brave and chief of numerous people (Gen. 16).

But poor Hagar quickly had to return to the desert, because Abraham, having to choose Sarah as his wife, had to send her away from his home. He gave her a piece of bread, put a water bottle on her shoulder, and sent her off with Ishmæl, who was then born.

He left the unfortunate and, some days, wandered aimlessly through the solitude of Beersheba. Quickly, the water from the small wineskin he was carrying ran out and, in that desert, there was no source that would flow the

precious liquid, even a little! And Ishmæel, still a child, and unaccustomed to the heat of thirst in the desert, was already fainting ... What to do, who to ask for help? How to revive that tender, almost agonizing child? Distressed, astonished, not knowing which side to take, the poor mother deposited her son in the shade of a tree, and ran away, so as not to watch her sad agony. As far as he could reach the shot of an arrow, he stopped, and when he sat down he began to cry, and sob, and exclaim: "ouch! that I will not see my son's agony, nor do I have the heart for it. Non videbo morientem puerem!

But, behold, the Angel of God appears to him and says to him: "Do not be afraid, for God heard your son's voice, in the place where he is". Then she showed him a well with water, and disappeared. Hagar ran quickly, filled the skin with water and took it to Ishmæel, Ishmæel drank and, satiated, began to live again. Then they both knelt and gave thanks to God (Gen. 21).

2 - Two Angels save Lot and his family from the Sodom fire

Lot lived in a city that became famous for the infamous life its inhabitants led. This city was called Sodom. Only he remained unscathed from the general pestilence and disruption of customs. Now, as a punishment for his nefarious sins, Our Lord, the Most Righteous Judge, condemned the city with all its inhabitants to fire, as well as three more cities, sinful like Sodom. But Lot was innocent. So God wanted to save him before the fire fell on the city. This happened as follows.

Lot was sitting one day at the gates of the city, when he saw two young men heading towards him. They were beautiful, and came in a great hurry. Believing that they were pilgrims, he ran to meet him and invited them, in a most affable way, to spend the night at his house.

But the pilgrims were two Angels. "We cannot accept it, they said, we have to spend the night in the square". But Lot did so much and said that they ended up accepting his invitation. At Lot's house the two young men (since Lot thought they were just young pilgrims) took food and slept.

The very next day, the Angels woke up. They went to Lot and told him that it was necessary to leave the city immediately. Get up, the Angels said to him, take your wife and your little children with you, and come with us. Let us leave the city so that it will not perish in its iniquity. You will know that it was to destroy the city that we were sent, but first we must save you and yours. Lot's astonishment can be understood. It was necessary that the Angels take him by the hand, as well as his wife and children, and made them leave the city almost by force. When Lot was in a safe place, the Angels left him. Then a

rain of sulfur and fire fell from the sky and set the city on fire with all its inhabitants (Gn19).

3 - The Angel of Isaac

One day God, to experience how far Abraham's obedience went, ordered him to offer him Isaac in sacrifice on a mountain.

Now Abraham tenderly loved his little son Isaac, But, thinking that he must obey God above all, who is the author of our life, he quickly resolved to comply with God's order. He made a bundle of firewood, put it on Isaac's back, took the cleaver with which he was to be slain, wielded a firebrand to light the wood, and set out for Mount Moria.

As they walked, behold, Isaac began to ask: "My father, the wood and the fire are here; but where is the victim to be sacrificed? " And Abraham replied: "My son, God will provide ..." After a long walk they arrived at Monte Moria, and Abraham made a stone altar and laid the wood on it. Then he tied Isaac with the rope, put him on the altar ... and pulled the cleaver.

He was about to deliver the fatal blow when he heard a voice: "Abraham, Abraham!" He was an Angel of God. And the voice continues: "Do not strike the blow on the child or do him any harm, for I already know that you fear God and that not even your only son was spared by my love". Then obedient Abraham turned and saw a kid that was trapped by the horns in a vine. He took it and offered it to the Lord instead of Isaac. However, the Angel once spoke to him and renewed how many promises God had made and how many blessings he promised (Gen. 22).

4 - The ladder of Jacob and the Angels that went up and down it

On one occasion, the patriarch Jacob of Beersabea left for Aram. Caught by night, still in the middle of the journey, he took a stone that he saw by the side of the road, made it a pillow and, as best he could, tried to reconcile sleep.

He still managed to sleep soundly, but he had a strange vision. He saw a ladder so big, so long, that it supported the foot on the ground and touched the top in the sky. And he saw that a number of Angels ascended and descended on it. In the part that touched the sky, the God of Heaven supported himself, who spoke thus: "I am the Lord God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants those lands on which you rest "(Gn27).

We cannot fail to mention here the beautiful reflection made by S. Bernardo on this vision: "The Angels go up, he says, because of themselves, and because of us they go down, or rather condescend.

So these blessed spirits rise with contemplation to God and descend, with compassion for us, to us, to guard us in all our ways. They go up to the face of God and go down at the behest of the same God: *Deus mandavit de te*. However, they do not lose sight of God when they descend because they always see the face of Heavenly Father: "semper vident faciem Patris ... qui in cœlis est " (In Sl. 90,9).

5 - More are those who are for us than those who are against us

It was at a time when Benadad, king of Syria, was at war with King Joram, who ruled Israël. Now a great prophet called Elisha lived in Israël at that time. The latter revealed to Joram how much Benadad was plotting in the most secret of his councils with his ministers and generals.

One can imagine Benadad's wrath when he learned of Elisha's procedure. He swore that he would capture him, no matter what, and that he would give the deserved prize, death.

In the past Elisha went with his servant Giesi to a city called Dotan, twelve miles away. Benadad knew it, and he quickly set up cars and soldiers, and arriving there at night, they just distributed troops around the city, in order to be completely surrounded.

The next morning Giesi wakes up and sees all that army, cars and horses around the city walls. Filled with astonishment, run to the prophet Lord, told him, what to do? Are we few and unarmed and will we have to fight against so many squads of armed people? " The man of God just smiled and replied calmly: "there is no reason to fear, because more are those who are in our favor than those who are against us". However, seeing that Giesi's dread did not allow him to settle, he prostrated himself in prayer, and exclaimed, "Lord, open Giesi's eyes so that he can see." Wonderful thing! Immediately Giesi's astonished eyes appear all over that mountain, in which the city was, covered with numerous cavalry, and chariots, around Elisha.

They were Angels from heaven, sent by God to help his prophet. They appeared in that form of flames and fire, to indicate that just as this one quickly picks up the bodies and devours them, so too the Angels with speed and irresistible force reduce the enemies to nothing. And so it was in reality. The Angels, using their wonderful power over nature, blindly wounded the Syrian soldiers and instead of capturing the prophet of God, they were the prisoners of the king of Israël.

And this is how Giesi learned to take into account not only the visible forces and soldiers, but also the invisible armies of the Angels, our faithful keepers. (IV, Reg. VI).

6 - The three young men in the fiery furnace and Daniel in the lions' den

We present these two facts together because they are very similar to each other.

There was a king of Babylon, so powerful and so proud, that he ordered all his subjects to pay divine honor to his golden statue, which he had raised in the fields of Dura. This superb king was called Nebuchadnezzar.

There was also a king of fears, equally superb, who ordered that for the space of 30 days no god should be offered prayers or sacrifices: only in his honor should all prayers and sacrifices be made. And the name of this king of the Medes was Darius.

Nebuchadnezzar ordered that everyone who transgressed his orders be thrown into a fiery furnace; and Darius, that those disobedient to his decrees were thrown into the lions' cave.

Now there were three young Hebrews in Babylon, called Sidrac, Misac and Abdênago, all of whom held high public positions. These, despite their public positions, disobeyed Nebuchadnezzar and said that they would not worship his statue, since worship is only due to the God of heaven.

With equal firmness Daniel, who also held the high position of satrap in the kingdom, ignored the royal mandate and, as usual, three times a day put his knee on the ground to worship the God of Heaven and thank him for the benefits.

Nebuchadnezzar, knowing of the disobedience of the three young Hebrews, had the furnace lit seven times more intensely than usual and had Sidrac, Misac and Abdênago thrown into the fire.

Similarly, Darius ordered Daniel to be thrown to the lions. But this is how God Our Lord came to the aid of his faithful servants.

An Angel descended into the flames of the furnace, pushed the flames away and made a cool, gentle breeze run through the furnace, so that neither the fire touched them nor hurt them at all. Upon seeing such a prodigy, King Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed in astonishment: "I see the four young men who, free and free, walk through the flames, without them doing any harm to them; and the fourth youth is similar to an Angel of God ". That said, he ordered the three young men to leave the furnace. When they left, all who were there surrounded us, amazed that the fire had no power over their

bodies. No hair on their heads was burned, their clothes were as if they had not passed through the fire, and not even the smell of smoke was left on their bodies. However, say the holy books, that such was the furnace fire that his tongues devoured him out of mouth. Three of the servants, who were to send the three Hebrews into the flames, were careless and were charred by these tongues of fire.

This was also how Daniel was saved from death.

An Angel came down from heaven and closed the lions' mouths. These meek, submissive, did no harm to Daniel. On the contrary, they came to lie at your feet.

Darius himself witnessed such a great miracle that, leaning over the entrance to the cave, he said: "Daniel, servant of the living God, your God, whom you serve so faithfully, was able to get rid of the lions' teeth?" And Daniel replied from within: "My God sent his Angel and he saved me". Daniel was quickly taken out, and they all saw with astonishment that the lions had left him unharmed. This miracle became more apparent with what happened next. For the accusers were thrown to the lions instead of Daniel, before the king, and these, before they reached the bottom, had already been shattered by the hungry teeth of those beasts (Dn3-4).

This was not, however, the only time that Daniel was thrown to the lions, and that he escaped through an Angel. On another occasion, he had destroyed the idol, called Bel, and killed a monster that the Babylonians worshiped as God. They were filled with hatred to Cyrus, who was then governing, and said: "Give us Daniel, or we will kill you and your family". Greatly frightened by the threat, he handed them over to Daniel. In possession of the prophet the people went to a lion's cave and they threw him there.

The lions had been starving for a long time, and Daniel was left with Daniel for six days. But the Angel also saved him from this time of those beasts, gave him to eat in a way, no less wonderful, which we now narrate.

At that time a prophet named Habacuc lived in Judea. This one had a field and many servants worked on it. One day, he prepared lunch for his workers, put it in a basket and went to the fields. Now, on the way, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him and commanded him to take that food to Daniel, who was in Babylon, in the lions' cave. Habacuc replied that he did not even know where Babylon was or where Babylon was in that cave. The Angel was not found. He took Habacuc by the hair, took him through the air, and deposited him at the edges of the lions' cave in Babylon. And when the food was delivered to Daniel, he again took Habacuc to the place where he had taken it.

When seven days had passed since Daniel had been thrown into the cave, it was the king with his retinue to see that those terrible and hungry animals had made the prophet. It is easy to imagine his amazement at seeing the prophet safe and sound.

He ordered him to be taken out of the cave, and in his place he sent to those who had plotted his death. They were continually devoured, there, under their sight (Dn14).

7— Favors of Archangel Raphaël to the two Tobias and Sara Rachel's daughter

It was Tobias from the tribe and city of Neftali. As the Bible says, he was a wise man, from his early years, and a God-fearing man. While the other fellow citizens of his people, were worshiping the golden calves that King Jeroboam had ordered to be erected, Tobias went to the Jerusalem temple to worship the Gods of Israël on the days of the three main Jewish festivals, and offered faithfully to the Lord the firstfruits and tithes ordained by the law. And this, since he was a little boy, he got used to doing.

Now, King Salmanazar, Ninevita, overcame God's people, and took his captive population to Nineveh, in Assyria. Tobias was also taken there with his whole family. Exile was the occasion for Tobias to reveal even more his great heart: he was an example of patience in enduring the sufferings of exile, and a model of charity towards his companions in misfortune. It was a most uplifting spectacle to see him help his fellow citizens as much as he could and, at night, engaged in the task of giving the deceased an honorable grave in the midst of the earth.

When he reached the age of fifty-six, an even greater tribulation came to prove his virtue: a sudden and total loss of sight.

He did not complain about divine Providence nor did he stop being the God-fearing man of all times, giving him thanks in all the days of his life. They did not understand, his friends, his suffering, and they often reproached and blamed him; his same wife accompanied them in such unfair treatment. It was then that, exacerbated by pain, he humbly asked God Our Lord to deign to free him from such suffering, taking him from this life

So he prayed to God, and then, waiting to be heard, he called his young son, who was also called Tobias, and who was then twenty-one years old, to make his last memories. I told him many beautiful things, but the main ones were that he was God-fearing, respectful of his mother, and charitable to the poor (34).

(34) TB5. Honor your mother in all the days of your life; for you must remember how much she suffered for you when you were not yet born ... And in all the days of your life, have God in your mind, beware of never consenting to sin, of transgressing the Lord's precept our God. Give alms of what you have and never turn your back on the poor who ask for it: thus also the face of the Lord will not depart from you. To these most pious advice, he added others, especially the well-known "do not do to others what you do not want to be done to you." - precept of natural law, which is also effectively inculcated by N. Lord Jesus Christ, as it is read in Mt7 , 12 and Lc6,31.

And he kept to the end what is the main argument of this whole story, which turns out to be: that he go to Rages, in the Media, and collect, from one Gabelo, ten talents that many years ago the good old man had borrowed from him .

The young man responded hastily: "I am ready, my father, to do as you have ordered.

But how am I going to get that money if I don't even know Gabelo, I don't even know the path that leads to his country? "

"I will give it to you," replied the father, Gabelo's chirograph (kind of receipt), and by means of this he will recognize you as my son, and will give you the money. And as for the journey, get on your way and see if you can find a good and faithful man, who will guide and protect you ".

Then young Tobias left without further delay, and set about looking for a guide to whom he could rely on such a long journey.

Now, while in Nineveh old Tobias led such a holy and so afflicted life, he lived, in a city of Media, a pious young woman named Sara, who also spent her mourning days in mourning.

It was that seven times he had been married and seven times on the same day of the marriage, the new husband, who was the victim of the fury of an evil spirit, had dawned dead on his side. But that was not all. His affliction peaked with an atrocious affront that he received. One day, reprimanded for not, I know that one of her maids is missing, so she shouted in her face: "May never be born of you neither son nor daughter, oh murderous woman of your husbands! And you want to kill me too? "

Upon hearing these words, poor Sara cried out in pain and, without saying another word, ran to her chamber in tears, got down on her knees, and remained in prayer for three days, without tasting a piece of bread or a drop of water. in all that time. In those three long days, nothing else, she had to plead with God with tears and sobs to deign to free her from such great opprobrium.

And before the throne of God were presented by the Angels, the prayers of Tobias in Nineveh and of Sarah in the Media.

And God Our Lord answered your prayers. He then sent Archangel S. Rafæl on a mission of comfort and joy with his troubled servants: missus est Angelus Domini sanctus Ræ pheel ut curaret and both, for one time; sunt orationes in conspectu Domini recitatae. It was done, because the Holy Archangel found close to Tobias, and greeting him, as soon as he stepped out of the house, declared him to be called Azaria (help from God), son of the great Ananias (providence of God), and kindly he offered himself as a travel companion, and a guide to the distant Media (35).

(35) This is what old Tobias said when he left Tobias the Azariah: Go and be happy, the Lord be with you during the journey, and may his Angel accompany you. And, weeping Ana for the absence of her son, she said to him: "Don't cry, because I believe that the good" Angel of God accompanies him willingly and solicitously in everything that happens to him, so that he may come back to us one day. "

Let us now let Tobias himself tell us how much the good Angel of God did on his journey.

1) While the trip lasted, the good Angel never left me: he took me from Nineveh to Rachel's house, and from there he brought me safe and sound to Nineveh. "Me duxit et reductionit sanum".

2) On the trip, almost a terrible fish devoured me, and Azarias: Meipsum a devoratione piscis eripuit got rid of it.

This was the case on the banks of the Tigre. The gentle waters of the river were calm and invited Tobias to stop, rest and wash his feet. Tobias stopped, but when, unconcerned, he plunged his feet into its waters, behold, one of its ferocious inhabitants, a fish of enormous proportions invested with armed teeth against him, wanting to devour him. "Save me, Tobias shouted" But Azarias replied: do not be afraid. Get down, grab him by the gills, and pull him out of the water. Óbed Tobias and pulled the fish ashore.

There you see the belief of the Jewish Church in guarding the Holy Angels, - No less beautiful example is found in Genesis (48.16), where it is marked that before dying Jacob called his sons, and said to them: "the Angel who saved me from all evils, bless these children of mine ". - And when entering victorious in Betulia, exclaimed Judite; "The Angel of God was the one who kept me when I left here, when I stayed away from here, and when I came back here" (Jd13,20).

The Angel then ordered him to open it, take out his heart, gall and liver, and to keep everything.

this very well: because, he added, they are very good ways to chase away demons and very good medicine to make the blind recover their sight.

3) He sought me out for a good wife, freeing her from the demon that afflicted her, and filling her parents with joy. "Uxorem ipse me habere fecit ..."

And so it was. When they arrived more or less in the vicinity of the house that Azarias knew was Rachel's, he said to Tobias: that's where we're going to stay. The owner of this house, he continued, has an only daughter, whose name is Sara. God assigns it to your wife. So you will ask your father. And don't even worry about the devil that has killed his spouses ... Know that the devil only has power against those who turn God away from themselves and from their own hearts, and surrender themselves to the disorders of their own will. (Tb16,17).

It was then that Tobias received the award for his obedience, preserving the entrails of the fish, because by burning them in the bridal room, he was able to escape the sad end that Sara's first seven husbands had.

And so it was that the good God, who proclaims calm and succeeds in weeping and infuses us with joy, gave Tobias a holy and rich consort, rewarded the patience with which she tolerated adversity, and finally flooded with unspeakable joy to the whole family of Raquel.

4) ... And the money he had to receive from Gabelo, was Azarias himself who received it: "Pecuniam a Gabelo ipse recepit".

After Tobias and Sara were already married, she asked him not to leave now, but to stay at home with his parents for at least two weeks. Now, Tobias still had to go to Rages to demand from Gabelo what he owed his old father ... On the other hand, he wanted to do what his beautiful and virtuous wife wanted. But how to reconcile the two, and return to Nineveh without making the poor old father wait too long?

Then he had the following idea. He went, full of confidence to meet Azaria, and said to him: Azaria, my brother, I beg you to listen to my words. Even if I became your slave I could not compensate you for the benefits you have done to me. However, I still have a request to make.

You get a good horse ready, call the servants, and transport yourself to Rages, where Gabelo lives. But I won't be able to go with you. When you get there, you must present my chirograph to Gabelo. In his sight he will pay you a sum and you will invite him to attend my next nuptials. I ask you, Azaria, to do me this great favor, because otherwise, if I took a few more days, you cannot even calculate what deep pain will go on my father's soul, that one by one will count the days of my absence. .

Tobias also told him about Raquel's request, and the good Angel, taking pleasure in Tobias' good feelings, left without delay for Rages, made that charge, and returned to Raquel's house. And Gabelo came with him.

5) And now, back in our house, it was also Azaria who made you, O father, see the sparkling light of spaces again. "Consider you fecit tum coelr".

Sara and Tobias' nuptials had already been celebrated, and finally Rachel's mother, Sara, decided to let them go, as two weeks had passed (36). He gave his son-in-law his daughter and with her half of what he had in servants, handmaids, herds and money. And everyone, with joy and great accompaniment, set out on their way to Nineveh, preceded by the Holy Archangel Raphaël.

Eleven days had already gone by, when they arrived in a region already very close to the city of Nineveh. Then the Holy Archangel proposed to Tobias one thing: that Sarah, with her servants and flocks, would follow them at a distance, slowly, and he and Tobias would step up to shorten the hour of joy of the good old father who was waiting for them.

Tobias listened to him docilely, as all other times, and as Azaria proposed, so they did. And so, quickly, they came into view of the great city. The first person who saw them in the distance was Ana, their mother. Every day she climbed a hill and spent hours and hours waiting for her beloved son to arrive, and asking everyone if they had seen him.

Spotting him, therefore, and running to warn her husband of her son's arrival, was all one.

(36) Rachel separated from Sarah and Tobias with these words: "The Holy Angel of the Lord be with you on the journey, and may he lead you safe". (Tb10,11).

The good old man, supported by two of his servants, went to meet him, embraced him tenderly, and broke down in copious tears of joy. Given that first relief in their hearts, they all fell on the ground to give thanks to God.

Then they sat down happily.

It was then that Tobias, taking the gall of the fish as the Angel had taught him, anointed his father's eyes with it. All of them had their eyes on old Tobias, and they only unfolded them to put them on Azaria, who in the departure for Media, had said: "Be of good cheer that God will soon heal you" (V, 3). well, that very happy moment had come. In fact, the good old man came back to his sight with the anointing of the gall and, kneeling down, he thanked God: "I

bless you, O Lord, God of Israël, because you punished and saved me. in good time again I see the face of Tobias, my son ".

A few days later Sara arrived with her servants and herds. The joy, exultation and joy that filled those homes in those days cannot be described. But to both Tobias, father and son, it seemed to them that they had a great debt to pay. How to properly thank and reward Azaria for her benefits? "What can we give to this holy man who came with you?" asked the old father. "What can we give you in proportion to your benefits?" replied the son. Finally, they agreed to give him half of all the wealth they had brought from Media. Then they called Azaria, and, with instinct, made their offerings to him. But the Holy Archangel interrupted them with the following and heavenly words: Bless the God of heaven, give him glory before all living beings, for having made his Mercy shine on you. Because if it is good to keep the secret affairs of the kings secret, it is praiseworthy, however, to publish the works of God ". Prayer, accompanied by fasting and almsgiving, is better than accumulating and accumulating wealth: for almsgiving frees us from death, it cleanses us from sin and makes us find mercy and eternal life. But those who commit iniquity and sin are enemies of the soul itself.

I therefore discover the truth for you, and do not keep an arcane deposit secret. When, with hot tears, you prayed to the God of heaven, you buried the dead, you got up in the middle of the meal to take care of the corpses of your countrymen, bring them home, and after hiding there, bury them in the hours at night, I offered your prayer to the Most High.

And you were tried out of temptation, because you were a favorite of God. But, behold, the Lord sent me to heal you, and to deliver Sarah, your son's wife, from the devil.

For you know that I am the Angel Raphaël, one of the seven that we are constantly in the presence of the Lord: "Ego sum Raphaël Angelus, unus ex septem qui adstamus ante Dominum".

Such words made such an impression on Tobias and his father that, trembling, they fell face down.

"Do not be afraid, said the Angel. Peace be with you.

While I was in your company, by God's will, I was: bless him, then, and sing his praises.

"It seemed to you that I ate and drank with you: but I use an invisible food and a drink that cannot be seen by men.

“But it is time to return to the one who sent me. As for you, bless God and narrate all his wonders”. That said, it disappeared before your eyes. For three hours Tobias and his father were prostrated on the ground, blessing and praising God.

After getting up, everyone told the favors that God had done to them. Old Tobias still lived forty-two years. And happy in his old age, he left in peace for the next life. Before he died, he called his son and seven young people, his grandchildren, and spoke to them: “Listen, little children, to this old father. Serve the Lord our God with a sincere heart and try to do what He pleases. Recommend to your little children to do works of justice and alms, to remember God, praising Him at all times with a sincere heart and with all your strength”.

Then he advised him to leave Nineveh and transport himself to Media. So they did. Dead father and mother, Tobias, with all his family, he went to his father-in-law's house in Rages, where he successfully lived long and happy years and never failed to praise God, for the advice and examples of his holy father, as well as for the care he had and the benefits that Archangel Raphaël had done him.

Chapter 11

ANGELS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1 - ANGELS AND JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ did not, of course, need Guardian Angels to guide, protect, enlighten Him. He is the Lord of Angels, he gave them the wisdom that they themselves possess - therefore, he could not need the help of his servants, as if before him they were superior beings, “It was not for him, as Saint Thomas Aquinas says, a Guardian Angel, as superior, but rather a minister (or servant) as inferior.

It is precisely these services of the Angels rendered to Jesus, their Lord and King, that the Gospel speaks. We will follow the Gospel in the main steps.

1. - Birth of Jesus

It is touching the narration of the part that the Angels had at the birth of Jesus.

Only the Redeemer was born, says the Gospel, that there were some shepherds in that region, watching over and keeping their flock in the night watch. And behold, continues the Sacred text, which appeared before them

an Angel of the Lord, and the clarity of God surrounded them with splendor; and they were very afraid.

But the Angel said to them, do not be afraid, for, behold, I announce to you a great joy, which will be for all the people. It is that today you were born in the city of David, the Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

And this is the sign with which you will recognize it: You will find a little child wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger.

And suddenly, a multitude of heavenly militia appeared with the Angel, praising God, and saying: "Glory to God, on high, and peace on earth to men of good will."

2 - Flight to Egypt

It was also an Angel of God who was charged with delivering the good Jesus, newborn, from the wrath of King Herod. So says St. Matthew: "When the Magi had departed, behold, the Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in dreams and said to him, Arise, take the Child and his Mother, and flee to Egypt. And there it remains until I come to warn you again.

For King Herod is going to look for the child to kill him.

In fact, it happened. Herod, deluded by the Magi, who had returned to his homeland in a way other than Jerusalem, enraged, ordered the killing of all the children of Bethlehem, who were less than two years old. Infallibly, if he had stayed there, the Child Jesus would also have been killed. But at that hour He was already away from Bethlehem, in a safe place - and all by the ministry of an Angel. It is one more favor that we owe them.

But when the danger was over, with the death of Herod, the Angel appeared again in dreams to St. Joseph, and said to him: "Arise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israël, for the who sought her to kill".

And the Sagrada Familia was then able to safely return to its homeland.

3 - Jesus in the desert is fed by the Angels

Jesus wanted to start his public life by an act of humility, and one of penance. Humility, he practiced it when he was baptized among the common people, as if he were a sinner like them. Penance, he practiced it in the desert, right after his baptism, staying there for forty consecutive days in the most absolute fast.

But Jesus was a man like us and felt the needs of our nature. For this reason, after such a long fast, he felt the need to eat, "he was hungry", as the Gospel says.

And as our needs often turn into temptations, so the good Jesus also wanted to be like us in this.

He allowed the demon to try. Then the demon appeared, and suggested that he turn those stones that were there into bread - thus he would satisfy his hunger, and at the same time, prove that he was the Son of God. But Jesus, recognizing this as a temptation, replied that it is not only the material food that feeds us but also the spiritual food, which fortifies our soul and, concomitantly and through redundancy, also invigorates the body. Two more temptations allowed Jesus to be done by the devil: one who threw himself from the top of the temple and another who worshiped him, and he, the devil, would give him in return all the kingdoms of the world and all his glory.

It is instructive to note that in the first of these two temptations the devil quoted a few words just about the ministry of Angels with us, who say: "Because it was for your good that God sent his Angels and they will take you into their hands so that they do not come hurting your feet on the stones of the road".

It was, therefore, intending to convince Jesus, through Scripture that the devil told him to throw himself from the top of the temple. The devil tempts us, many times, even with holy things.

But Jesus gave him a convenient answer, and after the third temptation, he formally ordered him to leave. The devil then vanquished, and the Angels of heaven came to serve the good Jesus that He needed.

4 - Agony of Jesus in the Garden

The agony of Jesus in the Garden is one of the most moving steps in evangelical history, Jesus, in the prediction of what he was going to suffer, and in the face of the indifference of men in the face of the sufferings with so much love, is besieged in his a man's heart of such dread, of such grief, of such sadness, that he falls flat on his face in prayer to his Father, and begins to sweat blood.

Jesus was alone, entirely alone, in that place. Nearby, it is true that there were three apostles, but ... they too, with the sky of the soul clouded by black clouds of impending storm. So, dejected, as if victims of some psychological drug, nothing, absolutely nothing could do to comfort Jesus and relieve his grief.

But Jesus prayed, and an Angel of God came down from heaven and brought him the comfort that his disciples could not give. Wherever the Angel

appears, it is always that lovely creature that comforts, helps, makes available to us the wonderful resources of his exalted nature.

5 - The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Everything that Jesus had preached would be true if He were resurrected, and could be put into doubt if he were not resurrected.

Therefore, after being underground two nights and one day, He was resurrected.

This is the part that the Angels will take in his resurrection.

The Gospels tell us that the Holy Women who always accompanied Jesus came to the tomb to anoint her body with perfumes.

But when they got there, they saw that the stone that sold the entrance was removed from the place, that Jesus' body was not in the tomb; that an Angel of God had come down from heaven and removed the stone, just so that Magdalene and her holy companions could see.

Jesus was not in the tomb, because he had risen.

St. Lucas says that this huge stone, which the Angel had removed without difficulty, had been put aside and that the Holy Angel had been placed on it. Visible to human eyes in the figure of a beautiful boy, however, this Angel had an aspect that revealed to him the superior nature and the blessed world in which he lived.

“His face was like a lightning bolt, says S. Lucas, his clothes are white as snow”. Now Pilate's soldiers kept the tomb, so that the apostles would not come to steal the body of Jesus.

But when the Angel arrived, the guards were already guarding an empty sepulcher, because Jesus had risen and left the grave, without having to remove the entrance stone.

The aforementioned evangelist says that such was the soldiers' fear when they saw the Angel, who fell to the ground as dead.

Magdalene and the other women were also frightened, as is natural, as they had never seen an Angel. But the Angel said to them: “Do not be afraid, I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.

But why do you seek among the dead who are alive? He's not here. He is risen,

Remember what He said to you when He was still living with you, in Galilee,

namely: that He must be delivered to sinners, and that He would be crucified, and that He would be raised on the third day.

Then they remembered everything ”.

And the Angel also told them to go and tell the apostles everything and especially to Saint Peter, and to tell them that he would wait for them in Galilee. And that is how Angels are messengers of God; they direct us, guide us, instruct us, inform us.

6. - The Ascension

After Jesus was still forty days on earth after the resurrection, he ascended, with majesty, to heaven. St. Luke says in the Acts of the Apostles that the apostles and about five hundred disciples were so enraptured, with the majestic ascension of Jesus to heaven, that when the cloud covered Jesus from their eyes, they remained staring at the sky, as if not conformed to having to look at the land again.

It was really necessary for two Angels to appear to them and say: Why are you, Galileans, looking at heaven like that? This same Jesus who has just left you and ascended to heaven, will return one day, in the same way that you saw him ascending ”.

But it was not only these two Angels who narrated part of Jesus' ascension. It is a very credible thing, says distinguished doctor Francisco Suarez, that on the glorious day of the ascension, all the Angels of heaven came to meet the Savior, in honor and recognition of his royal dignity.

And he, full of majesty, towered over Angels and Archangels, passed gloriously through the Principalities and Powers, through the Virtues and Dominations, through the Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim, and went to sit at the right hand of the same God, Father of Heaven ”.

Jesus, therefore, as the two Angels who appeared to the disciples and apostles said, one day he will return. It will be at the end of the world, to judge all men. Then everyone will be resurrected with the bodies they had in life and will either enjoy in heaven or suffer in hell.

The Angels there will also have an important role.

“Then, said Jesus in the Gospel, the Angels will go out and drive the wicked out of the righteous. The good will go to eternal happiness, and the bad to eternal suffering.

2 - The Angels and Maria Santissima

Our Lady could also dispense with guarding the Holy Angels. Because of her excellence as a mother of God, the Creator granted her in a supreme degree all the privileges that she had granted to her simple servants, the Holy Angels of heaven.

For this reason, there is no doubt that many of these blessed spirits will have been delegated by God to assist her, not so much because Mary needed him, but because of the reverence that the Angels owed her, as Dionísio Carlusiano says: “non tam ob indigentiam quam ob reverentiam ” (In cant, art. 12). On the other hand, she did not need anyone to defend her from the devil's assaults, since in the very first moment of her Conception she had crushed his head. And the saints say that she was completely free from temptation. In the ways of the spirit, its illuminator and instructor was God Himself, and his holiness hovered far above the holiness of Angels.

Therefore, announcing her divine favors, serving her with her ministries, recreating her with her presence, was all that, together with the Blessed Virgin, the Angels should be entrusted with.

From what can be deduced from the little - little in the words and a lot in the sense - that the Gospel tells us about it, it must have had a character of assiduity and very special familiarity, the treatment of Our Lady with the Angels.

Some doctors, even, like S. Bernardo, (From baptism they affirm that S. Gabriel, the Archangel of the Annunciation (Lc1) would have been the Angel destined by God, in a special way, to assist and serve her.

However, it must be kept in mind that the life of the Blessed Virgin did not have that character that of her divine Son, the target of the most widespread prophecies in the Old Testament, and the object of observation by her contemporaries. The life of Jesus had publicity that was consistent with his mission as Master, Prophet, Messiah, Our Savior.

That of Mary Most Holy was a hidden life, all interior, all spiritual. Most Holy Mary appears in the Gospel, always in function of Jesus Christ. It is therefore natural that the appearances of Angels in the Gospel are more numerous in relation to Jesus than to Mary.

The Gospel, concerning Our Lord: it only mentions an apparition of an Angel. It was at the announcement.

“In the sixth month, (from the visit to S. Isabel and conception of St. John the Baptist) the Angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city in Galilee, named

Nazareth, to a virgin married to a man from the house of David , called José - and the virgin's name was Mary.

And approaching her, the Angel said: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women.

But she, hearing this, astonished at these words, wondered what this greeting would be.

And the Angel said to her: Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

Behold, you will conceive, and bear a Son, and give him the name of Jesus, He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and He will reign forever in the house of Jacob, and his kingdom will have no end.

Then Mary asked the Angel: "how will this be done, for I do not know a man". The Angel replied: "The Holy Spirit will descend on you, and the virtue of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. .

Therefore, the saint born of you will also be called the Son of God.

And behold, Isabel, your relative, conceived a son in his old age; and this is the sixth month of what is called sterile, because with God nothing is impossible ". Such were the words of Archangel S. Gabriel.

And Our Lady replied: "Here is the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word ".

8— The Angels and the Holy Apostles (37)

(37) Jesus is Our King and Lord, as well as the Angels. For this reason, Angels consider us to be their servants in relation to Jesus Christ: "I am a servant like you, an Angel said to St. John, like you and like yours brothers who bear witness to Jesus "(19,10).

a) The beautiful story of Cornelius, Roman centurion.

There was, in the city of Cæsarea, in Palestine, a Gentile named Cornelius, who was the centurion, that is, commander of a centurion.

Cornelius was an extremely pious man, assiduous in prayer as in works of charity. And his whole family followed suit.

Now, one day, around the ninth hour, something extraordinary happened to him. He saw that an Angel from, God came to him, and called him by his name: Cornelius!

Stunned by such an unexpected appearance, he replied: "Lord, what do you mean by this"?

But the Angel continued: "Your prayers and alms went up to the presence of God. It is therefore necessary that you send someone to Jope, calling Simão, nicknamed Pedro, who lives with a certain tanner Simão in the vicinity of the sea. He will tell you what to do ". - And the Angel disappeared. Cornelius, therefore, more than quickly calls to two of his servants, everything tells them, and sends them with a soldier from his court to Joppa. Now, while they were walking, St. Peter in Joppa was in prayer, and he also had a wonderful vision.

He saw that a great sheet hung from the sky, suspended by the four ends. And this sheet was full of animals, of all varieties: even those whose meat the Jews are forbidden to eat.

And at the same time, S. Pedro heard a voice that said: "Get up, Pedro, kill them and eat them.

Now, St. Peter, he thought that he could not eat all animals like this, without distinction, because Jewish law did not allow it. So he replied: "Far be it from me! For I never ate an impure animal (which the law considered impure) ".

But the same voice spoke again: do not call what God has purified ".

This happened three times. Then the sheet was taken to heaven. Impressed, S. Pedro worriedly, trying to interpret such a strange revelation. But the facts came to explain it.

At that time, just as St. Peter was thinking, the three envoys of the Roman centurion knocked at his door and asked if this was not where Simon, known as Pedro, lived.

Then the Holy Spirit spoke to S. Pedro: "there are three men who are looking for you. Therefore, get up and go down and let yourself be carried away, for it was I who sent you ".

Meanwhile, Cornelius was at his house anxious, waiting with the whole family together, for the return of his own.

They stayed that night with S. Pedro, and left only the next day. And St. Peter also took some disciples with him.

When he arrived at Cæsarea, Cornelius knelt at his feet, as if to worship him. But St. Peter lifted him up, saying, "Arise, I am also a mortal man." Then Cornelius made him enter his house, so Peter, S, and seeing so many Gentiles gathered there, said, " you know how much the Jews abhor to communicate or approach the Gentiles.

But God showed me in a vision that no one is allowed to call me impure (and unworthy of a Jew's relationship). ”

Then he asked how Cornelius had been. the idea of calling him. And Cornelius said to him, that due to the appearance of an Angel, by the ministry of an Angel, he converted himself to Christianity, a pagan, first fruits of the conversion of the whole pagan world - that we too, in our ancestors, we were part of.

But, as the Acts of the Apostles tell us, this story is too beautiful to leave it unfinished in every detail.

Hearing, therefore, S. Pedro, Cornélio's narration about the apparition he had, he exclaimed: "in fact, I have just understood that there is no respect for people to God. Whoever fears, whoever he may be, and who practices works of justice, it is accepted ”.

And then he spoke to him of Jesus Christ: as he had preached peace in the kingdom of God throughout Judea, he had been baptized by John the Baptist, had spent his life sowing the good, healing the sick, freeing the possessed from evil spirits - and who, nevertheless, had been crucified by the Jews. He also told them about his resurrection and how he, Peter, and the other apostles had even eaten and drunk with Jesus after he was resurrected; of how Jesus had sent them to preach to the people, and, finally, that everything was foretold by the prophets, as it is read in the holy books. “Still Peter was speaking - says St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles - when the Holy Spirit descended on all who heard him.

And the circumcised (Jewish) faithful who had come with Peter were amazed. For they saw that the grace of the Holy Spirit was also poured out into the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking tongues and extolling the goodness of God ”.

And St. Peter, having baptized them, still stayed with them for a few days, to satisfy their devotion.

b) An Angel frees Saint Peter from the prison of Herod Agrippa, breaking their chains.

Herod Agrippa reigned in Judea for seven years, when he decided to persecute Christians. For this, he ordered S. Tiago, brother of S. João Evangelista, to beheaded, and seeing that such an act pleased the Jews, he passed on: he also arrested S. Pedro.

It was on the eve of Easter. Herod intended to introduce his new prisoner to the people after that great feast. So he ordered four pickets to guard him, each of four soldiers.

But while St. Peter was in prison, the Christians were praying for him without ceasing.

Now, on the same night that Herod was going to introduce him to the people, St. Peter slept between two soldiers, bound with double chains. And the guards, at the door, were watching the prison.

And, behold, an Angel of the Lord came, and a light shone in the prison. And touching St. Peter, the Angel woke him and said: Get up quickly "And the chains fell from St. Peter's hands.

The Angel said to him: "put on the cingulum and put on your sandals". And so it did.

And then: "put on your cloak, and follow me",

and leaving, Pedro followed him without understanding that what was done by an Angel, because he thought he had a vision, was reality. Passing the first and second guards they arrived at the iron door that leads to the city, which opened to them by itself.

And leaving, they passed a block, and there the Angel of St. Peter departed. Then St. Peter, returning to himself, said: "Now I truly know that the Lord sent the Angel and delivered me from the hands of Herod and from all expectations of the Jewish people."

So saying, St. Peter went to the house of Mary, mother of John, surname Marcos, where many of the faithful had gathered to pray. So, knocking S. Pedro, at the door of that house, Rhodes, the girl who was there, went to see who she was.

He was beside himself with joy when he heard S. Pedro's voice. And instead of opening the door, eager to give the news, she went to tell the faithful. But they said: "Are you crazy? ..." And she insisted and said that it could only be him. And the faithful: "no, it is not him, but his Angel".

Anyway, while St. Peter kept knocking, they went to the door and found the Holy Apostle! They were amazed.

St. Peter signaled them to be silent, and told them how he had been delivered by the Angel.

Shortly afterwards, Herod, who had retired to Cæsarea, as the Acts says, was wounded by the Angel of the Lord, because he had not given honor to God - and died devoured by the worms.

A comment by Origen regarding the word of the faithful, "It is not He, but his Angel". "Therefore, says Origen, it follows that one is the Angel of Paul, the other that of Peter, another that of each of the other apostles, and so on about other men (Homil, 2 in Numer.)" It also follows that the faith of the early Christians in the Guardian Angel was far from what the vast majority of the faithful are today - a languid and almost dead faith in practical life. "Angelus ejus est: it is his Angel"! the Angel of Peter, who brings us some message from the apostle. The confession of your faith in our Holy Angels couldn't be more spontaneous! This was the result of the firm persuasion in which they saw the certainty of this fact and this great and fruitful dogma. Young man who reads me, it is quite possible that you have often heard the voice of your Guardian Angel and that you have not recognized it. Learn, with the Christians of apostolic times, to recognize the voice of your Angel: " Angelus meus est" , say then, and listen to that voice: "audi vocem ejus" . In so doing, you will have the faith of the early Christians, and you will live a life unattainable to the senses of the body, but that is true life. And you will not perish drowned in the mud of this world.

Chapter III

EXAMPLES TAKEN FROM ECCLESIASTIC HISTORY

Christianity, throughout its history, faithful to biblical doctrine and the teachings of the apostles, also provides us with beautiful and numerous examples of the manifestations of the holy Angels in favor of men. We leave aside the devotion of great Christians and saints in general for the Guardian Angel, since this, in common, is found in almost all the edifying lives that our ancestors bequeathed to us.

As for the favors obtained by the saints of their Angels, we will only mention the main ones.

Thus, it was an Angel who freed S, Felix de Nola, from prison, and led him safe and sound to the saint, Bishop Maximus. The Angels comfort the saints Tryphonio and Respício in their torments, when condemned to them in the persecution of Bitinia. The great Simeão Estilita, who, obeying an inspiration from above, spent his life of penance on top of a column, is assisted in the last fight, at the hour of death, by a most lovely Angel of the Lord. As John narrates, the deacon, an Angel, in the form of a pilgrim, joined the twelve poor people that St. Gregory the Great, seated at his table and served,

when already elected to the chair of St. Peter. And St. Gregory himself tells us in his dialogues, numerous examples of protection provided by Angels in favor of his devotees. An Angel awakens S. Raimundo de Penaforte from sleep and invites him to pray; it serves as a guide to S. Domingos and leads him back to the convent; points the way to S. Feliz Benício and comforts him abundantly with wonderful food.

In the life of S. Nicolau de Tolentino, a wonderful thing is told, namely: a few months before his death he heard the heavenly melodies of the Angels every morning, and thus he was warned of his near death. And in the thirty-four years of St. Ludwina's illness, Angels appeared to him many times. No less wonderful is what is read in the revelations of great saints, such as S. Brígida and S. Maria Madalena de Pazzi, namely: that the holy Guardian Angels not only assist us during our lives, but also accompany us to the court of God, visit us and comfort us in the flames of Purgatory.

However, due to the interest they arouse and the historical authority of the authors who narrate them, the following examples deserve to be translated here with their details.

1 - Apparition of S. Miguel Arcanjo on Monte Gargano .

Both in the Synagogue, of the Jews, and in the Catholic Church, St. Michael the Archangel is recognized as a special protector and guard, as it is read in the official prayer book of the priests - the breviary (May 8). We must therefore recognize him, as our distinguished and assiduous patron.

The Holy Church invokes him several times in his prayers during the day. And we, as children who are docile to the teaching of their examples, must also pay him a humble tribute of reverence, love and trust every day. And during the year, there are two festivals where the Church pays homage to him for his liturgical celebrations. On the 8th of May, it commemorates the apparition of S. Miguel Arcanjo on Mount Gargano; and on the twenty-ninth of September he remembers the same holy Archangel, "when in his name a church of crude factory was consecrated on this same hill, yes, but adorned with heavenly virtue".

Now, if this fact deserved such great consideration on the part of the Church, it must be of paramount importance, and for this reason we will narrate it in detail.

He lived in the 5th century in the city of Siponto, at the foot of Mount Gargano, a shepherd, who had the precious name of Gargano, He was rich in herds and pastures.

Now, it happened that one day one of his cattle ran away, and when the shepherd went after him, he went to find her at the top of the said hill, at the entrance of a cave.

The animal was ferocious, which is why Gargano decided to kill him. He took the bow, took aim, shot him with an accurate arrow. But the latter, as if caught in the air by an invisible hand, suddenly turned into space and came to wound Gargano himself who had thrown it.

Great was the astonishment of those who accompanied him. But, not knowing how to explain the mystery and not daring to approach the cave, they ran to the city to inform the bishop of the extraordinary event. The holy prelate listened to them, and while he did not know what to attribute this phenomenon to, he ordered his diocesans to fast three days in order to ask God for light on the case.

After three days, the secret was revealed in a wonderful way.

S. Miguel Arcanjo himself appeared to the holy bishop and made him know that the mountain prodigy had been operated by himself, to indicate that the place was under his special protection and that he wanted to have special worship there, as well as to all the angelic hierarchies of heaven. Quickly, in turn, the bishop made his people aware of the apparition he had, and everyone, bishop and people, left for the mountain in search of the already famous grotto.

Once there, they soon began to celebrate the divine offices, as the cave, carved in the rock, was quite spacious, just like a church.

Over time, that simple cave became a celebrated sanctuary, a place of frequent and remarkable miracles.

In fact, it is Miguel Arcanjo, as the Church said, “prince of the heavenly militia”, the gifts that are given him bring benefits to the peoples, and his intercession leads men to the Kingdom of Heaven. To him God entrusted the guardianship of his elect, so that he leads them to the heavenly mansion of happiness. *Princeps militiae cœlorum, cuius honor præstat benefits populorum et oratio perducit ad regna cœlorum, cu tradidit Deus animas Sanctorum, ut perducatur eas in paradysum ersultaionis* ”.

2— The Guardian Angels of the Temples

S. Nilo the Great, writer of the achievements of S. João Chrysostom and a contemporary of his, mentions the following fact, which we transcribe almost in full.

The admirable and holy bishop João Crisóstomo, luminary of the Byzantine Church, or better, of the Church, Universal, had, so sharpened the eyes of the spirit, that he saw his church with angels from heaven, in several hours, engaged in keeping it, especially during the bloodless sacrifice of the Mass. Amazed by such a consoling spectacle, he narrated it full of joy to some of his close friends.

“The priest just begins the sacrosanct rite, he said, soon multitudes of blessed spirits descend from the heights. They wear very candid clothes and bring bare feet. At the altar, they arrange themselves in a circle, and with great veneration, peace and quiet, they watch with a bow inclined to the tremendous mystery. The moment of communion has arrived, the bishop, the priests, the deacons, who reverently distribute the precious Body and Blood of the Savior, reverently surround ”.

I wanted to write these things, adds St. Nile, so that we can see with what modesty and with what great reverence we should be in the churches, especially when the peaceful Host of Propitiation is offered to the Most High on the altars - (11 in epist. CCXCIV. Ad Anastasium episc.).

Another writer of the same saint's life, Palladium, says that, when the holy doctor was condemned to exile, he did not want to leave without saying goodbye to the angel of his church. "When he left his diocese, he says, he said in the bishops who accompanied him: come, let us pray, and we bid farewell to the angel who presides over the church". And he adds that the angel of that church departed with his bishop, hardly suffering loneliness and abandonment: *una cum eo egressus est Angelus Ecclesiæ, solitudinem Ecclesiæ non ferens*. (Bollandistas, 14 of IX).

3 - The Angels, community guards

The angels, as we have already said in the 1st part, as the holy Fathers, based on Scripture, teach, are not only responsible for the guardianship of individuals but also of cities, kingdoms and other communities other than such. On the other hand, the saints, always obedient to the inspirations of God, nourished in general special devotion, first to their private Guardian Angel, and secondly to the angel of the community to which they belonged. We will illustrate what we affirm, in the first place, with the example of B. Pedro Fabro, of the Society of Jesus, zealous missionary in several countries in Europe. As you can see, the field that opened before his eyes was large. But he did not discourage the saint, relying on the protection of the Angels, constantly invoking them, so that their words would be effective and their fatigue fruitful.

Once, from city to city and from village to village, he arrived, after crossing France, on the Spanish borders. What a great field for your zeal, but what an inability for you to promote divine glory! Then, seized with fervor, he got down on his knees and begged the tutelary angels of that place to be favorable to him.

The result was not expected. Bæro narrates it in the life of that first and definitive companion S. Inácio.

St. Francis de Sales also, exhorting Filoiéa, says the same thing in the following words: “make the holy angels very familiar to you, remember their presence frequently and, in a special way, love and obey the angels of the diocese in which you live, those of the people you live with and most of all, honor your Guardian Angel. Go to him with frustration, invoke him from time to time, and seek to deserve his help and help in all your spiritual and temporal matters “. And add the example of B. Pedro Fabro:

“The great Pedro Fabro, thus writes the first preacher, the first lens of the Holy Theology Companhia do Nome de Jesus, and the first companion of B. Inácio, its founder; returning from Germany, where he had carried out great companies for the glory of Our Lord, and passing through this Diocese, place of his birth, he quoted, that in touring many of the countries dominated by heresy, they had received great favors and consolations, for having greeted in all, parishes, as soon as they arrived, their guardian angels. These, as he sensibly knows, had been favorable to him already defending him from the hatred of heretics, already leading him to many souls and making docile to the teachings of eternal salvation. And this he narrated with such energy that a noble matron, still young at that time, referred to him with great feeling even four years ago, that is, more than sixty years after the fact ”(Introduction to life dev. p. TI, chap. 16).

The devotion of St. Francis Xavier to the holy angels in his apostolic undertakings was similar. S. Francisco, like B. Pedro Fabro, was one of the first companions of S. Inácio, and lived with Fabro in the same room, when both were students in Paris. He was in charge, due to an admirable disposition of Divine Providence, which does not mention it, the evangelization of the Far East. In this work, angels were his great helpers, as stated in the letter of his own hand, which he wrote to his followers. brothers of Goa, and that we transcribe the following excerpt:

“I live in great hope that God will grant me the grace of the conversion of these countries, but, in everything suspicious of myself, all my confidence is in Jesus Christ, in the Virgin Mary his Mother, and in all the nine choirs of angels,

among whom I chose as protector the prince and champion of the militant Church, S. Miguel, and I expect little from this archangel, to whose particular concern this great kingdom of Japan is entrusted. Every day I recommend myself especially to them, as well as to all other Guardian Angels of the Japanese, whose job it is to pray to God for their salvation. "(Bartoli Dell Asia, 1. TD.

4 - The Angels, guards of innocence

S. Policarpo was born around the year 70 of our era, he was a disciple of the apostle S. João, and for that he was sacred bishop of Smyrna. Even though he was a small child, his parents lacked, and so the poor child was seen without anyone taking charge of his education. Now, his holy Guardian Angel knew it at such a juncture and, with the prodigy we are going to narrate, he gave him what he needed. A pious lady, called Calista, lived in the city of Smyrna. She was chosen by the holy Angel. He appeared to him and said to him: "get up and go to the door called Ephesus, where you will see a little child enter in the company of two men. You will ask them if they want to sell the boy, and they will say yes. Then you will disburse the sum requested, you will take the boy to your house, and by adopting him as a child, you will educate him with tender love in piety and the holy fear of God.

More quickly, the good matron went to that door and, finding Policarpo, took her home and tried to educate him. For his part, Policarpo replied to his motherly care, with the passing of the years he became eminent in wisdom and virtue.

Now, one day - Policarpo was already a good guy - Calista had to leave Smyrna for a while. When he left, he called his adopted son and entrusted him with guarding his entire house: she loved him so much and trusted him so much!

The good boy, who had listened carefully to what his protector had taught him about charity for the poor, only saw so many goods in his hands, began to distribute so many alms to the poor that soon they ran out of wheat and wine and oil, and how much was at home to support the family. Now the servants of the house saw such generosity with bad eyes. For this reason, only when Calista returned, they accused him of lavishing and squandering the household goods. "That boy, they told him, whom you left in the government of the house in preference to your old servants, ended up, foolish as he is, with everything there was!"

Hearing this, Calista called Policarpo. Then, scowling, he went to the pantry and ordered the door to be opened. I wanted, as it were, to convince the offender of his mistake at the crime scene itself.

Poor Policarpo did not speak. He quickly went down to the pantry and there prostrating himself on the ground, he said to God this beautiful prayer: angel renew the same miracle in my favor! I ask you in the name of your most beloved Son Jesus Christ ”.

This prayer was heard. God loved so much faith and simplicity. In an instant the vases were filled with oil and wine, and the sacks filled with wheat. Now, Calista came and saw that when his servants had told him everything was false.

Outraged, he threatened them with severe punishments, but Policarpo intervened: “Do not be irritated, he said, nor do you punish your servants. It wasn't bad that I did it, but the truth is that I had given everything to the poor people who knocked on my door. God, therefore, Father of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, used me to satisfy the hungry, and at the same time everything restored you through the ministry of his holy Angel, so that you can continue in your holy custom of giving alms ”.

At these words, the pious Calista barely suppressed tears, amazed by what she saw, and all possessed of emotion, for she housed a true saint of God in her home (Bolandistas, Jan. 26,).

5 - Angels save us from the dangers of the body

The example that follows is also taken from the life of S. Policarpo, not already in his adolescence, but in his full virility, when he was already elected to the episcopal see of Smyrna,

It was on one of his apostolic journeys. He was traveling through a deserted place, and at night he had to stay at the first hostel he found. Late in the morning, the Saint slept unconcernedly when he heard someone calling him: “Policarpo, Policarpo”, - And the holy bishop: “Who wants me? ...” - And the voice continued: “Get up and run away quickly. , because this hostel will soon collapse ”.

Soon the saint stood up, awoke his companion, who was a young man named Camerio, and invited him to get up incontinent. But poor Camerio, tired and overcome by sleep, said: “But my holy father, why are you in such a hurry? ... as soon as we entered the first sleep! If you want to read the scriptures and meditate on them as usual, well, meditate on them though, but let me sleep myself ... ”

Policarpo fell silent and returned to the room. But he just entered it, the same voice was heard, also calling for him to withdraw as soon as possible. This time he was the saint with the most resolution to Camério, and ordered him to rise. Yet this one said, not without spirit: “as long as Policarpo is inside this house, I have full confidence in God that he will not fall”,

“Yes, replied the saint, it is God precisely who wants us to be saved. To this end, an angel sent me and tells us to leave now ”. He had not yet finished speaking when the holy angel appears to them and for the third time he orders both of them to leave the hostel. Frightened, then, Camério, jumped out of bed and before S. Policarpo reached the door of the hostel he was already on the road ...

Once they were both on the road, they tried to get away, a few steps away, heard the crash of the crumbling hostel. Full of recognition they knelt where they were, and Polycarp, looking up at the sky, thanked God with this devout prayer: “O Lord Almighty God, Father of Jesus Christ, blessed Son of yours, who through the great prophet Jonah predicted to ruin of Nineveh, and you have granted its inhabitants to escape the impending disaster, with all our hearts we bless you, because through your angel you have meant the ruin of this hostel and mercifully saved us from such great danger ”(Bolandistas, *ibid.*). Let us add to what we have just narrated what comes next, which shows that, just as the Guardian Angel of individuals saves them from personal dangers, so also the guardian angels of the communities free them from the disasters that threaten them.

It was in the year 593. Rome moaned in supreme distress, for a terrible pestilence was raging in the city. The Holy Pontiff Gregory the Great governed the Church. To implore the Mercy of God if he wanted to put an end to such a dreadful scourge, he ordered a processional pilgrimage, of clergy and people, to the church of the glorious apostle St. Peter.

The procession passed by the bridge that leads to Adriana, when an angel appeared to the pontiff, in an attitude that indicated the cessation of the scourge.

It was precisely over Adriana, and he had a sword in his hand that he inserted in its sheath. The facts showed that the sword of divine justice, which had been drawn over the people, had indeed returned to its sheath, as the epidemic soon disappeared (38) .

And in memory of this miraculous apparition the bridge and castle took the name of holy angel.

His statue was placed there, over the castle mausoleum, in that attitude in which he had been seen by the said holy pontiff.

(38) According to an old and popular tradition, which is followed by Baronius, Annalos eceles, Ch, 590, XVIII.

6 - The Guardian Angel protects us against the dangers of the soul

More important is the soul than the body. More through, therefore, are the dangers of the one you gave them. By freeing us from the dangers of the body, the angels cannot help but protect us from those of the soul and deliver us from them.

Now, the evils of the soul, which are sins, generally depend on our will. That is why the work of the Holy Angel is entirely interior - motions and inspirations that speak to us inwardly.

There are cases, however, in which, without our fault, we are suddenly in danger. Then either the holy angel infuses us with the courage and strength necessary to leave us unharmed, or else he seeks to distance himself from him in a more or less manifest way.

In the life of Cardinal Carlos de Principi Odescalchi we find a beautiful example of this. Carlos Odescalchi was born in Rome on March 5, 1785, and died a Jesuit religious, around the middle of the last century, in the city of Modena. He was a man of eminent virtue. With all detachment from the goods of this world, he first renounced the wealth of his princely family in order to become ecclesiastical, and then the splendor of the purple cardinal, and the high dignity of Vicar Pontifical, to make himself poor and a hidden religious of St. Ignatius. of Loiola. The example we are referring to is as follows. Only seventeen years old, was the age that Carlos was then, and was in Vienna, visiting the main and famous monuments of that then imperial city. So I went through museums and art galleries in search of instruction and the high emotions that the works of art provide us. It was precisely in one of these art galleries that what we are narrating took place. He was about to move from one compartment of the building to another, when a beautiful young man introduced himself and stopped him, indicating that he should take another direction. Then it disappeared, as if it had been diluted in the air.

Carlos stopped and stepped back, impressed by what had just happened. Then he met one of the guards at the art gallery and asked him if he knew what it was that exposed himself in such a room that was in such a part of the building ... The guard answered that he did. The works that were found there were largely obscene.

Later he told his close friends the horror he had felt at the time of the danger he had run and how the spirit of recognition for the holy Guardian Angel had filled him, which in the form of that young man, he said, had appeared to him. From then on, his devotion to his heavenly protector grew even more. More often, from then on, he begged for his help, and above all on his travels, he begged him to want to protect him and free him from all danger to his soul and body.

7 - Industry of the Holy Guardian Angel to lead its client to faith

Among the most illustrious saints of the third century, it is deservedly recognized that Gregory said the Thaumaturge, that is, prodigy operator, first bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, at Ponto.

Born of pagan parents, he was instructed in the faith by Origen, along with his brother Athenodorus. And it was precisely in recognition of the instruction received that the saint recited to his master the well-known and beautiful panegyric prayer in *Originem oratio Prosphon, et paregyr*. In this, he largely speaks of the Holy Angel of God destined for his guard, to whose industry and care he attributes his coming to Cæsarea in Palestine, having found Origen there, having been instructed by him in the faith and, finally, having her fervently embraced. Here, translated from Greek, are the steps that most speak to our intent:

“Referring to the divine Word to thank the heavenly Father with dignity for his ineffable providence”, he says that thanks to Origen, Gregory himself, was responsible. And I still do not pay with this, “raising up those sublime spirits who, invisible, take care of men”, at the same time still turns to “the one who, by virtue of a sovereign decree, took me to rule and educate since I was a child ; to that sacred angel who, as the beloved servant of God says, has tended me since my youth, *qui pascit me ab adolescentia mea*”.

And, “as for us (continues St. Gregory), in addition to the common Lord and Governor of all, who is *magni consilii Angelus* Angel of the Great Council, we well know and recommend THIS OTHER SPECIAL OUR TEACHER, whoever he may be about who we are truly children and little ones. This yes, which has always and in everything shown me as my good nutrition and tutor; title that certainly neither me nor myself, nor any of my relatives or friends can compete, because we are all, blind, us, even in the most obvious and everyday things, to choose what matters to us; but it is up to that superhuman minister, who when it results in the advantage of our soul knows how to provide. Now, as such, he has even been nurturing, educating, and as if leading by the hand. But what comes to cumulate his favors is certainly the

fact that he brought me to have relations and deal with such a dignified character (Origen) ...; which, as I think, had him in mind since the beginning of my life and education. But, it would be long to remember how he could bring me to these terms "(Nm4).

And here, indicating various vicissitudes of his life, Gregório stops to narrate how, due to his widowed mother's desire, he applied himself to the study of rhetoric. "But that (the saint continues) that my most vigilant and divine pedagogue and my true tutor, without my thinking about it, and even, even if I wished, he did not intervene in due time".

It is like? Inspiring his master of the Latin language, a great connoisseur, also of law, who would induce his student to learn Roman laws from him: since such a discipline he said, it would be of great help in the career of the forum or in a similar one. Words that, spoken by his master with a very different intention, have become, as the note S. Gregório, a true prediction. In effect, the culture of such laws put Gregory and his brother Atenodoro in need of going to the city of Berito, where a celebrated Roman university of such studies was flourishing.

Now Berilo is not far from Cæsarea Palestine, where St. Gregory wrote these things, and where other care had brought Origen of Alexandria, Egypt, thus bringing them to Providence, meeting each other.

Thus arranged for the trip to Berito, a soldier appeared to him with public transport to Cæsarea, since Gregory's brother-in-law had been chosen as minister in the provincial government and had sent for his wife, Gregory's sister. Thus it was that Gregory and Atenodoro, deviating from Berito, went to have Cæsarea.

So many providential circumstances led Gregory to recognize in all this the hand of the holy Angel. "To this complicated story, continues Gregório, another one is not complicated, but more worthy of esteem: dealing with this man (Origen), receiving from him the true knowledge and faith of the Divine Word, dealing with his own salvation, this is the destiny to that took us, blind and ignorant, on our journey to Cæsarea. It was not, therefore, the soldier who brought us here, but it was this courteous and divine companion, this good guide and guard, who throughout our lives, as if on a long journey, assists us in guarding all danger.

It was he who, guarding us from so many transfers and from Berito herself, the one who seemed to be heading for us, brought us here and came to leave us here. The good angel did not rest until he put us in the hands of the one who for us was the author and source of so many goods ".

The good Angel of God could not do more "To such a man entrusting me, says the holy doctor, there was nothing left for him to do: he had complied with all possible measures and care".

And so, always keeping such an insignificant favor in mind, he turns Gregory over to his Guardian Angel, greets him at the end of his speech, and with the utmost affection invokes him "kind guide and faithful companion".

8 - The holy Guardian Angel - protector of virginity

The holy Virgins are one of the most beautiful ornaments of the holy Catholic Church. But even more splendidly adorn the Virgins who, at the same time that they are Virgins, are also martyrs.

Among these, there are some that are mentioned every day in the Holy Mass, namely: Santa Ágata, Santa Luzia, Santa Inês, and Santa Cecília . Now, going through the minutes of his holy life and martyrdom, we see that almost all attributed the unblemished candor of his virginity amid the dangers of life, to the effective protection of his holy Guardian Angel.

"I have with me, said the holy virgin Inês the Angel of the Lord, guard of my body". - "If you condemn me to fire, so replied S. Agata to the judge, the Angels will mitigate their ardor with the gentle dew from heaven (39)".

(39) These words are read in the Breviary at the festivities of these same saints.

Celebrities are also the words that the husband Valeriano, directed S. Cecília, with whom he married, We will refer to her in the course of the narrative that follows, and which deals with S. Cecília, since in the smallness of this small work we do not fit speak of all the holy Virgins.

Cecília came into the world in the midst of one of the oldest and most illustrious Roman families. For example, Caia Cecília Tanaquilla is said to have been the wife of Targiúnio the Elder. And among the honors that his ancestors obtained, it is enough to list those of triumph and consulate, several times obtained, either under the republic or under the imperial monarchical regime. So Cecília grew up, amidst the pomp and wealth of such an illustrious house. But she had become a Christian, and she lived for the supernatural life she received at baptism, ignoring the miserable pomp of this mortal life. She was assiduous in reading the Sacred Gospel, which always carried over her heart, and her fasts were frequent. In addition, he hid under his rich garments the roughness of a painful cilice. (40).

(40) Nom dicbus, non noctibus, a colloquiis divinis et orationibus cessabat. Always absconditum Evangelium Christi gerat in pectore. Biduannis to triduannia feiuniis orans ... Caceilia nero subtus ad cornem induta, desuper auro toxtia vesti dus tegebatur. Minutes 8, Caociliæ.

It can truly be said of her that her heart was all of Jesus. He had chosen her for her heavenly husband, swearing her perpetual virginity.

But their parents thought otherwise.

In their relations, Valerian was counted, a young patrician among the first in Rome, but a pagan. And Cecília's parents assigned it to her as a husband. The day of the wedding celebration was already beginning, the rich halls of the palace were already ornamented, and a chorus of profane musicians was already making the galleries ring with very sweet melodies.

Cecília also sang. Not, however, those earthly songs that filled his palace, but the celestial harmonies, and the angelic praises of the mansion of Gloria: "May my body remain intact, lest confusion may fall on me" (41).

As for style, after the celebrations with which the wedding was celebrated, Cecília was alone with Valeriano, and so she said: great and dear young man, I have a secret to tell you, and I wish you to swear to me to keep it with complete fidelity . Valerian swore, and she went on. You know, therefore, that I have an Angel of God as a friend of mine, and that this Angel of God watches with great solicitude in the guard of my body. Well, if he finds profane love in you, he will continually be filled with holy zeal, and with severe punishments he will punish you.

But if I see you loving me with chaste love for you, also in a hurry, he will receive you under protection ”.

(41) Constantibus organis, Cæcilia in cord suo soli Domino decantobat, dicens: fiat cor meum et corpus immaculatum non confundar. - Ibid.

Valeriano replied, without hiding the disturbance that was in his soul at such a declaration: * If you want me to give credit to your words, make me see this Angel. And if I truly recognize him as an Angel of the Most High, I will willingly do whatever he deigns to indicate ”.

“Valerian, replied the pious maiden, if what I have done deserves in you, if you believe in that one God, who lives and true reigns high in the sky, and if you accept being washed in that water that flows from the fountain of life, you will be able to see the Angel who has me under his protection ”.

The young man acceded to Cecilia's words and went to the catacombs, where he met the holy bishop Urbano, (42), and told him the end of his coming. The holy bishop of joy cried, “Lord Jesus Christ,” he exclaimed afterwards, author of chaste thoughts, receive the fruit of the divine seed that was placed by you in Cecilia's heart. "O good Shepherd, Cecília, your servant, as an industrious little sheep, has already fulfilled the part that you trusted. And,

behold, this her husband, who she received as a fierce lion, turned your little sheep into a sweet lamb. He would not have me, oh no, he would not have sought me if the light of your faith had not already shone in his mind. Now complete your work, O Lord, and make him listen to the voices that cry out to him in the depths of his soul, which he Creator of yours confess you, and renounce the crazy superstitions of kindness. "

While the bishop was praying in this way, behold, a venerated old man is joined to them, wearing white robes like snow, and wielding a book all written in gold characters.

(42) We believe that the opinion that the holy virgin Cecilia suffered her martyrdom is no longer under the government of Alexandre Severo, but that of M. Aurélio and Comodo Emperors, and that this is why this Urban, of whom he makes himself famous in the Acts of the Saint, it would not have been Urbano Pope, but a bishop of the same name, "perhaps pulled from his episcopal headquarters by the violence of persecution, and a refugee in Rome. The author of the Minutes, who certainly wrote after the third century and probably at the end of this century and the beginning of the next, reading Urbano's name in the primitive minutes of the saint's martyrdom, added, on his own account, "who Papam sum chriatiant nominamt ", error that fell due to the name's suitability. Moreover, the same reading of the Minutes, and especially the judicial interrogation, sufficiently indicates the mistake of its author. See Tilemont, Hist. Eccl. T. III; Bolandista Sollier, Acta Sanctorum, Mai; GB. de Rossi, Roma sotterranea, T. II, Discorso prelim. c. 2.

It was Paul, the Apostle of the people.

Turning to Valerian, he said: "Read the words of this book and believe; so you will deserve to contemplate the Angel of whom the most faithful virgin Cecilia spoke to you".

He took the Valerian book and read the following passage: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, is in all things and in all of us". (43)

Finishing, Paul said to him: Do you believe that it is so?

Valerian replied: "Yes, there is nothing more true, nothing that should be believed more firmly". - Then the holy Apostle disappeared, and Valerian received, holy Baptism.

(43) Ephes, IV, 5.

And he came home. He wore white robes, a symbol of the sacrament of regeneration, which he had received. Upon entering the house, he saw Cecilia absorbed in prayer. Next to her was the Angel of God with a radiant face of vivid splendor and sparkling wings of candid light. In his hands were two crowns woven with roses and lilies. One, placed it over Cecilia's forehead and the other over Valerian's, And so she spoke to them: "Strive to keep these

crowns with you always with you, you will achieve it by the purity of your hearts and with holiness of your bodies. I brought them from the pleasant gardens of heaven. These flowers will never wither, and they will always give off a mild odor. But no one is ever given to see them without first having the complacency of heaven as you deserve ”,

9— The holy Angels: help and comfort of the Martyrs

Illustrious testimonies are the minutes of the holy Martyrs, how powerful they are and how much they strive to avail us with their powerful help. It was the holy Guardian Angels who gave the holy Martyrs that courage with which they faced tyrants and overcame the torments invented to make them weak.

Let us cite, among many, the example of S. Vicente, martyr of the 4th century, greatly celebrated by Prudêncio, celebrated sacred poet, as well as by Saint Augustine.

It was, first, the theater of his martyrdom, the city of Zaragoza, in Spain, and then that of Valença, a city also in Spain.

The torments he had to face were many and rare. He was stretched out on the *ecuulus*, skinned with iron nails, lying on a bed of red-hot iron and on burning grates. Finally, still unable to overcome his constancy, he sent Daciano, Governor of the province, to put his feet in that inhuman instrument. that was called *nerve* and that, cruelly tied, was thrown into a dark prison, And it was not all. He sent yet that sow the floor of the prison acute bags so that their tips unceasingly smite the feet and body, already wounded, the saint, wherever he turned,

Well, in such a bed, which was a bed of roses, the undefeated martyr fell asleep placidly.

But suddenly a flash from the sky filled that dungeon. Sweetly awakened, Vicente saw a squadron of the heavenly militia, not however armed with spears or wearing heavy armor, but composed entirely of the most lovable angels of the Lord.

And with his presence, everything changed: his chains were shattered and the sharp shards that carpeted the floor were transformed into flowers. And they began to speak: “Recognize, O Vicente, the goodness of that Lord, for whose name you are so forcibly fighting. So be of good cheer, for soon you will lay down this body of death and you will come to join our squads. ”- And he sang one of his very soft songs.

And Vicente, as if he already belonged to the Angelic choirs, joined them to sing, looking ahead to heaven, the praises of God.

Naturally, none of this went unnoticed by the soldiers who formed the prison guard. They started to look through the bars, and they all watched: they saw the light that filled that dark prison, and they heard the songs of the Angels. Above all, they marveled at Vicente, who was walking, rapt and alienated from God, on the floor covered with fresh and fragrant flowers. And when Vicente, later, spoke to them full of zeal for the Lord he served, they readily embraced the faith.

However, Daciano persisted in his satanic purpose of trying by all means and with all torments the apostasy of the Christian hero.

So he ordered that he be taken out of prison and given a bed of light feathers. They applied him more remedies on the wounds and tried to restore their strength.

The Christians learned of this, and from all parts they came to kiss those wounds, and to collect in cloths that blood that had borne witness to Christ. But the holy Martyr, to whom the torments had not given death, only placed on that soft bed, exhaled the spirit and was taken by the angels to heaven. His body, which by Daciano's order had been thrown to the beasts of the fields, was also the object of care by the Angels. Until the Christians gave him an honorable grave, he remained under the guard of the angelic squadrons, who still honored him with their songs and hymns. (44)

Two lessons to be learned here: that of the honor that must be given to the relics of the saints, and that of the guard that angels have not only of our souls but also of our bodies.

10 - The tears of penitents are the delight of the Holy Angels

There is almost no step in the life of the holy monks and anchorites of the desert, who flourished in the 4th and 5th century, in which there are no examples of the loving concern of the holy Angels.

The example we will mention is taken from the life of S. Paulo, known as Simples.

He was one of the main disciples of the great S. Antônio. And he was so used that he deserved, the prize of his humility and sincere obedience, among other great favors from God, to see the holy Guardian Angel beside each of the faithful who entered the church

One day he saw a prominent man from the place enter, and his entourage. They were his Angels, happy and festive. One, however, had sadness on his

face and followed his client from afar. The devil was also seen beside him. Intoxicated with satanic joy, he had locked his arm tightly. Then the saint began to shed copious tears and to beg with loud groans for divine mercy. And it was heard.

(44) Rainart, *Acta Martyrum*.

When the entourage of the church left, a festive saint and all that joyful angel saw him, who from a distance and sadly, upon entering, followed his client. The devil, instead, was following him painfully, suffering horrible torments. Paulo approached him full of joy and begged the boy to try to explain that wonderful change.

"Many and serious, said the other, are the sins I have committed. But when I entered the church, these words of Isaiah that the choir sang resounded in my ears: and your souls will become white as snow ". I was touched by divine grace when I heard such words. I started to beat my chest and weep with contrition, and so I prayed: "My benign Lord, that you came to save sinners, do with me what you just said to me through the prophet's mouth. I will return to you, repenting of my sins and firmly resolved to keep all your commandments. "(45).

(45) *Vida de S. Paulo o Simples*, written by Ruffino, n. 18.

Angels, therefore, as Saint Bernard says, *gaudent ad poenitentiam peccatorum* that is, they rejoice in the penance of sinners. *Quod si deliciae Angelorum lacrimas meae, quid deliciae?*

If my tears delight the Angels, what will be my delight? "

Who can say that contentment does not provide the Angels with the holy aspirations and flushed affections of pure and fervent hearts?

The fact that we refer to in the text is popularized by Cavalea, *Vite diverse*, p. III, p. 53.

11 - Kindness of holy angels to sincerely repentant sinners

It is the holy angels who move sinful souls to repent of their misdeeds and return to the right path. They, too, are the ones who give them the strength to resist the devil, enraged by the purpose that repentant souls take to return to heaven, this and to obedience to God's commandments.

A beautiful example of this we draw from the life of Saint Margaret of Cortona.

One day, he was praying for sinners the great saint - who had also been a great sinner - when Jesus Christ appeared to him and told him that his divine

Heart was most desirous of his conversion and that he was ready to forgive him. "My angels too, so said the most pious Redeemer, are sent by me to help him, and with urgent impulses they urge them to abandon sin and to detest it."

He then asked the saint if these very pure spirits have always stood by the impure sinners. Jesus said to him, yes: that although they do not always make the effects of their presence felt, they never leave them, nevertheless, the poor sinners. And there they stay for the opportune moment and sometimes repeatedly speak to their hearts and invite them to penance.

When he heard these words, he cried the saint bitterly, remembering his resistance to the internal voices of his good Guardian Angel, when he had not yet converted. But the Angel comforted her, saying that she had completely forgotten her ingratitude. And for proof of what he was saying he accumulated favors. He, too, was the one who led her on the path of holiness, clarified her in doubts, defended her in temptations, comforted her in anguish.

One day the saint was greatly disturbed and afflicted in her soul. The kindly guardian Angel comforted her by chanting Ave Maria. Needless to say, the sky of his soul became serene and the black clouds of sadness fled. But that was not all. Those heavenly modulations of angelic music flooded her with joy. And in such a way she was possessed of a celestial softness that she wished to see herself immediately untied from the bonds of the body to rest forever in the bosom of God and with her most blessed Mother. So he asked her how long she would have to stay in this land of exile and this valley of tears. The Angel replied that the day of his death was still far away.

But that he should take advantage of his days of earthly life to sow good works, a pledge of abundant harvest in heaven.

To this end, the holy Angel began to direct her in all her actions, in all her operations, so that they were all holy.

On one occasion, teaching him to attend Holy Mass perfectly, he said: "As long as you have the strength to stand on your knees, without kneeling and with your hands together at your chest, you will always pray in this posture. And if you ever feel very weak, you may be able to help yourself with a little bit of support from the bank. At the beginning of the Sacrifice take holy water, and make the sign of the Cross upon you. Then revive your faith, and listen carefully to the word of God that is read during Mass. And if you want to receive daily the sacrosanct body of the Son of God, our Creator and Lord, know what full license He grants you. If you attend Holy Mass in such a way,

you will experience a great increase in fervor in yourself and make rapid progress in all kinds of virtues.

12 - Lessons of sublime holiness given by the Holy Guardian Angel.

These lessons in holiness are a continuation of those we read in the previous chapter. Therefore, they are also extracted from the life of the holy penitent, Margarida de Cortona.

“Show me, she said to her Guardian Angel one day, show me with what signs we can know the virtuous and perfect friends of God” - The Angel replied: “The perfect friends of God are those who have the heart entirely detached from created things and have united him only to God, sighing for him, day and night, with all the impetus of his heart ”.

- And what are the virtues that belong to her, added the saint?

The first, replied the angel, is a profound humility, to imitation and for the love of him who humbled himself to death on the Cross, The second is a very perfect charity. That said, a friend of God is one in which the divine word is fulfilled, beati the world runs , blessed are the pure in heart.

He is a friend of God, the Angel continues, one who denies himself, or rather, who kills himself for Christ's sake, not, however, with daggers or similar instruments, but through the mortification of his own will , and that he is ready to suffer any penalty and even death, for the name of Christ, if such a thing were necessary in defense of the Catholic faith. On the other hand, “for the love of Christ, he who kills his senses with penance is killed.

A friend of God is one who truly has compassion and pities the poor and destitute, one who always speaks the truth, one whose purity of life is reflected in the absolute honesty of his customs.

It is a friend of God who seeks for the love of Jesus Christ to help his brothers in their labors and sufferings, taking them to themselves, preferring that he himself and not his neighbor suffer a shortage of food, clothing and housing. Finally, a friend of God is the one who is saddened and afflicted by the misfortune of others, even though the bastard is his own enemy; and who, without a shadow of envy, rejoices heartily at his prosperity ”.

Beautiful words, sublime lesson. But it is, as we have just mentioned, a narrow summary of the proofs of kindness of the Angel of Saint Margaret to her. So frequent were his apparitions, so benign were his words, that he even doubted the saint of the authenticity of such apparitions. Would it not be, she thought, the very spirit of darkness transformed into an Angel of light? Furthermore, as sinful as was believed, it did not seem possible that Jesus, his

Blessed Mother and his Angels could communicate with her so intimately. Jesus Christ was given the task of removing this doubt, which was like a thorn, which crossed his heart; “How could the devil, Jesus said to him, infuse you with such pure joy, that he is deprived of her and forever?

Not having that joy in you that you experience, everything he does so he can steal it ”(46).

(46) From the life of the saint, written by Fr. Giunta Devogado, her confessor and quoted by the Bolandistas.

Ah, that many, however, especially the inexperienced young people, steal the devil, the peace and joy of the heart! And how bitter, then, that someone has departed from the service of God! ... May

your divine Majesty grant, to all those in such a state, the grace to humbly bend under the weight of such suffering and return to the path that takes in the sky.

13 - Kindness used by Angels towards innocent souls

It is quite clear that Angels do not escape the general rule, we love preferably and with more tenderness and spontaneity to those who resemble us. A truly angelic creature, a true Angel in mortal flesh was Santa Rosa de Lima. And, to the glory of the Peruvian nation, it was the first flower of holiness that germinated in the lands of South America.

He was still a child when he decided to build a cellar to retire in prayer, penance and meditation on heavenly things. Now, one night, when she was praying in her little oratory, she suddenly found herself helpless with strength, and like fainting. Forced to leave the cell, which was in the garden, she ran to the house next to her Mother. thus pale and distressed, she sent the maid to go immediately to buy some chocolate and to prepare it for Rosa. However, Rosa replied that such an order was not necessary, since from the home of one Maria Usátegui, from the family relations, they would soon send her the food she wanted. The mother thought her daughter was joking. “Do you not see, I said, that no one at Usátegui can know that you need such food? Weren't you in your garden cell? ... Only if you sent someone over to our friend's house from there ... But ... who sent you there? So go, she said to the maid, and comply with the order I gave you ”. - “No, Mama said Rosa, I beg you to wait a moment. It doesn't take long for Maria Usátegui's servant to arrive with my chocolate ”.

These words were not finished when the servant arrived.

Faced with this fact, the mother wanted to know the whole truth. Who had been sent to the Usátegui house?

Candidasly Rosa explained: “it is my Guardian Angel, dear Mother, who has just rendered me such a service. As soon as I felt faint I asked my holy Angel to go to that house, that's where he would say what was happening to me, and what I was in need of. You never fail to grant me my good Guardian Angel whatever you ask ”.

It shows the naturalness with which Rosa expressed herself as she often did to her Angel and to receive such proofs of tender and most holy friendship from him.

A similar event occurred shortly afterwards.

It was the custom of Mother of Rosa to pick her up from her garden cell an hour before midnight, to take her to her bedroom. One night, however, he was careless, and Rosa would have stayed there if it were not for her holy and good Guardian Angel. In fact, seeing that Rosa was going to stay there, perhaps all night, he took charge of getting her out of the cell, led her through the garden and led her into the house, opening the doors that were already locked. . And when the Mother of Rosa realized her forgetfulness, the little girl, to her great amazement, entered her room (47).

(47) Hansen, *Life of the Saint*, and, 15, m. 201. - When it is narrated there, Clement X also mentions in the bull of the saint's canonization.

It is always true that the "holy Catholic Church" is truly "holy". No religion has ever had angels in its midst like Rosa de Lima.

And it is always true that the Angels of heaven delight in the company and treatment of the Angels of the earth.

14 - A beautiful victory over temptations is rewarded by the Holy Angels

S. Tomás de Aquino is undoubtedly one of the Church's greatest doctors. His clear and penetrating intelligence, as well as the heroic integrity of the virtue of purity, which perfumes his personality, earned him the name Angelico. His mind, from an early age, was preoccupied with the problems of supernatural life.

“Mommy, he asked when he was still a child, what is God? ...” - Later, understanding that God is the author of life, and that only the divine life is the true life, he decided to live only for this divine life, which it is given in baptism, and it makes us children of God. For this reason, he thought of becoming religious and entering the order of the glorious patriarch S. Domingos. But that was not how parents thought. Thomas was a brilliant intelligence, and

could be, in the world, the great glory of the home of the Aquinas. To dissuade his parents at once, he escaped, one day, from the surveillance of his own, and put on the habit of the Dominicans.

However, the escape was unsuccessful. Relatives followed him, took him from the peace of the Dominican convent and locked him up in the castle of Monte S. Giovanni. The fact is that we are concerned with this example. To tempt him, and make him fall into sin, an evil woman was brought into the castle by the saint's own brothers. So are the bad guys: they think the good guys are good because they don't taste the poisoned pleasure of sin. Unhappy! Unable to allow themselves to be attracted by the pleasures of the spirit, they believe that all the pleasure of life consists of the sensualities of the flesh! But Thomas Aquinas saw the danger and fervently recommended himself to heaven. Still drowning in prayer, he suddenly rises, takes a red-hot brand and puts the reckless woman on the run. Then with the lesson he drew a cross on the wall and prostrated himself before it. He asked for two things: one, that God should welcome his thanks for the strength he had received in temptation, and the second, that he should grant an angelic purity, with which there would never be fear of future struggles.

It is said that in dreams, or perhaps in ecstasy, this second part of his prayer was heard, whether in dreams or in ecstasy, the fact is that it was learned from his confessor, after the saint's death, that two angels appeared to him and they said that they were sent from God to give him the gift of perfect virginity, "that, they said, God now makes you irrevocable grace". After talking like that, they took the Angels from a thick cord that they brought with them and they girded the saint so tightly, at the level of the kidneys, that he recovered the use of the senses, And from then on, says the same confessor of Thomas, who the saint never felt in his flesh any obstacle to the practice of virtue. (48)

We gather, for the benefit of our young readers, that there is a brotherhood, or sodalice, instituted in the Church, in memory of this unique privilege granted to S. Tomás.

(48) Tonson, Life of S. Tomás de Aquino, I ch. XIV.

This sodalice is called Militia Angelica, and its purpose is to help the faithful to preserve or recover the precious gift of chastity: "quo confratres castitatis donum, Deo dante, delicias ineatur, aut consequantur amissum (49).

In doing so, that is, trying to remain pure in heart, our young readers will achieve a certain triumph in their studies. Especially those who desire greater knowledge of spiritual things have in the practice of angelic virtue a pledge to

achieve it, since this is the science of which S. Tiago “descends a Patre luminum, that is, the Father of lights grants it to the pure in heart. The perfect observance of chastity is what our saint undoubtedly owes in part, that intellectual sharpness with which he penetrated and resolved the most intricate theological questions.

15 - Greatly displeases the Holy Guardian Angel, even the slightest offense to God

There was a saint who, according to what is read in her life, was assisted not only by an angel, like ordinary mortals, but also by an archangel. She also saw him, Saint Francisca Romana (that saint is called), beside him, resplendent as the sun and wearing a snow-white garment.

And to her Guardian Angel she saw him not only when she was alone or in prayer, but even in her occupations or when in the company of others (50).

(49) Benedictas XIII in, Bella Pretinus, § III.

(50), Deus qu beat Franciscom fomulate tuam, inter cæ tera pratiae tuæ dune, familiari Angeli contuctudine decorasti etc. So the Oremus of the saint.

Now it happened that in her presence, small faults were committed by those who lived with her. The saint then saw that this heavenly spirit, as if blushing for such a lack, and turned its face to the other side.

And it happened to him, because "the righteous falls seven times" that the same saint fell in some of these shortcomings. Now, so little faults, committed by weakness rather than by malice, were enough for the Holy Angel to hide from view. Sometimes even the same Francisca did not notice at the time that she had fallen short. But, letting his Angel no longer be visible to him, he came to himself, and examining his conscience, he detested his absence with vivid tears of compunction. And then the holy Angel had been shown him again. Let us learn from here to serve God perfectly, and that no fault deserves contempt (51).

(51) From the life of S. Francisca Romana written by D. Giovanni Mattioli, who was Spiritual Father of the saint. This life, which the Bolandistas mention, was intimately taken from an unprecedented code in the archives of the Holy See, and published under the care of prof. Mariano Armellini.

Another saint, of whom a similar example is read, is Saint Margarida Maria Alacoque. Of greater interest is his example for a double reason; firstly because it is more of our day, and secondly because she tells it, in her own words, in the autobiography which, by order of the confessor, she had to write.

It says: In the midst of so many temptations - I was often comforted by the

visible presence of my faithful Guardian Angel, and was often rebuked and corrected by him. I once thought I should talk about the marriage of a relative of mine.

Then he made me see the Guardian Angel - that this was unworthy of a religious soul and, severely rebuking me, he even said that he would hide from my eyes if I still got into such intrigues ... He did not suffer nor yet the slightest lack of modesty or respect in front of my sovereign lord, in the presence of whom I saw him prostrate on the ground, wanting me to do as much. Which, as often as I could, I also did ”.

Ah, that in the face of such examples, we should weep bitterly for the great sins committed in the presence of the Holy Angel, and firmly propose, with God's help, to avoid them for the future.

16 - With what joy does the Holy Guardian Angel count our steps

Envy, says the definition of catechism, is a sadness that is felt for the good of others. And therefore, sinful, low, unworthy. Likewise, it is for well-formed souls, generous souls and superior spirits to rejoice in the good of others. Those who love the Kingdom of God, above all, rejoice in its progress, let it be verified wherever it may be, and through whomever it may be.

The Holy Guardian Angels have nothing more at heart than the progress of the Kingdom of God, because, as St. Paul says, “they are all sent to help those who are destined for the heritage of salvation” (Heb.1,14). For this reason, he joyfully recounts our victories and all the steps we take in the quest for the Holy Kingdom of God, which is Heaven.

It is said, by the way, that a desert monk lived so far from the sources of drinking water, that he had to take a long walk every day to supply his solitary home with the precious liquid. Tired, however, of making the same long journey every day, he thought to himself what follows. “Why, why should I have to work so hard to provide myself with water, if I can make my cell on the edge of a clean spring?” So he thought with his pitcher on his shoulder on his way to the cell, and he was already resolving himself to change, when he heard someone behind him, counting his steps. He turned, and saw an Angel, who counted his steps, because the number of steps depended on greater glory in heaven ... He learned his lesson. And he tore down the cell in the place where he lived until then, to transport it farther away from the source. And he was warned (52).

(52) Caralea, Volgarizzamento dello vito dei ss Padri, Vite diverte, p. III, ch. XI.

Remember this example, our young readers. Is it the church, the school, the congregation? All the better. The more steps, the greater the reward in heaven and the greater the progress in virtue, the greater the joy of our holy and good Guardian Angel.

17 - How much the Holy Angels love good works in general

To confirm what we have already said about the value, before God and his Angels, of the works of mercy, comes the following example, chosen among many others similar to the lives of the saints.

One day the great apostle of Rome, S. Felipe Neri, had passed through the streets of that city, when a beggar appeared to him, who prostrated himself before him, in the act of begging him.

Charitable as he was, the saint did not deny him the few coins he brought with him. But the beggar, instead of taking them by the hand, refused, and said smiling: "I wanted to see what you would do ..." And, such words said, disappeared.

The saint then understood who it was that had been hidden under the appearance of that beggar, and what the meaning of the heavenly apparition was. As he later told it to two priests, close friends of his, it was that beggar, neither more nor less, his own Guardian Angel, who wanted to make him understand how much alms God and his Angels are pleasant.

With this, St. Philip's compassion towards the poor grew to such an extent that it can almost be said that he did not leave the needy in Rome without his help. But it was not just the shamed poor who deserved your attention. Many poor young people received money, clothes and books from him. Even the effects of his charity reached the prisons.

In return, the Angels protected him with solicitous charity.

An example that proves it:

One afternoon, while looking for bread for a poor family, he fell, crossing the via del'Orso, in a deep pit, opened there for the construction of a new building. As usual, he only saw himself alive inside that grave, called for his Guardian Angel.

And he felt himself taken out of the pit, safe and sound, went on his way and went to do the beautiful work of charity that had made him leave home (53). St. John of God also put his strengths and possessions at the service of the needy. For this reason, he was, like S. Felipe Neri, greatly favored by the Angels.

(53) Gallonio, Vida de S. Felipe, cap, XV et sec.

One day, leaving home in search of water for his hospital - because he is the founder of a religious congregation for the service of the sick - the angels took advantage of his absence to save him a great deal of work. They swept the sick rooms, made the beds, washed the dishes.

Greatly surprised when he returned, S. João asked the patients who was the good soul who had so perfectly saved him so much work. Even more admired, they said that none of them had seen a soul working at the hospital, except ... João himself! It would be said that they were striving to tire each of them with greater astonishment: João in the sick, and the sick in João.

S. João knew well that the source where he had gone was far, and he was aware of not having fixed anything. Insisting, however, the sick, in his statement, concluded that all this was the work of the Holy Guardian Angel who, disguising himself, had done all that work with his holy hands. So he said: "Actually, my brothers, God has great love for the poor, because he sends his own Angels to serve them".

This fact caused great admiration in the city of Granada, which was where it took place, and many for that reason went to offer themselves to the saint for the service of those very poor who had been served by the Angels. Another time was the bread that the poor lacked. Greatly penalized, he no longer knew what to do as a saint, when the Angel of God appeared to him with a large basket full of bread and said to him: "Take it, my brother, and take it to your poor. I bring it from the same storehouses of divine Providence".

And it disappeared. João and those who witnessed the prodigy were amazed at the dignity of charity and were flooded with consolation (54).

(54) Vida do Santo, written by Francisco do Castro, priest and rector of the hospital in Granada, 1,2 and 3.

You certainly admire yourself, young reader. Remember that with this God and his Angels want to inculcate love for the poor. He loves them because they represent the person of Christ himself. And, as far as possible, help them, dedicate yourself to them, as Saint Tobias did, and as he advised his son: "Give alms to what you have, and never turn your back on any poor person; thus, also the face of the Lord will never turn from us".

18 - Love of God and his Angels for prayer

The example that follows is taken from the life of S. Isidro, who was a poor farmer in the neighborhood of Madrid. But he was so poor that he didn't even have land to farm. For this reason, to support himself and his daughter, he had

to work in the lands of a citizen of Madrid, called Juan de Vergas. Now Isidro had become accustomed to not taking from his instruments of work without first directing his prayers to God. To do this, he got up very early, and went to the church, mainly that of N. Senhora de Arocha, to hear Holy Mass and practice his devotions.

And when it was time for work, we went to the countryside on time. However, there was no shortage of people who accused him of failing with his duty by employing himself to pray instead of working. “He's a prayer, they told Isidro's boss, and he spends the morning visiting churches ...

The boss, full of zeal, decided to go to the work place very early. I thought that yes I would not find him, and I would have enough reasons to punish him with the deserved punishment. So he got up very early and went to the field. But arriving there, Isidro was already there with his oxen directing the plow. He was amazed ... - But who were the other two young men from the other plows?

He went quickly to meet the three, but found only Isidro. The other two were gone. He asked him about his co-workers, but Isidro replied: “I never called anyone to help me in my service, except my God, who I always invoke, and who always promptly helps me”.

Amazed and impressed, Juan returned home, told what he had seen to his people, and did not hesitate to tell them that his servant was a saint, and that the Angels, in return for their faith and piety, came to help him in his tiring work. from the field (55).

(55) This fact is narrated in the Breviary, on the 5th of May, with these words: Dominus hymns Angelos candida robe, dupliet Boum jugo aranios, mediunque inter ilop Isidorum conspezit.

- It is more detailed in the life of S. Isidro written by João the Deacon, which the Bolandistas transcribe on the same day.

19 - The devotees of the Virgin, especially beloved of Angels

Raimundo Nonato, a saint who flourished in the thirteenth century, was noted, in addition to other virtues, for a tender devotion to the Queen of Heaven. “The Angels especially loved him for this and gave him extraordinary favors. Meanwhile, Raimundo's piety made his father suspicious that his son was thinking of becoming religious. To remove him from such a purpose, he decided to remove him from his studies and send him to his homestead to take care of a small flock that he owned there.

Now, near the pastures where he spent his days, there was a church dedicated to S. Nicolau Bishop of Mira, and in that church a celebrated image

of the Augusta Mother of God was venerated. It was Raimundo's consolation. He went there and with his heavenly Mother he released his feathers. One day when he addressed his prayers with greater fervor, he heard the following words from the Blessed Virgin: "Do not be afraid, Raimundo. I will bring you from now on, under my particular protection. And I want you, like your Heavenly Mother, to turn confidently whenever you feel distressed ". After hearing these words, Raimundo was not in the mood to depart from his good Mother. But what about the flock? Who would keep him From this, Raimundo's holy Guardian Angel was entrusted. It's because? So that Raimundo could pay the price of his prayers to the Virgin, and be entertained with her in colloquial branches.

In fact, no longer able to repress the affection that brought him closer to his Mother in Heaven, he decided to go to the church - certainly inspired by the same holy Angel who, as if, offered to replace him grazing. He saw, suddenly, at his side, the holy Guardian Angel. He was kind and all shining with light. Raimundo recognized him and earned him lively actions of grace for such a marked favor.

A favor that is received with recognition provokes another favor. Thus, even more often, Raimundo can satisfy his devotion to Maria Santíssima, thanks to the charitable services of his Guardian Angel.

Such a prodigy so often repeated could not go unnoticed. Many witnessed it, including Raimundo's father. And before that, there was no one who doubted that God destined that young shepherd to great things. Raimundo's father was the first to cooperate with the work of God. She took him out of the care of herds and allowed her to carry out what he said was her ardent vow: "to consecrate herself entirely to Our Lady", to be forever hers.

For this he received the habit of Nossa Senhora das Mercês, and was soon sent to the distant lands of Costa da Barberia.

God knows that his servant suffered there for his holy faith. Everything was used to rescue the Christian prisoners and to convert the infidels of those places. There was then, as now, so many ways to spread news. But the works of the great saint were such that, reaching the ears of SS, Pope Gregory IX, wanted him to honor the purple cardinal by putting on him the holy man. He did it, therefore, cardinal of the S. Church, with the title of S, Eustáquio.

All the acts of the supernatural life of this great man cannot escape our perception. However, a fact occurred in the last moments of his life, which was known by many "as another sign of predilection by the holy Angels. It was his miraculous communion, received by the hands of the Angels, because there

was no one who could administer it. The veracity of this fact is attested by the Bolandist priests in their lives as of the Saints, on August 31.

20 - The holy Angels love truly Christian families.

S. Antonino, who was elevated to the episcopal seat of Florence in 1413, spending a day in the parish of S. Ambrósio, saw, on a poor little house in a poor street, a festive choir of Angels. Without trembling, he went to the house to see who would live there. He entered, and saw a poor widow with three daughters, barefoot and poorly dressed, applied to work.

Seeing so much work, and at the same time so much poverty, he exhorted them to trust in God, and promised them help. In fact, he gave orders for them to be plentifully rescued, and so it was done.

Now, after a while, the saint passed by the same street and the same house, And what did he see? An even greater misery: demons gloated over the house. Overwhelmed with horror and zeal, yet this time he crossed the threshold confidently and freely, and found himself among his already known sheep, He began to question them, and discovered that the subsidies he had ordered brought to them, had brought them an abundance to which they were not accustomed, and who, abandoning work and prayer, spent time in fun and worldly outings.

The first time the saint had been there, he had told nothing of what he had seen about his home.

But this time he told them both visions, “See, I said, when work and prayer reigned in your house, the holy Angels were delighted in it, which was the cause of your” absolute well-being “. But now, with idleness and vanity, the boredom of prayer has entered this house, behold, it is not the angels but the demons that delight in it “. He continued to rebuke them severely and paternally and ended up urging them to sanctify Sunday with prayer, and the rest of the week with work. And he reduced the usual alms to them, (Bol. 2 de Maio).

21 - The holy Angels give communion to a holy and young pilgrim.

Stanislau Kostka lived only 18 years and was a great saint.

I was a little over fifteen when it came to what we are going to narrate. He was Polish, but then studied letters in Vienna, and with his brother Paulo, who was not very scrupulous in religion, he had stayed at the home of a gentleman from the Lutheran sect.

In this house, often the object of his brother's mistreatment, and perhaps tired of penances and vigils, he fell into a very serious illness, which soon brought him to death's doors. Innocent as it was, it was not "the fears of cold death" that took care of him. It was the imminence of a death without a viaticum. To die, without being able to give a last hug to the great companion of our exile, the divine Sacrament Lord! Asking Paul for it was useless. It would be easier for the Lutheran fanatic, owner of the house, to allow the devil himself to enter his home, than Jesus sacrament in the hands of a Catholic priest.

What to do then? Stanislaus turned to heaven. He appealed to Santa Bárbara, who had read that he would not let his devotees die without a viaticum, and he was heard!

One night, when the violence of evil was at its peak, the saint came to him accompanied by two Angels, one of whom carries the consecrated host in his hands. At this sight, he ordered the aio to put himself on his knees, and he, making a supreme effort, knelt on the bed, said "Domine non sum dignus" three times, modestly opened his mouth and, receiving holy communion, all gathered in long and fervent conversations with his Bom Jesus do Sacramento.

He did not, however, die of this disease, but he had received an order that had to be carried out. Our Lady had appeared to him with the Child Jesus and told him to find him in the "Company of his Son".

To this end, he decided to flee Vienna - as all of his family were opposed to the execution of such a plan. He changed his noble clothes with a poor man he had met on the road, and started on his way to Augusta, where Dilinga went, and finally to Rome.

Now, during such a pilgrimage, he received communion from the hands of the Angels a second time. This happened in a village where he had passed and where he had seen the door open and the faithful praying. Thinking to be a Catholic church, he entered, wishing to receive communion. But realizing that it was the temple of the Lutheran sect, such pain he conceived in his spirit, which broke down in copious weeping.

They moved the Angels' charity so just and felt tears. He saw himself, therefore, suddenly, surrounded by these, bringing one of them communion. The latter, therefore, approaching, deposited it on his lips reverently and sweetly. And leaving Estanislau in the company of his beloved Lord, they disappeared (56).

(56) Bartoli, Vida do Santo, 1, I, c. 5 and 8 - Boero, ditto.

22 - The Guardian Angel assists us at the time of death

There are so many examples of saints who were watched by the Guardian Angel at the time of death, that only this narrative would make up a book. We have chosen among these the following:

S. João Gualberto was about to die when he saw a young man with a very sweet face, who started to serve him. He then asked his religious: "Why didn't you take this young man here with you to lunch?" - These, who did not see the Angel, said: "But what young man are you talking about, O father?" - "I speak to you, replied the saint, of this beautiful young man who is serving me with such care.

Blessed Leto, abbot of Passignano, was present. The latter, taking the floor, told him that that joyem, visible only to the saint, was from the mountain of the Lord, that is, an Angel from heaven.

At such words Gualberto, also enlightened by God, understood that he was not simply a man, but his holy Guardian Angel who visibly showed himself, to assist him, comfort him and lead his soul to Paradise (57).

(57) Life of the Saint, written by b. André, his disciple, n. 15.

Santa Margarida de Cortona, the holy penitent mentioned in examples 11 and 12, also had, at the time of her death, the appearance of the Holy Guardian Angel. The occasion of this appearance was the temptation of distrust with which the demon sought to slaughter it at this extreme moment in life. To comfort her, therefore, the Holy Angel appeared to her visibly. First he turned to the demon: "What do you have to do with this soul, I said," that the Lord our Lord will place in the choir of the Seraphim? " - Do not be afraid, said Margarida next, that I, Guard of your soul, which is the temple of the Lord, am always with you.

Worthy of memory is what is said of S. Felipe Neri. One day, wanting to move some religious, from the Congregation of Regular Clerics Minister of the Sick, to remain faithful in his holy institute, he told them the following vision, with which Our Lord God had favored him.

While, he said to them, two of our brothers were watching some of the dying, I saw that the Angels of the Lord were beside them, and these Angels suggested to them in their ears the words that should make them repel in the sick, in order to prepare them to die holy (59).

Even though the holy Angels are not present in a sensitive way, it is certain that they never fail to protect and comfort their clients for life in the extreme struggle. Nor could one reasonably assume the contrary.

The example that follows shows how the Holy Angels then seek the assistance of the priest for their clients.

In Rome, in the year 1596, there was a great mortality. One evening, around twenty-four hours, he came to the home of the Fathers Ministers of the Sick, of S. Camilo de Lellis, a young man of very sweet countenance, immediately pleading that two religious be sent to help a dying man.

They sent us promptly. He accompanied them solicitously as a guide, that same young man, but he disappeared from sight when they arrived at the patient's house and opened the door for him.

It was, therefore, the so-called young man, as can be conjectured, the Guardian Angel “of the dying man (60).

(59) Vida do auto, by Jerônimo Bernaboe - Bolandistas, May 26, - In the lessons of the Breviary, on the day of the feast of S. Camilo, it is said that S. Felipe had this vision more often.

(60) Life of S. Camilo de Lellis, at p. Cieateli.

23 - The devotion of the Holy Angels, an instrument of apostolate in Catholic schools

“Today another angel has gone to join the Angels of Paradise ...” Thus Fr Fernando Jeantier's brothers in the Society of Jesus announced the passage to eternity.

P, Jeantier was born in 1799, in the village of Liesle, not far from Besançon. During his long life, 79 years old, everyone had endeavored to cultivate in himself and instill in others devotion to the holy Angels.

He was rewarded in this life, at the time of death. He died on the day of the appearance of S. Miguel Arcanjo, and in the prayers of agony, when the officiating priest pronounced the words “in the name of Angels and Archangels, in the name of Thrones and Domination, in the name of Principalities and Powers, in the name of Cherubim and Seraphim ”,

everything lit up his face in a heavenly smile. The religious present, who knew his life, could not hold back tears.

Devotion to the holy Angels, drank it, as it were, like breast milk. When he woke up he had taught the good mother to say good morning to the good Guardian Angel with the following little prayer: “Good morning, my good Angel; I recommend Jesus, Mary, Joseph and You; as you kept me this night, keep me also this day ”.

His childhood was innocent in all the rigor of the term. At the age of twenty he entered the Society of Jesus, and there, for forty-five, he dedicated himself

to the formation of youth. That is why he was rightly called the apostle of youth

, but one of the main instruments he used to preserve young people in innocence and make them grow in piety was precisely his devotion to the holy Guardian Angels.

To instill it in his spirits he took advantage of conversations, public exhortations, the court of penance.

And still not happy with this, he used the Marian Congregations for which he was director to advertise his dear devotion. Under his perpetual direction were the congregations of the Holy Angels of the colleges of various cities inside and outside France. He held that post in Sant Acheul, Friborg, Passagio, Turin, Brussels and Vannes (61).

(61) Two are the Congregations that are usually founded in schools and colleges attended by many young people: that of the SS. Virgin, for the more advanced students, and that of Santos Anjos almost as a preparation for the first, for the youngest students.

Numerous chapters of his biography develop this single argument: the pious industries that were used to instill in their dear young people the love of the Holy Angels. We will expose, for brevity, only the main ones.

It can be said that there was no feast or practice of devotion during the year, in which he did not introduce the holy Guardian Angels in due course. The reasons for this were the Christmas, Easter, novenas and feasts of N. Senhora, the month of May, Sundays of S. Luis. But he acted in such a way that not only did he not deviate from the sense of festivity, but even corroborated it. It is useless to say how much I did not work and achieved in the same festivities as the blessed Spirits. Among them, there was one of his invention. He had placed it, with delicate attention for the servant Angels of Jesus, at the beginning of Lent, and aimed to honor those blessed Spirits, who gave the Savior the food he needed after his forty-day fast in the desert.

Farsighted, his greatest care was to get good preachers to prepare the spirits of his congregants for each of these festivities. I begged them to speak to them vividly and effectively: to tell them in the best possible way and with the clearest explanations and comparisons that are Angels, to describe their rich outfits, the beautiful aspect, the dignity of bearing, and finally move them with lit words to a solid, intimate, deep devotion to them.

Next, the ornamentation of his chapel was the object of his care. He multiplied the images of Angels everywhere, so that everywhere, in the chapel, his youth would have an Angel of God before their eyes.

And so that the amusements of the recess would not dissipate at all, and would not forget the great festivity that was approaching, he placed in the courtyards or in the garden a beautiful statue of the Guardian Angel, on whose pedestal they were read, carved in large characters, these words: “to heaven!”

In addition to these extraordinary ceremonies, there were the common practices of every day. Among these, the Crown of the Holy Angels had its main place. It consisted of several prayers, most of which were in his honor. one third, with a cross or medal and seventeen grains in which prayers were recited.

It is not easy to imagine how much Fr Jeantier esteemed this altar boy. He was as dear to her as the pupils of her eyes. He gave it to those he deemed worthy of it, and when he handed it over, he uttered the following words with great affection: “Receive this crown, my son, symbol of the true congregation. She will be the guardian of your body and your soul. Through you, thanks to the intercession of your holy Guardian Angels, you will one day deserve to achieve the eternal happiness of heaven “. And, warmly, he recommended his daily recitation, advised that they should always have it with them, that they could use it as help in all danger.

When he met with one of his youngsters: “come on, I told them, take out the sword, the sword of S. Miguel”. And they understood it: they took the crown of the holy Angels from their pocket and showed it to the priest. His zeal was admirable during the Mass he celebrated for the Congregates. Having said the Gospel, he went down the banks. Everyone should have the rosary of Our Lady in one hand, and the Crown of Angels in the other. There was no use hiding. Nothing escaped the good priest's eyes. Woe to anyone who did not have guns drawn! Fr Jeantier's gaze was fixed on him in a silent but effective rebuke: what a shame! a soldier without weapons!

Not so much work and zeal was left without abundant and precious fruit. In such a way he had inculcated devotion to the holy Angel present, which had already become a habitual thought for them. They did not meet the priest and did not enter his room when they went to visit him, without saying: “Father, I greet the good Angel of Your Reverence”. These words, uttered with great affection by his young disciples, provoked a similar affection in the priest. “And I, my son, also greet your Angel”. This greeting was worth them, together with the good priest, the same as, with those to whom they are recommended, the honorary titles apply to humble people.

The following fact comes by the way, and is quite expressive. One time the priest took his Friborg congregants to watch, I don't know which theater play.

At a certain point in the drama, a troubadour appears, addressing the words of comfort to a prisoner's window: "Courage, yes, courage. Here are your old friends ". - Upon hearing him, the Congregates turned to Fr Jeantier and said to him: Here are our friends, the holy Angels, on our side, always! - The refrain, or rather, the parody of the troubadour refrain, became famous among them from then on ... - And as they knew that the good priest liked it, those good young men of the same age did not miss the occasion. heard. Some, thirty years later, still repeated it in their letters.

Even more precious fruit of this intimate feeling of the real presence of the Guardian Angel was the horror, which they nourished, from every word less honest, from every conversation less convenient, in a word, from any and all sin. - "If, to my great misfortune, a student from Friborg College once said to his companions, I would fall into serious guilt, I would not remain in that state for even five minutes. I would soon go to the good Fr Jeantier to confess. This is how you can live in peace, willing to give and go ".

Together with the horror of sin, the devotion of the Angels inspired them to practice the most holy works. They became friends of prayer, of the holy sacraments, of obedience, of study, and even of mortification itself, in the victory of their whims and passions to blossom.

There is a chapter in the life of this great man in which one sees how the gentle devotion learned in school from his unforgettable congregation director was useful for his entire life. And the chapter: "Fr Jeantier and his former students". Just one example, however, we will adduce.

One of these happy and pious young people was therefore removed from the Friborg boarding school and enrolled among students at the Lyceum in Lion. This young man was a congregation of the most fervent and most devoted of the holy Angels. Imagine what your perplexity was when you first entered the common dormitory of your new school, where acts of piety were completely unknown. On the other hand, he did not think he could lie down without kneeling at the foot of the bed, examining his conscience and asking God for forgiveness for the faults committed during the day - just as he had learned from his mother and had been inculcated by his director. What is more, how can you reconcile sleep without having invoked the Blessed Mother and the holy Guardian Angel?

It is not that human respect would hinder you, oh no! Fr Jeantier knew well how to fight him and make him win. What embarrassed him was the thought that he was going to expose such a beautiful act of pity to his colleagues' laughs and mockery. What to do?

He decided that the next morning he would write to Fr Jeantier to receive direction from him. However, he did not give himself up to sleep without first fulfilling his devotions and without reciting the crown of the holy Angels. So the next morning he wrote to the priest.

And he did it in such beautiful and moving terms that, after having responded to the consultation, Fr Jeantier was happy to read it to his congregants in the first exhortation.

This was, moreover, one of the many industries used by him for the spiritual good of his people. There was no good example, of which he was aware, that he did not write down for the building of his congregations. And the examples of special protection used by the holy Angels towards their disciples, were even more carefully noted and with greater heat referred to. It was no wonder that his exhortations left everyone alive and heartily impressed and as if hanging from his lips.

We are pleased to offer our readers the following excerpt from one of their warm and practical exhortations. "See, then, O children, who all have companions! (and indicates any person to whom all eyes were turned). Ask him who he owes for the life and health he enjoys. To the crown of the holy Angels. It has not been two days since, from Mans, here to Vannes. But something astonishment happened to him while traveling. The train on which it came hit another, and crashed down a precipice. And do you know what he did in such great danger? - Full of confidence, he pressed the crown in his hand, invoked his Guardian Angel, and was safe and sound amid countless dead and wounded".

From another exhortation of yours: "Ah! ... let this little house, my little children, be nothing but a temple, in which you offer to the Queen of Angels every day and to each of the nine choirs into which they are divided. , a tribute of prayer and recognition ". - This, in fact, was what he sought, as we have seen, with all his strength, and what fortunately, by the goodness of God, he was able to achieve (62).

(62) (Le Père Jeantier or L'Apôtre des petits enfants, by RP Xavier Auguste Sojourné de la Compagnie de Jésus, - Poitiers. Oudin Frères, 1880.

OBSÉQUIOS

INTRODUCTION

"Non diligamus verb neque lingua, sed opere et eritate : Let us not love (says the great apostle of charity, St. John) with words or with the tongue, but with works and truth". - Whoever, therefore, sincerely wishes to be a devotee of the holy Angels must follow this advice of St. John: must love them with works and in truth. It can be said that there is no living devotion where the gifts are rare, that where they are numerous it is alive and fruitful and that it is dying where they are completely lacking. And so it is in the same way as plants, which will be vigorous, healthy, full of life, as their fruits are more or less abundant.

There are, then, as in all other devotions, two ways of offering the Angels. The first way is that of the gift, so to speak, direct.

It consists in praying to them, singing hymns to them, meditating on their benefits, reading or listening to their praises, visiting their altars, worshiping their images, in short, it consists in the practice of all acts that they immediately turn to worship them and aim to honor their excelsitude, holiness, glory.

The second way is that of indirect gift.

It consists of receiving the sacraments, practicing charity towards the poor, fasting for their love, and, in order to compose everything in one word, it consists in practicing virtue in order to please them.

Now, the devotion that is defined, according to several authors, *umor obsequiorum*, it covers both forms of gifts. But it is not necessary to be discussing this at length ... Our whole booklet is directed to this, and we often suggest practical ways of offering the Holy Angels. - Two things, however, we still lack. We will expose them in the two chapters that follow.

CHAPTER I

PRACTICAL DEVOTES IN HONOR OF THE SAINT ANGELS OF THE GUARD

Devotion to the Angels can be divided into three classes: daily practices, weekly practices and annual practices.

We will introduce our young people to the practices of each of these classes, seeking, in their choice, to meet the condition of those to whom we dedicate our work.

1 - Pray in the morning and at night the “Holy Angel of the Lord”. The Congregates of Our Lady used to beg him in the morning and at night for his heavenly protection with the recitation of three Ave Marias. It is a truly pious and salutary custom. It can never be too much to praise and inculcate him. (63).

(63) This flower of innocence and purity, which we have already mentioned above, is called Estanislau Kostka, lived in Rome in the novitiate of S. Audré, when he adopted the following custom, of many later also adopted: in the morning, soon upon awakening, and at night before going to bed, he would turn to the Basilica of S. Maria Maior and, bowing to the most holy Mother of God, would ask him to bless him. - See Bartoli, Life of the Saint.

But, tell me, O my son, does it not seem fair to you that after having invoked the One who, as the Mother who was given to you by Jesus on the cross, you also claim the One that Jesus gave you as a guard from the first moment of your existence?

No prayer seems more suitable for this than the one mentioned above, which we reproduce below:

Angel of God, who are my guardian, and to whom I was entrusted by heavenly piety, enlighten me, guard me, address me and rule me. Amen.

It is a short prayer, but rich in meaning and beauty, and very dear to Santos, S. Luís de Gonzaga, p. For example, this prayer is referred to in a handwritten script: (65) “You will recommend yourself to your Guardian Angel three times a day in a special way. In the morning with the “Angel of God”, at night with the same prayer, as well as during the day, when you go to visit the church altars ”.

(65) Cepari, Vida de S. Luís, p. II, c. 8 - The venerable servant of God José Benedito Cottolengo, uncle known for the Piccola Casa della Divina Provvidenza, founded by him in Turin, strongly recommended to his shelters the devotion of the Holy Angels, Along with other practices, he also prescribed the following, which everyone should owe. pay before going to bed: pray the 'Angel of God that you are my guard' times, with your arms crossed, so that the holy Guardian Angel would assist you during the night and quickly make you get up in the morning . - Guestaldi, V. Cottolengo's Life, 1. V. c. 18.

S. Luís is your special patron, as he is of the youth in general. You must therefore imitate him. You will recite, like him, morning and evening your prayer to the Guardian Angel. And, to imitate him even better, he also recites it every time you go to church or visit the SS Sacramento, or to attend Mass, or to confess or to communion. The good Angel will not act as a plea, and will promptly come to your aid to help you fulfill exactly these great acts of our holy religion.

You know, moreover, that you will gain 100 days of indulgence every time, at least with a contrite heart you say that prayer, as was granted by the Supreme Pontiff, Pope Pius VI, in Brief on October 2, 1795. - And if every day to recite, you will gain plenary indulgence on the day of the feast of the holy Angels, on October 2, if you also recite that day and visit any church or public oratory, to pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff.

In addition, this plenary indulgence can be won “In artículo mortis” by whoever is willing and has recited the prayer frequently during life. Even more. Holy Father Pius VII granted such a plenary indulgence, to be won monthly, on a day of his choosing, by those who have recited it every day and visit the church and pray in it as said above. (66).

(66). V. Ræcota di orazioi and pio opere, ece. Rome, ediz. 1898, p. 386.

2— The 2nd fair dedicated to the Holy Angels.

Another practice of the congregations of Mary is to offer you every special gift every Saturday. (67).

(67) To add an example, S. João Berelimans known for his tender devotion to the SS. Virgin, she used to fast every Saturday and at the vigils of the feasts of Mary Most Holy. Cepari, life of the saint P. II, § 20.

Likewise, the devotees of the Holy Angels are used to do every Monday. In his honor, some hear the Holy Mass devoutly, others do some kind of charity, others some mortification, or even more fervently pray to their powerful protection.

You will be able to imitate those who do so, marking, right after the “Angel of God” in the morning, the kind of gift to offer: “today (so you can tell yourselves) I will honor my good Angel by invoking him as often as I can, being obedient to my parents, applying myself to study, - and so on. This beautiful practice is also supported by the examples of the saints and illustrated by them.

B. Pedro Fabro, for example, left us in his memorial or spiritual diary the following (2): “Every Monday I make a habit of remembering the good Angels. But just as it is good to have devotion to good Angels and to invoke them, so it is also profitable to ask for the help of God and the same Angels against evil spirits, who try to deceive us and lose us in so many ways “. . Finally, it is our own spiritual mother, the holy Church, who suggests this when she designates the Monday for the worship of the Holy Angels, and on that day, priests can celebrate their Mass and pray their Office.

3 - The second of October, feast of the Holy Guardian Angels .

Outside the feast of S. Miguel Arcanjo, common to all Angels, the Church did not previously celebrate any special feast in honor of the Holy Guardian Angel.

This started to be done later, and in some particular churches.

This pious custom, however, of the faithful, was later approved by Paulo V, when he granted regular and secular clergy the celebration of the Feast of Guardian Angels on the first free day after September 29 (Feast of S. Miguel). Then the sacred Congregation of Rites fixed the day for the second day of the month of October, and this was to be celebrated throughout the Church. Finally, Leo XII raised this feast to a major double rite.

Now, if every day of the year we are to venerate and honor the holy Angels, it is right that we do so “especially when the date of their official feast passes. First of all it is advisable that we prepare with a novena, starting on September 23rd, In this, two things you should consider mainly every day: the benefits we receive from the Angels and the gratitude we owe them. For this, there are many books dealing with the holy Angels. With no other at hand, the considerations of the 1st part of this work are directed to this effect, and the examples of Part II should be followed. Add to that, the gifts already indicated: prayer, penance, alms, etc.

Keep in mind that among all the gifts the most pleasant. To the Angels it is that of fervent communion on the day of their feast, if it cannot be in the novena. Also on the first Sunday after the party this gift can be offered to Angels - if there is an impediment on the day of the party.

In this novena, in which prayers approved by the ecclesiastical authority will be recited, 100 days of indulgence can be gained every day, and plenary indulgence on one of the nine days of the same, or on one of the eight days that follow, if truly repented, confessed and communed , pray for the Church and the Supreme Pontiff. (68).

(68). Raceolto, p. 387.

4 - The other parties of the Santos Anjos.

- The month of October - The anniversary day of birth itself.

Three other practices still occur that seem to practice the devotees of the Holy Angels, and that deserve to be presented to the pity of our dear young people. I indicate them briefly here.

The first is to celebrate the Angels' other feasts, which are, S. Miguel Arcanjo on May 8 and September 29, S. Gabriel on March 18, and S. Rafael a October 24th. - And the devotees of the Angels know that the same indulgences of the novena of the festival of the Guardian Angels can be gained in the novenas of these four festivities.

The second is to devote the whole month of October to the Guardian Angels, in the same way that the month of May is dedicated to N. Senhora.

The third, finally, consists of reminding us in a special way, of the Holy Guardian Angel, on our birthday. And the reason is that this day, according to the common opinion of theologians, is also the anniversary of a great act of charity by our Holy Guardian Angel: it was on that day that he began to exercise his individual protection with us (69). In doing so, we will deserve a special help from the Holy Angel on the last day of our life.

(69) VS Tomãs I p, q. CXIII a 5 ad 3. There it teaches, as probable doctrine, that the child, while in the maternal breast, has for Guardian Angel the same Angel of its mother. And add the words of S. Jerônimo already quoted by us: "Magna dignitas animarum, ut unaguæque habeat ob ortu natiuitatia Angetum sibi deputatum".

Chapter II

Devout prayers in honor of the holy Guardian Angels

The long-awaited prayer "Angel of God, who is my guard ..." deserves more than any other to be recommended. Nevertheless, a useful and grateful thing, certainly, in my readers, will be to know the main prayers in honor of the holy Angels, to recite them in their festivities.

1 - Prayer of S. Anselmo, Archbishop of Canterbury to the Guardian Angel.

O angelic spirit, to whose profound care God the Lord has entrusted me, I beg you that whenever you want to guard and protect me, assist and defend against every assault by the devil, whether I am awake or asleep. Oh yes, I watched myself night and day, every and every moment, always be by my side wherever I find myself.

Keep all the temptations of Satan away from me, and from the most merciful Judge and Our Lord, who has made you my guardian and entrusted me to you, obtain for me through your intercession the grace, which totally undervers my actions, to remain immune from all guilt in my life. And if, unhappily, I headed for the road of vice, do it by leading me back through the path of virtue to my divine Redeemer. When you feel overwhelmed by the weight of anguish, make me experience the help of Almighty God. I also ask

you to find out if this may be the end of my days, and that you do not allow my soul, when it detaches from the body, to be terrified by the evil spirits, or to become an object of scorn to them, or be their desperate prey. No, never forsake me until you have led me to heaven, to enjoy the sight of my Creator, and to be eternally happy in the company of all the saints. Such happiness may I be able to achieve, through your assistance and the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ. (70).

(70) Oratio LXII ad Augelum Custodem, Migne, Patrol, 1st. tone. CLVIII, p. 967.

2— Prayer of St. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem

It is your kindness that I pray and implore, O good and immaculate Angels and Archangels. I resort to your power, O intemperate Spirits! Obtain to me that my life is pure, my hope unshakable, my customs unblemished, perfect and free from all offense, my love for God and for my neighbor. Ah! take me by the hand, lead me, guide me in those paths that are accepted by God and salutary to me.

3 - Protest of S. Carlos Borromeu, to the holy Guardian Angel, in preparation for death.

In the name of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I, unhappy and miserable sinner, protest in your presence, O Holy Angel of God, who absolutely want to die in the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, in which all the saints died, that until now have existed, and outside of which there is no salvation, I assisted myself in the hour of death and made me overcome the demon, my enemy and yours.

I still protest, O holy Angel, that I am under your care and protection: that I want to leave this life with great confidence in your help, and with firm hope in the mercy of my God.

In that last moment, I broke down the enemies of my salvation, I received my soul when it separated from my body, and after my death make Jesus Christ my Savior propitious to me.

I also protest, O most holy protector of mine, that with the most vivid affection I wish to share in the merits of Jesus Christ Our Lord, and that I hope to obtain the remission of my sins, by virtue of his death and passion. I hate how much I have done wrong in thoughts, as in works and as in words. I forgive all my enemies, and I want to die in the Holy Cross's compound, to show that I put all my hope in the Savior's passion.

I also protest, O my most faithful friend, that I abandon myself to your care and affectionate charity in the great step of my death, and that, although it is

true that I wish to go to heaven soon, I am nevertheless ready to erase the enormity of my sins, I am ready, I say, to endure any kind of punishment that divine justice finds it good to impose on me, even if they were the most atrocious punishments in Purgatory. So, I am also ready to abandon my relatives, my friends, my same body and all that I have most, in order to be able to enjoy the presence of my God more quickly and testify to him how much I regrets having offended him.

Finally, I protest, O most wise and most vigilant guardian of my soul, that I appoint you my last will and executor of my testamentary act. Tell Jesus my Savior, at the moment of my death, what I may no longer be able to say, and that is that I believe all that the Holy Church believes, that I hate my sins, because they displease him, that all I deposit in his most merciful Heart, and that from your infinite goodness I hope forgiveness for them: that I willingly die because that is how He wants it, and I abandon my soul and my salvation in your hands: that I love you over all creatures and for all eternity I want to love you , Amen, (71).

(71) Fr Grassot brings this protest in his Treaty of the Holy Angels, p. 4, devoc. 32, - Other authors still bring it, homogeneously "P. Guilherme Nakateai at Cæleste Palmetum.

4 - Prayer of S. Luis de Gonzaga.

O Holy and pure Angels, O you truly blessed, who continue to assist me in the divine presence, and who are gazing with such great joy at the face of that heavenly Solomon, for whom you were showered with so much wisdom, made worthy of so much glory and ornamented of so many prerogatives: you brilliant stars, who shine with such happiness in that blissful empyrean sky, infuse I beg you, in my soul, your blessed influxes, preserve my life without blemish, my hope firm, mine blameless customs, I love my God and my neighbor.

I pray you, blessed angels, that with your help you should deign to lead me as though by hand, along the royal road of humility, why did you first walk, so that after this life I deserve to see the blessed face of you together with you? Eternal Father, and to be counted in your number also, in the place of one of those stars, who for their pride fell from the sky. (72).

(72) Meditations of the holy Angels, and particularly of the Guardian Angels, P. 7, point 4 - This meditation is among those on p. Vicente Bruno; and it is, as p. Copari in the life of S. Luís (p. 1 cap VITI), all of the composition of the same S. Luis. It was not without particular intention that Fr. Vicente Bruno commissioned the saint to compose it, as he knew the particular devotion that St. Louis had towards the holy Angels, whose conduct he was a unique emulator.

5— Prayers of S. Afonso Maria de Ligório

I - O Holy Angel of my Guard, how many times with my sins have I not forced you to cover your face! I beg you to excuse me, and to forgive them before God, while on my part I propose never to displease God or you with my faults. "Angel of God, who are you ...

II - O how much I thank you, O Guardian Angel, of the lights you have communicated to me! I wish I had always obeyed you! Alas, continue to enlighten me, rebuke me in my falls, and do not abandon me until the last moment of my life. God's angel...

III - I thank you, O prince of Paradise, my Angel, because for so many years you have been with me! I have forgotten you, but you have not forgotten me. Who knows how much travel I have left to enter eternity. Ah, my Guardian Angel, guide me on the way to heaven, and be sure to assist me until you see me as your eternal companion in the blessed Kingdom. Angel of God ... (73).

(73) From meditation to the feast of the holy Guardian Angels.

6 - Prayer of S. Pedro Canísio.

I recommend your guardianship, O holy Angel, for your guard has entrusted me with divine goodness.

I am blind, guide me; I am ignorant, I instruct myself; I am weak, comfort me; I am small, protect me; I am a stray hiker, I went back to the royal road; I am lazy, get excited; I am late, encourage me to progress in good. And above all, make that extreme and dangerous struggle, which I will have to endure with the demons in my death, have a happy ending, so that, becoming your companion in heaven, I can joyfully sing the victory hymn: "laqueus contritus est nos liberati sumus: the bond was broken and we were free from there " (74).

(74) Apud P. De la Cerda, de excell, encl. Spirituum, In primis de Angeli Custodia ministry, ch. last. orat, 5.

7 - Prayer of S. João Berchmans.

Holy angel, beloved of God, who by divine disposition having taken me under your blessed guard from the first moment of my life, you never cease to defend me, to enlighten me, to govern me; I venerate you as a patron, I love you as a guard, I submit to your direction, and I give everything to you to be governed by you. I therefore ask you and I beg you for the love of Jesus Christ, that as much as I have been ungrateful to you and deaf to your warnings, do not want me to abandon you; but that you deign to lead me back to the right path, when lost, to teach me in ignorance, to rise when I fall,

to comfort me when I am in distress, to sustain myself in danger, until you bring me into heaven to enjoy eternal happiness with you . So be it (75).

(75) Cepori, Vida de S, J, Berchmaus, p. V. The p. Pasquale de Mattel in his beautiful little book on the devotion of the SS Guardian Angels also brings this prayer.

8 - Supplications to the Holy Guardian Angel.

I - O my good Guardian Angel, help me to thank the Most High, for having deigned to assign you to my guard. "God's angel..."

II - O heavenly prince, deign to forgive me for the forgiveness of all the sorrows, which I have given to you and to God, disregarding your threats and your advice. "God's angel..."

III - O my kind protector, I have a deep respect for you in my soul, so that I never have the audacity to do anything that you dislike. "God's angel..."

IV - O pious doctor of my soul, teach me the remedies and help me to heal myself from my bad habits and from the many miseries that oppress my soul. "God's angel..."

V - O faithful guide, imply strength to overcome all the obstacles that are in the way of virtue, and to suffer with true patience the tribulations of this miserable life. "God's angel..."

VI - O my effective intercessor before God, "obtain me the grace to promptly obey your holy inspirations, to conform my will in everything and forever to the most holy will of God. "God's angel"..."

VII - O pure spirit, all kindled by the flames of God's love, bring me this divine fire, and together a true devotion to your august Queen and my good Mother, Mary. "God's angel..."

VIII - O my invincible protector, I assisted myself to respond with dignity to your love and your benefits, and to commit myself with all my strength to promote your worship. "God's angel..."

IX - O Blessed Minister of the Most High, obtain me from your infinite mercy, that I may come to fill one of the places left empty in heaven by the rebel Angels. "God's angel"..."

9 - Jaculatory in honor of S. Miguel Arcanjo.

Sancte Michæel Archangele, defends us in prælio, ut non pereamus in tremendous judiciary. (76)

(76) 100-day indulgence. Rac. P. 383.

10 - Prayer in honor of St. Michael the Archangel composed by SS Pope Leo XIII, and by his order recited after Mass.

Sancte Michael Archangele, defends us in prælio: against nequitiam et insidias diaboli esto præsidium. - Imperet illi Deus, supplices deprecamur: tuque, Princeps Militiarum cælestis, Satanam aliosque spiritus mali qui ad perditionem animarum pervagantur in mundo, divine virtute in infernum detrude.

11 - Hymn enriched with indulgence, in honor of S. Miguel Arcanjo. (77).

(77), Pius VII, with a rescript of the Congregation for Indulgences, May 6, 1817, granted 200 days of indulgence once a day to all the faithful who, with their hearts at least contrite, recited the hymn Te splendor devoutly with the antiphon and the prayer in honor of S. Miguel Arcanjo; and those who recited it every day, for a whole month, granted full plenary indulgence, on a day of their choice, provided that on that day, having confessed and received communion, they pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff, Rac, p. 373.

Te splendor et virtus Patris,
Jesu cordium calls you,
Open ore pendent tuo
Laudamus inter Angelos.
Tibi mille densa millium
Ducum corona militat:
Sed explicat victor
Crucem Michael Salutis signifer.
Draconis hic dirum caput
Im tatar pellit
Ducemque cum rebellibus
Cælesti ab arce fulminat.
Against ducem superbiæ
Sequamur hunc in the Principem,
Ut detur ex Agni throno
Nobis corona gloriæ.
Patri simulque Filio,
Tibi sancte Spiritus,

Sicut fuit, sit iugiter

Sæclum per omne gloria. Amen.

Antiph. - Princeps gloriosissime Michæl Archangele, est memor nostri, hic et ubique always deprecare pro nobis Filium Dei.

V. In conspectu Angelorum psallam tibi, my God.

R. Adorabo ad templum sanctum tuum et confitebor nomini tuo.

Oremus

Deus qui miro ordine Angelorum ministeria hominumque dispensa grants propitius, ut a quibus tibi ministrantibus in cælo semper assistitur, ab his in terra vita nostra muniatur. Per Christum Dominum Nostrum. Amen.

12 - Hymn in honor of the holy Guardian Angels.

Custodes hominum psallimus Angelos, Naturæ fragili quos Pater addidit

Cælestis commites, insidiantibus

Ne succumberet hostibus.

Nam quod corruerit proditor angelus, Concessis merito pulsus honoribus,

Ardens invidia pellere nititur

Quos cælo Deus advocat.

Huc costs pervigil adyola Avertens patria de tibi credit

Tam morhos animi, quam requierce Quidquid non sinit incolas.

Sanctæ sit Triadi laus pia iugiter, Cuius perpetuo numine machina

Triplex hæc regitur, whose omnia in Regnat gloria sæcula. Amen.

Antiph. - Sancti Angeli, custodes nostri, defend in nos prælio, ut non pereamus in tremendous learning.

V - Angelis suis Deus mandavit de te.

R— Ut custodiant te in omnibus vis tuis,

Oremus.

Deus qui ineffabili providentia sanctos Angelos tuos ad nostram custodiam mittere digneris, Jargire supplicibus tuis et eorum always protectione defendi et æterna societate gaudere, Amen.

CONCLUSION

At the end of this little work, I dare to wait, dear young people. that I have not been at all heavy or boring to you, and that in achieving its scope it has helped to increase in you the love for the holy Guardian Angels. Therefore, I continued to cultivate this devotion, which, in addition to being soft, just, advantageous, and also (as I have already indicated) in a special way adapted to the times in which we live.

A characteristic of our century is the absorption of man by matter, to the point of taking into account only what falls under the senses and can flatter them ... That there may be more apt to heal this wound than a devotion that has for object beings completely independent and detached from all that is material and earth, and that raises the spirits to aspire to things from heaven? It was well under the influence of this gentle and heavenly devotion that the great man who was Silvio Péllico, after having gone astray, returned to the path of heaven ... In recognition of his Guardian Angel, who had led him back to the right path, he composed a poem entitled "Os Anjos", which we feel we cannot reproduce here, and which is a testimony, of the highest value, of how much the devotion of the holy Angels is fruitful.

Praise God, you, the reader who reads me, may you also be sent back to the hands of the Angels, if you have gone astray, or, at best, helped effectively to follow the path of heaven inflexibly.