

Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, archangels

JN 1:47-51

What is the image of the angels in your mind? Some of you probably think about the image of cutesy winged beings, others think beautiful young men and women with wings and halo, and some other might think strong and powerful warrior angels. Because the angels are invisible, we do not really know what is the right image of the angels. However, according to St. Augustine's explanation, all these images can be applied to the angels.

St. Augustine says: "Angle is the name of their office, not of their nature. If you seek the name of their nature, it is 'spirit'; If you seek the name of their office, it is 'angel': from what they are, 'spirit,' from what they do, 'angel.'

Angels are spiritual creatures who glorify God without ceasing and who serve His saving plans for other creatures. They work together for the benefit of us all. Therefore, all these images of angels we have in our minds could be applied to the angels who serve God in various circumstances. When we encounter various kinds of difficulties in our lives, the angels of God stay

beside us and help us to stay in love of God then assist and guide us to get through the difficult times.

Today, we especially celebrate the Feast of St. Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, archangels who are the patrons of our parish. Each of the archangels has served God in the significant moments in Salvation History.

St. Michael, whose name literally means who can compare to God, reveals the mighty power of God over the power of evil throughout the scriptures. As we heard from today's Second Reading, St. Michael has long been seen as a powerful warrior, taking on all of Satan's armies. St. Michael helps us to fight against all the temptations of an evil spirit.

The name Gabriel in Hebrew means "man of God" or "strength of God." His best-known appearance is an encounter with a young Jewish girl, Mary, who consents to bear the Messiah and became the mother of God. As he said to Mary "The Lord is with you, do not be afraid." St. Gabriel continue to help us to have strength in Jesus Christ, our Lord when we encounter the moments of doubt.

St. Raphael appears in the story of Tobit in the Old Testament. St. Raphael guided Tobit's son Tobiah through his journey which leads to the

healing of Tobit's blindness and the restoration of the family fortune. His name itself means "God who heals." And as he led Tobiah's journey to heal, St. Raphael assists us to stay in the healing power of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Each of these Archangels, with all other angels, continue to watch over the Church and each of us, guide us on our journey toward the eternal happiness in heavenly Kingdom.

St. John Chrysostom said, "When Mass is being celebrated, the sanctuary is filled with countless angels who adore the Divine Victim immolated on the altar. Indeed, as we heard from today's gospel, God's angels constantly ascend and descend between heaven and earth, praising God with us and helping us to come closer to God through Jesus Christ.

Therefore, let us remember that we can always call on the angels in a moment of need. With the help of the angels, may we always stay in God's love and mercy so that we may be strengthened and healed by the grace of God.

"For God commands his angels with regard to you, to guard you wherever you go. With their hands, they shall support you, lest you strike your foot against a stone." Psalms 91:11-12