

Belief in angels is a truth of the faith (CC328) – Catholics must believe in angels; God uses angels to order all creation (see session 2)

Catechism on Angels– A **spiritual** (no body), **personal** (relational) and **immortal** (unceasing) **creature** (created) with **intelligence & free will** who **glorifies God** without ceasing and who serves God as a **messenger** of his saving plan. (**CC Glossary**)

- Surpass all visible creatures in perfection (CC330) & will be present and announce Christ's return (CC333)
- Christ – center of angelic world, created *through* and *for* him (CC331), yet Christ made a little lower than the angels ([Heb 2:5-9](#))¹
- From the Incarnation to the Ascension, Jesus' life is surrounded by the adoration and service of angels (CC333)
- In her liturgy, the Church joins with the angels to adore the thrice-holy God (CC335)
- From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded by angels' watchful care and intercession (CC336)
- **Office/function Angel; Nature/identity Spirit** (CC329); **Pope Gregory the Great (540-604)** only called "angel" when delivering a message²

More

- Mary – Queen of Angels: Hebrew Gebirah (Queen Mother): The Queen was the King's Mother, not his wife (2 Sam, 1&2 Kgs)
- **Similarities of humans and angels:** spiritual, personal, immortal creature with intellect and free will, glorify God, messenger, made holy
- **Differences:** *angels:* no bodies/emotions; spirit/soul composite – *humans:* bodies/emotions; spirit/soul/body composite; learning differences
- **Difference of both with God:** God is purely simple–no division in his substance–when he wills, he does so with his entire substance
- Angels created before the world & rejoiced at the creation ([Jb 38:4-7](#): *While the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God*)³
- Each one is its own **species** (e.g. dog, tree, human, etc.)
- Only 3 of 7 *Angels of the Presence*⁴ (intercessors who present prayers to God) named in Scripture:
- **Raphael** *God heals/God's Remedy*; **Gabriel** *God is my power/Strength of God*²
- **Michael** *Who is like God?* **Gregory the Great** "Whenever some act of wondrous power must be performed, Michael is sent, so that his action and his name may make it clear that no one can do what God does by his superior power"²
- Angels order creation: people, parish, diocese, city, nation, important buildings to run a country, worldwide corporations, stars/planets
- Angels & demons cannot see your thoughts, but can judge based on bodily reactions to stimuli, suggestions & trajectory of your life
- Liturgy: *Solemnity/Feast/Memorial* Feast Michael/Gabriel/Raphael 9/29; 1500s Memorial Guardians in Spain 10/2/1670 Pope Clement X
- The flow of liturgy is very important for a strong spiritual life: follow the Church calendar and celebrate – linked to liturgy

Guardian Angels

- God charged His angels with the ministry of watching and safeguarding every one of His creatures that do not behold His face
- God created a spirit above us, for us: role as a personal messenger of God's saving plan for you (**light, guard, rule, guide**)
- **Love:** to will the good of another – your Guardian's first act was to love God through you so he has only love for you
- We are not to name our Guardian Angel; nature is his name (Vatican: no – Creation story: to name shows authority over it)
- You can ask the guardian angel of people you are working with so they will be more open; Popes & visiting heads of state
- You can ask the guardian angel of your children and of the family to help them grow up right
- **St. John Cassian (360-435)** *Holy Scripture bears witness that two angels, a good and a bad one, cling to us.* – Satan imitates God⁵
- Warning: Do not look for the extraordinary or your tormenting demon will oblige

Holiness & Protection: Daily & Lenten Practices

- [Eph 6:13-17](#) For protection use the armor of God: Truth, Righteousness, Gospel of Peace, Faith, Word of God & Prayer
- Know God's will & avoid sin– [Romans 12:1-2](#) *I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.*

Ask your Guardian Angel

- **To access to your thoughts** – cannot access unless you give consent to help you
- **To calm chemical reactions in your body** – when experiencing very strong emotions
- **For predominant defect** – ask him to reveal this; we must know where we are weak if we wish to improve
- **To humiliate you interiorly** – to help you grow in virtue; your angel has to deal with your pride, arrogance, etc.

¹ All Scripture, notes & refs from NABRE (<http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/>).

² Pope St. Gregory the Great, Homily 34, 8–9, from Liturgy of the Hours, Vol. IV, Office of Readings for the Feast of the Guardian Angels, Sept 29.

³ See NABRE note on [Jb 38:7](#) which directs you to [1:6](#)

⁴ See NABRE Note on [Tb 12:12](#).

⁵ St. John Cassian (360–435AD), Conferences 1.8.17 (Ch. 17), "For Holy Scripture bears witness that two angels, a good and a bad one, cling to us." Follows Pseudo Barnabas (18, 1), Hermas (Mand. 6, 2:2-5) & Origin (De. Prin. 3, 2, 4), source note 9. St. Athanasius, *St. Antony of the Desert*, Ch. 6-10 & Danielou (80-81) see note 6.

Summa Aquinas “All corporeal things are governed by the angels, and this is not only the teaching of the holy doctors, but of all the philosophers.”⁶

Importance of Mediation

- Exodus 3 Moses & the burning bush: God called to Moses through the mediation of the angel appearing as flames (probably a Seraphim)
- 1Ch 21:8-18 David sinfully calls for a census and Gad the prophet speaks for God: v18 the angel gives God’s word to Gad who mediates it to David
- 1Cor 14:32-33 *Indeed, the spirits of prophets are under the prophets’ control, since he is not the God of disorder but of peace.*
- Acts 7:53 Stephen: *You received the law as transmitted by angels, but you did not observe it.* (angels mediated the law)

The Celestial Hierarchy⁷ by **Dionysius (15 chapters written in the 400s–500s)** 9 *Choirs* (order or grouping) of *Angels* – all creation is ordered⁸

First Choir Set Chapter 7 “highest order of angels, closest to God, most perfect & holy created beings”⁷

1. **SERAPHIM** –Seraph (singular), burning ones serve as the caretakers of God’s throne and continuously praise God: [Isa 6:3](#) *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. All the earth is filled with His Glory* (Sanctus).⁹ [Isa 6:2](#) *had six wings: with two they cover their faces, with two they covered their feet and with two they hovered.* **Dionysius** “[Name] indicates their ceaseless and eternal revolution about Divine Principles, their heat and keenness, the exuberance of their intense, perpetual, tireless activity, and their elative and energetic assimilation of those below, kindling them and firing them to their own heat, and wholly purifying them by a burning and all-consuming flame; and by the unhidden, unquenchable, changeless, radiant and enlightening power, dispelling and destroying the shadows of darkness”⁷ **St. Denis, patron of Paris beheaded btw 250–270AD** “they are the princes of pure love and the love they exude permeates like fire.”¹⁰

2. **CHERUBIM** – **Dionysius** name “denotes their power of knowing and beholding God, their receptivity to the highest Gift of Light, their contemplation of the Beauty of the Godhead in Its First Manifestation, and that they are filled by participation in Divine Wisdom, and bounteously outpour to those below them from their own fount of wisdom.”⁷ [Rev 4:7](#) Four faces: one of a man, ox, lion, & eagle;¹¹ four conjoined wings covered with eyes, with ox’s feet. [Gen 3:24](#) Cherubim¹² guard the way to the tree of life in the Garden of Eden ([Gen 3:24](#)).

3. **THRONES**¹³ – Greek thronos or Elders, **Dionysius** “denotes that which is exempt from and untainted by any base and earthly thing.”⁷ **St. John Cassian** “Thrones...are so near to God and so private and close to Him that the Divine Majesty specially rests in them as in a Divine throne, and in a way reclines surely on them.”¹⁴ **Gregory the Great** “Thrones are the way God accomplishes his judgments.”¹⁵

Second Choir Set Chapter 8 “charged with governing and ordering the laws of the created universe”⁷ **Gregory the Great** “the names of these...Beings denote the divine characteristics of their likeness to God”¹⁵

4. **DOMINIONS**– Also from Latin and Greek *Lordships*. **Dionysius** “Dominions regulate the duties of lower angels and preside over nations.”⁷ **Gregory the Great** “[They] wholly give themselves to that true Authority, forever one with the Godlike Source of lordship.”¹⁵

5. **VIRTUES** – In [Eph 1:21](#), also Strongholds/Authorities (seems linked to “might” from a Greek root), they lie “beyond the wheels¹⁶” ([Ez 1:15-21](#)) **Dionysius** “Their primary duty is to supervise the movements of the heavenly bodies (stars, planets, etc.) in order to ensure that the cosmos remain in order. They are charged with giving the power to accomplish the ordering of Nature.”⁷ **Gregory the Great** “Through the Virtues, God performs most of His miracles as well as governing the seasons, the visible heavens and the elements.”¹⁵

6. **POWERS**¹⁷ – **Dionysius** “They are bearers of conscience and keepers of history. They are also the warrior angels created to be completely loyal to God. Their duty is to oversee the distribution of power among humankind. This choir is given the duty to order how to execute what has been commanded & direct the lower choirs on how to order creation.”⁷

Third Choir Set Chapter 9 “closest to earth, concern themselves with creation and are the most familiar to us”⁷

7. **PRINCIPALITIES** – Latin nom. principatus, pl. principatus, also Princedoms and Rulers, from the Greek arche. **Dionysius** Name “signifies their Godlike princeliness and authoritativeness, shown wearing a crown, carrying a scepter, their duty is to carry out the orders given them and bequeath blessings to the material world & oversee groups of people. They are the educators and guardians of the realm of earth, leaders of the last two, directing the actual implementation of God’s will.”⁷

8. **ARCHANGELS**¹⁸ – Chief angel, word used twice in the New Testament: [1 Thess 4:16](#) and [Jude 1:9](#), but they appear in many places in Scripture. The only angels named in Scripture are archangels Raphael, Michael and Gabriel. **Gregory the Great** “proclaim messages of supreme importance.”¹²

9. **ANGELS** – Lowest order of angels, most concerned with the affairs of living things. Many different kinds with different functions, such as making God’s will known in ordinary affairs & acting as messengers (Hebrew: malak, plural malakhim, Greek: angelos) to mankind; **Gregory the Great** “those who deliver messages of lesser importance.”¹²

⁶ Summa Theologica 1, 110, 1 in *The Angels and their Mission According to the Fathers of the Church*, Jean Danielou, SJ, trans. David Heimann, © 1957, The Newman Press, reprint by Christian Classics from Ave Maria Press, original 1953 *Les Anges et Leur Mission*.

⁷ *The Celestial Hierarchy*, Dionysius the Presbyter, 5th–6th centuries (400s–500s).

⁸ Unique table compares angelic hierarchy of four saints in *Holy Angels Mal’ak Elohim*, Fr. Sebastian Chukwuma Anokwulu, Trafford Publishing, ©2013, pg. 31.

⁹ Recall the Sanctus (Latin for Holy, holy, holy) in Mass, “...we sing with the angels and saints, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts...”

¹⁰ “All About God’s Agents, Ambassadors and Executives,” Ed Masters, <http://reginamag.com/all-about-angels/>, accessed 9/14/2015.

¹¹ [Rev 4:7](#) *The first creature resembled a lion, the second was like a calf, the third had a face like that of a human being, and the fourth looked like an eagle in flight.*

¹² See [Gen 3:24](#), [Ex 25:17-22](#), [2 Chron 3:7-14](#), [Ez 10:12-14](#) & [28:14-16](#), [1 Kgs 6:23-28](#), [Rev 4:6-8](#)

¹³ See [Ez 10:17](#), [Dn 7-9](#) vision, [Col 1:16](#), possibly [Rev 11:16](#)

¹⁴ St. John Cassian, Conferences 1.8.15 (Ch. 15) – <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/cassian/conferences.html>; cf. [Ps 47:9](#), [Sir 1:8](#), etc.

¹⁵ St. Gregory the Great (540-604AD)

¹⁶ Hebrew אֲפֻסָּיִם ’ōphannīm; singular אֲפֻסָּיִם ’ōphān: wheels in the vision of the chariot in [Ez 1:15-21](#)

¹⁷ Latin potestas (f), plural potestates or Authorities from the Greek exousias see Greek root in [Eph 3:10](#).

¹⁸ Greek ἀρχάγγελος, archaggelos translation of the Hebrew מַלְאָךְ mal’āk, derives from the Greek archō, meaning to be first in rank or power, i.e. messenger.

Scriptural Senses [CC 115-119](#) *Letter-deeds; Moral-how to act; Anagogy-our destiny; Allegory-faith*

1. Literal – “meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis following rules of sound interpretation”
2. Spiritual (all three based on literal sense – Aquinas¹⁹) “can be signs”
 - a. Moral – how we live (act justly)
 - b. Anagogical – “leading,” future viewed in terms of eternal significance (e.g. Church on earth a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem)
 - c. Allegorical/Typological – significance in Christ (e.g. Red Sea Crossing is sign/type of Christ's victory & of Christian Baptism)

Biblical Examples of Members of the Choirs (# in the choir)

- **Seraphim (1)** [Isa 6:2-3, 6-7](#) *Seraphim were stationed above*
- **Cherubim (2)** [Gen 3:24](#) *stationing the cherubim and the fiery revolving sword ... to guard ... the tree of life.*
- **Thrones/Elders (3)** [Col 1:16](#) *in him were created all things ... thrones*
- **Dominions (4), Virtues/Authority (5), Powers (6), Principalities (7)** [Eph 1:21](#) *above every principality, authority, power, and dominion*
- **Archangels (8)** [1 Thess 4:16](#) *with the voice of an archangel*
- **Angels (9)** [Gen 32:2](#) *Meanwhile Jacob continued on his own way, and God's angels encountered him.*

Biblical Foundations of Guardian Angels

- [Ps 91:11](#) *For he commands his angels with regard to you, ([Heb 1:14](#)) to guard you wherever you go. ([Ps 121:3](#); [Prv 3:23](#))* – Referenced by Satan in [Lk 4:10-11](#)/[Mt 4:6](#) when he tempts Jesus in the desert
- [Psalm 91²⁰:1-2](#): Invitation to God's protection – *to all who seek good* (impersonal third person - all), general protection
- **3-8**: General forms of protection **9-10**: Invitation to God's protection – *you who have chosen the Lord as your refuge*: angelic protection promised **11-13**: Angels guard & support you to *read upon the asp and the viper, trample the lion and the dragon* (spiritual sense, the devil is compared to a snake, lion & dragon) **14-16**: Oracle of Salvation
- [Mt 18:10](#) ([Ez 34:1-3 & 16](#); [Lk 15:3-7](#)) *“See that you do not despise one of these little ones²¹, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.”* (Angels experience the beatific vision [behold God face to face] and help us)
- [Acts 12:15b](#) *But they kept saying, “It is his angel.”* (Peter released from prison)
- [Acts 27:23](#) *For last night an angel of the God to whom (I) belong and whom I serve stood by me and said...* (Paul traveling to Rome)
- [Heb 1:14](#) *Are they not all ministering spirits sent to serve, for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?*
- [Rev 1:1b](#) *He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John* (possibly his Guardian Angel, most likely an Archangel)

Scripture Stories & Angels

- Genesis: [3:24](#) Closed earthly paradise; [19:1-38](#) Protected Lot; [21:17](#) Saved Hagar and her child; [22:11-12](#) Stayed Abraham's hand
- [Ex 23:20-23](#) Led the People of God; [Jdg 13](#) Announced Sampson's birth and calling; [Job 38:7](#) Called “sons of God”
- [Ex 3:1-6](#) Burning bush, God appears through the mediation of an angel; [Jdg 6:11-24](#), [Isa 6:6](#) & [1 Kings 19:5](#) Assisted the prophets
- [Acts 7:53](#) Communicated the law by their ministry
- Examine key points in the story: [Tb 3:7-15](#); [5:4-22](#); [12:6-22](#)

Demons in Perspective ([Rev 12:4](#) 1/3 angels fell following Satan; [Eph 6:12/Col 2:15](#) some Principalities & Power fell)

St. John Paul II

- “In the Fourth Lateran Council (1215)...Church teaches that the devil...and the other demons *were created good by God but have become evil by their own will & the angels who did not keep their dignity, but left their own dwelling, are kept by the Lord in eternal chains in the darkness, for the judgment of the great day* ([Jude 1:6](#))...We hear of angels who have sinned and whom God did not spare, but... cast in the gloomy abysses of hell, reserving them for the judgment ([2 Pet 2:4](#))...if God does not forgive the sin of the angels, this is because they remain in their sin, because they are eternally in the chains...at the beginning, rejecting God, against the truth of the supreme and definitive Good...St. John writes that *the devil has been a sinner from the beginning...* ([Jn 3:8](#)). And he has been a murderer *from the beginning, and has not persevered in the truth, because there is no truth in him* ([Jn 8:44](#)).”²²
- “The Church's faith, in fact, teaches us that the power of Satan is not infinite.”²³

¹⁹ Summa Theologica I, 1, 10, ad. 1.

²⁰ Analysis from *Holy Angels Mal'ak Elohim*, Fr. Sebastian Chukwuma Anokwulu, Trafford Publishing, ©2013, pg. 33-38.

²¹ NABRE Note: *For the Jewish belief in angels as guardians of nations and individuals: Dan 10:13, 20-21; Tb 5:4-7; IQH 5:20-22; as intercessors who present the prayers of human beings to God: Tb 13:12, 15. The high worth of the little ones is indicated by their being represented before God by these heavenly beings.*

²² St. John Paul II General Audience, August 13, 1986, paragraph 4 (All 6 Audiences - <https://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2ANGEL.HTM>)

²³ St. John Paul II General Audience, August 20, 1986, paragraph 1.

Scripture references to angels identified in my research – not exhaustive (118 passages, 536 verses not counting 4Mc)

1. Gen 3:24	2. Gen 6:1-4, 7, 9-11	3. Gen 21:17	4. Gen 22:11, 15
5. Gen 24:7, 40	6. Gen 28:12	7. Gen 31:11	8. Gen 32:2
9. Gen 48:16	10. Ex 3:2	11. Ex 14:19	12. Ex 23:20-23
13. Ex 25:17-22	14. Ex 32:34	15. Ex 33:2	16. Num 20:16
17. Num 22:22-27, 31-35	18. Jdg 2:1, 4	19. Jdg 5:23	20. Jdg 6:11-12, 20-22
21. Jdg 13:3, 6, 9, 13	22. Jdg 13:15-22	23. 1Sa 29:9	24. 2Sa 14:17, 20
25. 2Sa 19:27	26. 2Sa 24:16-17	27. 1Kgs 6:23–28	28. 1Kgs 13:18
29. 1Kgs 19:5, 7	30. 2Kgs 1:3, 15	31. 2Kgs 19:35	32. 1Ch 21:8-18
33. 1Ch 21:27	34. 1Ch 21:30	35. 2Ch 3:7-14	36. 2Ch 32:21
37. Neh 9:6 & 15	38. Tb 3:17	39. Tb 5:4-22	40. Tb 6:2-18
41. Tb 8:2-3	42. Tb 11:1-8, 14-15	43. Tb 12:1-22	44. Est 4:13
45. 1Mc 7:40-42	46. 2Mc 11:6	47. 2Mc 15:22-23	48. Jb 1:6
49. Jb 38:4-7	50. Ps 8:6	51. Ps 29:1	52. Ps 34:8
53. Ps 35:5-6	54. Ps 91:11	55. Ps 103:20	56. Ecc 5:5
57. Wis 16:20	58. Sir 48:21	59. Isa 37:36	60. Isa 6:1-8
61. Isa 63:9	62. Bar 6:6	63. Ez 1:5-28	64. Ez 10:1-22
65. Ez 28:14-16	66. Dan 3:5	67. Dan 3:49-50	68. Dan 3:58
69. Dan 3:95-96	70. Dan 6:23	71. Dan 7:9	72. Zec 1:9, 11-14
73. Zec 2:2-9	74. Zec 3:1-10	75. Zec 4:1-14	76. Zec 5:1-11
77. Zec 6:1-15	78. Zec 12:8	79. Mt 1:20-21, 24	80. Mt 2:13, 19-20
81. Mt 18:10	82. Mt 22:30	83. Mt 28:2-7	84. Lk 1:11-20, 26-38
85. Lk 2:9-14, 21	86. Lk 22:43	87. Jn 5:7	88. Jn 12:29
89. Act 5:19-20	90. Act 6:15	91. Act 7:30, 35, 38	92. Act 8:26
93. Act 10:3-8, 22	94. Act 11:13-14	95. Act 12:7-15, 23	96. Act 23:8-9
97. Act 27:23-26	98. Rom 8:38-39	99. 1Cor 14:32-33	100. 1Cor 15:24
101. 2Cor 11:14	102. Gal 1:8	103. Gal 4:3, 14	104. Eph 1:21
105. Eph 3:10	106. Eph 6:12	107. Col 1:16	108. Col 2:10, 18
109. 1Thess 4:16	110. 1Pt 3:22	111. 1Pt 5:8-9	112. 2Pt 2:4
113. Heb 1:14	114. Heb 2:7-9	115. Jude 1:9	116. Rev 1:1
117. Rev 2:1, 8, 12, 18	118. Rev 22:1, 6, 8, 16		
			4Mc 4:10 (extra-canonical)

Prayers

- *Angel of God, my Guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here; ever this day, be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide*
- *St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray and Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, wander through the world, seeking the ruin of souls.*

Source material and/or other reliable sources (in addition to the references throughout the notes):

- Opus Angelorum – <https://www.opusangelorum.org/>
- St. Thomas Aquinas – <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1.htm> (scroll down and click on each Angel section)
- Peter Kreeft – <http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics/angels.htm> & *Angels and Demons: What Do We Really Know about Them?*
- Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=1412&v=MBiuYd4IHH4>
- Priest talk on Guardian Angels – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HROH926Ln-A>
- Thomas Smith Biblical Story of our Unseen Allies – <https://shop.ascensionpress.com/products/angels-the-biblical-story-of-our-unseen-allies-3>

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