

## FEAST OF THE ARCHANGELS, September 29



The angels are our great allies. We owe them a great debt and it is a mistake to mention them as rarely as we do. Every one of us has a guardian angel, most faithful of friends twenty-four hours a day, from conception to death. He unceasingly protects us, body and soul, while we for the most part never think about him. We also know that each nation has its

particular guardian angel and, probably, every community and family. We know that the angels are a multitude, and their desire to help us is much greater than Satan's desire to destroy us.

Sacred Scripture often tells us about the missions that God entrusted to his angels. We know the name of the prince of the angels, Saint Michael. There is a hierarchy among the angels based on love, which is guided by the divine intellect "in whose will we find our peace," as Dante says. We also know the names of two other archangels: Gabriel and Raphael. The Apocrypha add a fourth name, Uriel. Sacred Scripture divides the angels into nine choirs: dominions, powers, thrones, principalities, virtues, angels, archangels, cherubim, and seraphim. The believer who lives in the presence of the Trinity and is certain of its life within himself knows that he also has a mother, God's own Mother, who ceaselessly helps him. He knows that he can always count on the help of the angels and of the saints; therefore, how can he feel alone, abandoned, or oppressed by evil? In the life of the believer there is pain, because it is the way of the cross that saves us, but there is no room for sadness. He who believes is always ready to give witness, to those who ask him, about the hope that sustains him (1 Pt 3:15). It is also clear that the believer must be faithful to God and must fear sin. This is the basis of our strength, as Saint John tells us: We know that anyone born of God does not sin, but he who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him (1 Jn 5:18). If sometimes our weakness leads us to fall, we must immediately pick ourselves up with that great gift of God's mercy: repentance and confession.

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