

Reflection Monday Week 27 Guardian Angels 2023

The Holy Guardian Angels: The doctrine that every individual soul has a guardian angel has never been defined by the Church and so is not an article of faith, but is the “mind of the Church”, as expressed particularly by St Jerome and St Basil. It is present in both the Old and New Testaments. As Jesus says: *See that you never despise any of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven always gaze on the face of my Father in heaven.* Thus, even little children have guardian angels, and these angels remain in the presence of God even as they fulfil their mission on earth.

Anciently, all angels were celebrated together on the feast of St Michael. A separate feast of the Guardian Angels began in Valencia in 1411. At the reform of the Breviary in the 16th century it was included among the local feasts, and it was raised to the status of a feast in the General Calendar in 1608, placed on the first free day after the feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael.

One of the benefits of this feast is that it reminds us that God cares for us each, individually. We all know this in theory, but it is easy – in times of depression or temptation – to convince ourselves that we are too small to matter, for good or ill. Let us use this feast to remind ourselves that each of us has an angel of our very own looking after us; and also to pray to God for our own Guardian Angel. What a bore and a burden to them some of us are. May we one day be a cause of rejoicing for them also.

May our Guardian Angels continue to watch over us and keep us close to Jesus and his Way.