

Like love which exist but cannot be scientifically defined, we are given the companionship of angels.

Dear beloved parishioners, Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ. I hope and pray all is good with you all. On September 29, we celebrate the feast of the Archangels.

We live in an age of what some call "scientism." It is the belief that all things that we can know must be known scientifically. So, when a couple falls in love, we might speak of the brain waves that cause their attraction, the chemicals that are activated in their brains that causes them such excitement to be in one another's presence, or the change in blood pressure or heart rate they experience. Seldom do we think of the little cherub Cupid shooting his arrows of love at their hearts. When someone is suddenly cured of a disease, we analyze whether the diagnosis was correct in the first place and what internal or external factors might have taken place to influence the healing. We tend not to think so much of just plain miracles.

We can never show you an angel, scientifically prove that angels exist, or tell you much about the substance of their being. But, like love, and poetry, and beauty, which exist but cannot be scientifically defined, we are given the companionship of angels to lead us to the greatest Beauty, Truth, and Love, the God whom they and we were created to serve and adore.

A priest friend who was struggling with his priesthood and was very frustrated with the parish he was in. One Friday night as he was driving, he slammed his hand on the wheel and said to God, "Lord, I can't take this anymore. If I do not receive some sign by tomorrow that you still want me to be a priest, I will be gone after the Masses on Sunday afternoon!" The next day he was hearing confessions, and a woman he had never seen before came to confess. After her confession, she got up to leave, but turned around and said, "Father, if you should ever think of leaving the priesthood, please don't, because we really need you!" He knew an angel had spoken to him by sending him that woman and putting those very unusual words in her mouth.

Thus, we, the Catholics, have always believed in extra-terrestrial beings – some of whom actually come to earth – in the spirits that God created which we call angels. The Holy Scripture mentioned the angels beginning from the

Book of Genesis up to the Book of Revelation. Our faith teaches that angels are a part of God's invisible creation and we refer to angels in the Creed at Mass when we pray: "We believe in one God... Maker... of all that is seen and unseen." And, of course, today we celebrate not only the Archangel Michael, but the Archangels Gabriel and Raphael as well.

The word, "angel" means, "messenger". The bodiless spirits have this name because they announce God's will to people. An angel is one whom the Lord can send on a task and who will fulfill that task with exactitude. The angels live everywhere. But they mostly live in Heaven, around the Throne of God. This feast of the Archangels teaches us that there are beings who are not human but who love us deeply, because they first love God. God loves us so much that he sends them as messengers to guide us, to enlighten us, to save us from sin and stupidity, and to keep us on the right path. The Archangels of God are also the chiefs of our protectors, the leaders and the ones in charge of our guardian angels, and all the angelic hosts and forces of heaven, who are locked in constant and regular combat and battle against the forces of darkness, led by the prince of evil, that is Satan.

The Holy Archangels, three of whom were named, God sends out powerful messengers to tackle the problems of the world. Michael, whom we meet in Dn 7:9-10, 13-14, has long been seen as a powerful soldier, taking on all of Satan's armies. Raphael is perhaps less well-known. The most extended biblical reference is in the Book of Tobit, where he guides Tobiah on his journey to find a wife for himself and healing for his father. And Gabriel, of course, is the great messenger. In the Gospels, Gabriel brings the promise of salvation to Elizabeth and Zechariah, to Mary and Joseph. And that promise of salvation becomes incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

St. Michael the Archangel, and all the holy Archangels and angels of God, pray for us, and protect us in battle, that we may always triumph against anything that the devil, Satan, that old snake and deceiver has put in our path, that we may rebuke him and profess our faith and love for the Lord our God. **Happy Feast of Archangels. See you all in the Church. Be Blessed and Be a Blessing.** Fr. Arul Yagappan, MSFS, M.A (Sociology), B.Ed.