

Today's memorial regarding guardian angels is one that can make us all smile. It gives a good opportunity to talk about angels and their role in God's plan of salvation.

First, the name "angel" concerns their office (what they do), rather than about their nature (what they are). They are spiritual creatures. They are like us in that they are created. At some point they did not exist. They are also like us in that they have an intellect and a will. In short, they are personal and immortal beings.

However, they are unlike us in that they do not have a body. They are pure spirits. What you may not know is that every angel is absolutely unique. We often say that each of us is unique. Yet, there is something we all share together – humanity. We all belong to the same species. For angels, however, it's different. Every one of them *is* its own species. Every angel is utterly unique – it's own species.

The Catechism tells us that Christ is at the center of the angelic world. They are *his* angels. He says, "*When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with him...*" (Mt 25:31). Belonging to Christ, they are sent to serve Him in His plan of salvation. Here are a few examples.

An angel led the people of God through the wilderness to the Promised Land. In the New Testament, of course the angel Gabriel announced the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus Himself. After His crucifixion, angels announced the Good News of Christ's Resurrection.

Tradition puts forth that each of us is given a guardian angel. The Catechism states that "Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life" (CCC 336). The basis of this belief comes from Scripture itself where Jesus says, "*See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.*" (Mt 18:10)

You may have seen the picture of the guardian angel helping two little ones crossing a wooden bridge. The fact that God assigns each of us a guardian angel is just another demonstration of His love and concern for each one of us. I thought we might close with the traditional prayer to our guardian angel: *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, Rule and guide.*