

Angels
(and Demons)

WILLIAM-ADOLPHE BOUGUEREAU, "Song of the Angels," 1881

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Outline

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ A Little Starter
- ▶ Angel Basics
- ▶ Reflections
- ▶ Final Thoughts

"Annunciation" Henry Ossawa Tanner, 1898

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Introduction

- ▶ Background
 - ▶ "... a Herdsman and a dresser of sycamores" AM 7:14
 - ▶ Amos 7:12-15, (Jul 11th 1st reading, Bp. Barron homily)
 - ▶ [Mech Eng, 35 years at Dow/DuPont]
- ▶ This presentation
 - ▶ Borrows heavily from several sources who are true experts
 - ▶ Quick tour of the Church teaching (Catechism of the Catholic Church)
 - ▶ Main takeaway is related to role angels play in God's creation.

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A little starter – page 1

- ▶ Angels were created before the dawn of time. They sang at the creation of the world. Some rebelled against God, became demons, or devils (evil spirits), and set up hell's lowerarchy against heaven's hierarchy. One of them was the snake in the grass that tempted us to give up paradise.
- ▶ Angels were instrumental at every major stage of god's plan to get us back on the road to paradise. They surrounded the life of Abraham, the first of God's "chosen people". They announced to Sarah, his hundred-year-old, laughing wife, that she would have a miracle baby. They stopped him from making a human sacrifice of Isaac. They saved Abraham and nephew Lot from the foretaste of hell that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. They came to Jacob in the desert on a ladder, back and forth like eighteen-wheelers on that busy highway to heaven. One picked up the prophet Habbakuk by the hair and whisked him seven hundred miles away.
- ▶ Angels come to old women and old men, to the blind and the poor, to shepherds and fleeing criminals, but not to kings or politicians. One came to a teenaged Jewish girl as an ambassador of her creator and meekly asked her permission in his name to use her womb as his door into our world. And because she said Yes to his angel, we have Christmas, and Easter and the hope of heaven.

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A little starter – page 2

- ▶ And when the Creator became a shivering, hairless, wet little baby, surrounded by scruffy sheep and drooling cows, they exploded over the night sky like a million close-encountered mother ships. And when, 33 years later, he had to muster up the courage in the garden of Gethsemane to jump into the cross shaped pit of hell, they were there to comfort him.
- ▶ And when he burst the doors of the dead wide open, they were there at the stone door to announce it to the women (who in turn, playing angel, as they always have, relayed it to the slower men). And when he leaped back home into the sky, they reminded his friends, who stood gaping up at the gap in the sky, that he would return and that they had better get busy spending the rest of history getting his landing field ready.
- ▶ And when he comes again, they will be there, blowing the sky in half with their trumpets and taking us home when Daddy calls to put away our toys. As they sang time's beginning, they will sing its end when the firmament is folded back like a book turned to its last page: "The end." [Peter Kreeft, "Angels (and Demons)" pp 53-54]

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Angel Basics – Overview

- ▶ Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)
- ▶ Sacred Scripture
- ▶ Liturgy
- ▶ Tradition
- ▶ Commentaries
- ▶ The Angel "choirs"

"The Annunciation" Fra Angelico, 1445

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Angel Basics - CCC

- ▶ Catechism of the Catholic Church: "The Angels" CCC 328-336, 391-395
 - ▶ The existence of angels – a truth of faith (CCC 328)
 - ▶ Who are they? (CCC 329-330)
 - ▶ Christ "with all his angels" (CCC 331-333)
 - ▶ The angels in the life of the Church (CCC 334-336)
 - ▶ The Fall of the Angels (CCC 391-395)

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Angel Basics - CCC

- ▶ The existence of angels – a truth of faith (CCC 328)
 - ▶ "Spiritual, non-corporeal beings"
 - ▶ Pure spirit, outside of time and space – but can enter into the material, temporal world.
 - ▶ Created, not from eternity
 - ▶ "Truth of faith" (de fide)
 - ▶ Fourth Lateran Council 1215
 - ▶ "Witness of scripture is clear"
 - ▶ Mentioned approx. 150 times in the bible
 - ▶ "Unanimity of tradition"

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Angel Basics - CCC

- ▶ Who are they? (CCC 329-330)
 - ▶ **CCC329**
 - ▶ "Angel" is the name of their office, not of their nature. – St. Augustine
 - ▶ **CCC330**
 - ▶ Purely spiritual creatures
 - ▶ have intelligence and will
 - ▶ personal and immortal creatures,
 - ▶ surpassing in perfection all visible creatures

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Angel Basics - CCC

- ▶ Christ "with all his angels" (CCC 331-333)
 - ▶ **CCC331** (Relationship to Christ)
 - ▶ "Christ is the center of the angelic world"
 - ▶ "when the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him..." **MT 25:31**
 - ▶ "for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities – all things were created through him and for him" **Col 1:16**
 - ▶ **CCC332** "Angels have been present since creation and throughout the history of salvation..."
 - ▶ **CCC333** "From the Incarnation to the Ascension, the life of the Word incarnate is surrounded by adoration and service of angels. ... they will be present at Christ's return, which they will announce, to serve at his judgement"

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Angel Basics - CCC

- ▶ The angels in the life of the Church (CCC 334-336)
 - ▶ **CCC334** "... The whole life of the Church benefits from the mysterious and powerful help of the angels."
 - ▶ **CCC335** "In her liturgy the Church joins with the angels to adore the thrice holy God."
 - ▶ **CCC336** "From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession"

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Angel Basics - CCC

- ▶ The Fall of the Angels (CCC 391-395)
 - ▶ **CCC391** "...The devil and other demons were indeed created naturally good by God, but they became evil by their own doing"
 - ▶ **CCC392** "...This 'fall' consists in the free choice of these created spirits, who radically and irrevocably rejected God and his reign..."
 - ▶ **CCC393** "...There is no repentance for angels after the fall just as there is no repentance for men after death"
 - ▶ **CCC394** "Scripture witnesses to the disastrous influence of the one Jesus calls 'a murderer from the beginning'..."
 - ▶ **CCC395** "...[Satan] is only a creature, powerful from the fact that he is pure spirit, but still a creature."

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Angel Basics – Sacred Scripture

- ▶ Sacred Scripture
 - ▶ Angels mentioned approximately 150 times in the bible (Kreeft, pg 149-151)
 - ▶ Old Testament – 70 times
 - ▶ New Testament – 80 times
 - ▶ Demons/Devil/Satan mentioned approximately 130 times in the bible (Kreeft, pg 151-154)
 - ▶ Old Testament – 20 times
 - ▶ New Testament – 110 times

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Angel Basics – Liturgy

- ▶ Eucharistic Prayer – Preface
 - ▶ EP II – "... And so with the **Angels** and all the Saints we declare your glory..."
 - ▶ EP IV – "... And so in your presence are countless hosts of **Angels**, who serve you day and night..."
- ▶ Burial service for adults
 - ▶ "May the **Angels** lead thee into Paradise, may the Martyrs receive thee of thy coming, and take thee to Jerusalem the holy City. May the **choirs** of the **Angels** receive thee, and mayest thou with the once poor Lazarus have rest everlasting... Come to his assistance ye Saints of God meet him ye **Angels** of the Lord. Receive his soul and present it to the Most High. May Christ who called thee receive thee, and may the **Angels** lead thee into the bosom of Abraham."

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Angel Basics – Tradition

- ▶ Fourth Lateran council – 1215
 - ▶ "God" by his almighty power created together in the beginning of time both creatures, the spiritual and the corporeal, namely the Angelic and the earthly, and afterwards the human, as if were an intermediate creature, composed of body and spirit"
- ▶ Scholars
 - ▶ Augustine (354-430)
 - ▶ Aquinas (1225-1274)
 - ▶ Saints

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Angel Basics – Tradition

- ▶ Created, not from eternity
- ▶ Created before or at the same time as the material world
- ▶ Satan and 1/3 of angels rebelled and thrown from heaven (demons)
- ▶ All angels created at same time, no new angels since original creation.
- ▶ The number of angels exceeds the number of material creatures – St Thomas.
- ▶ Every individual angel it's own species/no two angels the same
- ▶ Distinct hierarchy
- ▶ mentioned in Christian, Jewish, Islamic faith traditions

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Angel Basics – Commentaries

- ▶ Books
 - ▶ Angels (and Demons), Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press, 1995. (Overview/Q&A)
 - ▶ The Angels in Catholic Tradition and Teaching, Fr. Pascale Parente, TAN Books, 1961 (mid level)
 - ▶ Angels and Demons a Catholic Tradition, Catholic University of America Press, 2016 (in-depth)
 - ▶ Angels and Devils, TAN Books, 1999 (in-depth)
 - ▶ Many, many others...

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Angel Basics - Choirs

- ▶ Nine angel "choirs" divided into three triads
 - ▶ First triad – contemplate and adore God directly
 - ▶ Second triad – fulfill God's plan in the universe
 - ▶ Third triad – interact and serve humanity closely

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Angel Basics – Choirs


Angel "choirs"

Contemplate the general plan of Divine government	Arrange the general plan of Divine government	Execute the general plan of Divine government
Seraphim	Dominions	Principalities
Cherubim	Virtues	Archangels
Thrones	Powers	Angels

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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Seraphim
 - ▶ First choir
 - ▶ From Hebrew saraph "to burn"
 - ▶ Name means the burning ones, and they are attendants at the throne of God. They praise God singing "Holy Holy Holy is the Lord of Hosts"
 - ▶ Occurs only twice in Sacred Scripture
 - ▶ Isaiah 6:2
 - ▶ Isaiah 6:6



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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Cherubim
 - ▶ second choir
 - ▶ Name means the Fullness of Wisdom, and they contemplate God's providence. Assigned to protect special places
 - ▶ "first among all the Angels to be mentioned in the Bible"
 - ▶ "And the Lord God... placed before the paradise of pleasure cherubim, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" Gen 3:23
 - ▶ From the word KeRUHB – uncertain origin and meaning
 - ▶ Assyrian origin given meaning by Hebrews
 - ▶ Protective deities, guardians of temples and tombs
 - ▶ Occurs 58 times in Sacred Scripture

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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Thrones
 - ▶ Third choir
 - ▶ "Sacred Scripture does not offer any clues about the nature and duties of this Angelic choir beyond the fact of revealing its name at the head of a partial list" - Parente
 - ▶ "In him [The Word] were all things created in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers. Col 1:16
 - ▶ "Steadfastness seems to be the characteristic of the Thrones..." - Parente

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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Dominions
 - ▶ Second triad
 - ▶ fourth choir
 - ▶ Lord over the lower choirs and humanity. They take illumination from the higher hierarchies and govern the universe
 - ▶ Two scriptural references
 - ▶ Dan 7:27, Col 1:16
 - ▶ "In him [The Word] were all things created in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers. Col 1:16

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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Virtues (authorities)
 - ▶ Fifth choir
 - ▶ Run the operation of movement in the universe. They are often associated with planets, elements, seasons and nature
 - ▶ Three scriptural references
 - ▶ 1 Pet. 3:22, Eph 1:21, 1 Cor 15:24
 - ▶ Mentioned as "good" and "fallen"
 - ▶ "good" 1 Pet 3:22, Eph 1:21
 - ▶ "[Jesus] Who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him" 1 Pet 3:22
 - ▶ "fallen" 1 Cor 15:24
 - ▶ "then comes the end when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty and every authority and power". 1 Cor 15:24

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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Powers
 - ▶ Sixth choir
 - ▶ Assist in governing the natural order. They are warrior angels tasked with fighting the war against the demonic choirs
- ▶ Scriptural references
 - ▶ Dan 3:41, Eph 3:10, Eph 6:12
- ▶ Mentioned as "good" and "fallen"
 - ▶ "good": Dan 3:41, Eph 3:10
 - ▶ "fallen": Eph 6:12

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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Principalities
 - ▶ Third triad
 - ▶ Seventh choir
 - ▶ Princes of the lowest triad assigned to care and guard communities, kingdoms, states and parishes. They are associated with transitions in power.
 - ▶ Assigned to communities, kingdoms, states, parishes, Bishops
 - ▶ Scriptural references, Jude 1:6, Daniel, Rev 1:20
 - ▶ Mentioned as "good" and "fallen"
 - ▶ Mentioned in Jude as where most of the "fallen" Angels came from.

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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Archangels
 - ▶ Eighth choir
 - ▶ Best know of the angelic realm
 - ▶ Leader Angels assigned to communicate and carry out God's important plans for man
 - ▶ Only three named recognized by the Church (Michael, Raphael, Gabriel)
 - ▶ "St. Michael the Archangel is the heavenly protector of the Christian people"



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Angel Basics – Choirs

- ▶ Angels
 - ▶ Ninth choir
 - ▶ Closest to the material world and humanity.
 - ▶ The lowest choir is where we get the majority of our personal [guardian angels](#).

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Angel Basics – Guardian Angels

- ▶ Each child has a guardian angel
 - ▶ "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father. [Mt 18:10](#)
- ▶ Simple but sound reasoning extends this to adults
- ▶ Assigned at conception (some debate between conception, birth, baptism.)
 - ▶ At birth (St. Jerome)
 - ▶ At conception (St. Anselm)

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Angel Basics – Guardian Angel tasks

- ▶ Lead us safely through life till we attain the glory and peace which they themselves possess... - St. Bernard
- ▶ Protect both spiritual and corporeal life
- ▶ Defend and protect our immortal soul from the seduction of the world and wiles of Satan.
- ▶ Come to our rescue when harm has befallen us.
- ▶ Adult persons, are warned and cautioned by their Angel, but remain free to heed or ignore such warnings
- ▶ Act as intermediaries between God and man (e.g. Rafael in book of Tobias)
- ▶ Pray for us and with us.

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Angel Basics – Guardian Angel tasks

- ▶ At the hour of death shows the greatest zeal in protecting and defending the soul committed to his care
- ▶ Escorts the soul of the departed to the Divine tribunal as noted in liturgical prayers especially the burial service for adults
- ▶ Lead souls assigned to purgatory there and visit and comfort during time there.
- ▶ Prompts friends, relative, others to pray for souls in purgatory.
- ▶ Introduces soul to heaven when ready.



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Reflections

- ▶ Conversation with my wife about this topic
- ▶ "Convince me that they are real"
 - ▶ Scripture
 - ▶ Tradition
 - ▶ Parallels in the physical world (faith and science)
 - ▶ Personal experience
- ▶ Why does it matter?
 - ▶ Helps understand the invisible part of creation.

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Reflections - Creation

- ▶ "for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, **visible and invisible**, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities – all things were created through him and for him" Col 1:16

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Reflections - Creation

- ▶ Visible
 - ▶ Matter
 - ▶ Energy (heat, light, motion)
- ▶ Invisible
 - ▶ Spirit
 - ▶ Order (Intelligibility) (math)
 - ▶ Energy (potential)
 - ▶ Reason (ability to understand order)

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Reflections

- ▶ How do we know things are real?
 - ▶ Direct personal experience (five senses)
 - ▶ Shared information (read, oral, visual)
 - ▶ Reasoning (deductive, inductive)
- ▶ Why would we question that angels are real?
 - ▶ Direct personal experience – generally not readily available
 - ▶ Shared information – limited to specific media sources
 - ▶ Reasoning – requires time and specific training.

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Reflections

- ▶ How do we experience/know things?
 - ▶ There are physical things that are difficult/impossible to observe given our available senses
 - ▶ Spiritual things are difficult/impossible to observe given our available senses
 - ▶ Special tools/techniques required to observe/understand
 - ▶ It makes sense that concepts can be leveraged from the physical to spiritual worlds
 - ▶ Several interesting examples
 - ▶ Cosmic eye – physical world
 - ▶ Mandelbrot set - mathematics

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Reflections – Key Concepts

◊ [Cosmic Eye](#)

Matter/Energy

- 10²⁶ Cosmic Horizon
- 10²¹ Milky Way
- 10¹⁶ Alpha Centauri
- 10¹² Outer Planets
- 10⁸ Moon
- 10⁷ Earth
- 10⁹ Human
- 10⁻⁴ single cell
- 10⁻⁹ DNA molecule
- 10⁻¹⁰ Atom
- 10⁻¹⁴ proton/neutron
- 10⁻¹⁸ quarks
- <10⁻¹⁸ strings?

◊ [Cosmic Eye](#)

Spirit

◊ [Mandelbrot Zoom](#)

Invisible/Math

◊ [Mandelbrot Zoom](#)

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Final Thoughts

- ▶ They really exist. Not just in our minds, or our myths, or our symbols, or our culture. They are as real as your dog, or your sister, or electricity.
- ▶ They are present, right here, right now, right next to you reading these words with you.
- ▶ They are not cute, cuddly, comfortable, chummy, or "cool". They are fearsome and formidable. They are huge. They are warriors.
- ▶ They are the real "extra-terrestrials", the real "Super-men", the ultimate aliens. Their powers are far beyond those of all fictional creatures.
- ▶ They are more brilliant minds than Einstein.
- ▶ They can literally move the heavens and the earth if God permits them. (*Peter Kreeft, Angels and Demons p 17*)

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Final Thoughts

- ▶ There are also evil angels, fallen angels, demons, or devils. These too are not myths. Demon possessions, and exorcisms, are real.
- ▶ Angels are aware of you, even though you can't usually see or hear them. But you can communicate with them. You can talk to them without even speaking.
- ▶ You really do have your very own "guardian angel!" Everybody does.
- ▶ Angels often come disguised. "Do not neglect hospitality, for some have entertained angels unawares!" That's a warning from life's oldest and best instruction manual.
- ▶ We are on a protected part of a great battlefield between angels and devils, extending to eternity.
- ▶ Angels are sentinels standing at the crossroads where life meets death. They work especially at moments of crisis, at the brink of disaster – for bodies, for souls and for nations. (*Peter Kreeft, Angels and Demons p 17*)

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Questions/Discussion

- ▶ Questions?

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Resources

- ▶ **Handout:**
 - ◊ [Angelology](#)
- ▶ **Books**
 - ▶ Angels (and Demons), Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press, 1995
 - ▶ The Angels in Catholic Tradition and Teaching, TAN Books, 1961
 - ▶ Angels and Demons a Catholic Tradition, Catholic University of America Press, 2016
- ▶ **Videos:**
 - ◊ Mandelbrot Zoom, 16:55 min: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PD2x0OQCCK>
 - ◊ Powers of Ten (-18/+26), 5:00 min: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hbnN1X8G0n0>
 - ◊ Cosmic Eye, 3:00 min: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SArc9dD5W24>

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What does it mean?

- ▶ So, now that you are an expert on Angels – how is this useful?
 - ▶ Helps better understand the nature of man by comparison
 - ▶ Better insights by comparison to Angelic nature
 - ▶ Common culture tends to use chimps for comparison (materialist view)
- ▶ "... the study of Angels and Demons sheds light on knowledge of God, man, nature and history..." *Borino, p3*

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What does it mean – Faith & Science

- ▶ As an object of intense interest by both the faith and scientific communities the Shroud provides a bridge for those seeking truth.
- ▶ The Church welcomes this search for truth and has articulated it well in the Catechism.
- ▶ **Faith and science:** "Though faith is above reason, there can never be any real discrepancy between faith and reason. Since the same God who reveals mysteries and infuses faith has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind, God cannot deny himself, nor can truth ever contradict truth. Consequently, methodical research in all branches of knowledge provided it is carried out in a truly scientific manner and does not override moral laws, can never conflict with the faith, because the things of the world and the things of faith derive from the same God. The humble and persevering investigator of the secrets of nature is being led, as it were, by the hand of God in spite of himself, for it is God, the conservator of all things, who made them what they are." – CCC159