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OCTOBER 2015 *Newsletter*

Angels: An Inspiring Link to God – And A Reminder of Evil

By *Christine Corbett Conklin*

"A good angel will go with him; he will have a good journey and come back to us well and happy."

(Tobit: 5:22)

As the Christmas season nears, the Catholic Church celebrates the special role that angels play in our tradition and teachings. From Gabriel's appearance to the Blessed Virgin Mary to the presence of guardian angels and "fallen" angels in our world today, the role of these spirits is significant. On September 29, we celebrated the feast day of the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. October 2 was the feast day of the Holy Guardian Angels.

Despite our culture's tendency to relegate angels to little more than Christmas decorations, Halloween costumes and the occasional feel-good movie, angels are very real and among us now, say several Catholic priests who offered their thoughts on the subject. They can serve as an inspiring link to God -- and a reminder of the presence of evil in the world.

"The tradition of the Church is that God has sent us (good) angels to watch over us, guide us in the directions God is leading us, and protect us from evil influences," observed Very Reverend Michael Ibach, who serves as Judicial Vicar for the Diocese of Yakima.

"God uses (good) angels as ways of saying how much He cares for us, that we don't have to do this life on our own," he said. "They help us to grow in our relationship with Him. They're friends."

Father John Girotti, a pastor in Green Bay, Wisconsin, explains in his book, *"A Shepherd Tends His Flock,"* that angels "... are pure spirits -- they have been created by God to serve Him and to do His bidding... Because they are pure spirits, angels have no bodies (Yes, that means they have no wings...sorry.) Occasionally, they may assume human form, so that their messages can be received by us."

There are numerous references to angels in the Bible, Father Ibach reminds us. The archangels, for example, are seen as messengers. Michael is identified as a defender, of Israel, for example. Gabriel was a messenger to Mary, and also to Zacharias. Raphael was a healer and helper

of the family of Tobit.

Other angels we hear of, including the Seraphim and Cherubim, are also among what is described as the nine "choirs of angels," according to Catholic Online. The Seraphim are the "highest order or choir of angels... attendants or guardians before God's throne." The Cherubim are reportedly the "second highest" choir, devoted to "continually praising" God.

"Reflection on angels says more about God than anything else," said Father Richard Sedlacek, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Kennewick. "God is bigger than the whole universe. Yet, He created us to have a relationship with Him. Angels help us with our understanding of God... They are intermediaries between God and us."

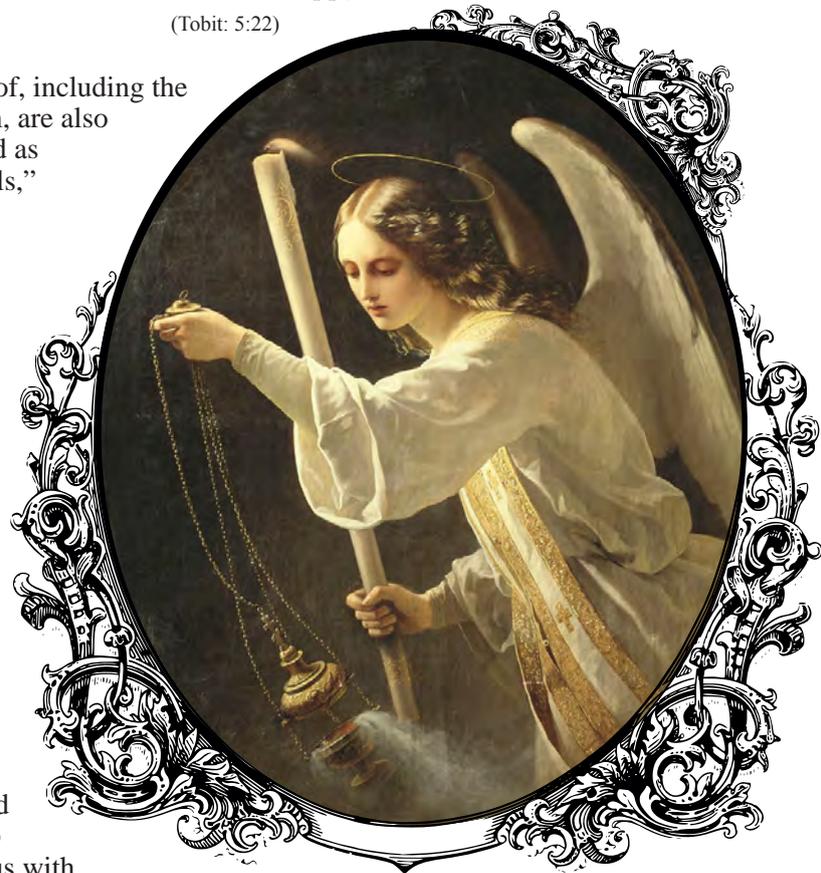
There are two ends of the spectrum when it comes to angels, Father Sedlacek added.

"Whatever influence (good) angels have, they influence us to the good. Bad angels influence us to the bad."

Happily, most angels are good angels, Father Girotti says.

"However, there are fallen angels -- those who have refused to obey God," he stresses. "The chief among them is the Devil: Satan, or Lucifer. The Devil is a fallen angel -- first and foremost...not nearly as powerful as God. Because he and his followers are angels, however, they possess a very keen intelligence which they use to tempt and lure us away from God."

It's reassuring to know that our guardian angels are always present, Father Ibach says, "guiding us, journeying through life." Although no one knows exactly how these good angels function, they may somehow



Angel portrait is by Carl Timoleon von Neff.
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

give us "insights or nudges," in cooperation with God, to steer us toward good or away from potential danger, he suggested.

"They're kind of nice to have around," agreed Father Sedlacek. "I pray to my guardian angel fairly often, particularly when I'm driving down the highway."

No matter how much you and I may admire the angels, however, we'll never become angels, Father Ibach said. When someone suggests that a departed loved one is now an "angel in Heaven," it's just not true.

"Angels are created beings," Father Ibach said. "God created us humans and through Baptism, we join the Communion of Saints. When we die, we (can) enter into our full sainthood in Heaven." That gives us a wonderful reason for hope and for following God's laws, even though there's still no promise of wings!

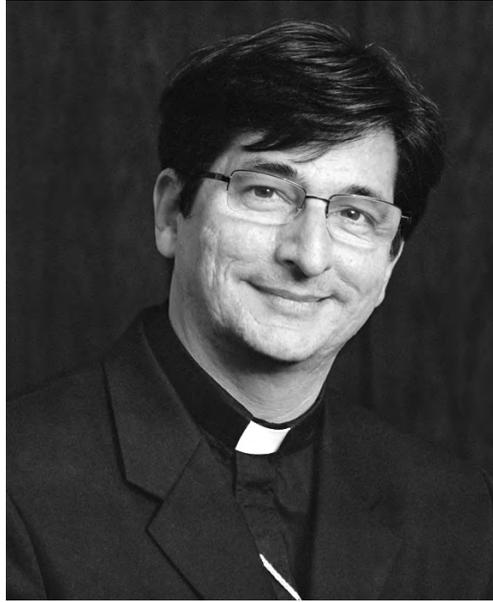
A Message from Bishop Tyson...

Dear Friends,

We are now deep into the Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) for the Diocese of Yakima. Three of our articles relate to items directly funded by the ACA: The Diocese of Yakima Youth Convention, our Magnificat Program, and the Safe Environment program we have developed in response to the issue of sexual abuse among clergy and laity in church settings.

When I arrived as bishop, we had no catechetical formation in English – only in Spanish. After working with Father Jaime Chacón, our director for Magnificat, we rolled out Magnificat classes in English in Yakima. Last year, we added Quincy as a regional site. This year, we added Kennewick. Now, we have a complete track in both English and Spanish, thanks to the ACA. We have well over 300 students in the Spanish-language track and nearly 100 in the English-language track. Because so many of us are now bilingual, the fact that we have all classes in both languages in all locations also means that folks can select the language in which they are most comfortable or, conversely, the language they want to better master to be missionaries in Central Washington.

The Diocese of Yakima Youth Convention each November is not the only diocesan youth program funded by the ACA. We also have a retreat on the weekend of Palm



Bishop Joseph Tyson

Sunday each year, since World Youth Day actually takes place on Palm Sunday each year in Rome. The World Youth Day Pilgrimage occurs once every three years.

Next year, many youth from our Diocese also will take part in a World Youth Day pilgrimage to Poland, led by Father Lalo Barragan.

We also host a diocesan confirmation retreat to make sure that all parishes – especially our

smaller and more rural communities – have support so that our youth experience a retreat during their Confirmation formation process. The ACA helps fund this retreat.

I hope you also will read carefully the article on our Diocese of Yakima Safe Environment Program. We are all aware in the regular media of reports across the country of coaches and teachers who have abused youth due to their direct contact and easy access. I would hope that our own efforts to create and maintain “Safe Environments” not only sensitize our clergy and laity who serve in the Church, but that those efforts also sensitize all of us to the tremendous challenge of monitoring the safe environments of our youth in the wider community. Compliance and participation in the national audit to review our efforts also does take considerable staff time and resources which are funded, thanks to the ACA.

In advance, I thank you for your generous contributions and for the many ways you support the programs and services we provide for our parishes and schools across Central Washington.

With every best wish and blessing!

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

New Assignments Announced for Priests

Bishop Joseph Tyson has announced the following new assignments for priests in the Diocese of Yakima, effective this fall:

Father Mauricio Muñoz, who has served as parochial vicar of St. Joseph Parish in Wenatchee, is the new parochial vicar at Saint Paul Cathedral Parish in Yakima.

Father Teodulo Taneo, who has been parochial vicar of Holy Apostles Parish in East Wenatchee, with ministry at St. Joseph Parish in Waterville, is the new parochial vicar of St. Joseph Parish in Wenatchee. He will spend time between October and December in Morelia, Michoacán, Mexico, to study Spanish.

Father Henry Rufo, a priest of the Archdiocese of Portland, is the new parochial vicar of Holy Apostles Parish in East Wenatchee, with service at St. Joseph Parish in Waterville. Father Rufo was ordained in 2001 and has been accepted for service of up to five years with the possibility of incardination in the Yakima Diocese.

Father Jacob Davis, a priest of the Diocese who has served as a U.S. Army Chaplain for three years, will become parochial vicar of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Grandview on December 1. He has been granted a medical retirement from the Army due to stress from combat zone conditions in the Middle East last December.

The St. Vincent DePaul Society *Continued from page 4*

me feel thankful for what I have,” observed Greg Vavricka, with the St. Vincent group of St. Paul Cathedral Parish in Yakima.

Thus far this year, the three members of his group, along with the pastor, have assisted about 50 families, including providing some funds to make sandwiches for the poor.

Bill Fulwyler, president of the St. Vincent conference of St. Joseph Parish, Kennewick, says that he joined the Society some 23 years ago because he “just felt like (he) needed to help other people. There are a lot of people who are hurting out there.” Today, he and about nine other members of his conference have helped some 100 families already this year.

“When you find somebody who really needs help and you help them, it just makes you feel so good,” he observed. “They give you so much joy.”

Contributions to the St. Vincent DePaul Society, which are especially crucial at this time of year, may be made in parish collections (November 28-29 and January 30-31, in some parishes). Donations also may be sent to the parish, marked for “St. Vincent.”

If you have been abused or victimized by a member of the Catholic clergy, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out.

The Yakima Diocese has a sexual abuse hotline for those who wish to report some incident concerning that issue as regards a bishop, priest, deacon or diocesan employee or volunteer. (888) 276-4490

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Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson

MODERATOR

Monsignor Robert M. Siler

EDITOR

Christine Corbett Conklin

TRANSLATIONS

Índiana Blandón

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Email: robert.siler@yakimadiocese.net

New Training Program Aims to Increase Awareness

To build on its already successful program of keeping children and youth safe from sexual abuse, the Diocese of Yakima has begun a three-year effort to introduce the Virtus safe environment training program for all clergy, employees, and those volunteers who work with minors.

More than 100 priests, deacons, and key parish and school leaders were trained last February. In recent weeks, the training sessions, which consists of two half-hour video presentations along with an hour or more of discussions, have been offered to nearly 200 more school teachers, parish employees and volunteers in the Tri-Cities. All Catholic school employees are set to be trained by February 5, 2016.

"Every person is precious. We believe that all people – including our children, youth and vulnerable adults – have the right to a life of dignity and respect," says Bishop Joseph Tyson, in an introduction to the first video presentation

"This means, among many things, a life free from abuse and violence of any kind. And yet, too many throughout our community experience that sadness. Together, as a Church, we have a responsibility to respond and we must work together to protect the vulnerable in our midst," the Bishop states.

Virtus, a program of National Catholic Services of Tulsa, Oklahoma, has provided training materials to the Diocese of Yakima for the education of children and youth in the prevention of abuse since 2003. However, training for clergy, employees and volunteers has been done in the past using a half-hour training video, "Entrusted to Our Care," produced by the Diocese of Spokane.

"It is still a fine resource," noted Msgr. Robert Siler, who oversees the Yakima Diocese's safe environment efforts. "However, the Virtus program has updated its training with new research. Also, the format of the training session allows for more dialogue and participation among those we are asking to help keep our young people safe."

Msgr. Siler, the chancellor of the Diocese, and Vice Chancellor Diana Aparicio, are the two trained facilitators. Others will be recruited and trained in the months ahead as employees and volunteers renew their safe environment training, which is required every three years.

Because the Virtus program is more detailed, the renewal training will take place through reading bulletins on a regular basis, once the video training has been completed. "This will help keep material fresh for our people," Msgr. Siler said.

The first training video details the problem of sexual abuse by interweaving the stories of five victims, including a child abused by a priest, with research from experts in law enforcement, medicine, and psychology. Two bishops involved nationally in the Church's efforts to keep children safe reaffirm the importance of that work.

The second training video outlines the five key steps to protecting children: Knowing the Warning Signs of Abuse; Controlling Access through Screening; Monitoring All Ministries and Programs; Being Aware of Child and Youth Behavior; and Communicating Concerns.

The facilitators are attentive to those who may have difficulty listening and thinking about such difficult topics. Participants can take a break if needed and discuss their concerns privately.

Moving to a new training program that can take as many as three hours to complete is a big step, noted Msgr. Siler. Given statistics that show 10 percent of boys and 20 percent of girls will experience some kind of sexual abuse as minors, Bishop Tyson is grateful that the clergy, employees and volunteers of the Diocese are willing to complete the training.

"Again, thank you for taking the time to attend this class today," says the Bishop in his taped remarks. "I am grateful for all that you do for the Diocese of Yakima and your commitment to protecting all of God's vulnerable with a loving heart. God bless you."



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NEWS

From Around the Diocese

Youth Convention Coming Soon

There's still time to register for the Yakima Diocese Youth Convention scheduled for November 6-8 at Holy Family Parish in Yakima. Attendees will have the chance to participate in Masses, breakout discussion sessions, praise and worship music, Reconciliation and Eucharistic Adoration. The keynote speaker will be Oscar Rivera, a hip-hop performer, who will explore the New Evangelization. For details, contact Melissa Montenegro at (509) 946-1675, ext. 234 or email Melissa@ckparish.org.

Magnificat: Learn About Your Faith

If you're looking for a way to learn more about your Catholic Faith, consider attending one or more upcoming classes in the Magnificat program. A variety of topics will be presented from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., November 7 at Holy Spirit Parish in Kennewick (7409 West Clearwater), and again November 14 at St. Pius X Parish in Quincy (805 North Central Avenue) and November 21 at the Diocesan Pastoral Center in Yakima (5301-A Tieton Drive). Topics on each of the three days will include: "The Bible" presented by Bishop Joseph Tyson, "Apologetics & Ecumenism" presented by Stephanie Bafus, and "Ethics & Christian Morals" presented by Father Miguel Gonzalez. The Magnificat program is designed as a formation school of faith for leadership and lay ministry.

Holy Redeemer Plans Bazaar

Holy Redeemer Church will hold its annual holiday bazaar from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, November 14, in the church hall at 102 West Pierce Street in Yakima (behind the main post office). The bazaar will offer a chance to begin Christmas shopping, with snacks and lunch also available for purchase. For more information, call (509) 853-8937.

Bazaar Set for Our Lady of Lourdes

A "Holly Jolly Bazaar," featuring handcrafted items and Christmas decorations is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, November 14 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 1111 West Fremont Avenue, in Selah. The event also will feature raffles and lunch served throughout the day.

Holy Family Plans Holiday Festival

More than 100 local craft vendors are scheduled to participate in the Holy Family Church Holiday Festival scheduled for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, November 21. The event will be held at the parish activities center, 56th and Chestnut avenues, in Yakima. Other special offerings of the day will include lunch, espresso and raffles.

Schutte to Appear in Moses Lake

Dan Schutte, a prolific liturgical music composer, will be featured in a free concert and workshop, December 4-5, at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Moses Lake. Schutte, who has written music for more than 30 years including collaboration with the St. Louis Jesuits, will perform at 6:30 p.m., December 4, followed by a workshop for liturgical musicians from 8 to 11 a.m., December 5. Free-will offerings will be accepted. For more information, contact Cleo Stevens at (509) 765-3083.

St. Vincent DePaul: Making A Difference Two By Two

In the best of biblical traditions, members of the St. Vincent DePaul Society have been known for going out into the community two by two, seeking to bring Christ's love -- and practical earthly assistance -- to those in need. In the Diocese of Yakima, there are about seven "conferences" and groups of members spread from Yakima to the Tri-Cities and Wenatchee. Some are officially "registered" with the Society, others are more informally affiliated.

The St. Vincent DePaul Society's mission has three key components, explained Brian O'Donnell, vice president of the Society's Western Region of 10 states. The Society encourages spiritual growth of its members, fellowship and, of course, serving the poor.

Today, many St. Vincent DePaul members still go out to visit those in need, in their homes or wherever they may be. In other cases, those in need come to the parish church for assistance.

"We hope we're representing Christ in serving the poor," observed Tom Curran, vice president of the St. Vincent conference of St. Joseph Parish, Kennewick, which has three "full-time" members and several others who volunteer when they can.

"We visit them and spend time with them, see how they're doing," Curran said. So far this year, an estimated 100 families have been helped by the parish conference.

"Our mission is to see Christ in everyone," added Gina Hugo, vice president of the St. Vincent conference of Christ the King Parish in Richland, which has about 14 active members and helped 1,136 people in their accounting year which ended September 30.

The spirit in which Society members visit the needy is key, Hugo suggests, quoting St. Vincent DePaul, who said: "...You are the servant of the poor... It is for your love alone that the poor will forgive you the bread you give them."

As a Catholic volunteer group, the St. Vincent DePaul Society depends upon contributions from parishioners - often in a "fifth-Sunday" or other specially designated collection - plus donations that may come in from sources as diverse as a religious order, community foundation or a casino. Members meet a variety of special needs, including anything from food or clothing to diapers, a power bill, home repair, housing deposit or emergency travel expense. Referrals also may be made to St. Vincent DePaul Centers (now a separate entity), local food banks or even a diocesan Financial Literacy class.

"We're just starting into our busy season," stressed Victor Kusske, president of the St. Vincent group of St. Joseph Parish, Yakima, which has about eight members and has helped over 37 families - or 131 individuals - thus far this year. "As Winter comes on, things get more difficult." Less availability of work, especially seasonal work, high heating bills and even more car problems seem to be typical of Winter, he said.

"We give out about 250 bags and boxes of food at Christmas time," agreed Doug Head, president of the St. Vincent conference of St. Joseph Parish, Wenatchee. Winter tends to bring the highest demand of the year for this group which, in partnership with the Missionary Daughters of the Most Pure Virgin Mary, operates the St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry. In total, some 5,000 people, including homebound elderly, have been assisted over the past year, he said.

"People come into the parish office and they ask for help for whatever reason," Kusske said. "They don't have to be members of the parish. They don't even have to be Catholic (to receive help from the Society)." By the end of September, the St. Joseph/Yakima conference had helped 37 families or more than 130 individuals this year.

The St. Vincent DePaul Society is named after Vincent DePaul, a French priest of the 1600s who led zealous charity efforts and retreats, in addition to establishing seminaries. He was canonized in 1737. The Society which today continues his charitable spirit, was founded in France in 1833 by students led by Blessed Frederick Ozanam. It began in the United States in 1845. Today, the Society is present in about 150 countries worldwide.

Those who are members of St. Vincent associations within the Diocese of Yakima - often serving faithfully for many years -- say that, as they give to others, they also receive.

"It's made me more aware that there's a big need out there. It makes



Jerry Roach, who has assisted the Christ the King Parish conference of the St. Vincent DePaul Society, helped sort cans for a Christmas food drive with two of his daughters in the school gym. -Photo courtesy of Maria Roozen-Roach

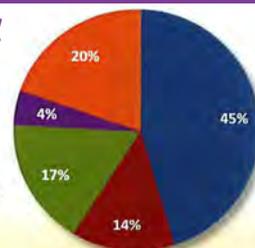
Read more about the ACA on page 2!

2016 Annual Appeal Projected Distribution of Collected Funds

- Support for Vocations
- Ministry to Families, Youth and Young Adult
- Catechesis, Lay Formation and Evangelization
- Catholic School Support
- Parish Needs

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

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Continued on page 2