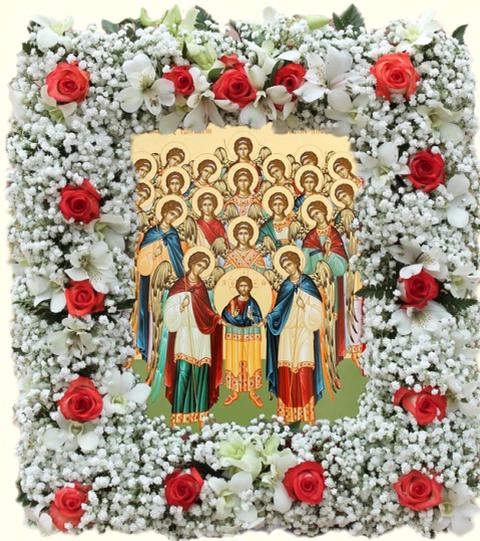




# CONVENT OF THE HOLY ANGELS

APHIDNAI, ATTICA, GREECE



## PATRONAL FEAST

November 8, 2020

The Holy Angels in Our Lives

10

For Edification and Consolation

■ He cares for us and protects us

## Our Guardian Angel: Our Good Elder Brother\* An Angelic Slap

**S**t. Cyril of Philea (1015 – 2 December 1111) was once visited by a monastic acquaintance of his who had great faith in the Saint and who told him the following:

“Abba, while resting in my cell, I was meditating on my sins and mourning, now over their magnitude, now over my lack of repentance. Suddenly, I was overcome by unbounded and unconstrained weeping, which accompanied me in all my works. The tears moistened my face to such an extent that for two days and nights I did not remember to take food. In the meantime, my heart became excessively heated, I lamented bitterly and plaintively, while at the same time I felt a sweetness and ineffable delight, joined with sorrow and inexpressible joy, now giving thanks to God, now offering prayers and supplications, and then again sending up thanks and glorification beyond measure.

“Finding myself in this condition and dwelling on my sins, I turned to my Guardian Angel and said to him:

“All-holy Angel, I charge thee in the name of God, Who formed us from non-being into being, so as to serve Him according to the strength that He hath given us, I beseech thee, do thou protect me more heedfully and strenuously. Because, as thou seest, I am perishing; and because I have lived a vain and useless life, thou art also found to be guarding me in vain.’





“Having spoken these words three times, I became weary and sat down. My mind was deeply calm and quiet, and meditating on God.

“Then I went into ecstasy and saw the following: a delicate and snow-white hand came and gave me a light slap on my right cheek. But that hand was so sweet-scented, that my face was fragrant for a week. At the moment when it slapped me, I saw that hand up to the wrist. All that week I had no appetite for bodily food.

“How, then, am I to regard what happened to me: was it from God or from the demons? For, my mind is in doubt...”

St. Cyril, by the gift of discernment with which he was richly endowed, gave this explanation:

“Our Heavenly Father has entrusted us to our Guardian Angel.... He is like our elder brother, who watches over us and protects us. When, however, we charge Him to ‘protect us more,’ he gives us a light slap of love and admonition, as if saying to us: ‘Exhort your own self; or, rather, command yourself to avoid pitfalls, because I am not the cause of them!’

“The same thing happened to you, my brother: the hand which appeared was not demonic. This is evident from the fact that it was gentle, whiter than the snow, and fragrant, as well as from the change which you underwent in not desiring food for a week. For, demonic changes do not bring about calmness in the senses of soul and body, nor do they have the power to lead them to supernatural states; on the contrary, indeed, they lead from the natural to the unnatural, because when demons are the guides, those who are guided by them become demons as well, from whom may the Lord deliver us!”



■ Refrain from speaking loudly and laughing inside the Church

## An Angelic Reprimand\*\* “With a grave and very stern gaze”

**A** Priest once related the following revelatory experience. One Sunday, as the Divine Liturgy was ending, some of the faithful began speaking loudly and laughing.

At that time, I was distributing the Antidoron and my fellow Priest, Father P., was consuming the Holy Gifts. There were about ten people left in line for the Antidoron.



One of them turned to look towards the Altar while laughing loudly. He saw me, of course, distributing the Antidoron, but the Templon (Iconostasis) had disappeared! His gaze fell on Father P., who was lifting the Chalice in order to consume the remaining Holy Gifts. At the same time, he saw how the Altar was filled with Holy Angels standing reverently, with their heads bowed and their arms crossed; they were all solemnly turned towards the Priest who was consuming the Gifts, since at this time there still remain the Body and Blood of our Lord in the Chalice.

Two of the Angels turned and looked at the laughing man with a grave and very stern gaze. He nearly fainted...



Going outside, he splashed some water on his face to recover, drank a glass or two of water, and left.

A few days later he came to confess to me what happened. ❧

(\*) From the periodical *Agios Kyprianos*, No. 260 (May-June 1994), pp. 279-280.

(\*\*) “Heavenly Powers - The Holy Angels” (Pelion, Greece: Hiera Mone Pammegiston Taxiarchon, 2013), pp. 97-98.