

Devotion to St. Michael, the Archangel

by Br. Alexis Bugnolo

Part 1: Its necessity

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI, the humble and devout founder of the Order of Friars Minor, is known for many of his virtues and for his great and ardent love for Christ Crucified. However, St. Francis' devotion to St. Michael the Archangel is scarcely known. Even among many books written by his sons, it is usually only a footnote, as it were, in the history of the events leading to his reception of the stigmata of Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the morning of September 14, 1224 A. D..

You can read more about St. Francis' stigmata in the wonderfully inspiring book, *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, also known by its Italian title, *The Fioretti of St. Francis*.

This "footnote" regarding St. Francis' devotion to St. Michael consists in this: that St. Francis received the stigmata while making a 40 day fast, or Lent, in honor of the noble Archangel, and that, in the hermitage of Mt. La Verna, north of Arezzo, in the province of Tuscany, Italy.

Other than this note, little is said about why that great founder and saint was making such a long fast in honor of St. Michael, and why on Mt. La Verna.

Mindful of my duty as a son of St. Francis, I consider it a duty to tell one and all something about in what consists devotion to St. Michael the Archangel, and why this is so important to the life of every Catholic.

First, we must understand that in the Christian life, there are two fundamental aspects: that is the Christian life, considered simply, and the Christian life considered as the way of perfection. Considered simply, the Christian life is a life which begins with faith, that is, with believing all that the Holy Roman Catholic Church believes and professes, according to the infallible, authentic magisterium; and continues with the observance of all the Commandments, the keeping of the Precepts of the Church, and the regular and devout reception of the Sacraments. With the assistance of daily prayer, the good offices of devout priests and religious, and the practices of certain simple devotions, such a Christian life, with God's assistance leads to eternal life.

However, Christian life, in the more stricter sense of the pursuit of the way of perfection, is a life-long exercise requiring from each Catholic something more: that is a habitual attention and a quest for greater understanding, for the sake of a more devout and faithful service of God Almighty.

The way of perfection is not something merely for religious, or for those who consider themselves apt for it; because the way of perfection is that form of Christian life which greatly increases the spiritual safety of the one who practices it; greatly increases growth in grace and all virtue; greatly promotes the sanctification of the soul and body; greatly defends against the wiles of all the enemies of God, demons and men.

For this reason, the Christian life, understood simply, cannot be lived in every circumstance by one who ignores the Christian life, understood as the way of perfection.

For this reason, those err greatly, who believe that they can be faithful Catholics without putting into practice in some manner, suitable to their own state in life, the evangelical counsels which Our Lord Jesus Christ gave for the sanctification of each and every Catholic: the counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience, which are the fundaments of the vows of religion taken by nearly all monks and religious and hermits.

This is because the Christian Life, in any sense of the word, must be something *living*, because there is no life, without growth and development.

Our Most High Lord Jesus Christ gave His One True Church the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience, to ensure the growth of that Church and the growth of His grace in the members of that Church until the end of time. The neglect of His counsels are the chief reason for the neglect of the observance of His Commandments and the neglect of fidelity to His Magisterium by all who fail in this way; because the effect of His Counsels is to spur (1) the practice of fidelity to all these lesser things, and (2) the understanding of the importance of all which He handed on to us, through the Apostles and Saints and Prophets.

This is why, in the life of each and every one of us, the moment in which we freely chose and deliberately determined to live our mortal life in this world in harmony with the Faith, was the most important first moment of our adult life as a

Catholic; and all our Christian life thereafter depends upon our fidelity to this resolution; and/or to our return to the fidelity of this resolution.

Such a resolution begins the life of merit in earnest, and certainly begins the life of Faith formally and explicitly.

But there is another moment in the life of a Catholic, which is different and which is called the “second conversion”, and it is this moment which characterizes the Catholic who receives the grace (and a *very commonsensical* one it is!) to walk in the way of perfection.

This “second conversion” is the moment in which the soul decides that it is not sufficient to merely keep the Commandments, that God merits that it strive each and every day to love Him more perfectly; and that such is absolutely necessary for this soul, because it sees that, left to undertake merely the normal observances which Catholics should all keep, it is bereft of the sufficient motivation to be faithful; that is, the soul realizes that the pursuit of the way of perfection is necessary for its salvation, because it needs that added, extra daily commitment and spiritual exercise, to keep it faithful.

This second conversion, therefore, is a moment of grace, spurred by a more profound movement of humility and under the light of those gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are called *wisdom* and *prudence*.

Many who receive this grace, however, remain without any fruits to show for it, or very meager ones, simply because they do not take the next, very necessary step: that of putting humility and faith into practice in admitting that such a way of perfection cannot be walked in, without the assistance of the intercession of the Saints.

First among the Saints, without question is the Most August and Immaculate Queen of Heaven and Earth, of Angels and Men, the Blessed Virgin, our Dear and Sweet Mother in Heaven!

And many, who discover Her powerful intercession and the efficacy of Her tender mediation for them, make much progress in the way of perfection and especially in charity.

But even devotion to the Blessed Virgin, alas, can become fruitless; not because Our Lady’s power is somehow ineffectual, but because the soul’s use of recourse to Our Lady is hampered by a secret growing pride, and this by all the concerted effort of the legions of Hell, who know that *they must use every tactic and exert every effort to undermine the recourse of the soul to the means of salvation, especially to that of the Blessed Virgin.*

Now there are deficiencies in the soul which can render its faith and devotion to Christ and the Virgin ineffective: chief of which are *pride* and *a lack of faith*; impurity too, which destroys the life of grace, also does, but if pride is absent and faith is strong, Our Lady can rescue a soul from impurity.

However, if the spirit of pride is afoot, the soul is in great peril, because it leads the soul to willfully take itself, as it were, out of the “reach” of the Blessed Virgin, where it cannot benefit from Her charitable mediation. And what makes pride difficult to avoid, is that it is the most indetectable of all the vices, since it is the worst of them all.

Vice, by definition, is *the lack of some moral perfection which ought to be present*. The worse vice, therefore, has the greatest lack. And just as it is easy to recognize a thing when present, so it is difficult to recognize it when absent; and the more absent a thing is, the more difficult to recognize that it is missing. For this reason pride is the most difficult vice to recognize, and thus the most difficult to avoid.

A simile of this in nature is found in darkness and light: *darkness is not something positive; it is merely the absence of light*; but to one who existed always in darkness, it would be impossible to demonstrate this truth, simply because the one who lives in darkness, has no way to understand *what* light is. This can be seen in the case of those who are blind from birth. They cannot really understand what color is, though from speaking with those about them, they can understand that there is something called “light”, which makes the presence and form of things knowable even from a distance.

Pride, then, darkens the house of the soul; as it grows spiritual things grow less recognizable to the soul; and eventually the soul loses the light of grace, by falling into *mortal sin*; whence the darkness increases tremendously, for *that* is the state of soul in which pride reigns.

Thus devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the pursuit of the way of perfection and Christian life, simply, all *require something more to protect against the vice of pride* and against the creeping malignancy induced by the forces of darkness which are ever afoot to do us spiritual harm.

This is why devotion to the Holy Angels, and chiefly to St. Michael the Archangel, is absolutely necessary for the salvation of souls, and in many cases, for the salvation of particular souls: especially for those souls who have the greatest difficulty in making any spiritual progress.

The recognition of this necessity is itself an act of humility and faith, because as St. Paul the Apostle declares, *our warfare is not against men and the powers of this world, it is rather against the Principalities and Powers of heaven*, those fallen spirits who had been entrusted with the care and governance of this world and of the human race, before they apostatized from God. Indeed, as the Apostle says, the Devil goes about *like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour!*

It is an act of faith and humility, therefore, for the Catholic soul, to recognize that, whereas angels by their nature are vastly superior intellectual beings, capable of overcoming each and every human being; that it is absolutely necessary to have the protection of the Holy Angels against the wiles and power of the fallen angels who seek our damnation.

Since, St. Michael the Archangel, is according to the teaching of Sacred Scripture, the leader of God's Army of *humble* Angels (Apocalypse, chapter 12), devotion to him, is thus necessary, since, when the soul calls upon the Captain of the Angels of God, it is able to obtain help of every kind, from each and every *humble* Choir of the Angels, ready as they are to receive orders from their Capitan, to assist mortals in the war against *pride* that has been raging about since the dawn of Creation.

Devotion to St. Michael is thus not some merely pious practice, to be relegated to a prayer after Mass, or to the back of a holy card, stuck in our Bible. Nay, rather, devotion to St. Michael is a necessity of the Christian order of things; without which spiritual warfare can *not* succeed or progress.

This is why all the great saints, like St. Francis, has a very ardent devotion to the Angels, and especially to St. Michael the Archangel; and why, consequently, they made so much progress in the life of grace and virtue, and why we, on the other hand, make so little.

Let us, therefore, fan our devotion to St. Michael into flames, and let us resolve this day to take him as our special guardian and protector!

A practical resolution here, which is most effective in saving the soul, is this: to promise St. Michael never to look upon anything impure or which incites to impurity, and in exchange to ask him to defend you against all impure spirits and to teach you the virtue of chastity. This devotion is very pleasing to him because it requires you to practice his own personal devotion, of considering nothing worthy of attention but God and His Law.

Such a devotion to the Saint will produce much more fruit, than merely reciting a prayer to him, or consecrating yourself to him (according to an approved formula), and then doing nothing more specific. For the spiritual life advances by steps and by an ever progressing movement of *humility*; it does not exist and grow by static moments in which the soul does not set out upon *that* path of perfection.

Yes, each prayer and each colloquy can be efficacious, if it is made with humility, faith, and sincerity; but such prayers *must lead to good works*, either those which are interior in the heart, or those which manifest themselves in charity to our neighbors, family members, friends, associates, etc..

Part 2: The Virtues and Efficacy of St. Michael's Intercession

SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL is by far the richest of all the angelic beings which the Most Holy Trinity has ever graced.

He is such, because he was the first to decide for God, when Lucifer, at the dawn of creation, fsought to overthrow God's empire among the Angels of Heaven. Being the first to honor God, it follows, that God, who is Infinite Justice, honors St. Michael first before all other Angels.

To stir a lively and efficacious devotion to this August Prince of Heaven, we do well to meditate on the virtues of this great Saint.

This is particularly necessary for us mortal men, because Angels, being pure spirits, are not like us, and hence their virtues are of a genus far superior to our own.

We mortals are frail and inconstant beings by our very nature; we think and will and act in momentary events, which form a chain of acts which tell the tale of the history of our individual existence, link by link. We do not know all that we know in one moment; nor can we even think of all which we know, in one moment. We do not desire all that we desire in one moment, nor can we will all that we will in one moment.

We have sensory powers which know particulars; and an intellect which can know universals, but only one at a time. And a will that can choose freely, but only one thing at a time.

After the Fall of Adam, our nature being afflicted with death, on account of its subjection to the prince of death, the Devil, is now subject to other imperfections: we can fall sick, get injured, suffer, and die.

On top of all of these, we mortal men can grow stronger or weaker in our bodies, whether by good nutrition and exercise, or by bad nutrition and careless living. We can also grow stronger in soul, whether in intellect, or

will, or memory, by study, prayer, and practice; or by a dissolute careless life, lose the knowledge and talents we have. Furthermore, we can grow in virtue or, contrariwise, loose virtue and grow in vice and wickedness.

The Holy Angels, however, chose all the good that they would every choose in one instant; knew in one instant all the good that they would know; by that choice, which was entirely for God, consecrated themselves to His eternal service, by an act similar to that which Catholic religious take vows: as a whole sacrifice or holocaust to the Divine Majesty.

By that choice and self-sacrifice, they merited eternal glory and beatification for themselves; and from that moment, they were not only Angels, but *Holy Angels*.

God the Most Holy Trinity, by His Sanctifying Grace, and the working of the Holy Ghost, came to dwell in each of them, burnished the beauty of their natures with the polish of many a natural and enhanced virtue, and enlightened and made them shine with the incandescent Radiance of His Eternal Glory; uniting Himself to their intellects in beatific vision and to their wills in an ineffable union of ecstatic love; filling their being with many graces and angelic virtues, which we can only guess at with the help all the wisdom which Saints and theologians have be graced throughout the ages.

The Holy Angels, therefore, are eternally blessed and eternally overflowing with joy. Angels, not having bodies, are not subject to emotions as we are; and if in an apparition or Angelic locution they indicate to us what appears to be the feelings of happiness or sadness, anger or contentment; this is only by way of accommodating themselves to our lowly natures, so that we can understand that with the entire unity of their being, they are in favor of or opposed to, something which we mortals have done, are doing, or are about to do.

The Holy Angels, unlike us mortals, only have 1 theological virtue: *charity*. They do not have *faith* or *hope*, because they have no need to believe in what they do not see, or hope for what they do not yet posses; because they see and possess all in God, in His fullness.

But their charity, though similar to ours (since they love the same God whom we love; the same Saints we love etc.), is much more intense than our own; since they can love all that they love *in one act* and with perfect attention and focus of soul. It is for this reason that the Angels are often compared to *fire* or to great lights. And by this means, we can often infer their presence, because Angels communicate to worthy mortals, a share in the knowledge or love, which they already personally posses; so that when they draw nigh to us, whether in moments of pray, or rest, or at work, our minds and hearts are enkindled with the love of God or enlightened by a spark of understanding, which leads to greater fidelity to God and service to our neighbors.

St. Michael has many an excellent virtue, of which we ought to speak. And each virtue can be remembered better if we classify them according to the twelve mystical names, which can be applied to St. Michael.

I cite no particular authority for applying these mystical names: but I use the biblical custom of the Prophets of old, who by the use of a name or image, intended to signify an particular virtue or quality of what they spoke. This was a rabbinic custom or method of educating the youth, so as to help them remember their lessons. Our Lord used this when He called King Herod a “vixen”, or likened the Church to a “mustard seed”.

The first mystical name for St. Michael, is his very own name, “Mikael” (מִיכָּאֵל), which is Hebrew for “Who is like unto God?” (Dan. 10:13) and it represents his *virtue of divine zeal or intelligence*. This was St. Michael’s riposte to Lucifer’s suggestion of rebellion. Lucifer, according to some writers, was also an Archangel and one of the 7 Seraphim who stood before the Throne of God in Heaven; he knew from apprising St. Michael that he would first have to seduce Michael to his rebellion, if it were to succeed. But St. Michael at the ugly suggestion, responded with this Angelic word, or thought, and plummeting this thought into the mind of Lucifer, repelled him from him; and by communicating this Angelic thought to the rest of the Heavenly Host, was the occasion of their own choice for God.

So powerful is this name “Michael” that it is after that of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the most feared by all the hosts of the enemy. It is powerful, because it engages the mind who hears it, to consider and compare what is being offered to what God is: with the obvious answer being, that “Nothing is like unto God”, and hence “It is madness to reject Him to have what you, Lucifer, are offering; regardless what you are offering.”

We can protect ourselves very much, in our daily spiritual struggle, by remembering the meaning of this Angelic Name, Michael, and using it as our own spiritual sword to resist temptation and turn the hearts of others about us, back to the True God.

The second mystical name of St. Michael, is “Aaron” (אַהֲרֹן), and it represents his *virtue of religion or mercy* (Exod. 4:14; cf. Ps. 132:2). St. Michael can be likened to Aaron, the brother of Moses, because like Aaron it was

his duty to accompany and assist Moses of old, and to accompany and assist the New Moses, Christ Our Lord, during His earthly life; like Aaron he offers the prayers of God's people, not however in an earthly temple, but in God's Temple in Heaven. Many sacred authors liken St. Michael to the Angel in the Book of the Apocalypse, who receives the censor and fills it with burning coals, and pours upon it the incense of the prayers of God's people, and offers this sweet fragrance to God almighty.

This mystical name of "Aaron", seems to have been taught by Our Lord, when He instructed the Apostles, because we find in the ancient liturgies of East and West, the affirmation that St. Michael has this role as thurifer in the Liturgy of Heaven. It is also indicated in the Ancient Roman Rite, because in the Confiteor, we confess our sins to St. Michael after doing so to the Blessed Virgin, for according to the ancient rabbinic understanding of the diverse places in Heaven, there are 7 heavens: and St. Michael according to the Rabbis offers the incense of the prayers of God's people before the Altar of Incense, placed in the 4th Heaven. The Saints indicate that the 7 heavens of Heaven, are the 7 levels or grades of dignity, enjoyed by the Just in Heaven: the *7th Heaven*, being that of the Most Holy Trinity; *the 6th* that of the Sacred Humanity of Christ Jesus, *the 5th* that of the B. V. M., and *the 4th*, would be where St. Michael is positioned; which is why he is named after the B. Virgin, in the Confiteor. The *third heaven* is that of the Apostles, Prophets and Angels, which is why St. Paul was rapt to the third heaven; the *second heaven* is that of the great saints, and the *first heaven* is for all the other blessed, who make it to heaven, since *the last shall be first*.

The mystical name of "Aaron" helps us remember that St. Michael has the wonderful office of mercy, by which he is able to present our prayers before the Most Holy Trinity, to Christ Jesus, to the Blessed Virgin, and to St. Joseph, all of whom are enthroned in the heavens above St. Michael. Yes, we can pray to God, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, without invoking the intercession of St. Michael, that is, without explicitly asking him to take our prayers to Them; but if we do explicitly ask this, our prayers are much more likely of being heard, and much more able to obtain a hearing, and much more capable of receiving an abundant reply of grace and help.

The third mystical name we can apply to St. Michael is "Sword". And this for 2 reasons: first, because in the Old Testament there are several prophecies about the Advent of the Incarnate Word as Savior of the world, in which the Sacred Text says *the Arm of the Lord shall do this*, or *the Right Hand of the Lord shall do that*. And this in the context of some authoritative intervention into world history. Since the sword is the symbol of a monarchs power to rule and govern, and since Christ is called the Right Hand of God, it follows that St. Michael, Our Lord Jesus Christ's personal Guardian Angel and Chief Executive Officer, be called the Sword of God. This is also an apt name because St. Michael's chief duty from the dawn of creation has been to battle God's enemies, and a sword is an image of an armament of war, which is personally employed by the one who uses it. Thus by calling St. Michael, "sword", we remember that this Holy Archangel does nothing whatsoever without the express consent of Christ Jesus Our Lord. This name reminds us of St. Michael's perfection in the virtue of *holy obedience*, so necessary in this age of false and wicked obedience. It is perhaps for this reason that, on the vigil of St. Michael, which is the Feast of St. Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia, the traditional Breviary selects for the 3rd Nocturne, a reading from St. Hilary of Poitiers (Commentary on St. Matthew, canon 3), which explains the significance of "sword" as an image in Sacred Scripture:

St. Hilary writes, "Of all weapons, the sword is the sharpest weapon, in which (image) is (seen) the right of authority and the severity of judgement and the worry of sinners. And, indeed, by the name of this weapon the preaching of the New Gospel is frequently indicated in the Prophets. Hence, we recall the word of God in the sword: which sword was sent upon Earth, that is which preaching was poured into the hearts of men."

From which consideration, we can see that one aspect of the preaching of the Gospel was to strike sinners with a call to repentance and to give the faithful knowledge of the long promised Hope, Christ our Lord.

Though, undoubtedly, all the Holy Angels assist in this holy work, and especially St. Michael, this duty pertains chiefly to the Holy Father, the Bishops and to priests, who by the fulfillment of their office of preaching are to announce the Good News and call men and nations to repentance. Thus, that St. Michael can be called "sword" helps us also remember that the preaching of the Gospel is not to be undertaken with a cowardly spirit, but with the boldness and zeal which befits a spiritual warrior and a spiritual war.

The fourth mystical name we can apply to St. Michael is "shield", and it represents *his zeal to defend the weak and needy*. A shield was the most common form of armament in ancient times, before the invention of the pistol, used to defend oneself. It was usually fastened to the left arm, and made of wood or metal.

As such, a shield became the symbol of defense and protection, which was used to block the blows of the

enemy as immediately as they issued forth.

By this name of "shield" we can remember that St. Michael is very able to come to the aide of Catholics as soon as they invoke his help, and to block the forces of evil in the very moment they attack.

But just as a shield, when used effectively, in a certain sense blocks the attack so efficaciously as to seem that there was no attack at all; so many a time St. Michael by his zeal and love for us, so effectively blocks the machinations of devils and evil men, that we never realize just how much we would have suffered without his holy patronage. Therefore, by this name of "shield", let us remember to thank St. Michael for all that he does for us, unseen and unknown; and remember to cultivate devotion and friendship for him, by praying to him frequently, visiting his shrines, churches and chapels, and lighting a candle in his honor.

The fifth mystical name that we can apply to this great Archangel is that of "spear", which represents *his virtue of understanding and charity in defense of the spiritually poor*. The spear was another ancient weapon, which was used to launch an attack against a foe from a distance; the lethality of which, when piercing him, was sure to immobilize if not kill him, outright. A spear was also used to keep an enemy at bay, so that he could not approach to attack one with his sword.

St. Michael is a fierce enemy of all devils and demons; and has great zeal for our spiritual protection. However, there are many temptations we can fall into, which we could be protected from, if we only asked St. Michael to ward off the evil spirits whom Lucifer has assigned for our spiritual destruction. A task at which he is an expert, since he has never been but victorious in every engagement with Lucifer and his minions.

And the most effective way to invoke this protection of St. Michael, is to ask him to employ his spear to defend us; to poke the devils where it hurts most (in their minds and wills) so as to keep them far from us. In this sense, "the spear of St. Michael" represents his angelic virtue of pugnacity and cleverness in the utterance of God's word; for as we have seen, he drives off devils by plunging into their minds some remembrance of the Divinity, so as to make them shudder and fear and flee away from the Eternal Light which they hate and fear most of all.

A humble man prays St. Michael to employ his spear, because, he realizes that, even with God's grace, he remains the inferior by nature to all angels, good or evil, and that it is absolutely necessary, ontologically, for man to have the help of an Angel against an angel's attacks. So, let us never forget to pray, especially in times of incessant temptations, "St. Michael, use your spear to defend me! Drive the devils far from me!"

The sixth and seventh mystical names we can apply to this greatest of the Seraphim, are "column of smoke" and "column of fire", which represent, respectively, St. Michael's *power to distract and dull the minds of God's enemies* and his *eminent sum of all virtue*, which serves as an example for our admiration and imitation as well as a guide-post for us in our earthly pilgrimage to the Eternal Fatherland.

These two mystical names are biblical: for in Exodus 13:21, Moses writes: *And the Lord went before them* (the children of Israel) *to show the way by day in a pillar of cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire, that He might be the guide of their journey at both times*. And again in Exodus 14:19, Moses identifies these two columns with the Archangel, saying, *And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, removing (himself), went behind them; and together with him the pillar of cloud . . .*

It was St. Michael's duty to create these two supernatural phenomena, so as to protect and lead the children of Israel as they fled from the Pharaoh of Egypt. According to the teaching of St. Paul the Apostle, the passage of the Children of Israel out of Egypt is the type or foreshadowing of the passage of Christians through Baptism to the life of grace, and of the spiritual pilgrimage of Catholics after Baptism as they persevere and make progress in grace. It is also a fitting image for the passage of a sinner from the state of mortal sin to the state of sanctifying grace (as occurs in the Sacrament of Penance, or in a moment of grace), or the liberation of a Catholic who suffers from any particular vice to that state in which he is free from it.

In each of these cases, we can invoke St. Michael to be our *pillar of cloud* to block the path back to sin and death, so that it no longer appears attracting to us, and so that the demons who reigned over us loose sight of our souls; and that we might, in the darkness of this land of faith, have him as a shining example of virtue, to lead us on to the perfect love of God above all things, renouncing ever more the love of and preoccupation for the things of this world of darkness.

The eighth mystical name we can apply to St. Michael is "covenant", which represents his *virtue of fidelity in helping us*, because only those who are intent on keeping the New Covenant of Grace, that is in persevering in sanctifying grace and living first and foremost for Jesus and His Kingdom, merit the help of St. Michael, the Archangel of the New Covenant.

The ninth mystical name we can apply to St. Michael is “peace”, because, as the traditional liturgy of the Roman Rite explains, St. Michael is the Angel of Peace. He is such, because only those who are under the protection of Christ’s New Covenant of Grace, enjoy true peace in this world, and find everlasting peace in the next; in each of which places, St. Michael as the Angel of the New Covenant is the guarantor of that peace.

Hence, if we lack interior peace, or peace in our families or town, let us pray to St. Michael for the conversion of ourselves or of sinners, since only in Christ and with Christ and for Christ can we discover and enjoy peace. If we lack peace, personally, let us examen our conscience, especially those fundamental choices which govern the context of the lifestyle we live, to uproot sin and vice and thus return to Christ’s peace.

One can taste of this peace which St. Michael brings, by praying the prayers which he taught the children of Fatima: that which begins, “O God, I believe in You...” and that which begins, “O Most Holy Trinity . . .”.

The tenth mystical name we can apply to St. Michael is “chalice”, which represents his *fullness of grace and his zeal to make us sharers in it*. We can see this in the apparitions he gave of himself to the children of Fatima in 1916, when he came to them bearing a chalice, from which they received the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

While it is the right and prerogative of priests alone to touch and bear about the Sacrament of the Altar, these apparitions show that Christ allows certain holy Angels this function, on account of their exceptional holiness and zeal. We can be sure that in descending to Fatima to bring the Sacrament to these little children, St. Michael was more overjoyed and filled with a sense of honor and accomplishment, than ever before in the history of his existence. How much more should we be, since unlike the Angels, we enjoy the right as Catholics to receive the Sacrament! A thing which no Angel in Heaven can even do! Let us pray, therefore, to imitate St. Michael’s zeal, love and devotion for this great Sacrament, for Christ’s Body and Blood: saying, “St. Michael, chalice of God’s graces, help me to be a worthy chalice of Christ’s Body and Blood!”

Finally, the last two names which can be applied to St. Michael are “victory” and “vengeance”, because with St. Michael the soul enjoys victory after victory, and opposed to St. Michael the soul experience the fullness of God’s vengeance for sin and vice and every punishment which they merit.

“O St. Michael, be ever my guide and protection, that I might enjoy victory in the fight; and the enemies of God suffer the vengeance of His Justice!” ☩