GUARDIAN ANGELS

What are angels?
An angel is a pure spirit created by God. The Old Testament theology included the belief in angels… The name applied to certain spiritual beings or intelligences of heavenly residence, employed by God as the ministers of His Will. The English word “angel” comes from the Greek angelos, which means ‘messenger’. In the Old Testament, with two exceptions, the Hebrew word for “angel” is malak, also meaning ‘messenger’. The prophet Malachi took his name from this word. He was himself a messenger and he prophesied about the coming of “the messenger of the covenant”, Jesus Christ. Although the word ‘angel’ in the Bible, meaning a messenger, nearly always applies to heavenly beings, it can occasionally apply to human messengers. Malachi himself said a priest was a messenger of the LORD of hosts. (Malachi 2:7).

#1
Does everyone have a Guardian Angel?

God created the angels to praise Him in Heaven, to lead the fight against Satan and to guide and protect us. Some of these angels are the Guardian Angels, they guard us against evil, and as God's messengers, tell us what God wants us to do.

Every person in the world has an angel whose only job is to watch over them, pray for them to God and keep them safe from sin and evil. If we listen well, our angel will keep our soul from sin and protect our body from harm. Have you ever fallen down, or nearly been hurt some other way, and someone said "Your Guardian Angel is watching over you."?
Our Guardian Angel loves us because God loves us. He loves us because we are so precious to God that His only Son, Jesus died on the Cross to save us. Our angel wants us to go to Heaven, to live with God forever. We can ask our Guardian angel for help to save our souls, and by saying the prayer, we will remind ourselves to keep listening for the guidance of our own special angel.

(Ask those present to pray…. ) Prayer-Guardian Angel Prayer

"Angel of God, my guardian dear, Through whom God's love protects me here; Ever this day be at my side, To light and guard, to rule and guide."

Think about a personal experience with your own Guardian Angel that you might like to share later…

So….Yes, each of us has a Guardian Angel… When the apostle Peter was arrested and ready to be killed, everyone expected him to die, but they prayed for his release, anyway. The Lord caused him to be rescued through a miracle. But, nobody expected this. So when he appeared at the door, a girl answered, and ran to tell everyone. They didn’t believe her, and said “it is his angel,” meaning his guardian angel. (Acts 12:5-15). However, angels do not normally take the form of human beings. There may be rare times when they do. The Bible says that people have ‘entertained angels unawares.” So, it does happen. There have also been rare instances where people have felt the presence of angels protecting them. But, usually God sends people to help. And, angels stay in the spirit realm, doing things like keeping a horse from throwing its rider, or keeping a person from getting hurt some other way. Angels take their orders from Jesus; we never pray to them, and we can’t order them around. They are more powerful than us. But, when we pray to Jesus, if the spiritual battle is in doubt, that prayer can tip the balance in God’s favor.
What is the official Church teaching about Guardian Angels?

That every individual soul has a guardian angel has never been defined by the Church, and is, consequently, not an article of faith; but it is the “mind of the Church”, as St. Jerome expressed it: “how great the dignity of the soul, since each one has from his birth an angel commissioned to guard it.”

In recent catecheses we have seen how the Church has professed throughout the centuries the truth about the existence of the angels as purely spiritual beings. Illuminated by the light that comes from Sacred Scripture, the Church has professed this with the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and has confirmed it in the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), whose formulation was repeated by the First Vatican Council in the context of the doctrine on creation: "God at the beginning of time created from nothing both creatures together, the spiritual and the corporeal, that is, the angelic and the earthly, and thus he created human nature as having both, since it is made up of spirit and of body" (Const. Dei Filius, DS 3002). In other words, God created both realities from the very beginning—the spiritual reality and the corporeal, the earthly world and the angelic world. He created all this at one and the same time with a view to the creation of man, constituted of spirit and matter and set, according to the biblical narrative, in the framework of a world already established according to his laws and already measured by time.
In the Symbol of Faith we find the following words: "I believe in One God . . . the Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." The invisible, angelic world was created by God before the visible world. "When the stars were made, all My angels praised Me with a loud voice" (Job 38:7).

The Church's belief in the ministry of the Guardian Angels is amply supported by our Lord's warning, "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 18:10). Luke, likewise, in referring to Peter's angel, testifies to that belief among the early Christians (Acts 12:15). These references indicate that the Guardian Angels were already well known to the readers of the Matthew and Luke; the idea required no explanation.

The faith of the Church recognizes not only the existence of the angels, but certain distinctive characteristics of their nature. Their purely spiritual being implies first of all their non-materiality and their immortality. The angels have no "body" (even if, in particular circumstances, they reveal themselves under visible forms because of their mission for the good of people). Therefore they are not subject to the laws of corruptibility, which are common to the material world. Referring to the condition of the angels, Jesus himself said that in the future life, those who are risen "cannot die any more, because they are equal to the angels" (Lk 20:36).

#3
What is the purpose of Guardian angels?
‘They are to lead us, if we wish it, to the Kingdom of Heaven.’ No evil shall befall you, nor shall affliction come near your tent, for to His Angels God has given command about you, that they
guard you in all your ways. Upon their hands they will bear you up. Let you dash your foot against a stone. Psalm 91: 10-12 A heavenly spirit assigned by God to watch over each of us during our lives. The doctrine of angels is part of the Church’s tradition. The role of the guardian angel is both to guide us to good thoughts, works, and words, and to preserve us from evil. Since the 17th century the Church as celebrated a feast honoring them on October 2 throughout the Universal Church.

He has charged His angels with the ministry of watching and safeguarding every one of His creatures that behold not His face. Kingdoms have their angles assigned to them, and men have their angels: these latter are to whom religion designates the Holy Guardian Angels. Our Lord says in the Gospel, “Beware lest ye scandalize any of these little ones, for their angels in heaven see the face of My Father.” The existence of Guardian Angels, is, hence a dogma of the Christian faith.

According to revelation, the angels who participate in the life of the Trinity in the light of glory are also called to play their part in the history of human salvation, in the moments established by divine Providence. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to possess salvation?" asked the author of the Letter to the Hebrews (1:14). The Church believes and teaches this on the basis of Sacred Scripture. From it, we learn that the task of the good angels is to protect people and be solicitous for their salvation.
Do our Guardian Angels stay with us our entire lives?

The Blessed Augustine writes, "The angels, with great concern, and with untiring eagerness, reside with us at every hour and in every place. They help us, they foresee our needs, serve as mediators between God and ourselves, lifting up to Him our groans and sighs … Accompanying us in all our travels, they go in and out with us, attentively watching if we deport ourselves with piety and honor among the evil species, and with what effort do we seek the Kingdom of God." A similar thought is expressed by Basil the Great, "With every believer there is an angel, which, as a child's leader and pastor, directs his life." And in confirmation of this he quotes the Psalm that says about God that "He commands His angels regarding you to guard you in all your paths ... The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them" (Psalm 91:11, 34:7). Bishop Theophan the Recluse instructs in one of his letters, "We must remember that we have a Guardian Angel and turn to him in our thoughts and heart. This is good during peaceful times and especially so during turmoil. When such contact with the angel is missing, he has no means of influencing us. For example, if one approaches quicksand or an abyss, and has plugged his ears and closed his eyes, how can anyone help him?" From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession. “Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life.” Already here on earth the Christian life shares by faith the blessed company of angels and men united in God. Says Pope Pius XII, “We must unite with the holy angels: with them we must become one great strong family in view of the times that are approaching us!” (Encyclical <Humani Generis> 1950). To American tourists (1958): “There exists another, an invisible world, real as our own, it is all around us: it is peopled with angels; they travel with you and play a part in your lives. As Christ said of children that ‘their
angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven’ (Matt 18:10), so when children become adults, their guardian angels do not abandon them, but remain at their sides.” Finally, they are not separated from us after death, but remain with us in Heaven.