**Celebration of the Eucharist**

Monday 2 October 2023

**The Guardian Angels**

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God’s love commits me here, ever this day, be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

This simple text is one of the earliest prayers that my mother taught me as she accompanied me on the journey of faith. Together with my father, her efforts to model the faith by walking with me were the beginning of the synodal way in my life.

I suspect that many of us learned the value of such prayers and such accompaniment at a tender age when hearts and minds were innocent and free, unencumbered by the sophistication of religion that sometimes creeps into ecclesial life, ministry, and mission.

The exhortation of Jesus in the Gospel today reminds us that childlike faith is the key to the kingdom of heaven.

Childlike faith is not childish faith; which is fearful and suspicious. Children can teach us much about life, about love, and about faith in God. They can also teach us how to walk with others without judgement, or manipulation, or imposition.

Because the child is first loved by its parents, it seems reasonable that a child might trust his or her parents to offer knowledge, and understanding, and wisdom; greater than their own. In that same spirit, and having first been loved by God, we too are invited to listen and dialogue in the Holy Spirit. We are urged to be sure of and respect the input, perspective, and contributions of others as much as our own.

Children know that they do not have all the answers. This can easily be seen by the multitude of questions that they often ask.

A person with childlike faith, is not afraid to reveal vulnerability. Childlike faith keeps the believer humble and free.

My brothers and sisters, the childlike believer is the one who knows how to detach themself from their own ideas when they see that they are not formed by the truth of the Gospel; when in the light of the Gospel, they realise that opinions, ideologies, and philosophies along with strategies and plans, are simply administrative and political structures devoid of the Spirit of the Gospel.

Childish faith seeks consensus at all costs. And yet, consensus does not lead to truth. Truth leads to consensus.

Now, here is a bold statement that may leave some people wondering; the overconfident, administrative, super sophisticated believer who is not open to ongoing conversion to Christ, is neither authentic nor honest. This kind of believer will struggle to embrace the pastoral mission of the Body of Christ. Communion, participation, and mission will simply remain plans and strategies used to coerce the whole People of God into remodelling under the guise of reform.

A pastoral mission, beginning and ending with Jesus Christ, will allow for personal and communal conversion, renewal, and regeneration of the Body of Christ.

The angels are God’s messengers. They are our companions as we walk this way of discipleship together. They reveal God’s thoughts to us, but even more so, they reveal God’s love for us and for all of creation.

In the Scriptures, those who are authentic in the faith are those who are open to God’s regenerating Word in their life.

For the faithful Christian the invitation is always to receive the message that God loves you and has a plan for your life. That same message reminds us that sin will destroy you and that Jesus Christ died to save you.

So, my sisters and brothers, today the Gospel urges us to hear the Word of the Lord and receive the truth of the Gospel into our lives.

Repent and believe the Good News. Receive the Holy Spirit, live your life in Christ and abide in his body the Church. Then, like those heavenly messengers of God, accompany others, seek the truth of Christ, and preach the Gospel by your life as you go and make disciples for the Lord.

H.E. Mons. Anthony Randazzo

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