

# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

## SAINT MICHAEL DEFEND US IN BATTLE...

Just recently at Saint Christopher's Parish over in Grant City, Cardinal Timothy Dolan met with a group of us priests and deacons concerning the terrible scandals that have rocked the Church this past summer. It was a very productive meeting and while the Cardinal spoke a bit about the sad state of affairs, he allowed the clergy to voice their concerns and worries.

One of the priests present brought to our attention a very powerful prayer to Saint Michael which Cardinal Dolan wrote about in the current edition of Catholic New York (September 13th). At the end of the meeting, the Cardinal led all of us in saying that prayer which until the 1960's was recited at the end of each and every Mass in the Catholic Church. Some of you might recall it: "Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. And do thou O Prince of the heavenly host, cast down into hell Satan and all other evil spirits that prowl the world seeking the ruin of souls Amen." that certainly is a very powerful prayer!

On September 29th, we celebrated the Feast of Saint Michael. He is an Archangel. An angel is a messenger sent by God. An archangel delivers messages of supreme importance to humanity. Saint Michael is specifically mentioned in the very last book of the Bible-Revelation. He is the angel who as the head of God's armies, fought the devil and was victorious. The name Michael means "Who is like God."

Now the modern world might consign angels and devils to the realm of fiction and fantasy. Yet when we look at the state our world is in today, I think we could safely say that there has to be some active agent of evil that tempts us all to veer from the "straight and narrow path."

The devil, or Satan as he is called is our adversary. He knows our weakest points and where we are most vulnerable.

In that regard, there was a woman who had the fault of spending too much money on clothing. Her weary husband, tired of paying all those bills, told her not to give into that temptation. He said, "Next time you are at the mall and you feel the desire to buy a new outfit, just say this, "Get behind me Satan." The wife agreed, but just a few days later came home with a new dress from the store. The husband hit the ceiling. He said, "Didn't I tell you to say 'Get behind me Satan.'" The wife said, "I did that! But when Satan got behind he said, 'It sure looks good from the back too!'"

I wouldn't want to joke too much about the devil and influence today because it seems that he has been given a rather long leash. Many years ago, back in 1972, the late Pope Paul VI gave an excellent talk about this subject. The Holy Father said, "What are the Church needs at the present time? Don't be surprised at our answer and don't write it off as simplistic, or even superstitious. One of the Church's greatest need is to defend against the evil we call the devil."

The Pope's words are very relevant in 2018. Jesus recommended two ways we could combat the devil and they are prayer and fasting. The Cardinal said we could fast and he would pray! Well, both things are not easy to do. But in this time when there is such a diabolical disorientation in our Church and in our current society, let's give a little more time to prayer and maybe abstain from what we don't need in order to make reparation for our sins and the sins of others!

Sincerely in Christ,  
Father Jerome