

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Oct 2nd 2015

Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels

“Papa, papa, papa.”

My daughter and her four living children live with my wife and me. It is not the easiest thing I have ever done. I hate clutter. They do not even know what clutter is. Food disappears quickly, as does toilet paper and paper towels. If there are a half dozen bananas on the counter and you want one for your green smoothie in the morning, best to take one and hide it somewhere. I have an office in one of the bedrooms but, if I want quiet to meditate and pray, there are headphones nearby, the same ones I use when mowing the lawn, not for listening to music but just to cut out as much of the noise as possible. What’s this “empty nest” I hear people talking about?

All things considered, none of that seems to matter when Wyatt, the soon to be two-year-old, sees me coming and starts in with his “papa, papa, papa.” He hears me come into the house and it begins: “papa, papa, papa.” He comes searching for me and thinks I am either in my bedroom or my office and, along with loud banging on the door, he starts in: “papa, papa, papa.” Do you get the idea that I might just do anything in the world for that little guy? I love my grand-daughters but we also wanted a grandson and thought that we would never have one. Kaden, our first grandson, died in the womb and we just figured that we would love our grand-daughters and think of what it would have been like to have a grandson. And then came Wyatt. “Papa, papa, papa.”

In the gospel reading for today, the Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels, Jesus tells his disciples that the greatest in the kingdom of heaven is the disciple who embraces humility and becomes like a little child. Do we really want to be like children? Wyatt does not know how to keep his hands off of things. I am constantly telling him to keep his hands off of things on the bookshelves, on the counter, on the night stand, etc. He has plenty of other things he can handle but he wants to touch the things I do not want him to touch. He can throw temper tantrums, too. He can cry incessantly for no reason. He is not hurt. He is not hungry. He just wants to punish you because you did not give him his way. So, I really do not want to be like that. Then there is “papa, papa, papa.” He loves his papa. I daresay, he trusts his papa. He is always happy to see his papa. The feeling is mutual.

Jesus says that we should never despise one of the little ones because “their” angels in heaven always gaze upon the heavenly Father’s face. “Their” angels do this. Wyatt has his own angels who can protect him and intercede for him when his papa cannot. Wyatt has guardian angels, as we all do. This is simply another one of those teachings which speaks of the love of God for his children. He sends his servants the prophets when we need to repent, he sends his own Son to show us the way, he pours out his Spirit to anoint us with wisdom and power for the journey. Like Wyatt with his papa, we can trust our heavenly papa. We, too, have guardian angels who know how to help us because they stay focused upon the Father’s face.

In thanksgiving, let us cry out to Him: papa, papa, papa.

