

Reading for the Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels

2nd October 2026

First reading

Job 38:1, 12-21; 40:3-5

‘Have you commanded the morning; have you entered into the springs of the sea?’

The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: ‘Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place, that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it? It is changed like clay under the seal, and its features stand out like a garment. From the wicked their light is withheld, and their uplifted arm is broken.

‘Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep? Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness? Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Declare, if you know all this.

‘Where is the way to the dwelling of light, and where is the place of darkness, that you may take it to its territory and that you may discern the paths to its home? You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is great!

Then Job answered the Lord and said: ‘Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 139(138):1-3. 7-8. 9-10. 13-14b. R24b

Lead me, O Lord, in the way everlasting.

O Lord, you search me and you know me.

You yourself know my resting and my rising; you discern my thoughts from afar.

You mark when I walk or lie down; you know all my ways through and through.

O where can I go from your spirit, or where can I flee from your face?

If I climb the heavens, you are there. If I lie in Sheol, you are there.

If I take the wings of the dawn or dwell at the sea’s furthest end,

even there your hand would lead me; your right hand would hold me fast.

For it was you who formed my inmost being, knit me together in my mother’s womb.

I thank you who wonderfully made me; how wonderful are your works.

Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 103(102):21

Alleluia, alleluia.

Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his servants, who do his will. Alleluia.

The following reading is proper to the memorial, and must be used even if you have otherwise chosen to use the ferial readings.

Gospel

Matthew 18:1-5, 10

‘In heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.’

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, ‘Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’ And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, ‘Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me.

‘See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.’

These are the readings for the memorial

First reading

Exodus 23:20-23a

‘My angel goes before you.’

Thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.

‘But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries when my angel goes before you.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 91(90):1-2. 3-4. 5-6. 10-11. R11

For you has he commanded his angels to keep you in all your ways.

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, and abides in the shade of the Almighty, says to the Lord, ‘My refuge, my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!’

He will free you from the snare of the fowler, from the destructive plague;

he will conceal you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge.

His faithfulness is buckler and shield.

You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

nor the plague that prowls in the darkness, nor the scourge that lays waste at noon.

Upon you no evil shall fall, no plague approach your tent.

For you has he commanded his angels to keep you in all your ways.

Short reflection on the reading for today

A verse in the letter to the Hebrews says, “do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers for by so doing some have entertained angels without knowing it.” The author seems to be saying that there can be more to those who cross our path in life than we realize. Jesus makes the same point in today’s gospel when he says, “anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.”

In the world of those times, the child had no social status or position. Yet, Jesus declares to his disciples that in welcoming the least, like little children, they are welcoming him. He comes to them in and through the least. This is a sobering lesson for the disciples who have just been arguing over which of them was the greatest. Not only do we *welcome* Jesus when we welcome a child, but unless we *become* like children we will never enter the kingdom of God. Instead of the selfish attitude of competing to be the greatest, if we are to enter the kingdom of heaven we must have something of the receptive attitude of children who depend totally on others. Only those who admit their littleness and put their trust in God will enter the kingdom of heaven.