

# Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle.

Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.

May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,

and do thou,

O Prince of the heavenly hosts,

by the power of God,

thrust into hell Satan,

and all the evil spirits,

who prowl about the world

seeking the ruin of souls. Amen. .

*O glorious prince St. Michael,*

*chief and commander of the heavenly hosts,*

*guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits,*

*servant in the house of the Divine King*

*and our admirable conductor,*

*you who shine with excellence*

*and superhuman virtue deliver us from all evil,*

*who turn to you with confidence*

*and enable us by your gracious protection*

*to serve God more and more faithfully every day.*

# Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

## First let's review the Basic Catholic Prayers:

- The Act of Contrition
- The Angelus
- The Apostles Creed
- The Glory Be
- The Prayer to Your Guardian Angel
- The Hail Mary
- The Holy Rosary
- The Our Father
- The Prayer to St. Michael The Archangel (**tonight's Topic**)

An angel is a pure spirit created by God. The Old Testament theology included the belief in angels and applied the title to certain spiritual beings or intelligences of heavenly residence, employed by God as the ministers of His will. The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes Angels as existing not only Glorifying God unceasingly; but, to aid in God's mission for Mankind on Earth.

Our Faith, from the Old Testament Times until today, tells us often that there is "order" in Heaven; therefore, in terms of times of old and today, --- there is a hierarchy to prevent chaos. Thus, the Book of Revelation references seven Angels of the Highest Order which we call Archangels, and the Church often speaks specifically of three as being Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael. Because the Lord revealed "Angels" to mankind before the time of Christ, other non-Christian Faiths such as Judaism, Islam, others also recognize Angels and Archangels – right or wrong – eventually applying names to a total of the seven Archangels.

The New Testament makes over a hundred references to angels, but only uses the word "Archangel" twice, Paul's 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and the Epistle of Jude 1:9. Catholic Tradition also describes three levels of Angels: (1) Archangels with the ability to invoke powers upon Mankind in a wholesale level and to combat and, in the end, "kill" Satan (the "Fallen Angel); and (2) Heavenly Angels (on High) who interact directly with Mankind on a periodic and group/global basis; and (3) Guardian Angels who guide and protect the individual Members of Mankind. Tonight, we focus upon Michael as one of the Archangels.

Christian tradition gives to St. Michael - four roles/offices: (1) To fight against Satan, (2) To rescue the souls of the faithful from the power of the devil, especially at the hour of death, (3) To be the champion of God's people; both, the Christians of the New Testament and the Jews in the Old Law, (4) To call away from earth and bring men's souls to judgment on the Last Day. Likewise, in following the "Order" in the prevention of "Chaos" in Heaven and on Earth, his rank in the celestial hierarchy opinions vary, St.

Basil and other Greek Fathers place St. Michael over all the angels. They say he is called “Archangel” because he is the prince of the other angels. St. Thomas, in having the benefit of a closer meaning of Christ’s Teaching about being a Servant and then Leader, notes that Michael is the prince of and the last of the lowest choir of the angels. The Roman Liturgy and Breviary seems to follow the Greek Fathers; it calls “St. Michael even above the Twenty-four Elders” in the Book of Revelation. Lots of opinions including, a Saint in being only a beatified human!

What we call today as “The Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel” usually refers to the specific shortened Catholic prayer to Michael the Archangel on the Cards before us. This version falls within the realm of prayers that our Faith calls “spiritual warfare”. From 1886 to 1964, this prayer was recited after Low Mass in the Catholic Church, although never incorporated into the text or the rubrics of the Mass.

Many versions existed over the years, this version is taken from The Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel by Pope Leo XIII in the 1880’s and included in his 'Leonine Prayers' which originated in 1884 with Michael’s Prayer added around 1890. **Why was the Michael Prayer added?** One day, after celebrating Mass, the aged Pope Leo XIII was to join in a conference with the Cardinals when suddenly he sank to the floor in a deep swoon. Physicians who hastened to his side could find no trace of his pulse and feared that he had expired. However, after a short interval the Holy Father regained consciousness and exclaimed with great emotion: *Oh, what a horrible picture I have been permitted to see!* He had been shown a vision of evil spirits who had been released from Hell and their efforts to destroy the Church. But in the midst of the horror --- the Archangel Michael appeared and cast Satan and his legions into the abyss of hell. Soon afterwards Pope Leo XIII composed the prayer to Saint Michael, which is the original version shown on your handout.

So why the revival? The time of Pope Leo XIII was a turbulent time with the Pope and the Church often in Exile. It was not until the restoration and the creation of the city-State of “The Vatican City” in 1929 which assured the Pope's status as a temporal leader as being forever restored. If not a “Country” so to speak, WW II would have been another exile. The following year, Pope Pius XI ordered that the Michael the Archangel Prayers should, from then on, be publicly offered to God at the conclusion of Catholic Masses.

However, society and man’s earthly will soon intervened. As a part of “making room for Vatican II changes”, the practice of reciting this and the other Leonine prayers after Mass was officially suppressed by the September 1964 Instruction which came into effect in March 1965. Although, removing the obligation to recite this prayer after Low Mass (along with the three Hail Mary’s, the Hail Holy Queen, and a prayer for the Church) did not mean forbidding its use either privately or publicly in other circumstances. Thirty years later, Pope John Paul II re-recommended its use, saying: “The Prayer will strengthen us for the spiritual battle and invoke the Spirit of Michael to come to our defense”. Finally, in September 2018, Pope Francis asked Catholics everywhere to pray the Rosary each day during the month of October and to conclude it with the ancient prayer to Saint Michael.

**So, Father Michael, as an actual “Human Instrument of God”, is following the “Teachings and Direction from the Chair of Saint Peter” as a part of the “REVIVAL” of our Catholic Faith as handed down from Christ’s own direction. Thus, we, as a part of the COR Program and those that choose to “Lead by Example” should cease the opportunity to not only invoke our Prayers directly to God; but be that Servant Leader that leads others to do the same.**

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle; be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

## Historical context<sup>[edit]</sup>

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Saint Michael fighting the dragon (miniature from the Book of Hours of the Knight Étienne)

The threat to the church at the time was the Italian government's campaign against the Papal States.<sup>[1]</sup> The 1890 text was composed and published twenty years after the [capture of Rome](#) had deprived the Pope of the last vestige of his temporal sovereignty. The papal residence at the [Quirinal Palace](#) had been converted into that of [King Victor Emmanuel II of Italy](#).

## In the Leonine Prayers<sup>[edit]</sup>

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In 1886, [Pope Leo XIII](#) added a Prayer to Saint Michael<sup>[2]</sup> to the [Leonine Prayers](#), which he had directed to be prayed after [Low Mass](#) two years earlier.<sup>[3]</sup>

Blessed Michael, archangel,  
defend us in the hour of conflict.  
Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil  
(may God restrain him, we humbly pray):  
and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host,  
by the power of God thrust Satan down to hell  
and with him those other wicked spirits  
who wander through the world for the ruin of souls.  
Amen.<sup>[5]</sup>

The English translation which was used in Ireland is quoted in [James Joyce's](#) novel *Ulysses*.<sup>[6]</sup> Variant English translations include: "Holy Michael", "Saint Michael", "defend us in battle", "malice and snares", "may God rebuke him", "thrust into hell", "all evil spirits", "prowl about the world seeking the ruin", and "roam throughout the world seeking the ruin".<sup>[7][8]</sup>

The prayer's opening words are similar to the [Alleluia](#) verse for [Saint Michael's](#) feasts on 8 May and 29 September in the [Roman Missal](#) of the time, which ran:<sup>[9]</sup>

<i>Sancte Michael,</i>	Saint Michael,
<i>defende nos in proelio</i>	defend us in battle
<i>ut non pereamus</i>	that we might not perish
<i>in tremendo iudicio.</i>	at the dreadful judgment.

## History<sup>[edit]</sup>

One day, after celebrating Mass, the aged Pope Leo XIII was in conference with the Cardinals when suddenly he sank to the floor in a deep swoon. Physicians who hastened to his side could find no trace of his pulse and feared that he had expired. However, after a short interval the Holy Father regained consciousness and exclaimed with great emotion: "Oh, what a horrible picture I have been permitted to see!" He had been shown a vision of evil spirits who had been released from Hell and their efforts to destroy the Church. But in the midst of the horror the archangel St. Michael appeared and cast Satan and his legions into the abyss of hell. Soon afterwards Pope Leo XIII composed the following prayer to Saint Michael, which is the original version:

### [Pope Leo XIII](#)

, when [Pope Leo XIII](#) ordered certain prayers to be said after Low Mass, in defense of the independence of the Holy See. God's help was sought for a satisfactory solution to the loss of the Pope's [temporal sovereignty](#), which deprived him of the independence felt to be required for effective use of his spiritual authority.<sup>[3]</sup> The prayer to St Michael described above was added to the Leonine Prayers in 1886.

The Pope's status as a temporal leader was restored in 1929 by the creation of the State of [Vatican City](#), and in the following year, Pope [Pius XI](#) ordered that the intention for which these prayers should from then on be offered was "to permit tranquility and freedom to profess the faith to be restored to the afflicted people of Russia".<sup>[10]</sup>

The practice of reciting this and the other Leonine prayers after Mass was officially suppressed by the 26 September 1964 Instruction *Inter oecumenici* which came into effect on 7 March 1965.

Removing the obligation to recite this prayer (along with the three Hail Marys, the Hail Holy Queen, and the prayer for the Church) after Low Mass did not mean forbidding its use either privately or publicly in other circumstances. Thirty years later, [Pope John Paul II](#) recommended its use, saying:<sup>[11][12]</sup>

May prayer strengthen us for the spiritual battle that the Letter to the Ephesians speaks of: "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might" ([Ephesians 6:10](#)). The Book of Revelation refers to this same battle, recalling before our eyes *the image of St Michael the Archangel* (cf. [Revelation 12:7](#)). Pope Leo XIII certainly had this picture in mind when, at the end of the last century, he brought in, throughout the Church, a special prayer to St Michael:

"Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil; May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen."

Although this prayer is no longer recited at the end of Mass, I ask everyone not to forget it and to recite it to obtain help in the battle against the forces of darkness and against the spirit of this world.

—*Pope John Paul II, [Regina Caeli](#), 24 April 1994*

On 29 September 2018, [Pope Francis](#) asked Catholics everywhere to pray the [Rosary](#) each day during the following month of October and to conclude it with the ancient prayer "[Sub tuum praesidium](#)" and the Leonine prayer to Saint Michael. He asked them "to pray that the Holy Mother of God place the Church beneath her protective mantle: to preserve her from the attacks by the devil, the great accuser, and at the same time to make her more aware of the faults, the errors and the abuses committed in the present and in the past, and committed to combating without any hesitation, so that evil may not prevail".<sup>[4]</sup>

A month earlier, Pope Francis called more generically to "a penitential exercise of prayer and fasting" in view of scandals concerning [Catholic Church sexual abuse cases](#).<sup>[13]</sup>

## Stories about the origin of the prayer<sup>[edit]</sup>

Statue of the Archangel Michael, [University of Bonn](#), slaying Satan represented as a dragon. *Quis ut Deus* is inscribed on his shield.

An article in the [Roman](#) journal *Ephemerides Liturgicae*<sup>[24]</sup> in 1955 gave an account in [Latin](#) and [Italian](#) of how the Saint Michael prayer (in the Leonine Prayers) supposedly originated. Footnote nine of this account quotes

an article in another Italian journal called *La Settimana del Clero* in 1947 by Domenico Pechenino, who worked at the Vatican during the time of Leo XIII, in which he said that after Leo had celebrated a [Mass](#), he seemed to be staring at something, then went to his private office, with his attendants asking if he was well. Half an hour later he had written the Saint Michael prayer.

According to the same article in *Ephemerides Liturgicae*,<sup>[25]</sup> [Giovanni Nasalli Rocca Cardinal di Corneliano](#) wrote in his *Litteris Pastoralibus pro Quadragesima (Pastoral Letters for Lent)* that according to Leo's private secretary, Rinaldo Angeli, Leo had seen a vision of demonic spirits who were congregating on the Eternal City (Rome); he wrote the Saint Michael prayer, and often said it, in response to the vision. Leo also personally wrote an [exorcism](#) prayer included in the *Roman Ritual*, and recommended that [bishops](#) and [priests](#) read these exorcisms often in their [dioceses](#) and [parishes](#). This account, which speaks not of the prayer included in the Leonine Prayers but of the general exorcism of which the prayer was at first a part, and for which it later (1902) served as a sort of preface, an exorcism that the Pope recommended bishops and exorcist priests to perform often, indeed daily, in their dioceses and parishes, and that he himself recited often throughout the day.

## The 1890 prayer to Saint Michael

### English translation<sup>[17]</sup>

O glorious Archangel St. Michael, Prince of the heavenly host, defend us in battle, and in the struggle which is ours against the principalities and Powers, against the rulers of this world of darkness, against spirits of evil in high places ([Eph 6:12](#)).

Come to the aid of men, whom God created immortal, made in his own image and likeness, and redeemed at a great price from the tyranny of the devil ([Wisdom 2:23–24](#), [1 Cor 6:20](#)).

Fight this day the battle of the Lord, together with the holy angels, as already thou hast fought the leader of the proud angels, Lucifer, and his apostate host, who were powerless to resist thee, nor was there a place for them any longer in Heaven. But that cruel, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil or Satan, who seduces the whole world, was cast into the abyss with all his angels ([Rev 12:7–9](#)).

Behold, this primeval enemy and slayer of man has taken courage, Transformed into an angel of light, he wanders about with all the multitude of wicked spirits, invading the earth in order to blot out the name of God and of his Christ, to seize upon, slay and cast into eternal perdition souls destined for the crown of eternal glory.

### Catholicism<sup>[edit]</sup>

For Roman Catholic views and prayers, see [Saint Michael \(Roman Catholic\)](#).

[Archangel Michael frees souls from purgatory](#), by [Jacopo Vignali](#), 17th century

[Catholics](#) often refer to Michael as "Holy Michael, the Archangel"<sup>[38]</sup> or "Saint Michael", a title that does not indicate [canonisation](#). He is generally referred to in Christian [litanies](#) as "Saint Michael", as in the [Litany of the Saints](#). In the shortened version used in the [Easter Vigil](#), he alone of the angels and archangels is mentioned by name, omitting saints [Gabriel](#) and [Raphael](#).<sup>[39]</sup>

In [Roman Catholic teachings](#), Saint Michael has four main roles or offices.<sup>[33]</sup> His first role is the leader of the Army of God and the leader of heaven's forces in their triumph over the powers of hell.<sup>[40]</sup> He is viewed as the angelic model for the virtues of the "spiritual warrior", his conflict with evil taken as "the battle within".<sup>[41]</sup>

*St. Michael weighing souls during the Last Judgement*, *Antiphonale Cisterciense* (15th century), Abbey Bibliotheca, [Rein Abbey, Austria](#)

The second and third roles of Michael in Catholic teachings deal with death. In his second role, he is the angel of death, [carrying the souls](#) of Christians to heaven. In this role he descends at the hour of death, and gives each soul the chance to redeem itself before passing; thus consternating the devil and his minions. Catholic prayers often refer to this role of Michael. In his third role, he weighs souls on his perfectly balanced scales. For this reason, he is often depicted holding scales.<sup>[42]</sup>

In his fourth role, Saint Michael, the special patron of the Chosen People in the Old Testament, is also the guardian of the church. Saint Michael was revered by the military orders of knights during the [Middle Ages](#). The names of villages around the [Bay of Biscay](#) express that history. This role also was why he was considered the patron saint of a number of cities and countries.<sup>[43][44]</sup>

Roman Catholicism includes traditions such as the [Prayer to Saint Michael](#), which specifically asks for the faithful to be "defended" by the saint.<sup>[45][46][47]</sup> The [Chaplet of Saint Michael](#) consists of nine salutations, one for each choir of angels.<sup>[48][49]</sup>

# The Angelus

The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary:

And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to Thy word.

Hail Mary...

And the Word was made Flesh: And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by

His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you' (Lk 1: 28)

'Blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb'  
(Lk 1: 42).



**A Guardian Angel Prayer for Friends** - Guardian Angel, watch over those whose names you ...

**A Mother's Prayer to the Guardian Angels of her children** - I humbly salute you, O you faithful,

**A Prayer to All the Angels and Saints Before Mass** - Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, .

**Advent Prayer #3** - A Root shall come forth from the stock of ...

**Angelic Praises of the Most Sacred Trinity** - Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, all the ...

**Another Prayer to the Guardian Angels** - My good Angel, Thou comest from heaven; God has ...

**Aspiration** - O my dear Angel Guardian, preserve me from the ...

**Fatima Prayer** - My God, I believe, I adore, I hope, I love You. ...

**Fatima Prayer #2 - Most Holy Trinity** - Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy ...

**Guardian Angel** - Angel of God, my Guardian dear, to whom His ...

**Guardian Angel Prayer # 1** - Angel of God, My Guardian Dear, to whom His ...

**Guardian Angel Prayer # 2** - O Holy Angel, attendant of my wretched soul ...

**Guardian Angel Prayer # 3** - I humbly salute you, O you faithful, ...

**Guardian Angel Prayer # 4** - My good Angel, Thou comest from heaven; God ...

**Guardian Angel Prayer # 6 (by Saint Gertrude)** - O most holy angel of God, appointed by God,,,. .

**Help Against Spiritual Enemies** - Glorious St. Michael, Prince of the heavenly ...

**Holy Archangel Who Strengthened Our Lord in His Agony** - I salute thee, holy Angel who didst...

**Holy Guardian Angel (feast On October 2)** - Dear Angel at my side, my good and loyal ...

**Holy Michael, the Archangel, Defend Us in Battle** - Holy Michael, the Archangel, defend us...

**Miscarriage Prayer (by. Mother M. Angelica)** - My Lord, the baby is dead! Why, my Lord, dare ...

**Our Lady, Queen of Angels** - A Bernardine Sister was shown in spirit the vast ...

**Our Lady, Queen of Angels** - August Queen of Heaven! Sovereign Mistress of ...

**Prayer for Angleic Assistance** - Lord Almighty, Creator of all life, Thank You ...

**Prayer of the Church Concerning St. Gabriel** - May the offering of our service and the prayer of ...

**Prayer to All Guardian Angels** - O pure and happy spirits whom the Almighty ...

**Prayer to God Regarding Angels** - O God, Who in a wonderful order hast ...

**Prayer to Holy Michael the Archangel** - Holy Michael, the Archangel, defend us in ...

**Prayer to Our Guardian Angel** - O holy Guardian Angel, my dear friend and ...

**Prayer to Our Holy Guardian Angels** - Heavenly Father, Your infinite love for us has ...

**Prayer to Our Lady of Evangelization** - O Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of his ...

**Prayer to Saint Michael Powerful Aid** - Glorious Prince of the heavenly hosts and victor ...

**Prayer to St. Gabriel, for Intercession** - O Blessed Archangel Gabriel, we beseech thee, do ...

**Prayer to St. Gabriel, for Others** - O loving messenger of the Incarnation, descend ...

**Prayer to St. Raphael, Angel of Happy Meetings** - O Raphael, lead us towards those we are...

**Prayer to the Guardian Angel When Unable to Assist at Daily Mass** - Go, my Angel Guardian dear, To church for ...

**Prayer to the Holy Angels** - Bless the Lord, All you His Angels, You who ...

**Saint Raphael Prayer** - O God who in Thy ineffable goodness hast rendered ...

**St. Michael, For Personal Protection** - St. Michael, the Archangel! Glorious Prince, ...

**St. Michael, For Protection of the Church and Her Members** - O glorious St. Michael,  
guardian and defender of ...

**Thanks to My Guardian Angel** - O Angel of God, my blessed protector, to whose ...