

# ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX

NOVEMBER 03 2024



5191 LENNON ROAD

FLINT, MI 48507

OFFICE: (810) 732-0720

WEB SITE: [saintgeorgeflint.org](http://saintgeorgeflint.org)

**SATURDAY: VESPER SERVICE @ 400 P.M.**

**SUNDAY: ORTHROS @ 8:50 A.M. - DIVINE LITURGY @ 10:00 A.M.**

**CONFESSION BY APPOINTMENT**

**V. REV. FR. AMIN HOULI**

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**REV. FR. MICHAEL BASSETT**

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Welcome to St. George! Thank you for attending today's Divine Services. If you are a first-time visitor, please register your visit by completing the guest book located in the narthex. We would appreciate getting to meet you after liturgy, so feel free to join us during Coffee Fellowship! Every Sunday we remember the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The word "Liturgy" means work of the people that means everyone participates through singing, praying, hearing the teaching, and opening our hearts to allow God's grace to enter. Anyone interested in learning more about our faith are encouraged to speak with one of our clergy.

**Guidelines for Receiving Holy Communion for Orthodox Christians:** Orthodox Christians fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist by receiving Holy Communion in fulfillment of Christ's command to eat His Body and drink His Blood. In order to be properly prepared to receive Holy Communion, the faithful should fast (no food or drink from midnight the night before), the Sacrament of Confession (7 years and older) within the last 2 months, being at peace with others, and striving to always love God and their neighbor. Frequent communion and regular confession are recommended for all faithful Orthodox Christians.

**For other Christians:** We welcome you to this celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Unfortunately we cannot extend to you a general invitation to receive Holy Communion. Orthodox Christians believe that the Eucharist is an action of the celebrating community signifying a

ing a oneness in faith, life, and worship of our community. Reception of the Eucharist by Christians not fully united with us would imply a oneness which does not yet exist, but for which we must all pray. All, however, are welcome to partake of the blessed bread (antidoron) which will be given when coming forward to venerate (kiss) the Holy Cross and receive the final blessing from the priest. Again, welcome!

**NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST & FIFTH SUNDAY OF LUKE  
MARTYRS AKEPSIMAS, JOSEPH AND AEITHALAS OF PERSIA; DEDICATION  
OF ST. GEORGE CHURCH IN LYDDA OF PALESTINE; HIEROMARTYR GEORGE  
OF NEAPOLIS; THEODORE THE CONFESSOR, BISHOP OF ANCYRA**

**RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE TWO**

When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hades with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

**APOLYTIKION FOR THE PERSIAN MARTYRS IN TONE FOUR**

Thy martyrs, O Lord, in their courageous contest for Thee \* received as the prize the crowns of incorruption and life from Thee, our immortal God. \* For, since they possessed Thy strength, they cast down the tyrants \* and wholly destroyed the demons' strengthless presumption. \* O Christ God, by their prayers, save our souls, since Thou art merciful.

**TROPARIAN OF ST. GEORGE IN TONE FOUR**

As the deliverer of captives and the protector of the poor, as the physician of the feeble and combatant of kings, holy champion and great martyr George, intercede with Christ our God to save our souls.

**ORDINARY KONTAKION IN TONE TWO**

O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant, O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

## THE EPISTLE

(For the Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost)

The Lord is my strength and my song.

The Lord has chastened me severely.

The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

(11:31-12:9)

Brethren, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who is blessed for evermore, knows that I do not lie. In Damascus, the governor under Arétas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes, willing to seize me, and through a window I was let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hands. I must boast, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body, I do not know, or whether out of the body, I do not know; God knows—who was caught up to the third heaven. And I know that this man—whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know; God knows—was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which no person is allowed to utter. On behalf of this one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my infirmities. For if I would desire to boast, I shall not be foolish, for I shall speak the truth. But I refrain from it, lest anyone should think of me above that which he sees me to be, or hears from me. And to keep me from being exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations, I was given a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me, to keep me from being exalted above measure. For this thing I beseeched the Lord three times, that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Most gladly therefore will I rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

قُوَّتِي وَتَسْبِيحَتِي الرَّبِّ. أَدْبَابًا أَدَّبَنِي الرَّبُّ.

فصلٌ من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول الثانية إلى أهل كورنثوس.

يا إخوة، قد علم الله أبو ربنا يسوع المسيح، المبارك إلى الأبد أنني لا أكذب. كان بدمشق الحاكم تحت إمرة الملك الحارث، يحرس مدينة الدمشقيين ليقبض عليّ. فدلّيت من كوة في زنبيل من السور، ونجوت من يديهِ. إنّه لا يوافقني أن أفتخر، فأتي إلى رؤى الرب وإعلاناتهِ. إنني أعرف إنساناً في المسيح منذ أربع عشرة سنة (أفي الجسد، لست أعلم، أم خارج الجسد لست أعلم، الله يعلم) اختطف إلى السماء الثالثة. وأعرف أن هذا الإنسان (أفي الجسد أم خارج الجسد لست أعلم، الله يعلم) اختطف إلى الفردوس، وسمع كلمات سرّية لا يحلّ لإنسان أن ينطق بها. فمن جهة هذا

أَفْتَحِرْ، وَأَمَّا مِنْ جِهَةِ نَفْسِي فَلَا أَفْتَحِرُ إِلَّا بِأَوْهَانِي. فَإِنِّي لَوْ أَرَدْتُ الْإِفْتِحَارَ، لَمْ أَكُنْ جَاهِلًا لِأَنِّي أَقُولُ الْحَقَّ، لَكِنِّي أَتَحَاشَى لِئَلَّا يَظُنَّ بِي أَحَدٌ فَوْقَ مَا يَرَانِي عَلَيْهِ أَوْ يَسْمَعُهُ مِنِّي. وَلِئَلَّا أَسْتَكْبِرَ بِعَرِطِ الْإِعْلَانَاتِ، أُعْطِيتُ شَوْكَةً فِي الْجَسَدِ، مَلَكَ الشَّيْطَانِ لِيَلْطِمَنِي لِئَلَّا أَسْتَكْبِرَ. وَلِهَذَا طَلَبْتُ إِلَى الرَّبِّ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ أَنْ تُفَارِقَنِي. فَقَالَ لِي "تَكْفِيكَ نِعْمَتِي، لِأَنَّ قُوَّتِي فِي الضَّعْفِ تَكْمُلُ." فَبِكُلِّ سُرُورٍ أَفْتَحِرُ بِالْحَرِيِّ بِأَوْهَانِي، لِتَسْتَقَرَّ فِي قُوَّةِ الْمَسِيحِ.

## THE GOSPEL

(For the Fifth Sunday of Luke)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (16:19-31)

The Lord said, "There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, full of sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

فَصَلِّ شَرِيفٌ مِنْ بَشَارَةِ الْقَدِيسِ لَوْقَا الْإِنْجِيلِيِّ الْبَشِيرِ.

قَالَ الرَّبُّ: كَانَ إِنْسَانٌ غَنِيٌّ يَلْبَسُ الْأَرْجُوَانَ وَالْبَزَّ، وَيَتَنَعَّمُ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ تَنَعُّمًا فَاخِرًا. وَكَانَ مِسْكِينٌ اسْمُهُ لِعَازَرُ مَطْرُوحًا عِنْدَ بَابِهِ مُصَابًا بِالْفُرُوجِ. وَكَانَ يَشْتَهِي أَنْ يَشْبَعَ مِنَ الْفُتَاتِ الَّذِي يَسْقُطُ مِنْ مَائِدَةِ

الغَنِيِّ. بَلْ كَانَتْ الْكِلَابُ تَأْتِي وَتَحْسُ فُرُوحَهُ. ثُمَّ مَاتَ الْمَسْكِينُ، فَنَقَلَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِلَى حِضْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ.  
وَمَاتَ الْغَنِيُّ أَيْضاً، فَذُفِنَ فَرَفَعَ عَيْنَيْهِ فِي الْجَحِيمِ وَهُوَ فِي الْعَذَابِ، فَرَأَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ مِنْ بَعِيدٍ وَلَعَّازُ فِي  
حِضْنِهِ. فَنَادَى قَائِلاً: "يَا أَبَتَ إِبْرَاهِيمِ ارْحَمْنِي وَأَرْسِلْ لِعَازَرَ لِيُغَمِّسَ طَرْفَ إصْبَعِهِ فِي الْمَاءِ وَيُبْرِدَ  
لِسَانِي، لِأَنِّي مُعَذَّبٌ فِي هَذَا اللَّهَيْبِ." فَقَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ: "تَذَكَّرْ يَا ابْنِي أَنَّكَ نَلْتَ خَيْرَاتِكَ فِي حَيَاتِكَ،  
وَلَعَّازُ كَذَلِكَ بَلَايَاهُ. وَالآنَ فَهُوَ يَتَعَزَّى وَأَنْتَ تَتَعَذَّبُ. وَعِلَاوَةً عَلَى هَذَا كُلِّهِ، فَبَيْنَمَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ هُوَّةٌ عَظِيمَةٌ  
قَدْ أُثْبِتَتْ، حَتَّى إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَجْتَازُوا مِنْ هُنَا إِلَيْكُمْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ، وَلَا الَّذِينَ هُنَاكَ أَنْ يَعْبرُوا  
إِلَيْنَا." فَقَالَ: "أَسْأَلُكَ إِذَنْ يَا أَبَتَ أَنْ تُرْسِلَهُ إِلَى بَيْتِ أَبِي. فَإِنَّ لِي حَمْسَةَ إِخْوَةٍ، حَتَّى يَشْهَدَ لَهُمْ لِكَيْ لَا  
يَأْتُوا هُمْ أَيْضاً إِلَى مَوْضِعِ الْعَذَابِ هَذَا." فَقَالَ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ: "إِنَّ عِنْدَهُمْ مُوسَى وَالْأَنْبِيَاءَ، فَلْيَسْمَعُوا مِنْهُمْ."  
قَالَ: "لَا يَا أَبَتَ إِبْرَاهِيمِ، بَلْ إِذَا مَضَى إِلَيْهِمْ وَاحِدٌ مِنَ الْأَمْوَاتِ يَتُوبُونَ." فَقَالَ لَهُ: "إِنْ لَمْ يَسْمَعُوا مِنْ  
مُوسَى وَالْأَنْبِيَاءِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ، وَلَا إِنْ قَامَ وَاحِدٌ مِنَ الْأَمْوَاتِ، يُصَدِّقُونَهُ."

### Arabic Divine Liturgy

Wednesday November 6th , 2024 at 6:00 PM

### BAPTISM/CHRISMATION DAYS

The Church School offers the Holy Bread for our students who are celebrating the day  
of their New Birth: Maria Abuaita Nov 08th & Luka Mitri Nov 26th

*May they be children of the Light and heirs of eternal good things.*

### Holy Oblation & Coffee hour offered by

George and Hiam Ishaq for the health of Nusta, Nidal, Samer and the occasion of Nida's  
birthday.

## PRAYER LIST

Our parishioners who are ill, recovering, or in need, especially His servants: Sahar Abdallah, Abeer Abuaita, Reader Fouad and Soad Abuaita, Philip and Janett Abuaita, Rasha Abuaita, Sami and Shafiqa Abuaitah, Laila Abud, George Abueita, Georgette Abueita, Youssif Abousamra, William Alsaouri, Basil Andoni, Naila Banna, Stephanie, Cynthia Brooks, Nadim and newly born Alayna Burbar, Douglas Coone, Kristy Corcoran, Vera Daoud, Said Farah, Joseph Gagne, Elias Gantos, Subdeacon George and Suad Gantous, Phyllis Good, Daisy Isaac, Danny Mortensen, Karen Mortensen, Kevin Myott, Laura Nassar, George Nassif, Adam Odeh, Betty Ramsdale, Elaine Shaheen, Michael and Nancy Silpoch; our Catechumens\* Maria Kirk, Evan Sandford, and Jaden Turner and Inquirer\*\* Santorie Jenkins; for Stephanie and Nadim and the newborn Alayna Lucia (9/14), for Nantania and Rene and the newborn Marina (10/26). We pray also for our Expectant Parents: Liana and Hanna Abuaita, and Dania and Subdeacon Salim Hanna.

The newly fallen asleep in the Lord: Nejme Khair (+Sep 26th Mother of Esperanza Abuaita) Elaine Moore (+ Oct 3rd, Ric Shahin's mother in law), Robert Clark (+ Oct 6th, Kelly Dotson's stepfather), Jeremy Andrew Meshraky (+ Oct 11, Samir Meshraky's son), Bishara Farah (+ Oct 11), Issa Fouad Awad (+ Oct 18, Fouad Awad's uncle).

\* *Those under instruction become members of our Orthodox Faith.*

\*\* *Those inquiring into our Orthodox Faith but have not been enrolled as Catechumens.*

## Teen SOYO Wants YOU!!!

All teens of St. George are encouraged to participate in our teen group – Teen SOYO (Society of Orthodox Youth Organizations). Our group has dedicated leadership who will not be happy until all teens of St. George are participating! Whoever is reading this please pass it along to a teen in your house or to Godchildren, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, sons, & daughters. We are gathering on Sunday, November 14th. 6:00pm—8:00 pm. If you would like to know more, come to our get-togethers, scan the QR code to signup, or contact President Cezar Abuaita (810-986-1434 or [cezarabuaita@icloud.com](mailto:cezarabuaita@icloud.com)).



**26<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Basketball Tournament**

**In Canton Ohio, November 8-10, 2024**

**Division I: Ages 12-15 / Division II: Ages 15-18 / Division III: Ages 19+**

**Church School News**



The Church School would like to thank everyone that donated ,volunteered their time , made a turkey or helped out in anyway at yesterday's annual Church School Thanksgiving. Children grades 1st-12th participated in preparing their part of the meal. 1st/2nd graders made the green bean casserole, 3rd/4th graders made the pumpkin pie, 5th-7th graders prepared the salad and the High School class prepared home made mashed potatoes. The children also decorated the tables for dinner, had a "Ask Abouna " session with either Father Amin or Father Michael, did crafts and other activities. Thank you all and God Bless you and your families.

**TODAYS ACTIVITY**

**TODAY, SUNDAY THE 3rd OF NOVEMBER, IMMEDIATELY AFTER DIVINE LITURGY, ALL ARE INVITED JOIN FR. AMIN AND FR. MICHAEL AS WE GO TO THE VENUE TO BLESS IT WITH HOLY WATER TWO DAYS AFTER HAVING Poured THE CONCRETE FLOOR!**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**DECEMBER 8, 2024**

**OUR GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

## SAINTS OF THE DAY

On November 3 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the holy Martyrs Akepsimas the bishop, Joseph the priest and Aeithalas the deacon of Persia.

### Verses

Akepsimas is slain by thrashings with cudgels, and Akepsimas' friends, by merciless stoning. On the third, Akepsimas is beaten, and his fellow athletes stoned.

A child prophesied that 80-year-old Bishop Akepsimas would suffer for Christ. He told a member of his household that he would not return home, but instead go to his "home on high." King Sapor raised a bitter persecution of Christians throughout Persia, and Akepsimas was apprehended and thrown into prison. The following day Joseph, a 70-year-old priest, and Aeithalas, a deacon, were also imprisoned. After three years of imprisonment and many tortures, Akepsimas was beheaded. Joseph and Aeithalas were buried up to their waists in the ground and stoned to death. That night, by God's providence, Joseph's body disappeared, and a myrtle tree grew over Aeithalas' body that healed all diseases and pain. This tree stood for five years before the wicked pagans cut it down. These soldiers of Christ suffered in Persia in the fourth century. On this day, we also commemorate the Consecration of the Temple of the holy GreatMartyr George in Lydda in Palestine, as well as the deposition of his holy body therein. George's relics came from Nicomedia, where he suffered at the time of Emperor Diocletian. Anticipating his martyrdom, George begged his servant to take his relics to Palestine, where his mother had been born, and where he had distributed his large estate to the poor. The servant did so. During the reign of Emperor Constantine, pious Christians built the beautiful church to house the miracle working relics of the Great Martyr. On this day, we also commemorate the Hieromartyr George of Neapolis; and Venerable Theodore the Confessor, bishop of Ancyra. By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.



**REMINDERS):**

**HOME BLESSING PLEASE CONTACT FR. AMIN AT OFFICE: (810) 732-0720 OR**

**CELL: (248) 709 1186**

**SAY YOUR PRAYERS AT HOME AND READ THE BIBLE.**

**The Voice News Letter**

**You will be receiving the news letter of our parish four times a year, starting  
the beginning of January 2, 2025.**

**OUR STEWARDSHIP, OFFERINGS, & DONATIONS**

**BELOVED MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY OF ST. GEORGE**

***EACH OF YOU SHOULD GIVE WHAT YOU HAVE DECIDED IN YOUR HEART TO GIVE, NOT RELUCTANTLY OR UNDER COMPULSION, FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER. (2 CORINTHIANS 9:7)***

**Our stewardship, offerings, and donations are needed. PLEASE help your parish by continuing to offer your gifts! If you cannot come to church, you can simply go to our parish website (<https://saintgeorgeflint.org/>) and donate on-line (or use the QR code below) or you can bring or mail your offerings to St. George, 5191 Lennon Road, Flint, MI 48507. As always, THANK YOU for your generosity and love of our St. George! Online Donations will accept Credit / Debit Cards or ACH (transfers from a banking account) and can be set for automatic donations. Call the Church Office (810-732-0720) if you need help with this.**

**Automatic Giving. Did you know most banks and credit unions offer automatic bill payment services? You can set it up so they send a check from your account to St. George for the amount you designate. This can be a one-time event or done automatically weekly/monthly. Just call or go online with your banking institution to get the form you need.**



**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE  
OF NORTH AMERICA**

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23)

Dear Reverend Clergy, Esteemed Members of our Parish Councils, and all the faithful parishioners of our God-protected Antiochian Archdiocese,

May the divine grace and peace of Christ Jesus our Lord come upon you and our entire world!

Our main office at the archdiocese has been receiving a considerable number of inquiries from clergy, parish council members, as well as other various organizations who have the desire to help the Antiochian Archdioceses in Lebanon.

The inquiries are related to the news and Social Media posts about events taking place in several archdioceses in the Antiochian Motherland.

In response to the aforementioned inquiry, all interested donors that want to help this humanitarian need may mail their donations to the Archdiocese noting on the memo section of their checks “Relief Fund - LB”. All donations will go directly to those in need.

During these challenging times as well as all times, love is practiced and demonstrated by prayers and supplications on behalf of all that are in pain, distress and loss of comfort.

Please pray for peace in the entire world and upon all of God’s creation so that the Lord Jesus Christ may wipe every tear of all the afflicted.

Your Father in Christ,

+SABA

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

**Live Streaming of Divine Services**

St. George is open for all parishioners and visitors. If you cannot attend, please pray with us through our livestream which can be seen on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SaintGeorgeOrthodoxChurchFlintMI>

If you have a smart TV, you actually have a web browser and YouTube app built in. All you have to do is start the browser app for YouTube and put the link in the address bar.

## **History of Marriage in the Orthodox Church**

According to early Hebrew law, marriage was founded on the purchasing of the woman by the man. The wife was assigned a low status; in effect, she was the property of her husband although he could not sell her. The woman could neither own nor inherit property, and she could not obtain divorce although the man could divorce her on the excuse of some "uncleanness." Polygamy was practiced at times with the consent of the wife, but in the later period of Judaism monogamy was pursued as the ideal marital state. Roman matrimonial practice proved in many ways influential in the formation of the Christian doctrine on marriage. And though divorce was readily available to both husband and wife, marriage was considered to be a lifelong partnership and a sharing of civil and religious rights. The legal opinion that it was consent rather than consummation that made a marriage was not contrary to Christian belief. The decree of the Roman law, however, that there could be no marriage between a slave and a free person was contrary to Christian teaching and was set aside in the third century. Although Roman law required a civil ceremony, a marriage was not recognized by the Church until given a ceremonial blessing by a bishop. [This requirement is undoubtedly a precursor to the voluntary practice of normalizing a marriage previously performed in a non-Orthodox church.] The following relationships constitute impediments to an Orthodox marriage:

1. Parents are not allowed to marry their children, grandchildren, or great grandchildren. Also, a brother is not allowed to marry his sister and vice-versa.
2. A brother-in-law cannot marry his sister-in-law, and vice versa.
3. Uncles and aunts cannot marry their nieces and nephews, and vice versa.
4. First cousins cannot marry each other.
5. Foster parents cannot marry their foster children, nor can foster children marry the children of their foster parents.
6. God parents cannot marry their godchildren; nor can godparents marry the parents of their godchildren.

## الملاك الحارس في

### الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية

يجد اعتقاد الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية بالملاك الحارس دعماً زاحراً في تحذير السيّد: "أنظروا، لا تختبئوا أحد هؤلاء الصغار، لأنّي أقول لكم: إنّ ملائكتهم في السمّوات كلّ حين ينظرون وجه أبي الذي في السمّوات" (متى 10:18) لوقا، في إشارة إلى ملاك بطرس، يشهد لهذا الاعتقاد بين مسيحيي القرون الأولى (أعمال 15:12). هذه الإشارات تشير إلى أنّ الملائكة الحارسين كانوا معروفين جيداً لدى قارئّي متى ولوقا، ولا تحتاج الفكرة لأي شرح.

ورثت الكنيسة في إيمانها أموراً عديدة من اليهودية، مثل الصلاة للموتى ودور الملاك الحارس. أعلن كاتب المزامير: "ملاك الربّ حالّ حول حانفيه، ويُنَجِّيهمْ" (مزمو 7:34)، و"لأنّه يُوصِي ملائكته بك ليكي يحفظوك في كلّ طرفك" (مزمو 11:91)

التصوير الأكثر وضوحاً لإيمان اليهود بالملاك الحارس موجود في كتاب طوبيا في السبعينية. إنه قصة عائلة يهودية منفية في ما بين النهرين خلال القرن الثامن قبل الميلاد، ولبّ القصة يتعلّق بالرحلة الطويلة التي يقوم بها الشاب طوبيا مرسلأ من أبيه الأعمى طوبيت. في هذه الرواية، هدف طوبيا الأول من الرحلة هو تحصيل أحد الديون لكي يحفظ العائلة من العوز. وللقصة إضافات تغنيها وتتخطى هدفها بطرق مختلفة، ليس أقلها إيجاد طوبيا لزوجته نقيّة.

قبل مباشرة طوبيا بالرحلة، زاره وأهله غريبٌ عرّض أن يكون دليلاً له في الطريق، ونهاية القصة تحدّد هذا الغريب برافائيل "أحد الملائكة السبعة الواقفين والداخلين في حضرة مجد الرب" (طوبيا 15:12). لا تتمّ هذه الرؤيا حتى نهاية الكتاب أي عند نهاية الرحلة. وهكذا، طوبيت وعائلته، مثل إبراهيم في تكوين 18، جدعون في الملوك 6، وأهل شمشون في الملوك 13، يستقبلون ملاكاً "وهُمْ لَا يَدْرُونَ" (عبرانيين 2:13)

بالرغم من عدم معرفته لهوية رافائيل الحقيقية، فإن طوبيت يشير بسخرية مرتين إلى "ملاك صالح" سوف يرافق ابنه في الرحلة (16:5 و 21). على المثل نفسه، عند انتهاء الرحلة، ولكن قبل أن يعرف هوية رافائيل، بارك طوبيت "ملائكة الله القديسين" (14:11). طوبيا سافر برفقة ملاك حتى من دون أن يعرفه.

الرحلة التي عرّض رافائيل أن يفقد طوبيا فيها، من نينوى إلى راجيس ميديا، كانت طويلة بكل معنى الكلمة، حوالي المئتي ميل وأغلبها في الجبال. مع هذا، في أقدم مخطوط موجود حالياً لكتاب طوبيت (المخطوط السينائي)، قد أدرجت يد الناسخ ملاحظة بأن الرحلة كان تتطلب يومين فقط! إذا تذكرنا أن جيش الإسكندر السريع، بحسب بلوتارخوس، احتاج لعشرة أيام لاجتياز هذه المسافة، فلا بد أن تُفهم منافع السفر مع رفيق من الملائكة. وقد جلبا معهما كلب العائلة، وهكذا نجد طوبيا مسافراً مع رفيق ملائكي ورفيق حيوان، يمثلان عالمي الروح والحياة الجسدية، عالمي الخبرة التي يسافر بها الإنسان في العالم.

يخبرنا القديس إيرونيموس أنّه نقل كتاب طوبيا من اليونانية إلى اللاتينية في ليلة واحدة... وهو قد رأى في رحلة طوبيا رمزاً لرحلة الإنسان في العالم، عودة إلى البيت الأبوي...

إن تعليم الإنجيل هو أننا لا نقوم بهذه الرحلة بمفردنا، بل يرافقنا "ملاك سلام، مرشد أمين، حافظ نفوسنا وأجسادنا".