

October 2, 2010

Dear Sisters in Christ our Hope,

As Mary pondered in her heart all that was disclosed to her, I suggest we ponder the fact that we are gathered together as women of faith on the Memorial of the Guardian Angels, on the 1st Saturday of the month which is a day that holds the Mother of God in esteem and reverence, the day before Respect Life Sunday. Today, at the beginning of a month devoted to the Blessed Mother, we look to her to be our Model of spirituality, service and leadership; our Model of Life as Catholic women in the Diocese of Tyler. Uplifted by our common prayer, nourished by the Word and the Holy Eucharist, and enriched by our Bishop, we boldly assume our leadership responsibilities as women of life, accompanied by our guardian angels. John Paul II gives us this beautiful understanding of the place of the angels in salvation history and in our lives:

“Angels are discreetly present at all the most important moments of Jesus’ life in addition to the Resurrection. They announce his birth (cf. Mt 1:20; Lk 1:26; 2:9); they guide his flight into Egypt and his return to his native land (cf. Mt 2:13, 19); they are a comfort to him at the end of the temptations in the desert (cf. Mt 4:11) and at the hour of the passion (cf. Lk 22:43); at the end of time, they will stand at his side when he judges history and the world (cf. Mt 13:41)... Angels, then, serve God’s designs at the fundamental moments of salvation history. As God’s envoys, they function as *messengers of his redeeming will*. Their presence is seen by Scripture and by the Church’s uninterrupted faith as the sign of a special intervention of Providence and as the announcement of new realities which bring with them redemption and salvation. ...By putting his angel beside us, the Lord *intends to accompany every moment of our lives* with his love and protection, so that we can fight the good fight of faith (cf. 1 Tm 6:12), and give fearless and unhesitating testimony of our loyalty to the One who died and rose for our redemption. Let us invoke the Queen of angels and saints, that she may grant us, supported by our guardian angels, to be authentic witnesses to the Lord’s paschal mystery.” John Paul II, *Regina Caeli*, March 31, 1997

We are a voice for life not of our own accord, but by our free-will choice to love God, who so loved the world that he sent his only-begotten Son for our redemption. In thanksgiving and respect for the life God has given us, we spend this time today in hope that we will be formed in the image of Christ and to be more fully women dedicated to God’s service. Our presence is a visible sign of our desire to grow in our love for God and neighbor. United as the Body of Christ, we become the voice of those in need and the hands that offer help.

In choosing Mary as our Model of Life, we find the sublime way to respond to our Bishop’s call to holiness and discipleship:

We now address the single most important question concerning our Christian faith. We have heard the question that passes the lips of Jesus and reaches the very depths of our hearts, “Do you love me?” As true disciples of Jesus Christ, each of us is called to answer Jesus in a very personal way, passionately and with absolute certainty, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” By His grace, we move decisively and deliberately to do His bidding. Bishop Alvaro Corrada, S.J., *The Following of Jesus: Catholic Discipleship in the Diocese of Tyler*, §17, June 29, 2006.

Mary, Model of Life, pray for us.

Angels of the Lord, pray for us. Amen.

Sue Kennedy, Church Commission Chair
Tyler Diocesan Council of Catholic Women