



TIMES OF THE LITURGY

Sunday - 7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass (Extraordinary Form) | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Low Mass | 7pm - Vespers.

Monday - Friday - 7am - Lauds | 7.30am - Conventual Mass | 6.15pm - Devotions and Meditation | 6.30pm - Vespers. [N.B. First Fridays of the month, Vespers in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament with a period of Adoration from 6.15pm.]

Saturday - 9am - Lauds | 9.30am - Conventual Mass | 4.30-6pm - Confessions | 6.15pm - Sung Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary | 6.30pm - Vespers.

THIS WEEK

Sun 12 **EASTER VII**

Mon 13 Our Lady of Fatima

Tue 14 **St Matthias**

Wed 15 *feria*

Thu 16 *feria*

Fri 17 *feria*

Sat 18 *feria*

Sun 19 **PENTECOST**



Lauds, Mass, and Vespers are broadcast daily on Radio Maria.

To listen visit:

<https://radiomariaengland.uk/>

SUPPORT US

Our ministry relies on the generosity of our friends and supporters. If you would like to support us make a donation in the cloister, visit our website, or speak to or email the bursar, Fr Albert.

cambridge.bursar@english.op.org

**WALSINGHAM
PILGRIMAGE**



SUNDAY 19 MAY

Annual Provincial Pilgrimage

*For details of lifts and additional information,
please see the poster in the cloister.*



CORPUS CHRISTI

Sunday 2 June,

11am Mass followed by a Processions followed by a bring and share picnic in the garden.

Our next Communio/ Blackfriars Study Group meeting will be on Wednesday 5th of June at 7.30pm in the Old Library. We will discuss an interview given in 2016 by Pope Emeritus Benedict in which he reflects on the theme of 'the mercy of God'. This theme has been central to the teachings of Pope John-Paul and Pope Francis, and it gives a better way of understanding what was achieved in Christ for our salvation than the long influential idea of 'the honour of God'. The Pope Emeritus then explores what this means for the mission the Church has in proclaiming the redeeming power of Christ for all.

Ten new roses have been purchased for the rose garden, but help is needed preparing the garden. If you can spare some time, please phone Helen Ross (07803 619 215) or Zlata Vrabc (07769 745 014).

DO ANGELS HAVE WINGS?

Of course they don't. That still leaves two questions. How can we say that they don't have wings and why would we speak of angels having wings? To the first question, we could reply that angels being immaterial beings, do not require and could not have wings as part of their nature. Wings are part of the material world. But are angels immaterial beings? Since Aquinas, angels are seen as immaterial beings, but this was not universally taught before he insisted on this. There was a suggestion that angels were made of a special type of material, virtually invisible, virtually intangible, but not entirely so. One influence on this way of looking at angels was probably influenced by Origen, the second and third century thinker, who argued that only God could be wholly immaterial. This allowed him to show that the three persons of the Trinity were God even though he allowed for a certain inequality between the persons. In modern times, especially as we have grown used to thinking of the material universe as an interactive system, it would be difficult to fit material angels into that system. This is not to say that angels could not influence the material world, which Aquinas certainly thought was possible, but they would be acting upon the material world from outside using the power that God gave them.

Even if angels are wholly immaterial, the human mind is very limited in thinking about their mode of existence, so we naturally use analogies from the material world. We imagine angels as appearing rather like humans, which is unavoidable. Visions of angels in the Old Testament do describe them as having wings. There is Chapter six of the Prophet Isaiah, where Isaiah has a vision of God in the temple. With God are the Seraphim,

Above him stood seraphs, each one with six wings: two to cover its face, two to cover its feet and two for flying... (Isaiah 6:2).

Then we have the vision of Ezechiel in Chapter one of the book of Ezechiel. This is more complicated. It is not clear at first that Ezechiel is seeing a vision of God. The first verse of the Chapter certainly says that Ezechiel saw a vision of God but that could mean a vision from God. What he sees is much more complicated than the vision of Isaiah. It involves creatures with wings, but they have human faces and human hands.

And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had a human likeness, but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings (Ezekiel 1:5-6).

These are angels no doubt but Ezechiel sees much more than that. There are fiery objects, like glowing amber, wheels which seem to move inside other wheels, and the four faces are faces of a lion, an ox, an eagle and a human being. The whole of Chapter one is too long to quote here, but it is an astonishing vision, full of strange details, and difficult to translate from the original Hebrew with complete certainty. It does turn out to be a vision of God though, because above the angels is one with the face of a human being, who sends Ezechiel to the people of God and in the course of this message, the figure identifies himself as God.

The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD' (Ezekiel 2:4).

So there we have the principle sources for thinking of angels as having wings. It is a long way from the simple wings of much Christian art, with them having six wings in Isaiah and four wings in Ezechiel. The wings are for more than flying as the two quotations make clear, which would only require two wings. The Ezechiel vision may seem bizarre, but the point seems to be that the prophet is struggling to interpret in visual terms what it is that he is actually seeing. C S Lewis in his science fiction novel, *Perelandra*, has his main character, a human being called Elwin Ransom, brought to Venus where he encounters the angels of Venus and Mars. At one point, he asks two of them to show themselves as they really are and is subjected to a series of visions which are rather unintelligible to him, though they finally appear as a gigantic man and woman. Here is an excerpt from the book, where Ransom asks if he has really seen them.

'But do I see you as you really are?' he asked. 'Only Maleldil sees any creature as it really is,' said Mars. 'How do you see one another?' asked Ransom. 'There are no holding places in your mind for an answer to that.' 'Am I then seeing only an appearance? Is it not real at all?' 'You see only an appearance, small one. You have never seen more than an appearance of anything – not of Arbol, nor of a stone, nor of your own body. This appearance is as true as what you see of those.' 'But ... there were those other appearances.' 'No. There was only the failure of appearance.'

We cannot imagine angels but as the angels say, only Maleldil, their name for God, sees anything as it truly is, and that includes the material world.

Angels do not always appear in such a strange fashion in the Old Testament. The word 'angel' comes from the Greek word which translates the Hebrew word for messenger. The angels often appear to be like human beings, and only reveal their angelic nature at the end of a visitation, as in the Book of Tobit. Sometimes what appears to be an angelic visitation turns out to be a visitation by God as in the three visitors to Abraham in chapter eighteen of the book of Genesis.

The wings of the angels say something about angels because they say something about God. Wings represent a way of escaping from danger and depravity.

And I say, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest... (Psalm 55:6).

This is wings as a means of flight, but wings can also represent the outstretched wings of bird over her brood, so that the wings are there to protect us.

Let me dwell in your tent forever! Let me take refuge under the shelter of your wings! (Psalm 61:4)

Yet wings can be frightening too. The same idea of outstretched wings is used to describe the power of invaders who stretch out their wings as in Jeremiah 48:40. We are under the shadow of the wings of God, wings beat mightily and to feel safe under the wings of God is no light matter. God is said to ride on the wings of the wind, the vast, mighty and unpredictable winds. This may be why, according to some modern translations, the Book of Job, asks a profound question.



M
A
T
T
H
I
A
S

After the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot, the apostles brought their number back to twelve by choosing Matthias to replace him. He was chosen by lot from amongst the disciples. The author of the Acts of the Apostles sees apostleship differently from Paul's interpretation of the rôle and seems to reflect the understanding of the gospel of Luke. The number had to be restored so that they might "sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel". It was conditional that they had to have been with Jesus during his earthly ministry and witnesses to the resurrection. The point of being chosen by lot, rather than by some democratic method, indicated the election or choosing by God, rather than by mortals.

THE PRIORY OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Blackfriars, Buckingham Road, Cambridge. CB3 0DD.

www.blackfriarscambridge.org.uk/ | Phone: +44 (0) 1223 741251

Please send any enquiries to prior.cambridge@english.op.org | To request a Mass to be said for a specific intention visit

<<https://www.blackfriarscambridge.org.uk/mass-service-times/request-a-mass/>>