

I accidentally learned how to read when I was probably 4 years old ... maybe 3 ... it's so long ago.

I say 'accidentally' because it turns out that my mother was teaching my older brother how to read before he went into Kindergarten. And they were on one side of the kitchen table, and I was on the other side of the table.

Oh ... yeah ... I forgot to add something to 'accidentally' ... I accidentally learned how to read backwards and upside-down.

Anyway, even with that unique handicap ... or advantage ... I'm not sure which ... I've made it this far.

Today is the Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels. And the parish I went to when I was in Kindergarten was named Guardian Angels. By then, I had flipped around my reading skills, but at one point, I remember that my mom cut out from the church bulletin the "Guardian Angel Prayer." If you got a bulletin insert this past week, you might have seen it in the sidebar.

And like I said in the sidebar: that was the first prayer I ever learned.

Angels are all over Scripture, and in today's Gospel we hear Jesus say:

*See that you do not despise one of these little ones,
for I say to you that their angels in heaven
always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.*

The word here rendered as *despise* is the Greek word *kataphroneo* ... which literally means to "*think down on*" ... what we might call "*looking down on*" someone.

And it is true that children see and understand things that adults often tend to overlook or misunderstand ... mostly due to our own mental baggage.

I read somewhere online where one commentator wrote:

*The least of the angels,
were God to will or permit,
could mash the cosmos into a little pea
and flash the Big Bang again.*

Indeed, God's grace is bigger than we often give credit ... and some things that we might take for granted or look down upon ... are more powerful than we may realize.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ; let us pray that we might humble ourselves and become like children so that we may inherit our place in the Kingdom of heaven.