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29 Thursday

FEAST of Ss MICHAEL, GABRIEL, RAPHAEL, Archangels

Daniel 7: 9-10, 13-14

Ps 138

John 1: 47 – 51

People of all faiths and of none are fascinated by angels. It may just be the feeling that there are special beings we cannot see but who are friendly and protective of us humans. Or the religious conviction that God uses special messengers who act as His agents for certain missions among us. Or the faith that God's creation is so much more vast than anything we can imagine, and His love for us so inventively beyond our limited grasp.

Our Christian tradition, taking over from the people of Israel, names three "super" angels, whom we call the archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. Their names themselves tell us the special missions of these messengers from God. They express a facet of God in relation with His people. They, and the bible's description of what they do, speak of the power and strength of God protecting His people, the mercy and compassion of God for His people, the healing power of God who accompanies our journey to wholeness, health, and the perfection we're called to. Honouring them on today's feastday, we glorify and honour God's reaching out to us.

Jesus in today's gospel tells Nathanael he'll see far more wonderful things than he can ever think of, even than his recognition of Jesus as King of Israel. And Jesus describes this beyond-imagining vision as seeing "angels of God ascending and descending". To glimpse God's messengers coming and going expresses the whole invisible world of God's relationship with His creation and us, things so much beyond what we can understand. In His messengers we can catch something more of what God is saying to us.