



St. Gabriel, One of Seven Archangels

The Archangel Gabriel is celebrated on September 29, the feast of the archangels. The feast also celebrates two other well-known archangels, Michael and Raphael. The total number of archangels is traditionally regarded as seven, a number based upon an Old Testament verse, “I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who enter and serve before the Glory of the Lord” (Tob 12:15); and a New Testament verse, “I [John] saw the seven angels who stood before God” (Rev 8:2).

Gabriel is a Hebrew word with two root parts. The first portion, “gabri,” means strength, power, or might; while the suffix, “El,” is a Hebrew word for God. The name Gabriel means God is strong, God is powerful, or God is mighty. An archangel is a superior rank, higher than other angels. Archangels occupy a loftier tier on the hierarchy of angles because they have more important roles. Gabriel is God’s special messenger. Gabriel explained, “I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I was sent to you and to announce” (Lk 1:19). Gabriel is mentioned four times in the Bible, twice in the Old Testament and twice in the New Testament. Gabriel appeared to the prophet Daniel (Dan 8:16; 9:21) to explain two dreams. Then Gabriel brought the message of the two great births in Luke’s Infancy Narrative: the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah (Lk 1:19), and most importantly, the birth of Jesus to Mary (Lk 1:26).

Gabriel was chosen as the special angel who had the sole privilege of carrying the message of the prophet who would go before the Lord to prepare his way, “to prepare a people fit for the Lord” (Lk 1:17), John the Baptist. Gabriel’s most privileged duty was to announce the birth of Jesus (Lk 1:31), the Son of the Most High, the one who would take the throne of David, who would rule over the house of Jacob, whose kingdom would never end, the Son of God. No other angel has ever brought such an important announcement. Gabriel stands alone as the greatest of all angelic messengers.

Gabriel was God’s special messenger to the prophet Daniel. Daniel had a vision of a ram and a he-goat (Dan 8:1-12) which he could not comprehend, so God sent Gabriel to describe the symbolism to him (Dan 8:16-26). Daniel also did not understand the seventy years of the Babylonian Captivity (Dan 9:2) as foretold by the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 25:11; 29:10), so God sent Gabriel a second time to provide another explanation (Dan 9:22-27).

The archangel Gabriel is the patron saint of all those who carry messages, including letter carriers and all postal employees; stamp collectors; telegraph workers years ago and telephone workers today; anyone involved with radio or TV; those who work with satellites and the telecommunications industry; as well as diplomats.

Archangel Gabriel has an unlimited power, meaning he can help anyone who needs him at the same time. He can help in the following ways among others: **WORKS WITH CHILDREN:** Archangel Gabriel assists with conception, pregnancies and birth. The wellbeing and happiness in children is important to him. He especially helps sensitive children, mentoring parents, teachers and counsellors to help a child. **ENCOURAGES YOUR PASSION:** Archangel Gabriel supports us to work in our chosen careers, to find our passion and he gently encourages us to follow in our dreams. **GIVES US STRENGTH & PROTECTION:** Archangel Gabriel gives us strength when we feel weak, emotional or vulnerable. He helps us to protect ourselves from negativity and encourages us to feel stronger in situations when needed. **COMMUNICATION:** The Archangel Gabriel symbol denotes communication, and he assists us in finding ways to communicate with others, especially if there is something which needs to be finalized, discussed or if highly charged emotions are involved.

Made by Christopher Bierlein: Parish Office Administrator