

*Celebrating Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019...*

**Wednesday, 2 October 2019**

**WORD be WITH you**

Fr. Jose Pellissery CMI

“I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven”  
(Mt 18:11)

In one story we are told of an atheist in Russia who in his study hung a board with these words written in big block letters: ‘GOD IS NOWHERE’ to remind him continually that he was a hard-core atheist. His only little child slowly learning to write and utter words found the word ‘NOWHERE’ too big for him to spell, so he split the word into two-NOW, HERE to make the whole thing pleasant and comfortable to read: ‘GOD IS NOW HERE’. The atheist father happened to hear his doted child say this: ‘GOD IS NOW HERE’, to the effect that a sudden transformation took place in him and he became an ardent believer.

Today when we specially remember and celebrate the feast of Guardian Angels in liturgy, the gospel passage prescribed for our reading and reflection is the parable of the Lost Sheep. What the Lord our Saviour teaches us through this parable is that God who is Jesus’ Father and our Father in heaven through Jesus is on constant watch and care on His little ones through their Guardian Angels in heaven. So we are asked not to despise anyone of the little ones belonging to His people including the meanest. The reason is it is not the will of God the Father, the Great and Good Shepherd in heaven that even one of His sheep should go astray and be lost.

We probably tend to take the word ‘little ones’ literally or chronologically to mean ‘small children’. Of course, our Lord has made it known to us in the gospels that small children are closer to his heart and to heaven because of their innocence and openness. But when taken figuratively or spiritually, the word, ‘little ones’ means every one of us, in the sense that we are people who go astray or sin. Still when we repent of our sins, we prove to be His ‘little ones’ tenderly taken care of by the Father in heaven who rejoices along with His angels over the return of His people to Him in repentance.

So God the Father is not One who is ‘NOWHERE’ in the world, but One who is very much ‘NOW, HERE’ and everywhere with us, His little ones, as He was with the Apostles (Acts 5:19) and the Churches in general (Rev 1:20; 2:8, 12, 18; 3:1,7,14) and with Peter (Acts 12:7,8,9,15) and Paul (Acts 9:25; 27:23) in particular, through their angels.

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