



The Angels & Their Mission by Jean Daniélou S.J.

Reading Group Discussion Guide

Use the following questions as guides to deeper individual understanding of the novel or for group discussion.

- 1. Angels are often dismissed as fantasy, like UFOs, or else regarded with New Age enthusiasm as evidence of other realms of reality. Does this make it harder or easier to speak of Angels as a Catholic today?**
- 2. Is a belief in scientific method consistent with a belief that "all corporeal things are governed by angels" (St Thomas Aquinas)?**
- 3. Protestant writers often object that the mediation of Angels would get in the way of God's personal care for his creatures. How do you reply to this argument?**
- 4. What does Daniélou say was the role of Angels in the Old Testament, summed up also in the role of St. John the Baptist?**
- 5. How does Daniélou describe the mission of the Angels among the gentile and pagan nations, under the sign of the Rainbow Covenant or the revelation of God in nature?**
- 6. We are told that Jesus came to the aid of his Angels in Bethlehem and they in turn assisted him by making his Incarnation known. In what mystery were they *unable* to help him, and why?**
- 7. Origen interprets the shepherds of the nativity as the Angels of the Nations, informed of the Incarnation by higher members of the hierarchy. And many Church Fathers see in the Parable of the Good Shepherd a teaching about the assumption of human nature by the Son of God. Do you appreciate this "allegorical" style of interpretation or do you think it detracts from the literal meaning of Scripture?**

8. How does the Incarnation revolutionize the earth, and the Ascension revolutionize heaven, "amazing the Angels"?

9. It may not be easy to see in the Apocalypse a description of the average Sunday liturgy in your parish. How might reading it as such change the way the the Holy Mass is celebrated?

10. How might Daniélou's writing on the Guardian Angel or "Angel of Prayer" influence your own spiritual life in the future?

11. Would reading the chapter on the Angels and Death help to console and instruct someone who was in the process of dying?

12. Are there any aspects of the *Catechism's* teaching on Angels (paras 328-54) that you think Daniélou has not adequately covered in this book?

13. Discuss the appearance and mission of Angels in the Sacred Scriptures, from their first mention early in the Old Testament to their place in the Apocalypse or the Book of Revelation.

14. St. Augustine tells us that "Angel" is the name of their office, not of their nature. If you seek the name of their nature, it is "spirit" - if you seek the name of their office, it is "angel." Discuss how your understanding of Angels has or has not changed by reading the book.

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