

Patrons of Parishes

SAINT RAPHAEL



S the Holy Ghost has related in Holy Writ the story of the Archangel St. Michael, He also relates the story of the Archangel St. Raphael. But, what a contrast between the two. The former appears in heaven in the shape of a warrior clad in armor from head to foot, crushing the rebellious angel and piercing him with his victorious spear. The latter appears on earth in the form of a young man, of brilliant beauty, wearing a girdle over his clothing, like a traveller about to set out on a journey. This is because each of these blessed spirits exercises a special ministry: Michael whose name means *like unto God*, is the prince of the heavenly hosts, the Protector of the Church, the Defender of God's rights; while Raphael, whose name means *God's medicine*, is the figure of Christ, the Savior of mankind. The story of these two angels, however marvelous it may be, is more certain than the existence of the sun; for the spirit of truth has Himself given it to us in its slightest details.

What an admirable picture is that painted by God Himself in the book of Tobias! It suffices to study it to thoroughly learn the mission of the angels among men, the immense good that each of us can obtain from their charity and their zeal. St. Raphael is sent to deliver Sarah from the power of the devil, to cure the old Tobias of blindness and to be the travelling companion of the young Tobias. Who does not know that the latter when about to undertake a long and painful journey, found a comrade, a prudent and enlightened guide? In the form of a fine and shapely young man, the archangel Raphael had presented himself to him and had promised his father to conduct him to Rages in Media and to bring him back. Everybody knows that on the very first day the archangel delivered Tobias from the deadly attack of a monstrous fish.