

Saint Francis de Sales

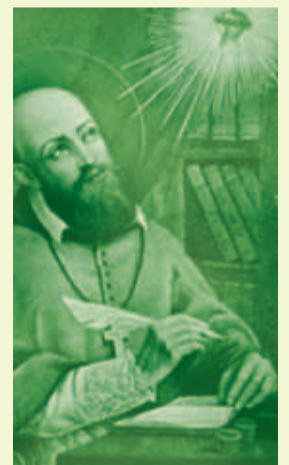
1567-1622

Francis de Sales, after having obtained his degree in Law, decided to become a priest. Afterward he was assigned to the region of Chablais, dominated by Calvinism, where he dedicated himself to preaching.

In the first part of his work on lay spirituality, "Filotea", we find some of his personal thoughts, in which he mentioned his Guardian Angel. "Imagine to find yourself again in a wide open field, alone with your Guardian Angel; to your left you see the devil on a lofty throne, he is surrounded with many devils nearby; and around them you see an immense number of people acknowledging him as their master and lord and they render him homage, who by sinning in one way and

since care and diligence can be the companions of serenity and of peace of the spirit; not so instead are anxiety, worry, and even less rushed distress." In fact, St. Francis often enjoyed the vision of Angels and Archangels.

A young woman from the Savoy area, Anne Lacoste, favored with the supernatural gift of grace, was lending service as a domestic in a hotel in Geneva. Here one day she met the Bishop St. Francis de Sales and immediately she felt attracted to the spirituality that emanated



who in another. Examine the behavior of the disgraced courtesans of that king of abomination: some are furious because of hatred, envy and rage; others are given to murdering, there is a group worn out with their vain pursuit of riches and fame but finding it hollow. Many are hardly human so sunken are they in fleshly vice, corrupt in the animalistic passions. See how they are all without peace, disordered and without restraint; see how they despise each other as they try to hide behind a hypocritical appearance of love." And also: "The care and diligence that we must put into our occupations have nothing in common with anxiety, apprehension and excessive haste. The Angels are in charge of our safety and they watch over us with diligence but without anxiety, apprehension or haste; care and diligence are the expression of their charity, while anxiety, apprehension and haste would be contrary to the state of blessedness;

from the Saint and asked to be received to be able to speak with him. The Bishop accepted to meet her and Anne, throwing herself at his feet, candidly revealed her entire soul to him. St. Francis was touched by such simplicity and innocence, even if the woman was Calvinist, he gave her absolution and asked whether she wanted to receive Holy Communion. Anne replied: "I strongly desire that, but how can it be done in this region where it is forbidden to celebrate the Holy Mass?" St. Francis then removed a silver pyx from his coat and held up the Host. He always carried the Blessed Sacrament with him to meet the needs of the sick and dying. As she knelt a worry crossed her mind. "Monsignor, how are we to do this without altar servers?" St. Francis answered with a smile as he said: "My daughter, my Guardian Angel who is here and yours who is right here with us will be our acolytes."