

**Sunday 28 September 2025,  
The Feast of St Michael and All Angels (usually 29 September)**

**Collect:**

Everlasting God,  
you have ordained and constituted  
the ministries of angels and mortals in a wonderful order:  
grant that as your holy angels always serve you in heaven,  
so, at your command,  
they may help and defend us on earth;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**Readings for this week:**

*Genesis 28:101-7; Psalm 103:19-22; Revelation 12:7-12; John 1:47-51.*

The West Front of Bath Abbey is famous for its depiction of the ladder reaching from foundation to pinnacle upon which angels are ascending and descending from heaven to earth, and vice versa. They indicate a continuous, if precarious channel of communication between the terrestrial and the divine, described in today's passage from Genesis. Jacob's vision of these climbing angels leads him to proclaim the place where he is resting as holy, the dwelling place of God. Sometimes we need reminding that earth is God's dwelling place and that the Lord is closer than we might think. The Bath Abbey West Front ladder looks dizzyingly high and sheer – one wrong step and you would come tumbling down, which is the case for deceiving devil in Revelation, who has chosen rebellion over obedience and is subsequently thrown over the parapet by St Michael. If this route between earth and heaven is so dangerous even for divine beings, who, according to Psalm 103, are created to do God's bidding, then how is it possible for such frail and fallible creatures as us to make the journey and meet with us?

Which is where our Gospel reading comes into play. In his exchange with Nathanael Jesus references both Genesis 28 and Daniel 7:13 concerning the Son of Man, upon whom God's angels are ascending and descending. The writer of the Fourth Gospel has described Jesus as the ladder linking earth and heaven. Ladders need to be grounded; they require a firm footing to be stable. Jesus is earthed in our world, he is one with us, he knows what life is all about, yet, at the same time, he reaches high into the heavens. The implication is that if he can carry the fierce, fiery angels, he can carry humanity, he can link all creation to the Creator.

Lord of heaven,  
in worship you have brought us near  
to an innumerable company of angels  
and to the spirits of the saints made perfect:  
as in the food of our earthly pilgrimage  
we share their fellowship,  
so may we come to share their joy in heaven;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Readings for next week:**

*Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4; Psalm 37:1-9; 2 Timothy 1:1-4; Luke 17:5-10*  
*Trinity 16*