



# Angelology and Demonology of St Thomas Aquinas

## Introduction

# Why angelology is important?

- very popular topic - large number of inadequate and simplifying publications
- teaching on angels in non Christian religions sometimes mixed with Christian teaching
- strong links with contemporary spiritism (channeling)
- growing number of demonic possession in the modern world
- growing popularity of prayers to Angels

# Why St Thomas Aquinas?

Angelology of St Thomas Aquinas is unique and it is the top achievement of angelology ever made in Catholic Theology

There are several reasons for this...

# Special character of Aquinas' angelology

- Aquinas stands at the peak of the whole ancient and medieval tradition and brilliantly makes the synthesis of Christian and philosophical teaching on Angels.
- Aquinas lives in medieval society where whole spiritual world and angels are present in more intensive way in the ordinarily life of man and society.
- Aquinas has perfectly crafted tools of metaphysics to discern and name spiritual reality.
- Aquinas angelology is methodological and puts in order all main topics of angelology:

# The order of issues

1. we must have an analysis on the nature angels as such  
- metaphysics of angels

- ◉ spiritual beings are discussed in general without the division between good and bad spirits

2. theological issues must be resolved on the basis of philosophy of angels

- ◉ salvation and sin of angels  
good angels  $\leftrightarrow$  evil demons

# metaphysics first - philosophy of angels

- Whether angels exist? Are there any proofs?
- What it means to be a being separated from matter?
- How such being relates to material world? Is he in place? Can he move? Can he change matter?
- How angels cognise? What can they know about material world, human thoughts etc.?
- How they will and love?
- When were they created before or after material world?

# theology of angels

- Sin of angels and its consequences. What kind of sin it was? Can they convert back?
- Salvation and damnation of angels.
- Good angels
  - Vision of God and happiness of angels
  - Hierarchical structure of angels
  - Guarding activity on world and man
- Evil demons
  - Punishment of demons
  - Are they organised in a kind of order?
  - Temptation - how demons can influence human soul?

# Literature

- St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1889, Ia q. 50-119 ([www.newadvent.org/summa/1.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1.htm))
  - Pars prima; questions 50-64; 106-114.
- St Thomas Aquinas, *Tractatus de substantiis separatis*.
- J. Collins, *The Thomistic Philosophy of Angels*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington 1947.
- D. Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, Oxford University Press, New York-Oxford 1998.
- T. Stępień, *Aquinas against spiritual matter*, *Epekeina*, vol. 6, n. 2
- T. Stępień, *Doktor Anielski o aniołach*, *Michalineum* 2014.



- All materials for the course are available at:  
[www.filozofiareligii.teologia.uksw.edu.pl/234-2/](http://www.filozofiareligii.teologia.uksw.edu.pl/234-2/)
- Assessment method:
  - Short paper (apr. 10 pages) on one of the topic presented on the course.