Opinion

EarthBeat



Seven Archangels, from left to right: Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, Chamuel (Camael), Raphael, Jophiel and Zadkiel. Stained glass made in 1862 at St. Michael and All Angels Church, Brighton, East Sussex, England. (Courtesy Wikipedia/Creative Commons)



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In an exclusive, RNS is publishing the leaked minutes of a heavenly committee on the future of humanity. Despite the danger of suffering from the divine wrath, we feel that publicizing this document is in the public interest. The document follows.

From: The Archangel Committee on the Future of Earth

Present: Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, Chamuel (Camael), Raphael, Jophiel and Zadkiel

Absent: Lucifer

Holy, holy, holy Lord God almighty,

Per your request, the Archangel Committee on the Future of Earth met for the first time since the last Jubilee in the year 2000. In the eternal scheme of things, this is very soon, but events on earth are developing rapidly.

In the past, the committee could meet every hundred years or so since the population of earth was limited and lived mostly in an agricultural setting. Earthlings lived their short lives, some were saints, others were evil, while the majority were simple people who struggled to do the best they could. Civilizations rose and fell, but the planet could eventually heal itself of any damage done by humans.

Today is different. In the last hundred years, science and technology have given humans power to permanently reshape the earth itself, and they are doing it. Nuclear weapons have the potential to do this quickly, but luckily, they have only been used twice. Meanwhile, fossil fuels have supported an economy that has improved the lives of people, but over the decades they have also been changing the atmosphere.

As the committee noted in its last report, global warming is progressing, and if not stopped, it will have catastrophic consequences for the planet and its inhabitants.

The committee is especially worried that it will reach a tipping point where the Arctic tundra will unfreeze, releasing so much greenhouse gas that weather patterns will dramatically change. It will take thousands of years to reverse this effect. Animal and plant species will go extinct. Humans will starve and fight over limited resources. It will be apocalyptic.

The committee is unanimous in wringing its hands over this situation, but it has no consensus on what to do.

Michael and his faction favor a military solution. He and his soldiers want to go to earth and kick ass. He believes humans will not change unless there is divine intervention. It is time for the Second Coming.

Gabriel proposes a softer approach. He notes the success he had 2,024 years ago when he recruited Mary to be the mother of a new era. He thinks he can recruit others who can turn things around. He notes that major religious leaders like the pope, the patriarch of Constantinople and the Dalai Lama are prophetically warning about global warming.

Mary, by the way, has offered to make multiple visits to her shrines around the world to beg people to change. Michael thinks her followers are worthless, rattling their beads and singing off key.

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Raphael proposes using secret agents to infiltrate the scientific and business communities to help them find solutions to global warming. He fears that without assistance from above they will not get their acts together before it is too late. The committee did that earlier with Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein and Anthony Fauci — to varying degrees of success.

Ariel wants to bring in help from the outside, from one of your more successful experiments in other star systems. They could help humans install green technology before it is too late. However, this would require that you waive the Prime Directive about interference in the affairs of other intelligent species.

Finally, there is a significant minority who want to do nothing and just wait to see what happens. If humans fail, they fail. After all, you have millions of successful

kingdoms in the universe that have listened to your Word and prospered. Mary is furious with this group and has told her son to send them to join Lucifer.

Speaking of Lucifer, he sent a note to the committee with his recommendation, which I am obliged to pass on. He thinks humans are finished, and it would be better to wipe them out and try again with cockroaches who can survive anything. Rather than letting humans suffer for the next couple of millennia, in an act of mercy killing, he would nudge an asteroid to crash into the earth and finish them off like you did the dinosaurs.

The committee abjectly apologizes for not reaching consensus. It followed your instructions and had conversations in the Spirit and tried to discern but still did not reach consensus. They brought in St. Ignatius Loyola to guide their discernment, but he ran away when Michael started throwing lightning bolts at Gabriel.

Lacking consensus, the committee set up a series of study groups to investigate the controversial issues. They will report back in 25 years before the next jubilee year, but many on the committee fear that may be too late.

Bowing before your almighty power, your humble servants beg forgiveness.

P.S. As a simple angel and secretary to the committee, I fear that someone, probably Gabriel, will leak this memo to a journalist. If this happens, Lucifer has offered to loan the committee some former members of the Inquisition to investigate.