

## Native Speakers of Angels' Language

In childhood, I often wondered what language angels use. Before I started to learn German in primary school, I was convinced all angels speak Croatian. But after a few German classes, I thought, "Well, maybe some angels speak German." I asked my mother about her opinion of the angels' language. "No doubt, your guardian angel speaks Croatian," she answered smiling. "But, what about others, no one knows for sure. Maybe they don't speak any, or maybe they speak all languages. It could also be that some of them speak one language, and others speak some other language. Who can know that?" Mother's answer made me more curious than I was before. If angels speak *all* languages, how many is it? My investigation for native speakers of angels' language had just started.

Many years later, in summer 2019, I came to Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology to attend English and Culture Studies (ECS). There were forty-one students from fifteen countries. Different countries, races, cultures, ages, customs, and languages – but our Catholic faith and the English language gathered us together. All of us wanted to improve our English for different reasons. I use English occasionally: reading theological books in English, attending international conferences, writing academic articles and conference papers. Classes at SHSST (grammar, writing, reading, and oral communication) helped me a lot in improving my English. Because of professors' clear expectations and in-time feedback, I had several opportunities: to enrich my vocabulary, to dissolve some grammar doubts, to listen to English for seven weeks, and to speak with more confidence (in spite of mistakes). Besides, at SHSST I started to write in English: paragraphs, short essays, a conference paper. I usually write a lot in the Croatian language, but this was the first time I was writing in English. I worked hard and spent

a lot of time, but it was very fruitful: one meditation, ten short essays, and one conference paper. Regarding the conference paper, next week I'm going to attend the Congress of European Society of Catholic Theologians in Bratislava (Slovakia). I will present my paper in English, *Hope in the Dance of Light and Shadow: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Women's Religious Communities in Croatia*. I wrote the paper with the professor's help. If I were not attending classes at SHSST, I wouldn't be brave enough to write the paper in English. I would probably ask some expert for a Croatian-English translation. Thanks to the professor's encouragement, I did it by myself.

In general, the atmosphere at SHSST is very encouraging. Maybe students won't remember everything they learned in classes, but certainly, they won't forget the way they were treated. So much respect! It doesn't matter what race students are, or where they come from (from the country of 2nd, 3rd or 4th world), everyone is respected. Sharing a meal and communication with others at the same table can be helpful for building a friendship with so many people from all around the world.

Praying and celebrating the Eucharist together helps to grow in spirituality with so many priests/brothers worldwide. Our last Eucharist celebrated by whole SHSST community sticks in my mind. It was so solemn, with dignity. Praying and singing in many languages was so beautiful. I felt like I was in heaven having the opportunity to listen to angels singing and praying. It was like I finally found native speakers of angels' language.

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