

# Content Guide

## *Battle for His Soul*

**Themes:** spiritual warfare, the power of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, consequences of drinking and drug use, the Miraculous Medal, guardian angels, mercy, and forgiveness.

**Educational Value:** Student Study Guide, Parent Study Guide (with answers), and Discussion guide available on the author's website. While in this story angels and demons, which are pure spirit, are portrayed with bodies, wings, and cool weapons, actual details about angels and demons, gathered from St. Thomas Aquinas' writings, are sprinkled throughout the story. See the author's blog post "A Bit About Angels" for more:

<https://catholicbooksblog.wordpress.com/2017/05/05/a-bit-about-angels/>

**Positive Messages:** Trying to help others, especially family members, develops a person's inner strength and peace, regardless of whether that help is accepted.

**Spiritual Messages:** This story shows the power of prayer, especially before the Blessed Sacrament; Our Lady's intercession; and the miraculous Medal. A battle for each of our souls goes on every day. Our guardian angels never give up on us, but they can help us better when we are open to God's will. Jesus loves each of us with a profound and merciful love.

**Positive Role Models:** A teen boy shows concern and sacrificial love for his brother and perseveres in trying to help him, even when rejected. Another teen boy eventually prays and even fasts for someone he doesn't like. A different teen boy struggles to overcome his weaknesses, listen to God's voice, and put his faith into practice. A father makes several attempts to help his troubled son and to strengthen family bonds. A teen girl makes a commitment to prayer and inspires others to join her.

**Violence/Gore:** There are several stylized fight scenes between angels and demons, many where the demons seem to get the upper hand—until the story climax, where the power of prayer and sacrificial love open a troubled teen to God's grace. A disagreement between two teen brothers escalates into a fistfight. A gang restrains and then punches a character. When a man is caught stealing, he fights off another man to get away but then repents.

**Sexuality:** There is no graphic sexual content. A troubled teen recalls with sadness a past relationship and the baby they had out of wedlock, along with his initial insistence that his girlfriend have an abortion—although she didn't, and he later repented. A teen boy makes two passes at a teen girl, at different points in the story, and is rejected both times.

**Language:** Bad language is indicated with phrases like, "a stream of curses spewed from his mouth" and a character "cussed up a storm." A character thinks that at upcoming trip is "gonna be hell." Another characters says an Arizona summer is "hotter than hell." Hell is mentioned in it's true sense a few times in the demon and angel exchanges.

**Drinking, Drugs & Smoking:** A troubled teen smokes cigarettes in several scenes. The same troubled teen sneaks a bottle of wine and drinks it with the purpose of getting drunk. The consequences are clearly shown: disappointing his father and physically sick and

vomiting. He smokes “a joint” on one occasion, shown from his guardian angel’s point of view. The spiritual consequences are clearly shown; the correlation is made between substance abuse and Satan chaining a person.

## **WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW**

The West family is not a perfect family. Years before the story takes place, Mrs. West passed away and Mr. West stopped trusting God. The effects of that are seen throughout the series, but because of the example of friends and the power of prayer, the West brothers grow in faith, one by one, over the series—and their father too, eventually returning to the practice of the Faith. The beauty of the Catholic faith comes to life in each of these stories.

### **Rating:**

Moderate – Story includes subject matter for teens 14 plus.

### **Rating Scale:**

Light- For all readers.

Moderate - Story includes subject matter for teens 14 plus

Advanced - Although not graphic in description, the subject matter is recommended for teens older than 15.