

*The*  
M E E K N E S S *and*  
H U M I L I T Y *of*  
J E S U S C H R I S T



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H U M I L I T Y *of*  
J E S U S C H R I S T

*A Life to Be Learned*

CONOR GALLAGHER

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*To Jesus Christ, meek and humble of heart, who lowered Himself  
that I might rise and waited in silence until I came.*





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## NOTE TO THE READER

MY DEAR READER,

Writing a book on humility is a humbling experience. The idea for this work came from one simple passing remark from a priest friend, Father Paul Check, who said to me on the phone, “You know, Jesus said ‘Learn of me’ only once.” That was it! My mind was set ablaze. I set out reading the Gospels through a new pair of glasses, almost like an investigator looking for the lesson of meekness and humility in the life of Christ, particularly in events that do not immediately bring these virtues to mind.

In fact, the most obvious examples of meekness and humility have been the most challenging. For instance, being born in a manger or becoming the Bread of Life—the lessons in meekness and humility are so evident that, perhaps in my own pride, I was dissatisfied until another insight came to me in prayer. Yet, events in His life less associated with meekness or humility, such as driving the money changers from the temple, came to me more naturally.

*Meekness and Humility*

I have written of these two distinct virtues together, as they are both perfected in every act of Christ. At times, however, one shines more brightly. They are not the same. Aquinas says that humility is seeing ourselves as God sees us. There are numerous clichés about humility, such as “humility is not thinking less of yourself but of yourself less often” or “humility is knowing the truth about yourself.” Aquinas’s definition is not only more accurate but, I think, more helpful in day-to-day experience.

Meekness, on the other hand, is the lesser understood virtue. Aquinas, and Aristotle before him, says it is the virtue that moderates anger according to right reason. It is more typically described as power under control. Frankly, I prefer thinking of power under control rather than anger under control. A beautiful analogy is that of a mighty horse that allows a rider to climb on his back and pull the reins this way and that. I love this analogy, for traveling this life with those we love often resembles this beast of burden.

At the beginning of this project, I suspected that humility would be easy to find in the Gospels but that meekness would be less obvious. I was wrong. In fact, I was backwards. When meditating upon the God-man through the lens of meekness, His willingness to hold back His infinite power is startling. My experience on nearly every page was that of anticipation, as if the power of the Almighty would burst forth and put an end to the human nonsense He endured. I had a

palpable sense of the Divine Horse able to cast off its many constraints at any moment. There is a tension throughout His life that meditation reveals, as if the veil of humanity is about to be torn asunder to reveal divinity. Bated breath is a proper response, for one day the heavens will be opened and His glory will blind those who think they see, and the eyes of those who know they are blind will be opened.

### *Writing to Our Lord*

Addressing a work to the Lord is tricky business, both from a spiritual and literary standpoint. The example that most people think of is Saint Augustine's *Confessions*, a work that has surely influenced me.

People often forget how common this method was. We overlook Saint Catherine's *Dialogues*, large swaths of Saint Teresa's *Interior Castle*, and portions of Saint Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, which include dialogues with Christ. Recently, I have spent many hours in the works of the prolific Saint Alphonsus Liguori, about half of whose writings are directed to Our Lord (or Our Lady).

The difference, of course, is that these are the works of great saints, and I am a great sinner. Solace comes to me, however, when I recall that a student of literature once told his teacher he never wanted to copy the style of a great author such as Dickens. The professor smiled and said, "Son, go right ahead; try the style of Dickens all you want." The lesson is that we can strive to emulate the greats because we

will inevitably fail. Even if there is some level of success, one will naturally become different and unique by the time anything of value appears on the page.

Writing to Our Lord is embarrassing—plain and simple. It makes the writing more intimate and makes one feel vulnerable, like praying extemporaneously in public. I’m Catholic and have always lacked the comfort in this that my evangelical brethren possess. Showing the world your words to Christ makes one feel grotesquely hypocritical. Does humility demand tearing up the manuscript? If it is truly correspondence with Our Lord, has it not been accomplished without sharing with others? Am I a rich man sounding trumpets as I toss gold into the coffer?<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, but I hope not.

From a literary standpoint, I felt constrained by how many different ways I could say “O Lord” or “Lord, my God.” I suspect David felt the same when composing the Psalms. But such is the limit of my own mind and language, and I ask for a bit of patience from the reader.

Regarding writing style, I have been told it would be classified as poetic prose. This was not my motivation; I envisioned myself writing letters to Jesus—simple as that. If I did this, I would, perhaps like most people, use the most beautiful language I could muster without sounding silly or gaudy. Admittedly, I felt this get away from me at times. I tried to pull it back and write to Our Lord in a way He deserves: plainly and simply but with reverence and eloquence.

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<sup>1</sup> See Matt. 6:1–4.

*40 Chapters*

How does one choose the main events in Christ's life? I settled on 40 events for no reason other than that it is a good biblical number and is neither too big nor too small. Yet, I had to leave out so many glorious events that it saddened me.

For example, I included only one parable: the Prodigal Son. How does one choose which parables to include in a book like this? I don't know. I limited myself to a few public miracles and feel sorrow for not including His giving sight to the blind or telling the paralytic to take up his mat.

More importantly, I came to a screeching halt at the crucifixion. Initially, I planned on exploring His seven last words, the resurrection, and the ascension. How can any book on Our Lord's life not include these events? Here, the answer is surely not that my quota of 40 chapters ran dry; on the contrary, numerous chapters remained once I reached the crucifixion. And yet, Our Lord screamed out at me from the Cross, "Learn of me, Conor. Learn of me." All that my soul and body could do was write, "THE END". I thank God for this personal revelation. I feel confident in saying that this painstaking effort, every morning for nine months, was intended for me to learn that the cross is Christ's pulpit on which He preached the greatest sermon on meekness and humility.

And so it was; I happily went back and added a few more reflections to reach 40.

*Lessons Learned*

I feel compelled to share one major lesson I learned that is far too obvious to more educated men than myself. I was continually overwhelmed by the connections between passages that, previously in my mind, were separate scenes. First, some editor long ago went through the Gospels and inserted verse and chapter breaks. I have not researched who did this, nor do I really care, but I have concluded that his work was a necessary evil. Perhaps he had an impossible task before him, but I can't help but be frustrated at many of his decisions.

Before meditating deeply on a passage, I made sure to read everything before and after it. Then, in my meditation, I was astounded at the flowing waters that were dammed up by chapter breaks. If not by chapter breaks, the way we Catholics experience the Bible is usually in small chunks read day after day. So, one day, I would like to read the Gospels without any verse or chapter breaks and am certain it will be a remarkably new experience.

To demonstrate, consider Jesus calming the storm at the end of Mark, Chapter 4, and then His exorcising a demon from the man living among the tombs in the beginning of Mark, Chapter 5. In my reflection, it became clear to me that these two events are meant to be read together, for the former displays Jesus's power over nature and the latter shows His power over the supernatural. Yet, they are rarely read together because of a chapter break.

Another example: Consider the story that closes Luke, Chapter 10. Martha is reprimanded for being busy about her preparation and for criticizing Mary who sat at Jesus's feet. We all know the story. But have we considered that in the very next verse, Luke 11:1, the Apostles ask Jesus how to pray? Surely Mary, the mother of contemplatives, is meant to be seen as the precursor to teaching us how to pray. We do not consider this because of a darn chapter break.

The real point is not my frustration with chapter breaks, but that meditating on these passages shows the seamless connection of one story with another. Consider the leper in Matthew 8:2–4, an untouchable who approaches Christ with perfect faith, knowing that Jesus can make him clean. Is it a coincidence that in the very next verse, Matthew 8:5, the Roman centurion, another “untouchable” of sorts, approaches Christ with perfect faith? I think not. Yet, I had failed to see the flow of the narrative until now. And the examples can go on and on. Another book should explore these connections rarely made.

### *My Method*

Contemplation could never be one's method of choice, for it is beyond choice. Meditation, however, is more within your control. But remember, it is not study. Meditation is allowing the story to sink deep within you. And when one thing sinks deep, it tends to pull other things in with it.

Studying is more like connecting dots and making deductions. While meditation is not contemplation, heightened meditation (for lack of a better word) is like drifting down a river by the currents as you paddle ever so gently. I was not grabbing for things. I was being drawn, just like the woman at the well was drawn to Jesus even more than the water was drawn from the well.

Meditation takes time. This entire book was written between 5:00 a.m. and 6:30 a.m., when little kids start coming downstairs. I begin my morning with the Office of Readings. It is important to begin the day with prayer completely outside of any “work” I was doing, even if the work was prayerful in itself.

I would then read the Gospel passage next on my list of 40 as *Lectio Divina* instructs. I would be sure to read the page before and after my passage to see the context.

I would implore Our Lord—sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Holy Spirit, but always intentional about who I was speaking to—asking them to speak to me through the passage. And then, I would dim the light and sit in darkness, usually with little or no thoughts coming to my mind. Nearly every time, I was certain there was nothing to be revealed to me beyond the obvious meaning on the page. A glimmer of something, however, would eventually shine. And then, like a bolt of lightning, the light would become so clear that I couldn’t not see it, just as looking briefly at a flash of lightning or the sun and its fiery image becomes imprinted upon the retina. I would hold

that in my mind for five minutes, ten minutes, thirty minutes, until I was bursting to get it on paper.

I would then feverishly write a rough draft in my notebook. I am convinced writing with pen and paper for a project like this is infinitely better than typing on a keyboard. Later on, I would type it and begin the editing process, trying to give the Lord the language He deserves. I was surprised, however, that the first draft that came in prayer was eighty percent complete. When one is in a deeply reverent mindset, early in the morning, with a subtle light hanging over the pages of Scripture, you might be surprised how easily the words flow. So much of our day is not like this. It was a glorious experience, one that I will continue.

### *A Glimpse Beyond the Veil*

Regarding contemplation, I am uncertain as to whether it ever occurred or not. I will say that there were many occasions when time stopped, when I lost awareness of what was going on, that my thinking stopped but my experience enhanced. An intimacy with Our Lord was felt beyond description, even when the intimacy was in the form of a rep- rimand or the experience of distance, as ironic as that may sound.

And then as quickly as the experience began, it would end. I felt like one moment I was walking on water, and the next I was sinking beneath the waves with hand outstretched to Jesus. Sweat had filled my brow. My breath was

labored. But worst of all was the realization that it was over. In those few seconds, I would give anything to reengage Him at that level. But like a dream that drifts away by the moment, so does that zeal, that feeling, that longing to be with Him.

Whether such rare experiences were contemplation or simply practiced meditation is not the point. Rather, if this encounter with the life of Jesus can occur in me, I am certain it can happen in anyone who opens himself up to the grace pouring forth from sacred Scripture. But time is necessary. Stillness is necessary. Silence is necessary. In other words, you must be the architect of an environment conducive to this experience. No one will build this for you. You must take ownership of your day and thus provide the Holy Spirit with the tools He needs to work His grace within you.

The Lord awaits you, dear Christian reader, in every syllable of Holy Writ. Do not delay. Meet Him there. He is waiting for you. And you will learn from Him, for He is meek and humble of heart.



## INTRODUCTION

*“ . . . learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart . . . ”*  
*(Matthew 11:29)*

O LORD, YOU SPOKE these words not just to Your disciples, but to me. In Your divine providence, You have been slowly revealing to me the prominence of humility and the wickedness of pride. I confess, Almighty God, how pride has eluded me for so many years. I have used my intellect to comprehend the sins of the flesh, my curiosity to decipher moral conundrums (as if they were riddles to be solved), my education to play with the ideas of ancient philosophers, and my catechesis to navigate the world of virtue and vice, as if that world is a mere labyrinth to wander. But so little attention I have given to the golden path that leads into Your Kingdom: humility.

Due to Your merciful grace, I was entrusted with being the publisher of TAN Books, a publisher of many great works proclaiming Your glory. One little book, however, redefined the way I understand everything: *Humility of Heart* by Father Cajetan Mary da Bergamo (d. 1753). This

little masterpiece cast the entire Christian life in terms of humility and pride. For the first time, I saw the prevalence and permutations of my own pride, so subtle and sly. I saw how the slightest act of pride was a monstrosity against Your infinite glory; that it would be better for all the world to go up in flames and the stars to fall from the sky than for me—helpless little me—to commit the smallest venial sin of pride against You, the infinite source of meekness and humility.

O Lord, I do not know which is more present to my feeble mind: the vastness of Your being or the meagerness of my own. I comprehend neither. My pride prevents me from seeing either of us for what and who we are. And yet, I must praise You for my ignorance, for I would surely die of terror if I were to clearly see either one of us.

Ever since reading *Humility of Heart*, I have desired to better know what true humility is. Since then, You have seemingly put before me Your words in Matthew's Gospel, *learn of me . . . learn of me . . . learn of me . . .* as if calling me forth, giving me a place at Your feet, like Mary who in serenity sat at Your feet while Martha busied herself in anxiety. I hear Your calling. I feel Your pull.

I have felt the desire, if not the call, to read Your life through lens of meekness and humility. You said "learn of me" only once, and You said to do so "because I am meek and humble of heart."<sup>2</sup> And thus, I desire to reexamine everything in Your earthly life in meditation, hoping and

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<sup>2</sup> Matt. 11:29.

## INTRODUCTION

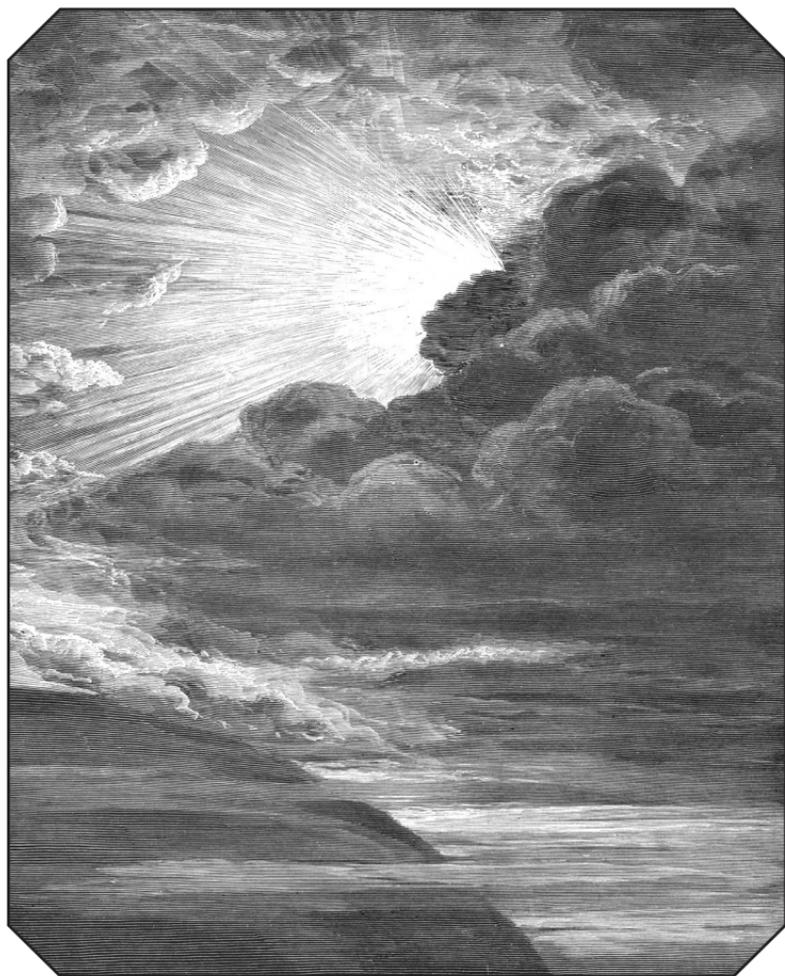
praying that You will show me the lessons of meekness and humility You want me to see. It has proved arduous yet rewarding beyond measure.

Enlighten my mind, Holy Spirit, so that I may show the brilliance, the glory, the majesty of the Son's meek and humble way.

My purpose, dear Jesus, is to look at Your life in this very particular way. I want to learn of You, dear Lord. I want to learn how to be meek and humble in the face of triumph and disaster, wealth and poverty, praise and scorn, pleasure and pain. I want to learn of You. I want to learn of You in the cracks and crevasses of Your little life in Bethlehem and Egypt and Nazareth. I do not want any lesson in meekness and humility to go unlearned, though I can only grasp the smallest shred of Your virtues.

I do not have a lifetime, dear Lord, to write this little book. But I do have a lifetime—however much You give me—to live in meekness and humility. One moment of humble living may well be enough to invoke Your infinite mercy. Yet, I am unsure whether I have ever done one act of true humility in my life, for pride resides in me as much as the blood running through my veins.

Do whatever You must, Lord, to bring me to meekness and humility. Do whatever You must to help me learn of You, for You are meek and humble of heart, and I am not.





## I

# THE IDEA

WHOSE IDEA WAS THIS? Did the Father propose this to You, or You to the Father? Did the Holy Spirit think up the unthinkable?

Who has heard of a sculptor becoming his own marble, a painter becoming his own brush stroke, or a composer dissolving into a single note of his opus? To my limited mind, the idea of God assuming humanity is baffling and nonsensical.

Shall I climb into the chicken coop tonight and perch on the roosting bars next to my hens? Shall I graze with my goats in the field at dawn, or forage for pollen with my bees in their quest among the clover? Such ideas are ridiculous. And yet, the idea of the divine Son of the divine Father taking on the form of a slave<sup>3</sup> was not ridiculous? Or was it wonderfully ridiculous, as when I make my toddler laugh by making animal noises or pretending to feed her doll with

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<sup>3</sup> See Phil. 2:7.

a bottle? Shall I giggle like a child when I think of You becoming man?

I offer this to You, O Lord, pondering a notion so whimsically divine it seems folly: that You, a being of eternal magnitude, would lower Yourself to our mortal coil. It's a thought so outlandish, so fantastical, that only a divine intellect could conceive it. No mere creature's imagination could leap to such heights—or rather, such depths. The ancients with their demigods—Hercules, Achilles—crafted beings part-mortal, part-divine, yet none touched the essence of true Godhood. Their gods, steeped in their celestial dramas, bore no resemblance to the God of Abraham, the singular Almighty. And thus, the notion that the One Almighty God would become fully flesh and blood was never even considered. Perhaps, O Lord, no creature could have even conceived of such an idea. Our lives are constrained by logic; Your life is larger than logic.

Could any being, even the greatest of angels arrayed in splendor before time began, have ever anticipated the Incarnation? This concept, this genuine Incarnation, surpasses the fanciful tales of mythology. It's a reality that only an infinitely humble mind could fathom—a mind supreme enough to imagine being small, pure enough to consider taking on a form that, to divine sensibility, might seem a tarnishing.

The mere idea of the Incarnation speaks of Your existence, Lord. It's beyond comprehension that the Necessary would become needy, the Absolute would embrace contingency,

the great I AM would become a creature. You descended not from mythic heights, from some Mount Olympus, but from a realm entirely separate, piercing an impenetrable division between the Infinite and the finite. I am that finite, that nothing; You are that Infinite, that Everything. And yet, You traversed this gulf with the humility that would later allow human hands to nail Yours to the cross—a humility that foresaw every lash, every thorn, every indignity that my own sins would inflict upon You.

Truly, only an infinitely humble God could conceive such an idea.





## II

# THE CLASH OF ANGELS

AS TRADITION HOLDS, O Lord, you made the radical idea of Your Incarnation known to the angels. Your greatest of angels of the highest choir, Lucifer the Seraphim, could not bear the thought. The Angel of Light would be called to bow down to flesh and bone, artery and vein, synapse and sinew. He who could dash across the universe by the pure power of will would be called to prostrate before He who would receive applause for learning to crawl, He who would flail His arms as He learned to walk, He who would one day tire from swinging a hammer.

Truly, O Lord, he who could sling thunder bolts better than Zeus could not bring himself to adore Him who would take pleasure in skipping stones; he who could pull the sun across the sky with less effort than Apollo refused to follow Him who would one day be pulled across the desert on an ass; he who could lift the world upon his back with greater ease than Atlas could not submit himself to Him who could be crushed beneath the weight of a beam of cypress.

Until this point, if such temporal words can be used, Lucifer was in fact the crowning achievement of creation. It was somehow made known to him, however, that not only would God do the ungodliest thing imaginable (or, perhaps, beyond imaginable) and become a sniffing, sneezing, wheezing, whining baby, but that a fourteen-year-old girl would be made His queen, the queen of all angels, of all creation, the mediatrix of all graces.

I fear getting into the mind of the devil, O Lord, but it is easy for my own prideful mind to see his point. Who does not hate having pride of place taken from him? Ah—there is that word again. Pride. I know, Lord. I see it. But I cannot help asking myself: if I were as glorious as Lucifer, would I have humbled myself before Mary of Nazareth? Would I have adored the babe in a manger? How much prominence do I give to pride of place, to status, to association, to rank and privilege? Do I treat kings and servants the same?

I must admit, it is easy to worship You who has conquered the Roman Empire, who has had great cathedrals built in Your honor, the greatest art depicting Your life, the greatest music singing Your praise, the greatest minds stretching to comprehend You, the greatest poetry surging every syllable with passion for Your sacred passion. I sit here in my comfortable chair, looking back over two thousand years of triumph. Only a dunce would fail to pay You homage, to worship You, and to follow the greatest of men in their pursuit of You.

But what if rather than Your victory I only saw Your defeat? What if rather than seeing Your cardinals in cathedrals I only saw Your rabble hiding from the Romans in hovels? What if rather than smelling incense raising the prayers of the faithful to heaven, I only smelled Your earthly stench? What if rather than hearing the soothing chant of Your holy monks I only heard Your agonizing scream, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!” What if rather than gazing up at a beautiful stained-glass window depicting Your passion I stood at the foot of Your cross and were splattered with blood?

Jesus of Nazareth, I live my life in gruesome pride, proud of my allegiance to You. But I am nothing more than a spoiled heir to a magnificent fortune, proud in his inheritance, fooling himself that the gold and silver are meritorious, that they are the fruits of his labor, and that if others worked they would likewise win.

Forgive me, O Lord, for I have done nothing for my inheritance.

This brings me back to Lucifer, Your once great angel. In Your infinite humility, O Lord, You allowed this glorious being to reject You and Your dearest mother, the girl of Nazareth, the Queen of Heaven. You force no one to love You. Your meekness held no chains around the Seraphic wings, and You thus allowed him to fly away, even unto the pit of hell where Your light will never shine. But he did not just leave. He waged a fearsome war against Your kingdom. Your meekness and humility allowed a great schism, a clash of angels.

In what would become Your typical way, You chose Michael from the lowly eighth choir of angels to lead Your army. You chose the humble to cast down the mighty from his throne. By the powers of nature instilled by You, Michael the Archangel held no power over the glorious Seraphim. But with his humble receptivity of Your grace, all things were possible.

It is from the very beginning of sin in the universe that we see Your meekness and humility and we see Your grace bestowed upon the humble. It is in this clash of angels where we see the foreshadowing of all that is to come, for the story of mankind is nothing but the battle between pride and humility. And the story of my own heart, O Lord, is but the same battle—the battle between loving self and loving You.







### III

## THE MOMENT BETWEEN THE VERSES

*or*

## THE ANNUNCIATION

(Luke 1:37–38)

IN THE BEGINNING, YOU brought the cosmos from nothing into being. But in Nazareth's tranquility, You did nearly the opposite: You emerged from the Absolute to the contingent, from Creator to creation, from the Almighty to the fragile, from the Omnipresent to the confines of DNA, atoms, cellular walls, and a Nazarene womb.

The humility of this act, Lord, of confining Yourself within human form, is beyond my grasp. The meekness required to limit Your infinite strength to vulnerability, to muscle, tendon, and sinew, is incomprehensible.

Yet, there's a humility even deeper in Your Incarnation. In the quiet of Nazareth, an act of humility took place that

delved into the depths of Your divine meekness, surpassing all other actions on earth. This humility—I contend, dear Lord—outstrips even the willingness to be scourged, crowned with thorns, and crucified.

The humility I speak of is in making the Incarnation dependent upon the humility of a little girl. Divine humility sought permission of human humility. Truly, the humblest act imaginable, the incarnation, was placed at the feet of Mary, which in itself is even more humble than the incarnation itself. It's as if you said, "I will not do the humblest act unless you permit me."

At the Annunciation, Gabriel proclaimed a future still dependent on Mary's answer: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb."<sup>4</sup> It was yet to happen because Mary had not yet given her *fiat*, had not yet accepted Your humility.

And so, seeking understanding to love and serve better, she asked, "How shall this be done, because I know not man?"<sup>5</sup> Gabriel detailed the coming events, still contingent on her agreement: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee . . ."<sup>6</sup>

Is the moment between those two verses (Luke 1:37 and 38) the most crucial in all of Scripture? Your plan to redeem mankind was poised, contingent on one humble reply. Between these versified moments of scripture, the salvation of all mankind hung in the balance. I imagine heaven itself

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<sup>4</sup> Luke 1:31.

<sup>5</sup> Luke 1:34.

<sup>6</sup> Luke 1:35–37.

may have paused, legions of angels from all choirs gathering, absorbed by the events in a small house in Nazareth, their tasks momentarily forgotten.

I wonder, did angels of the ninth choir forget their duties in order to focus on the soon-to-be Virgin Mother? I chuckle at the thought of what the world would look like if guardian angels lost their train of thought for just a moment. Did a stone mason in Rome clumsily fall off his ladder? Did some Egyptian housemaid uncharacteristically stick her finger with a needle? How many carpenters, perhaps even Joseph, slammed their thumbs with a hammer?

You have assigned not just guardian angels but Archangels to great dignitaries in both Church and civil roles. Did Herod stub his toe in front of his entourage? Did the high priest trip on his elegant vestments? Did Caesar choke on a grape?

I know, O Lord, that You assigned the fifth choir of angels, the Virtues, to govern the natural order of the universe. But did gravity cease for just a second? Did the planets lose their orbit around the sun and have to be put back on track? And did any child think he had Herculean powers as he jumped over a flowing stream because gravity ceased for just a moment? How many Germanic arrows went just above the bullseye? How many Mongols came off horseback? How many infuriated Egyptian painters could have sworn the pigments floated upward on their tomb wall? While weaving a basket for her family, did a mother in Cana sense a cosmic change? How many Greek playwrights

shook their quills? And did You, O Lord, chuckle at all this and say, “It is good”?

If even the holy angels paused, what confusion must have gripped the demons, sensing the impending, transformative “yes.”

Whatever the heavenly and hellish powers did at this moment, I am quite certain that sinful man’s business carried on as usual, oblivious to the monumental moment that would forever change all of creation.

Your glory, the fulfillment of salvation, waited at the humble feet of a Jewish maiden. Her acceptance is the very proof of every Marian consecration and devotion, every uttered Hail Mary ever said by the greatest saints and sinners. In this divine act of humility, the Holy Trinity entrusted the plan of salvation to the Virgin’s willingness.

You not only took the form of a slave but enslaved Your incarnate plan to the free will of a humble girl.

The Annunciation proclaimed not only the Incarnation but also the potential held in Mary’s consent. Above all, it brought to light the profoundest depth of divine humility—a humility that sought the permission of human humility.

Then, the most humble act in history unfolded with Mary’s words: “Be it done to me according to thy word.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Luke 1:38.