

*Transcendentals*

THE INCARNATION OF THE  
TRANSCENDENTALS



A DIGITAL CATHOLIC JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 2020 • ISSUE 3 • VOLUME 1

Copyright © 2020 Transcendentals: A  
Digital Catholic Journal

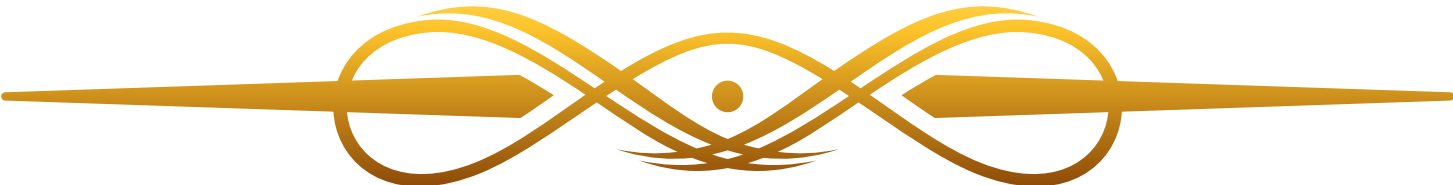
Individual copyright to works belong to  
the individual creators and writers.

Photos and art not expressly from the work of the  
individual contributors are from [canva.com](https://canva.com) and  
used with permission.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be  
reproduced in any way without express  
permission of *Transcendentals* in writing.





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **SPECIAL GUEST CONTRIBUTOR**

---

The Holy Family  
~ Ante & Roberta Skoko 05



## **ART 10**

---

Her Yes 11  
And the Word Became Flesh 12  
Mary and Child 14  
St. Joseph's Staff 16

## **ESSAYS 18**

---

Conscience and Reason 19  
Parle, Commande, Règne 21  
The King Shall Come When  
Morning Dawns 24  
Mary: A Restored Femininity 26  
Beyond the Dim Mirror:  
Historical and Dogmatic  
Criticisms of the New Images 29



## **POETRY 34**

---

Rest Here 35  
Anticipation 36



# News From the Front

---

## A Message from Our Editors

Welcome to our third publication of *Transcendentals*! Now that we have three under our belt, we are starting to figure what works and what does not work. As we continue developing, we would humbly ask that you share this issue if you liked it so that more people can be exposed to the wonderful content created by our contributors. More importantly, please pray for us so that this project may continue to reach more and more people in the best way possible.

On another note, we are officially opening the doors wide for submissions! If you were inspired by our previous issues, wanted an outlet to express yourself, be a part of this growing network, or all of the above, please send your work! For more information, check the website under the “Submissions” tab or feel free to email [info@transcendentals.ca](mailto:info@transcendentals.ca).

Our theme this month, *The Incarnation of the Transcendentals*, is fairly straight forward. It is meant to encapsulate the time when Catholics prepare for the Feast of the Nativity: the liturgical season of Advent. There are many ways we can prepare ourselves for Christmas and there are many lessons to ponder on during this season. Ultimately, as you will see by the following pieces, these lessons should orient towards the preparation of the arrival of Jesus: who is the Word Incarnate and truth, beauty, goodness Incarnate.

To help us reflect on these lessons, we are doing something a little different. Our Guest Contributor for this month is not a person but a family: Roberta & Ante Skoko. They have offered to share with us their journey as a young married couple and their reflections on the Holy Family. Be sure to check out their blog *Catholic et Cetera* and visit St. Joseph's Realty to learn more about this wonderful family.





Photo Copyright to Kristyn Brown's, 'The Saints Project'

# THE HOLY FAMILY

ANTE & ROBERTA SKOKO

If anyone were to look at our lives and see anything they find noteworthy, and then ask us what the “secret” is, the collective answer would be this: we entered into full communion with the Catholic Church; with our courtship, our marriage, and then parenthood, not once expecting any of it to be easy.

Our life thus far has been a balancing act between being aware of the misfortune and suffering inevitable to a fallen world, with the conscious decision to love and trust the Lord throughout. We do not think too much about

the former because that could lead to despair, fear, and paranoia. The latter is a good decision, but we do not allow our love of God to manifest in such a way that makes us naïve: He is a good Father who wants our internal freedom—He wants us for Himself so that we may flourish to who we were created to be—and this is something we can work on, but the external is something out of our control.

We look to the Holy Family daily as the perfect manifestation of God’s Will in family life. Mary and Joseph were aware of the implications of

living God's Will, or at the very least they were aware that there would be implications such as obstacles, trials, and persecutions. They also knew of the power of Love—the indescribable blessings, precious moments, and eternal reward to come—and that overtook everything else, setting the tone for each new day.

On our first date we talked about how many children we would be open to, and the concrete answer was 'seven,' but the sentiment was that we would be open to having as many children as God would give.



We had both come to this openness individually, so when we met it was a breath of fresh air to encounter another with the same ferocious desire to be used as an instrument of God's Will. Something we both know is this: no amount of worldly success or praise could ever amount to the miraculous experience of partaking in God's creative power.

After a year and a half of hoping and praying, we conceived our son in December of 2018 on the Feast of the Holy Family! No, this was not what we were aiming for. Yet in a moment of grace, God wanted to remind us that He has been there every second along the way. He was there in the early trials of our marriage when the only thing that kept us together was our promise to Jesus. He was there in the worries of infertility when we had to ask ourselves if we could find peace without becoming parents, and the answer had to be 'yes.' He was there when the hatred of the world felt almost too heavy. He was there then, and He is here now, gently whispering, "Will you follow me?"

If we look at our lives through the lens of the Cross, we can deduce that there is no room for self-interest or selfishness in the Christian life. The faithful Catholic



understands that it is through the death to self—through being “lost”—that we are found. We understand that through partaking in His death of the Cross, we are also called into the glory of Resurrection. It sounds beautiful—and it is—but we often we do not discover the level of our faith until it is tested. Who will we be when the unthinkable happens? Yet we are not facing the unthinkable daily. We are facing the small moments in the day-to-day which invite us to proceed with patience over irritability, honesty over lies, calm over anger, hope over despair, and trust over frustration. When we fail to do these things, we are called to humility over pride, and that is a decision completely within our control.

This is precisely where the Catholic family needs to cleave to the Holy Family. If the family is the human representation of Trinitarian love between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Family is the perfect family, we must look to Mary, Joseph, and Jesus daily on our journey to Sainthood. We find that is it difficult to define where in our lives we resemble the Holy Family; sometimes it is difficult to even imagine what they would have been like, but we do know some things.

A young woman is visited by an Angel and told that she will conceive a son. We once read an excerpt from “The Life of Mary” where Mary is praying, hoping to be alive long enough to meet the Mother of God.

Ponder that for a moment.

Precious Mary, so gracious and pure, completely unaware of the plan God had for her. The Immaculate Conception was so humble she did not even know this Truth about herself. Never doubt that God, too, has a plan for you. For that plan to manifest, we ought to mimic Mary: obedient to her faith, prayerful, humble,







open to the Will of God, not an ounce of selfishness; no worldly desires or aspirations because she knew that the only real success was in serving the Lord. Is there something in our lives that is taking precedent over our desire to please God?

A man likely in his late twenties betrothed to the young Virgin Mary. Many scholars interpret Joseph's initial separation from Mary as his attempt to spare her of embarrassment: he knew the child was not his. Our favored interpretation is this: Joseph knew that Mary was carrying the Son of God and he did not feel worthy; he could not fathom that he would be part of that plan, to partake in the life of the Incarnate God, let alone raise him. And yet God raised the lowly and used the humble. Is shame or feeling of inadequacy keeping you from doing the things God might be calling you to do?



That young couple presenting their newborn child in the temple, only for Mary to be told that a sword would pierce her own soul, too (Luke 2:35). How do parents do it? How do they let go? How does a mother live, knowing that her Son's fate is an excruciating one? They just do. She just does. With the grace of God and unwavering trust in His plan, she perhaps knew then what we know now: on the third day death would be conquered, Heaven's gates would be opened, and the world would be saved through Jesus's perfect act of selflessness on the Cross. You see, we get to live in the hope of the Resurrection and our Eternal Reward, if we so choose.

This Advent, we meet Mary and Joseph on the road to Bethlehem. Their story is not bound up in time, but a timeless witness, day by day, breath by breath, to God's gentle whispers, His blatant commands, and His unending love.

It is not recommended to travel in the third trimester, yet we find Mary on camelback.

Have you ever been on a camel? Is it a smooth ride? Likely not. Will the Catholic life often take us into the unreasonable and uncomfortable? Yes. Will we be given the chance again and again to reaffirm our trust in the Lord's plan? Yes. Are there moments we question God's plan? Yes. Are there times we fail? Oh yes!

Yet on that Holy Night, Jesus was birthed and the world felt wonder. It was introduced to the God-man, our Savior and Redeemer; the Word made flesh and our path to Heaven; the only means by which we are saved. Mary and Joseph were instrumental in introducing Jesus to us, and now we are asked to be instrumental in introducing Him to the rest of the world.

We can often measure ourselves against the Holy Family most successfully by our failures and the acknowledgement that "Mary would not have acted this way," and "Joseph would not have responded that way." We do not allow our happiness to lie in the other, but in God alone. This takes the pressure off and allows a marriage to grow and thrive. We are most peaceful when we are honest, and best to one

another when the time comes to forgive. It is amazing the grace God will give the family when the family seeks to bring glory to Him. In not expecting Catholicism, marriage, and parenthood to be easy—willing to choose one another, put in the work, have the needed conversations, and carry our Crosses—God has made the Crosses feel light. We strive to be a traditional family; a man who provides and protects, and a woman who serves and nurtures. This society makes it difficult, logistically, but in a world fallen so far from God, we hope to live as the antithesis to secularism.

When we both gave our "yes" to God in our early twenties, we entered with an open mind and heart, in search of Truth, conforming our lives to Jesus and the Church, not the other way around. In that we have found our peace and joy, because in that we have found who we are in the Lord. We invite you during this Advent season to open yourself up more fully to the path God has paved for you. Too many miss this point of this season: to anticipate the arrival of the One who changes everything, beginning with you.





# Art

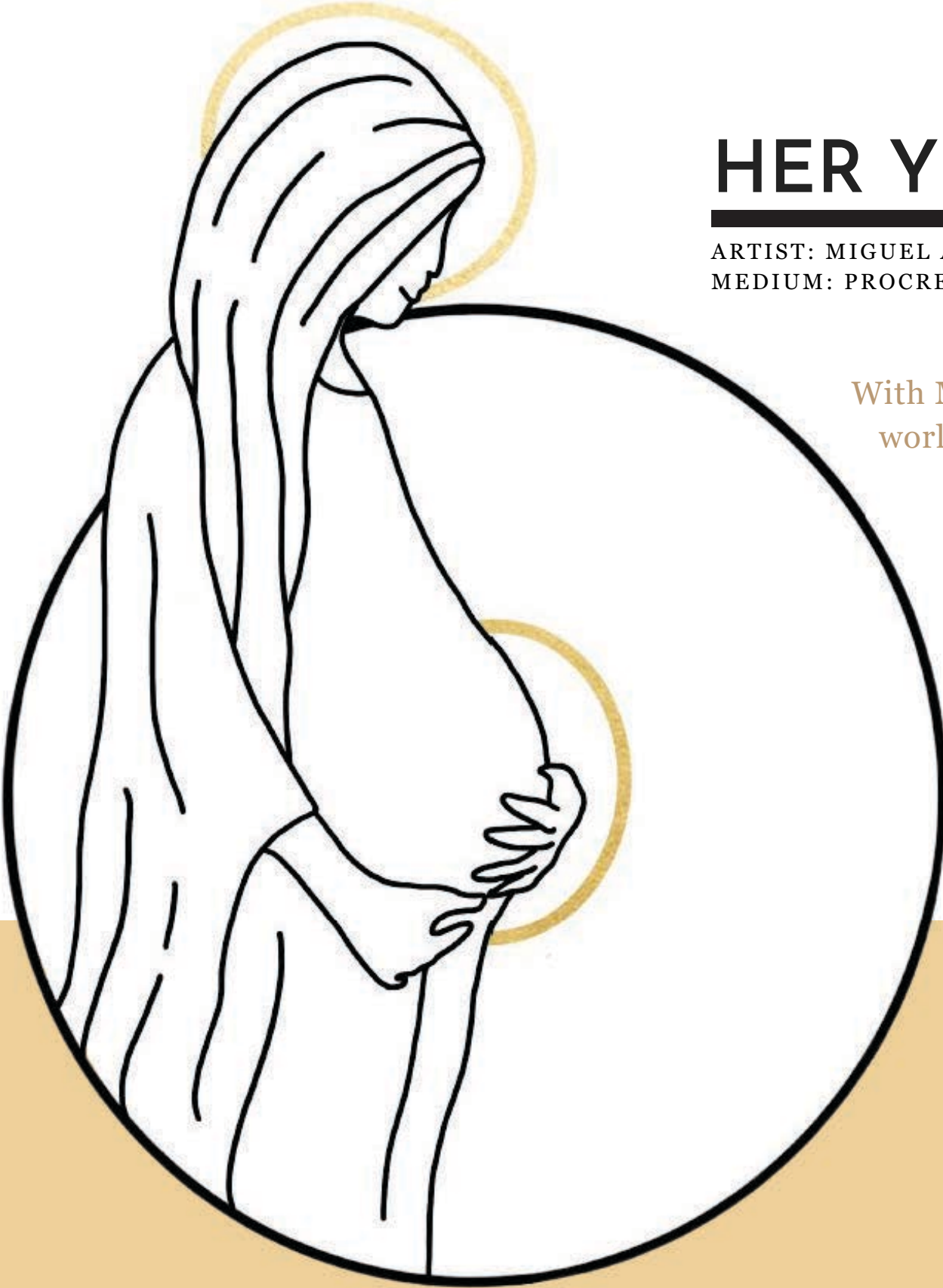


# HER YES

ARTIST: MIGUEL ANDRES

MEDIUM: PROCREATE

With Mary's "Yes," the  
world was changed  
forever.



In this piece, I've depicted pregnant Mary. I made her the largest part of the piece even to the point of her not being contained by the frame. This symbolizes the importance of Mary and the yes she gave when she became the mother of Jesus. Her docility to God's Will changed the world.

As the mother of God, she is clearly significant. However, what makes her significant is the child that she bears. In this piece, the unborn Jesus is at the centre, making Jesus the central focus.

I've also used the golden halos to indicate the unborn child's divinity and the holiness of Mary.



# AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH



ARTIST: JOSHUA TERPSTRA  
MEDIUM: PROCREATE  
ORIGINAL SIZE: 3825X4950PX



"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14a, RSV). This scripture captured my prayer a few months back, and I think that this is one of the most important elements of the Incarnation of Christ.

As we've established, Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Transcendentals: He is Truth, He is Beauty, He is Goodness (because He is God, who through Divine Simplicity is the Transcendentals). The moment in which He embodied these attributes, and in taking human form, was ultimately at the moment of conception; the moment before the nativity. Inside the womb of His Blessed Mother, He became incarnate. In the transcendence of time and space, God's Divinity was found in a single moment, in a single space. It is indeed one of the greatest mysteries of our faith.

In the image, we see a few important elements pointing to the depth of this truth. The first is the selection of colours in the concentric circles. The three outer-most concentric circles are flesh coloured - that is, the three colours of the layers of a womb. The following three thin circles are red (representative of the humanity of Christ), purple (representative of the royalty of Christ), and blue (representative of the divinity of Christ). Through the presence of perfect humanity and perfect divinity, Christ's kingship is made perfect. Following this, we see a

mandorla, that is, an iconographic mark of the moments in history where God transcended time and space. In inserting himself into human history, it is in the conception of Jesus that the salvific process is tangibly started. The mandorla holds white triangles (representative of heavenly light) and stars (representative of the Heavens themselves). We also see the halo, a gold that is reserved for the Divinity of Christ, with the stylings of the icon of Christ as the High Priest.

The umbilical cord moves from the second layer of the outer circles (the uterine wall) and wraps in the lines of the mandorla. That is, God's transcendence of time and space worked in cooperation with Mary's fiat, while maintaining the human substance of sustenance given by His Mother as he grew into a human child. We also see the latin text for John 1:14a, emboldened into the outer concentric circle, marking Mary as the vehicle through which the Word was given flesh. Finally, as in the Western artistic tradition, Jesus is portrayed as a naked child, while borrowing elements of Eastern iconography to capture His dual-nature.



*"He made your womb a throne, and He made it wider than all the heavens.  
In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices. Glory be to you."*

### **The Irmos to the Mother of God**

*" In You, O Full of Grace"*

from the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great



# MARY AND CHILD

ARTIST: IRENA VÉLEZ

MEDIUM: WATERCOLOUR WITH MIRCO-LINE PEN

ORIGINAL SIZE: 22.9 X 30.5 CM (9 X 12 IN)



Through the Incarnation, God took on flesh and became human. Jesus was miraculously conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary and lived a mortal life on earth. He was both fully God and fully man.

Mary's openness and acceptance of God's will for her to bear the Son of Man is

miraculous in itself. When the angel Gabriel told her she would bear a Son, she responded, "Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word" (Luke 1:37). Her faith was unfailing and her trust in God was firm.

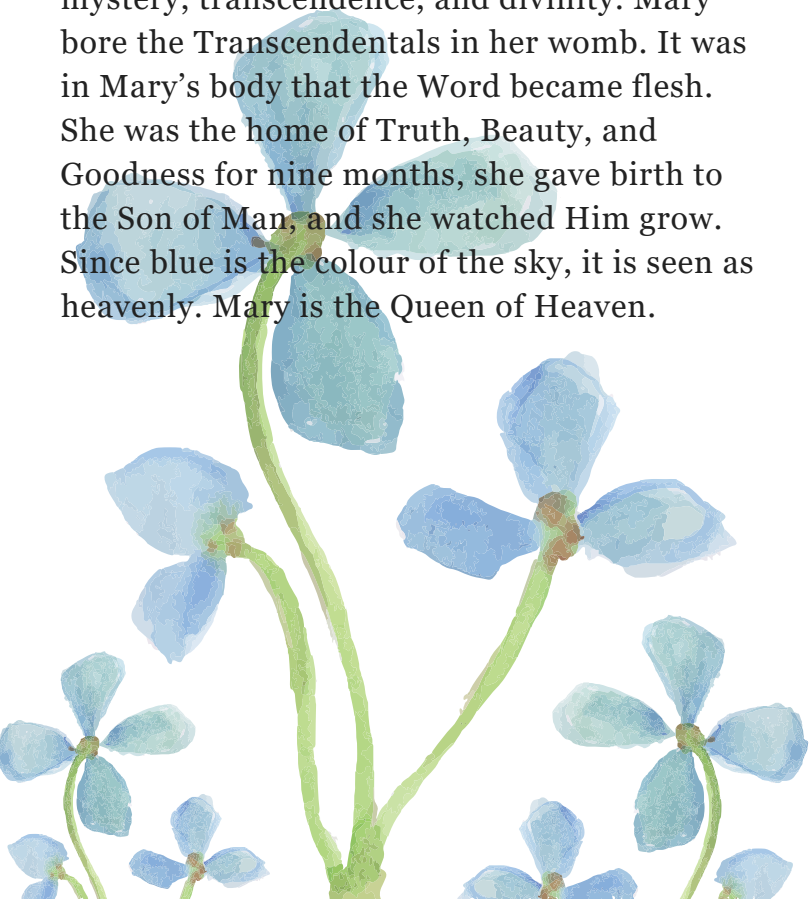
My painting depicts Mary as a compassionate mother, cradling her infant Son tightly in her



arms and tenderly gazing down at him. She is completely devoted to her Son, she adores Him. There is warmth and intimacy in the relationship between Mother and Son. There is nothing in the background, only Mary and Jesus are important. Light shines around them to show their holiness, like one giant halo.

I chose to depict Mary wearing her traditional blue garments. The Virgin Mary has been depicted wearing blue in Christian art for more than a thousand years. In the Old Testament, the book of Numbers notes blue as the colour of the people of Israel, which they wore to remind themselves of God's commandments. Furthermore, the Levites would spread a blue cloth over the Ark of the Covenant. Behold Mary, the New Ark. Just as the Ark in the Tabernacle was the place of God in the Old Testament, so the Annunciation makes Mary the dwelling place of God in the New Testament. Blue symbolizes her purity and royalty.

In Byzantine tradition, blue symbolizes mystery, transcendence, and divinity. Mary bore the Transcendentals in her womb. It was in Mary's body that the Word became flesh. She was the home of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness for nine months, she gave birth to the Son of Man, and she watched Him grow. Since blue is the colour of the sky, it is seen as heavenly. Mary is the Queen of Heaven.



Historically, blue was also the most rare and expensive pigment of all. Since antiquity, various peoples imported lapis lazuli, a precious blue stone from Afghanistan for its ultramarine pigment. Since the colour blue was so prized, it was reserved for the most sacred and important subjects in art. At times, it was even more valuable than gold. It is no wonder that Christians began to depict the Virgin Mary in blue clothing.

The vibrant blues contrast with the simple white blanket that Jesus is wrapped in. White symbolizes purity, sinlessness, and divinity. Utterly defenceless and vulnerable, God came to the world as a little baby. A baby cannot survive without the constant care and nurturing of its mother. Mary is the most loving, fervent, and devoted Mother this world has ever seen. Her vocation was to be God-bearer and this she accepted in every way.

Once when Jesus was preaching to a crowd, a woman raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you" (Luke 11:27). Truly blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of God's will for her. May we all strive to have the docility of Mary and love Christ as she does.





# ST. JOSEPH'S STAFF



ARTIST: LAURA BELL  
MEDIUM: ACRYLIC ON SKETCH PAPER  
ORIGINAL SIZE: 11"X14"



I've been told that I look a lot like my mom. So much so, that many people call me, "Sally's daughter," rather than Laura... it's become a running joke in our family! At first, this used to bug me, but now, I realize it's one of the greatest compliments I could receive: to look like my beautiful mother. Even though I look like my mom, I have my dad's personality – he's an artist, I'm an artist; he can't eat spicy food, I can't eat spicy food; he likes Disney movies, I like Disney movies.

Other than Jesus, my dad was the first man in my life to love me, and my mom taught me how to embrace my identity as a beloved daughter of God. I am very blessed to grow up with a mom who reminds me of our Blessed Mother Mary, and a dad who reminds me of

St. Joseph. In his book, "The World's First Love," Venerable Fulton Sheen describes the union between Mary and Joseph as, "The World's Happiest Marriage." In the Bible, Mary was often called "woman" or "mother." She was never called by her first name.

This was out of protection and God's level of great humility that He called her to. Mary also spoke very little in the Bible. In a similar way, St. Joseph does not say anything in the Bible. Very little is known about him, and yet, they're recognized as "The World's Happiest Marriage," the purest form of a Holy Family. Of course, this mission of fostering the Holy Family began at Mary's Fiat – her yes to be the Mother of God.

Reflecting on Mary's Fiat in the Annunciation is a common and powerful way to prepare our hearts during the Advent season. But what about St. Joseph and his role in the nativity? As much as Mary needed to give her yes to be the Mother of God, St. Joseph also needed to give his yes to be the foster father of Jesus. There needed to be a Mary and a Joseph for Jesus' birth...for the Holy Family. This reflection led to the idea for my painting.

There's a scene in the movie, Prince of Egypt, where Moses surprises his soon to be wife, Zipporah, with flowers wrapped around her staff as she's shepherding the sheep.

This imagery reminded me of St. Joseph's staff and how he's depicted holding flowers, specifically lilies in one hand and the Child Jesus in the other. This got me thinking: what would St. Joseph's bouquet on his staff look like? It would probably have lilies!

This is my depiction of St. Joseph's staff. His lilies are known to represent his holiness, purity, and chaste marriage to Mother Mary. The staff itself represents his role and his mission to serve his family as the head of the household, "For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Saviour" (Ephesians 5:23). Mary is often represented by a rose. I drew Mary, Baby Jesus, and the rose as a separate drawing at the beginning of quarantine. Little did I know that this rose would serve as a flower on St. Joseph's staff.

In this depiction, the rose petals are Mary's veil – her mantle of protection. The rose forms Mary's body, and Mary's body forms the fetus of Jesus. The red of the rose emphasizes the love between the Holy Trinity and Mary, conceiving Jesus in her womb. The blue represents Mary's purity and her veil as a symbol of her identity as a beloved daughter of God. As Fulton Sheen writes, "No husband and wife ever loved one another so much as Joseph and Mary" (The World's First Love, 97).





# ESSAYS





# Conscience and Reason

CLIF CLEMOTTE

Conscience is one of those features of moral and political discourse whose invocation is supposed to be both unknown (intangible, hidden) and final (indisputable, authoritative). "I acted according to my conscience" is a phrase that should end the dispute as to why a person acted in one way or another. It is unknown, intangible, hidden insofar as it is something that belongs to that person alone, and no other; it is final, indisputable, and authoritative because one cannot impose one's conscience on anyone else, precisely because everyone's conscience is unknown, intangible, and hidden. Appeal to conscience is thus the highest moral claim - except, this assessment of conscience does not work. It does not work because it leaves conscience wholly unexplained - and anyone who seeks to understand reality according to the tools of reason should be reluctant to leave something unexplained without a good reason. (Not all things can be justified, as both Aristotle and Russell concede - in particular, the fundamental principles of logic - but there is a reason for leaving them unjustified.)

In this view, conscience is some moral impetus within all humans which cannot be understood, despite being universal. It is so universal as to be inescapable for every human being, yet cannot be scrutinized by anyone - including, it would seem, oneself because its origins are separate from objective matters of fact. This should raise warning flags, as whatever is universal should have sufficient commonality to allow investigation. What are facts, after all, except those things which are universally known?

My purpose is not to define conscience in any definitive way, but rather to argue that some

common assumptions about conscience should be abandoned. However, I hope I am not preaching to a choir in doing so, as I suspect the assumptions I target are ones which occur outside the postmodernist weltanschauung. I was marking papers the other day, several of which argued against so-called "Divine Command Theory" in ethics. The claim of this theory is that morality exists only by divine dictat, and is either arbitrary or independent of (and thus superior to) the deity. The response, then, is either that morality is completely unknowable, being arbitrary (and probably unrevealed) or that God cannot be God, lacking omnipotence.

While reading, I sat back and wondered, what historical theologians or philosophers ever advocated this flimsy 'Divine Command Theory'? Certainly none of the major Scholastic thinkers (except maybe Ockham), none of the Patristic teachers, none of the Scriptural writers, and no ecumenical council. What possible theology do these pupils have in mind? It seems a fictitious straw man with no historical counterpart. However, an argument I have heard before is this: morality comes from God, and is revealed through conscience. Thus, the existence of conscience is an argument for God's existence, because only the Creator could imprint the moral impulse on every soul, such that it is universal and yet so intensely personal.

I do not want to persuade readers that there is no merit to the argument for God's existence; but I do want to suggest that this view of conscience as directly dependent on God for existence seems at least open to misinterpretation. The misinterpretation would be that conscience is indeed both unknown and final, and appeal to conscience thus bears finality because it is an appeal to Divine authority. The contents of one's conscience are unknown in this view because they do not arise from any knowledge we have of earthly things,

but rather precede our knowledge of earthly things. My purpose then, is to advise an alternative view of conscience wherein it is an ability grounded in reason and knowledge of human flourishing.

This should not be considered a threat to Christian thought, nor to apologetics; rather, it is an aid to both. Josef Pieper, in *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, writes that "reason 'perfected in the cognition of truth' [he here quotes Aquinas] is... the receptivity of the human spirit, to which the revelation of reality, both natural and supernatural reality, has given substance" (Ch. 1).



This point simply means that moral reasoning is part of the broader function of reason in receiving truth from any wholesome source. The exercise of reason is no threat to the discovery of God, but rather is an essential aid in the process. The emphasis upon the relation of reason to reality, incidentally, is also a reason why the list of transcendentals (previously called predicables) rested upon being, or existence - these two should never be distinguished, and Paul Tillich was in error to do so.

The emphasis upon reason as a kind of receptivity to reality is necessary, because the kind of 'conscience' most spoken of today might more accurately be called prudence (Ch. 2). In modern jargon, prudence seems to mean calculation, such that one might call a selfish miser a prudent man (cf. Ch. I). This is a poor use of the term. Prudence was historically the ability to judge what must be done in the

moment, i.e. consistently making good judgments. As Pieper says, "Prudence... is the mold and mother of all virtues, the circumspect and resolute shaping power of our minds which transforms knowledge of reality into realization of the good" (Ch. 2). More succinctly, "prudence means... nothing less than the directing cognition of reality" (Ch. 3).

The correlation of prudence to reality under the knowledge of reason means that prudence is scrutable; it can be erroneous, and can be corrected according to an objective standard. Remembering that conscience often is synonymous with prudence, then, our response to contemporaries who assert a right to act according to their conscience could begin by agreeing with them! However, this agreement is only possible with the condition that one's conscience be rightly ordered. This is not to impose one's own conscience on others, but rather is an attempt to submit one's own conscience (in the company of others) to what can be rationally known to be good. The strength of a conscience is not determined by deeply held beliefs but rather by objective veracity. Conscience, prudence, human morality, and human goodness can be known by reason. This was the legacy of the Scholastic thinkers, and should be an integral part of all Christian apologetics and political action (without displacing the central core of



Christian kerygma, which must be Christ risen). Moral reasoning grounded in human nature and the objectivity of the natural world enables genuine dialogue, dialogue which wins hearts and minds and assists renewal of life. By emphasizing the objectivity of conscience, that inner sanctum long hidden underneath a dubious classical liberal neutrality, we protect the human desire for knowledge and strengthen our ability to act well.

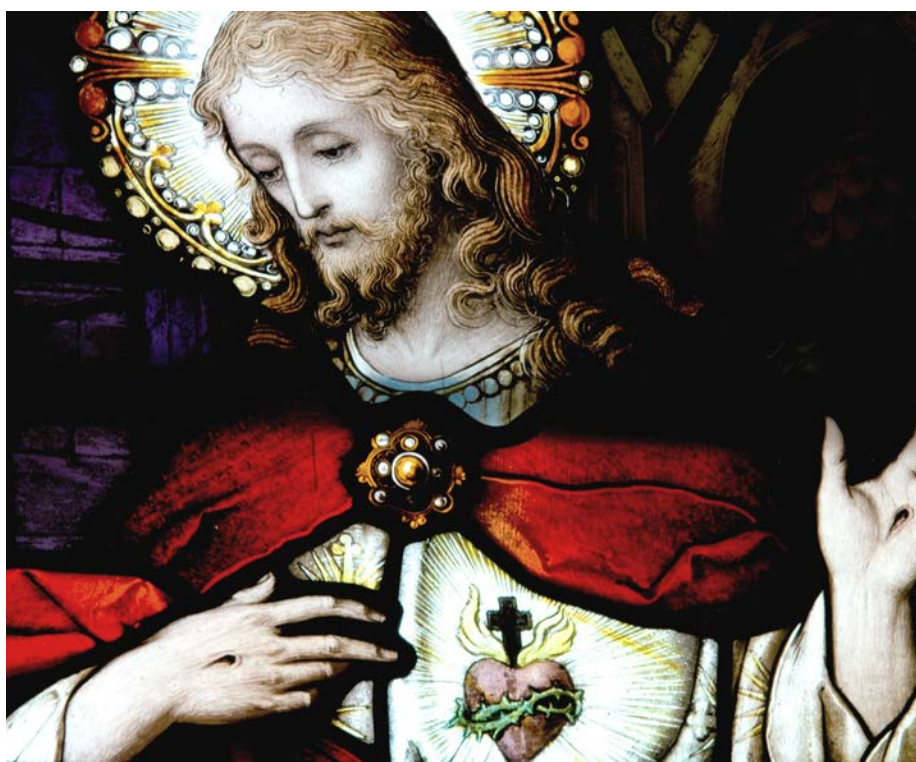
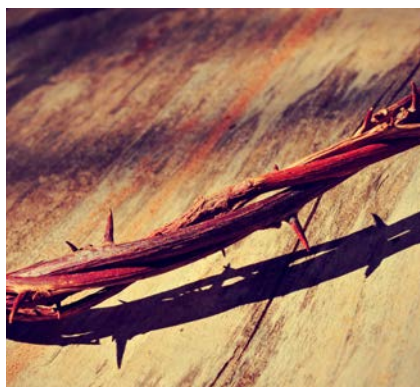






# PARLE, COMMANDE, RÈGNE

TYLER BROOKS



The title of this essay comes from a traditional Catholic, French song with the same name. In English, it translates to “Speak, Command, Reign” (but the French version sounds much nicer in my opinion). It is usually sung during the feast of Christ the King, which, in the traditional calendar of the Catholic Church, is celebrated on the final Sunday of October. As I was attending that Mass this year, the congregation was challenged by the priest to ponder how to make Christ reign in their own hearts. Since we are approaching Advent, and the theme of this publication is about Jesus Himself, it feels appropriate to write on how to make Christ reign in our hearts.

It is tempting to think that the Catholic Church’s language of God as our “King” is a symptom of Medieval or Early Modern blends of Church and state. However, we see this type of language constantly in scripture that refers to God as a King and ruler over his people.

“The Lord has established His throne in the heavens,  
And His kingdom rules over all.”  
(Psalm 103:19 RSV)

“Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.’”  
(John 19: 19 RSV)



“On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords.” (Rev 19:16) It is true that Jesus is our best friend, the greatest teacher, and sole mediator between us and God the Father. However, it is important to stress that Jesus is the King of Kings who reigns over all the Christian faithful. This is because Jesus accomplished the greatest task that no other ruler could ever do: Jesus conquered death. By his descent in Hell and resurrection on the third day, Jesus spiritually fought with Satan and won. There are many other reasons but for me personally, I find Jesus’s conquest of death to be the primary tenet for his Kingship of Kings.

Jesus is not only the ruler of the Heavenly Kingdom, but as is reflected on the feast of Christ the King, He is the ruler of the faithful’s heart. Thus, as subjects to Jesus Christ, Christians have a responsibility to ensure that their interior is oriented towards Him.

But what exactly does that mean and how can Christians ensure that Christ reigns in their heart? A way to look at these questions is to imagine our hearts to be a castle. While there are many parts of a castle, I want to focus on three that can help us maintain our hearts for Christ the King: castles have formidable walls that are difficult to breach, defences that repel enemy attacks, and the keep where the centre of castle life is (Note, the following terms “heart” and “spiritual castle” reflect the same meaning).

The first is the most telling sign of a castle: the large, impregnable walls that surround the city. Picture the multilayered stone or brick structures that are immune to a simple arrow or single cannonball. These defences are a sign of intimidation for its foes and security for its residents. For our spiritual castle, that is to say our heart, it too needs protective walls that surround it. After all, as St Paul says regarding the spiritual struggle:



“For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12 RSV).

Just as kingdoms contended with other rival kingdoms, so do we all contend with the cosmic forces of Satan. The enemy wants to do everything possible to thwart Christ’s subjects from following the will of God and having peace in their hearts. In order for our hearts to be secure from this attack, there needs to be an intimidating structure that surrounds and protects it. Think of the sacraments as being that outer layer; for it is not something we make ourselves but God makes when He gives His graces through them. The Eucharist, in

particular, provides us with an indestructible defense that keeps His faithful secure and the enemy terrified. For when we are in communion with Jesus Christ, the conqueror of death, we can rest safely and know that our walls will never be destroyed.

Secondly, castles have defences that thwart off enemies when they approach the walls. Imagine large ballistas, trebuchets, or even soldiers themselves with crossbows. Who are these soldiers in particular that thwart off the enemy's attacks when they harass the impenetrable wall of our spiritual castle? Imagine the army of the Heavenly Host, the angels led by its general St. Michael, fighting for your heart. We can be confident that the army under St. Michael continues to defend us when we pray:

“St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protections against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray, and do thou O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into Satan and all the evil spirits; who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.”

What is interesting about this particular metaphor is how there are spiritual forces fighting for each and every one of us. Additionally, just as our previous Guest Contributor Tianna Williams suggested with her art piece, we can actually join the spiritual fight. Not only can we watch the angels fight off the attacks from our hearts, but we can contribute to the defence as well. Through prayers such as the St. Michael one or devotions like the rosary, we can see how both Heaven and ourselves fight for the safety of our hearts. Thus, our hearts have a fortification instilled by God through the sacraments and continuous defences in place through the efforts of the angels and even ourselves.

Finally, there is the keep of the castle. This represents the “heart” of the city where the political life resides and also bears the flag of the kingdom. Think of it as the heart of the

spiritual heart. Here lies the most important point of this metaphor: only we can choose to plant the flag of Jesus in the keep to show that it is the castle for Christ the King. If He were to do it for us, then it would not be love but manipulation. Love and respect can only be chosen by the recipient and can never be forced upon. Jesus wants to be our King and reign within us, but it is up to each individual to make the choice of claiming it for Him.

When there is no flag in the keep of the castle, there is confusion and it can be for anyone to take. When there is the wrong flag in place, then there is disorder

and struggle for control of the

castle: the sides for the legitimate king and a pretender. For our own hearts, there can often be

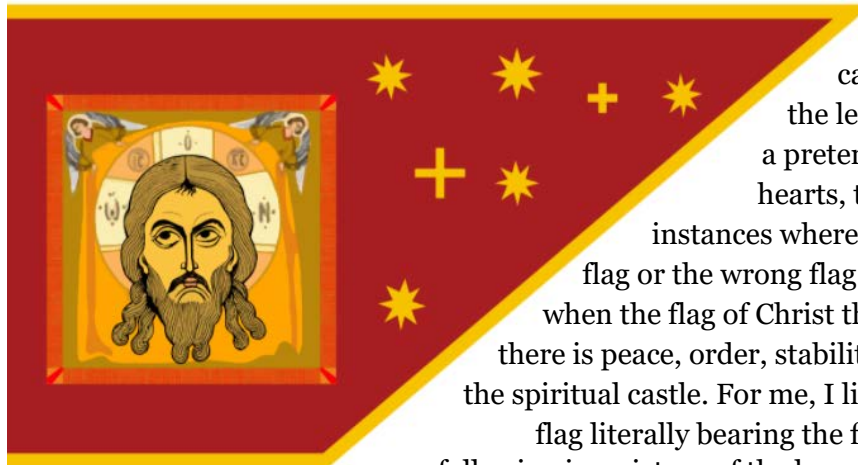
instances where there is either no

flag or the wrong flag in place. It is only when the flag of Christ the King is planted there is peace, order, stability, and security in the spiritual castle. For me, I like to imagine that

flag literally bearing the face of Christ. The following is a picture of the banner of “The Most Gracious Saviour” used by the Tsardom of Russia up until the 17th Century. I like to imagine a flag similar to his as it is very clear who I am fighting for and who is fighting for me.

Bearing these three observations of the spiritual castle in mind, we can be ready for the Nativity of Our Lord this upcoming December 25th. When we celebrate Christmas every year, we are celebrating when the Word of God became flesh, when God dwelt among us, and when our King arrived.

“For behold, the Lord is coming forth from His place. He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.” (Micah 1:3) God is on his way and desires to take His rightful place as ruler. All that remains is if we desire to choose Him to speak, command, and reign in our hearts.







# The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns

FR. STEPHEN BRUZZESE

“The King shall come when morning dawns and light triumphant breaks, when beauty gilds the eastern hills and life to joy awakes.” As the month of November draws to a close, the month in which we remember and pray for the holy souls of Purgatory; we now turn our eyes towards the East, with great anticipation and joy, as the words from the Benedictus (Canticle of Zechariah) proclaims to us:

“the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:78-79).

As the cool autumn days transition to the bone chilling days of winter; as the green of Ordinary Time fades into the purple of Advent; as we begin a new liturgical year; as we listen to the voice of St. John the Baptist crying out in the wilderness, “prepare the way of the Lord,” we begin preparing our hearts and minds for the coming of our saviour, Jesus Christ, in the incarnation of Christmas.

For me, especially as a priest, the Season of Advent is by far my favourite liturgical season. Even as a young boy, I loved everything about the season; probably because innately, I knew it meant Christmas was almost here! When speaking about the liturgy of Advent, the Catechism says, “Each year she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour’s first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming” (CCC, 524). As Catholics, we know that in just four short weeks, we will be celebrating the birth of our Saviour; who is the “the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6), who is the Word made flesh, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

For we know that without the Crib, there could be no Cross; for the wood of the Cross is fashioned from the wood of the Crib.

St. Augustine, one of the preeminent Doctors of the Church, wrote famously in his Confessions, "Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new, late have I loved you! You were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you." As we journey through the Season of Advent, we get closer to the birth of that "beauty ever ancient". There is no doubt that it's only through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ that the fullness of beauty, truth, and goodness resides; for He is the author of the transcendentals. So regardless of whether a person knows it or not, they are in fact all seeking the same thing: beauty, truth, and goodness. And if the fullness of beauty, truth, and goodness reside in Christ, ultimately everyone is seeking a participation in Christ, whether they know it or not. In a sense, everyone is anticipating the coming of Christ, even if they are searching outside themselves, as St. Augustine says:

"Like St. John the Baptist, this Season of Advent allows us to also be like the one crying out in the wilderness, preparing the way for the Lord; not only for ourselves, but also for others. These next four weeks of joy-filled waiting provides each of us with an opportunity to truly evangelize and bring the light of revelation to the nations.

Paradoxically, as we approach the birth of Christ, who is the light of the world (John 8:12), we also move towards the darkest day of the year, the Winter Solstice. However, it is through the birth of Christ that we begin to move away from darkness and towards the light, both physically in nature and spiritually in our lives."

For those who are music enthusiasts, of which I am one, this is the time of year we ought to be listening to Handel's Messiah; and particularly, Part I. In it we hear from the words of the Prophet Isaiah prophesying about the coming King, who will come to bring light to those who

walk in darkness (Isaiah 9:2). The Prophet Isaiah continues saying, "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). For those who are wondering who this child is, it is of course Jesus Christ, the babe, the Son of Mary. And yes, the Blessed Virgin Mary did know, because the Angel Gabriel told her in the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38).

As we begin the Season of Advent, there is always a sense of restlessness; one which is generated not from the Spirit but from the world. The Psalmist exhorts us, "Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him..." (Psalm 37:7). The reason we have this restlessness, this inability to be still before the Lord, is because the world tells us that we need to get our Christmas tree up, buy the perfect presents, get the lights up before it snows, and make sure all the baking is done before December 24th. The hymn *The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns* continues in the fourth verse, "O brighter than that glorious morn shall this fair morning be, when Christ, our King, in beauty comes, and we his face shall see!" As we anticipate this glorious morn of Christmas Day, when we will gaze upon Beauty himself, we must continue to repeat the words of St. Augustine's Confessions, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

I think deep down we all understand what St. Augustine is saying, as we have all experienced this restlessness, in one way or another. As we start this new liturgical year, in the Season of Advent, let us with renewed devotion and enthusiasm look forward to that day when "the dawn from on high shall break upon us" in the incarnation! As we turn our eyes towards the East, with great anticipation and joy, in which the King shall come when morning dawns and light and beauty brings, and we with loud voices will proclaim, Hail, Christ, the Lord! Thy people pray: Come quickly, King of kings.



# MARY: A RESTORED FEMININITY

MEGAN JOSEPH



In the season of Advent, the Church is pregnant with anticipation of the coming Saviour and we reflect on the mystery of the Incarnation. As soon as Mary gives her fiat, the Word becomes flesh. Mary then visits Elizabeth and at their meeting, the women rejoice and praise God. From vv. 46 to 55 in Luke, Mary responds to the praise from Elizabeth through a psalm or hymn of praise called the “Canticle of Mary” or the Magnificat. There exists some historical context and analysis on the first chapters of the Gospel of Luke to suggest that the Incarnation of Jesus portrays the perfection of Mary’s womanhood and discipleship. In fact, one cannot be separated from the other.

The Gospel of Luke is the longest of the four. It is linguistically more complex than the rest, with a more distinct vocabulary. This elevation of writing indicates that Luke was well-educated, likely a physician or doctor. In addition, Luke’s work does not end with the story of Jesus like the other Gospels. The same author is credited with the Acts of the Apostles, which illustrates the triumphs and struggles of the Early Church. Scholars pair the Gospel of Luke with the Acts of the Apostles together since they both demonstrate Hellenistic writing styles and share similar themes. The books were probably written around 70 CE, which means that the author was most likely a second or third generation Christian compiling a narrative rather than an eyewitness account to the life of Jesus and His mother.



From the beginning, Mary’s Magnificat is special to Luke. In contrast to Elizabeth and Zechariah, when Mary begins her canticle, Luke does not explicitly say that she is filled with the Holy Spirit as he does with the others. The Holy Spirit is “of particular concern to Luke and is, in fact, a focal character in Acts,” (Bonnie Thurston) but is not mentioned before, during,



Within the larger context of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, the Magnificat should be read as “a song of promise, prophetic protest, and powerful deliverance by the Lord of the poor and oppressed” (Ben Witherington). The Magnificat is “rooted in the Old Testament past” but also “sheds light on the New Testament present and future” (Daniel J. Harrington). By her prayer, Mary is portrayed as a type of Old Testament prophetess who proclaims the hope of salvation. However, in her New Testament context, Mary exceeds the job description of a prophetess since she herself brings salvation into the world. Taking these connections into account, the Magnificat can be described as the culmination of all previous prophets’ words, the bridge between Testaments, and the perfect prayer of surrendering one’s will to God.

Mary’s Magnificat sets the stage for Luke’s unique focus on women in his Gospel. In Luke-Acts, there is a male-female parallelism, also called step parallelism. This dual structure means that Luke pairs his parables together, “one about a man and one about a woman” (Witherington) to show their equality before God. In fact, “nearly one-third of the material unique to Luke deals with women” (Witherington) including “fifteen texts with significant women characters and no fewer than nineteen passages in which women or the traditional work of women is focal” (Thurston). These numbers are overwhelming compared to the other three Gospels. One possible reason for Luke’s focus on women might be his Hellenistic heritage. In general, “Greek women enjoyed more legal freedoms than Palestinian Jewish women” (Thurston) which would have shifted the focus of Luke’s Gospel narrative. The Magnificat contains many of the larger themes found throughout Luke and Acts. In his Gospel, Luke has many scenes of celebration and rejoicing. From the first chapter, the Magnificat sets the tone of joyful praise to God. In addition, Luke highlights that salvation includes everyone. Women were often excluded from literary education or

or after Mary’s Magnificat. Instead, Godet suggests that “at this epoch of her life [Mary] dwelt habitually in a divine atmosphere, whilst the inspiration of Elizabeth [and Zechariah] was only momentary” (F. Godet). In other words, “both Elizabeth and Zechariah have the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:15, 41, 67) but the divine overshadows Mary (Luke 1:35)” (Marla J. Selvidge). Scholars interpret this overshadowing as “an allusion to the ark of the covenant in the Old Testament” (Selvidge) since God dwelt within the ark in the same way His presence dwelt within Mary during her pregnancy. It is already clear that Mary is set apart because of the child in her womb and her unique relationship with the Holy Spirit.

leadership unless they belonged to the wealthy elite. However, in Luke and Acts, they are constantly included in Jesus' ministry. This inclusiveness is further reinforced by his 'step parallelism' motif. Luke also depicts Mary as the first disciple as she is the first to say 'yes' to God's call at the beginning of the narrative. She is also present until the end of the Acts of the Apostles. Mary's Magnificat is a strong affirmation of God's faithfulness and mercy working through humanity, especially through His chosen disciples.

Luke has an undeniable interest in women as part of the salvation story, with Mary at forefront. In Luke's account, Mary "serves God in a most traditional and natural way" (Selvidge). She bears a child. Luke values Mary's service to God through her womanhood as something only a woman can do. Thus, the

incarnation reveals a restored femininity that worships God through the very act of being a woman. Mary freely offers to the Lord exactly what makes her a woman biologically (her womb) and spiritually (her receptivity). She advances salvation history in a way that only a woman could.

Not only is Mary portrayed as the first and most perfect disciple from the beginning of Luke-Acts until the end, but her holiness comes in and through her being a woman and mother. When God became man in the womb of a Jewish girl, He did not only send the Messiah into a broken world. In a special way, He sent a Saviour to redeem the femininity that Eve distorted and to offer all women restored womanhood through the care of Mary our Mother. This is just part of the beauty of the Incarnation that trickles into the present day.







Photo credits to Nolan Toscano

# Beyond the Dim Mirror: - Historical and Dogmatic Criticisms of the New Images

NOLAN TOSCANO

When I had the opportunity to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, there was a Crusade-era Church that was particularly memorable among all of the Basilicas and Churches built upon the locations where Christ had performed His ministry. This was not a Church at any of the “big” spots, but was actually a Church that’s sacred art had been made, defiled, and then let to rest in the centuries afterward until the present day. What was clear was that the faces of the saints, and most especially of Jesus and Mary, were sanded away. What was left was

essentially paintings of some recognizable persons in our faith, yet with no face. The reason for the lack of faces was due to Islamic owners of the Church in the latter centuries after the Crusades having sanded off the faces of religious images. This is connected to the Islamic theology forbidding images with the notion that they are idols; a key break in the religious expressionism between Christianity and Islam. While it was fascinating, and highlighted the theological differences and historical conflicts, the memory of the Church slid in my mind to be one of several interesting sites.



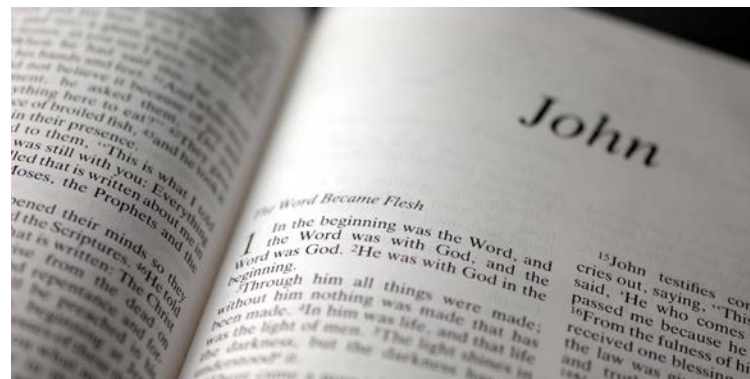
*“For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood.”  
(Corinthians 13:12, RSV)*



The image of this Church has been more in my mind of late because it was where I had seen the reality of Sacred Art essentially missing something. The memory of this Church could not help but be teased to the forefront of my mind with a new influx of religious art in recent years that depicts key figures in our faith: from Jesus, to the

Blessed Mother, and to the rest of the saints without faces. I would like to invite you to perhaps recall seeing these images. They are simplistic, and depict saints that are extremely recognizable – yet without the facial features. Seeing these images were intriguing as they were and are purposely made without faces in the name of simplistic and stylistic creative freedom, lack of ability to depict faces, or both. They are troubling to see as having an increasing presence in Catholic artistic world.

I do not mean to call out any particular artist, nor those who enjoy these images. Rather, I want to start the conversation, or contribute to perhaps an ongoing one, that the new art that depicts the Lord, the Blessed Mother, and the Saints without faces, is quite historically ignorant of the great turmoil that the Church went through to ensure orthodoxy in how we understand and treat religious imagery today; let alone how it ignores the fundamental reality of the Incarnation. That God is describable because He became a human, face and all.



*“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father “ (John 1:14).*

## **Understanding that Depictions Matter: A Short History**

Historically, we can see a dramatic unfolding of how the Church came to understand the role of religious images both theologically and practically in the first great event of its kind that challenged the use of religious imagery: The Iconoclasm.

The Iconoclasm was the explosive period in which the dispute over whether images had a place within the realm of worship for Christians. It began with a series of bans on Icons in the year 730. Emperor Leo III desired unity in the empire between Muslims, Jews and Christians, and so sought to ban any religious images to win favour. The first famous act was to tear down a statue of Christ above the imperial palace in Constantinople. Icons and other religious imagery were subject to intense destruction in many places across the Byzantine Empire, let alone the deaths of those both defending the use of Icons and those assaulting them. In the West, Pope St. Gregory II zealously backed his apostolic brother, Patriarch St. Germanus of Constantinople (already exiled and humiliated) clarifying that the orthodox disposition was the veneration of Icons. Pope St. Gregory II joined the chorus of holy men, like St. John of Damascus, who wrote In the Defense of the Holy Icons that there was a substantial theological importance of not only depicting the figures of our faith, but their importance in both veneration and worship (according to the source The Theology of the Icon).

Pope Gregory III took it a step further, and in his role as Pontiff, summoned another council in Rome and declared that “in the

future, whoever removes, destroys, dishonors or insults the images of the Saviour, His Holy Mother, Virginis immaculateae atque gloriosae, or the Apostles... will not receive the Body and Blood of the Saviour and will be excluded from the Church.” The Roman Catholic position to double down on the importance of depictions of the Saints, and the cooperation of the Universal Church against heresy and sacrilege, is noteworthy in this period.

The Solemnity All Saints day as we know it, instituted for November 1st, came directly out of this period under Gregory III as a means to honour all the Saints who had suffered sacrilege from the Iconoclasm. In other words, All Saints Day was inspired and made to emphasize the importance of honouring the saints, and their proper depictions in art.

The response on behalf of the Universal Church was the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787. This Council confirmed that the Veneration of Icons was in accord with Christian tradition.

By the time that the Iconoclasm in the East had reached new heights in the 830s and 840s, Rome continued to support the veneration of Sacred Images under Popes like Pascal I and Gregory IV, with the Incarnational Theology as a cornerstone of it.

By the end of the Iconoclastic period in Eastern Christendom, almost all mosaics, icons, statues, and other sacred art were destroyed or dismantled. This does not account for the lives lost in defense of icons from martyrs, the exiles and humiliations of



confessors, and the division that was caused in the Eastern Church. The celebration in the Eastern Churches of the return to Iconography being the secured is known as the “Triumph of Orthodoxy” and is celebrated on the first Sunday of Great Lent.

We can learn a lot from the Iconoclasm since it is not a historical event within the Church’s memory that can be overlooked easily. Especially as it was a foreshadowing of the religious, political, and cultural upheaval that the Protestant Reformation incurred – complete with its own iconoclasm from Calvinists.



And hence there are now subtle echoes of this past cataclysm with the popularizing of sacred art (or art of sacred and holy persons) without their respective faces. While history has shown that this argument was a point of enormous rupture, the presence of incomplete images will be given the answer that was proclaimed before, during and after the Iconoclasm. The basic theological answer to this is what the Church gave in the 700s: that in the light of the Incarnation, God indeed has a face, both in the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, and in His saints.

### **The Incarnational Component, or Lack thereof, in the New Images**

What was central to the theology of the role of depictions of persons in sacred art was the Incarnational reality that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

The existence of depictions of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity is based on the Dogma that God became incarnate, and therefore describable, and therefore depictable. Essentially, religious imagery that depicts the Lord as He was gives proof that the incarnation was historical truth, and not an illusion. To detract from this with intentionally depicting faceless images actually undermines understanding of the importance of the clear and simple truth; that Jesus -who is God- was human with a human face, and His saints (particularly those who are venerated) are those who showed us who Christ was in their own times. In a sense, the communion of saints are the many faces of Christ throughout the ages. To remove their faces, is to remove an element of their humanity, and erode the reality of their own extraordinary lives; thus distancing us further from the beautiful truth of the Incarnation.

*“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18, RSV).*



## Let's Join those Depicted in Holy Images

Considering both the Iconoclasm and Incarnation, one cannot look into the new images of intentionally faceless Sacred and Holy Persons without seeing the periods of great strife that the Church went into to show us that the full depictions of Jesus, His Mother, and the Saints are not only acceptable, but encouraged. Ironically, many of the faceless images of saints today are taken from preexisting full depictions, simplified to the degree where the face is no longer 'necessary' – either by stylistic choice or lack of artistic ability, or both.

Let us have a greater appreciation of not only the artistic ability of those who produce the holy images, mosaics, statues and the like that honour the Saints. More importantly, in these Holy Images and Sacred Art, realize that we too are called to be Saints. Saints whose lives reflect the Incarnational God they know, love and serve. Future saints who maybe one day, will have their own glorified image for veneration, face and all.



# Poetry





# REST HERE

EMILY MILLAN



Mary received  
Spirit conceived  
World weary and wanting  
From waiting, relieved

Word among flesh  
Laid in a creche  
Glory of God softly  
Falling afresh

Sung in the psalm  
Welcomed with palm  
From table, tree, tomb  
Love now embalmed

Wherever You rest  
Holy ground is professed  
Your hiding place, Lord  
Forever be blessed

We now receive  
Whom Mary conceived  
Tabernacle bodies  
In You, we believe

---

# ANTICIPATION

BARNABAS NEY

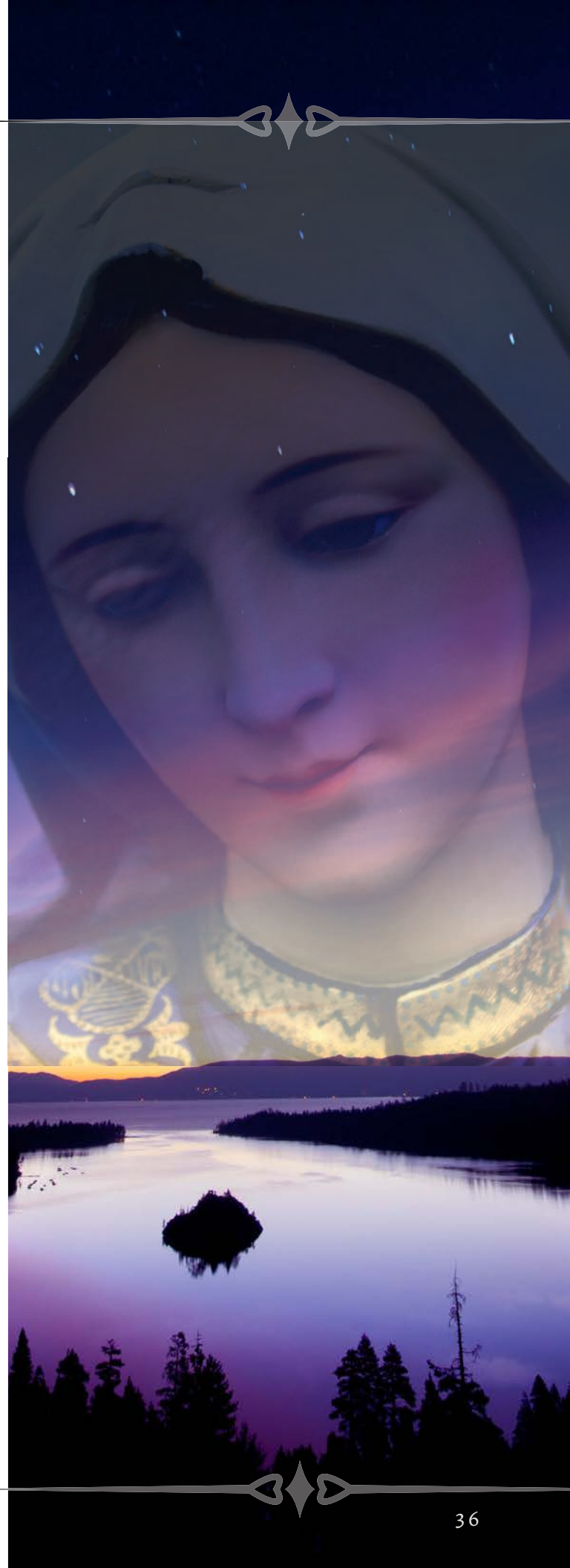
My busy, waking thoughts toss to and fro  
Though I sit stiffly still and slip slow  
On a large, gratefully warm, cup of Joe  
And gladly gaze east on the growing glow

My thoughts drift along that expectant light  
Towards another glowing joyful sight  
A mother clothed in gentle blue and white  
Her cheeks glowing softly and warmly bright.

In the times before our days had begun  
Both the still sky and the peaceful woman  
Glowed pink with warm, flushed anticipation  
As they waited for the sun, for her Son.

Now again, the whole waking world seems stilled  
By peaceful light, alive yet not fulfilled  
Until the moment the Creator willed  
When the dark, weary world with light is filled.

But for now, I wait in silence and take  
Another sip, and pray for my own sake  
That my slumb'ring soul would fully awake  
By the time the dawn and the water break.





## BIOGRAPHIES

---



### **Miguel Andres**

Miguel is a son, a brother, a friend to many and a fiancé to one. He currently lives in Ottawa, where he serves the Lord as a missionary with Catholic Christian Outreach. He loves anything beautiful, especially his lovely fiancée Megan. You will often find him with a coffee in one hand and his iPad on the other.



### **Laura Bell**

Laura is first and foremost a beloved daughter of Christ, second, a daughter of the Bell family, and third, a student of the Arts. This June, she will be graduating from Ryerson University with a Bachelors in Radio and Television of the Arts: Media Production. Now, as she finishes her education, she is beginning a new chapter in her life by helping Transcendentals; a community in which she can fully engage and combine her two true passions in life: her love for Jesus Christ, and her love for creating art.



### **Tyler Brooks**

Tyler is a faithful Roman Catholic, student at heart, and passionate nerd. After recently obtaining an Honours Bachelor of arts with a major in History and minor in Political Science at UOttawa, he is now in the Master of Divinity program at St Paul University. He can be found reading history books, hanging out with his friends, and probably discussing theology.

## BIOGRAPHIES

---



### **Fr. Stephen Bruzzese**

Father Stephen Joseph Bruzzese was born October 11th, 1989. From an early age, he always wanted to be a priest and found great joy in being an altar boy. Between 2009 and 2012, he earned a Baccalaureate in Thomistic Thought from St. Philip's Seminary & between 2012 and 2017, he earned a Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology and a Masters of Divinity from St. Augustine's Seminary. Father Stephen is currently serving the people of God at Our Lady of the Scapular.



### **Clif Clemotte**

Clif is a student of philosophy, currently pursuing graduate studies and living on Vancouver Island. He holds two undergraduate degrees from liberal arts colleges, institutions that fostered his love of reading, research, and stimulating conversation. For a year after graduation, he taught at a private elementary institution; now, a student once again, he plans to conduct research on the human mind and the process of knowledge.



### **Megan Joseph**

Megan has lived across North America but calls Vancouver, BC home. She has always loved seeking the truth which led her to graduate in 2019 with a Bachelor of Theology and Culture from Saint Mark's College. Megan is currently a campus missionary with Catholic Christian Outreach in Halifax, NS. She is also a seasoned equestrian, avid rollerblader, and now - an amateur writer!



## BIOGRAPHIES

---



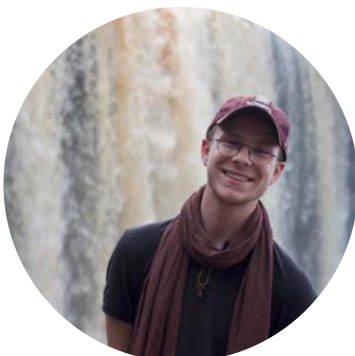
### **Emily Millan**

Emily is a born, raised, and chosen Catholic whose missionary zeal has taken her across both Australia and Canada. She is a seasoned evangelist, and has served with NET, CCO, and various other ministries in her mission to see hearts return to the Lord. She is unashamedly in love with the Eucharist, dancing barefoot, sunshine, and the ocean.



### **Barnabas Ney**

Barnabas is a beloved beggar of the Most High King. He enjoys adventuring in the wilds of his native Vancouver Island, but is even more excited to be serving Christ and His Church as a campus missionary for Catholic Christian Outreach. While he holds an MA in Economic Policy, his real joy is in pursuing and contemplating beauty and its One true source.



### **Joshua Terpstra**

Joshua was raised in Belleville, Ontario, where he was received by a loving Catholic community in some of his formative years. His years in youth ministry coincided with a developing love of the arts, both in the theatre and in his sketchbook. Since beginning his studies at the University of Ottawa in 2017, not only has he found a community where he has been able to thrive, he has been led to travel across the world to Singapore, Cameroon, and Mexico to serve and to learn. As he finishes his psychology and theatre degree, he is teaching visual arts, drama, french, and english to elementary students at a private Catholic school.

## BIOGRAPHIES

---



### **Nolan Toscano**

Originally from Pickering, Ontario, Nolan has a passion for history, writing, mixology and puns. A jack of all trades, he has done everything from life-guarding to landscaping, professional cooking to political staffer, youth camp counselor to long-term care social worker. Currently, he serves as the Mission and Discipleship Director for St. George's Parish in Ottawa, Ontario. You can find him pondering life's silly paradoxes, exercising, engaging in debate, and above all, pursuing the Love of his life: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



### **Irena Vélez**

Irena is a passionate Ottawa-based artist working mainly in watercolour. Her art inspiration and ideas come largely from her Catholic faith and her desire to share it with others. When Irena is not painting, she is either at church, reading a good book, studying journalism and history, training in martial arts, or spending time with family and friends.



