

MARY—DAUGHTER, BRIDE, AND MOTHER

Dearest Mother, what is this mystery
in which you find yourself so deeply immersed?
The angel appears to you in your simplicity,
and offers an invitation to your pure and virginal heart.
“Will you open yourself to the gift of God,
to his love which comes to you in your belovedness,
and which, in embracing you tenderly,
overshadows you and makes you a spouse and a mother?
Will you give the Son of God human flesh,
allowing him to grow and to be sheltered in your womb,
and offering him that maternal, feminine presence
that he needs to grow unto natural maturity?”

You, Blessed Mary, said “Yes” to the angel,
and yet this single word of assent was more,
more than a single moment of passing enthusiasm.
Rather, it was a “Yes” that enveloped your whole life
and accepted in advance all that would come,
the whole unfolding story of this mystery
that broke into your life in that moment of Annunciation,
and, indeed, had accompanied you from your Conception.
Yes, your acceptance was completely open,
not limited to one particular thing or another, alone,
but to the fullness of the story that would come,
to all that God would will (that he wills in eternity).
Or rather, it was more than this—
it was not assent to a particular event or act
(though in it every event, every act, is contained);
it was assent to the pure and gratuitous love of God
which broke forth upon your heart and life,
and which, indeed, had enveloped you always
and sought only to envelop you more fully still.

Yes, this loving approach, this invitation of God,
was not so much a call to service (in our superficial sense)
but to the truth of filial and bridal acceptance:
if you but knew the gift of God!

For God wants you, you, purest woman,
absolutely and unreservedly, uniquely and totally,
not merely to be a vessel, or even a mother of his Son,
but to be simply his precious and beloved daughter,
held unceasingly within his tender and sheltering arms.
He wants you to be a spouse of the Spirit,
a spouse of Christ, the Bridegroom of the new creation.
And within this, within this alone,
does the beauty of your maternity unfold.

Yes, Mary, you are Daughter, Bride, and Mother,
each of the latter enfolded within the former,
like a series of three concentric circles...
all enveloped in the simple joy of childhood.
And it is precisely in this filial trust and surrender,
in the joy of playfulness, of abiding repose,
of simply *being* in each unique and unrepeatable moment,
that your spousehood and your motherhood can unfold.

And it is in this unique encounter between God,
the Blessed Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
and the precious and unrepeatable human heart—
it is in this that the whole of humanity
is espoused to God who draws near to us.
For your own heart, dear Mary, is a meeting-place
in which God weds himself to our humanity,
in which the truth of adoption is realized
and the wedding-band of grace enfolds the hearts of all,
and the abiding intimacy of persons in love
brings forth its spontaneous and healing fruit.