

HUMILITY of HEART

# HUMILITY of HEART

the  
COMPLEAT  
ENGLISH  
TRANSLATION

*Includes 58 pages from the original work,  
never before translated & published in English*

de Bergamo

Vaughan

Church

*The Visitation by Mariotto Albertini  
For the Congregazione di San Martino 1503*

BY  
FATHER CAJETAN MARY DA BERGAMO

ORIGINAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN

EDITED WITH ADDITIONAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

MICHAEL AUGUSTINE CHURCH





**HUMILITY OF Heart.** From the 1739 Italian of Father Cajetan Mary Da Bergamo, Capuchin. By Herbert Cardinal Vaughan. The preface, by Bernard Vaughan, S. J., best tells the story:

"The 'Thought and Sentiments of Humility' were translated by Cardinal Vaughan during the last months of his life. It was Padre Gaetano's work on Humility that had been the instrument in God's hand of helping the Cardinal. Accordingly in his zeal for souls he proposed to put it into English, so as to bring the work within the reach of all such as care for the health, growth and strength of their own individual souls in solid virtue. That the Cardinal has left us a precious legacy in this treatise on humility will, I feel sure, be the verdict of all who study or who only peruse these pages, done into English from the Italian of the devout Minor Capuchin whose death occurred two centuries ago. This treatise is a sort of last will and testament of Cardinal Vaughan, bequeathed to those with whom he was most intimately associated in the work for the good of souls."

- *AMERICAN CATHOLIC REVIEW QUARTERLY*

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**Michael Augustine Church Presents  
Humility of Heart**

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- 269 pages
- New Introduction by M.A. Church
- New Index & Bibliography included
- Newly updated reference materials; formatted for modern readers

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# HUMILITY of HEART

de Bergamo  
Vaughan  
Church



[ i. ]

For my children and family.

*“Si est in vobis sanctitas, timete ne perdatis eam.*

*Unde? Per superbiam;* If there be holiness in you, fear  
lest you may lose it. How? Through pride.”

-Augustine

# HUMILITY OF HEART



ENGLISH TRANSLATION EDITION

*From the Italian, written by*  
Fr. GAETANO MARY DA BERGAMO  
*Capuchin*

*English Translation & Additions By*  
HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN

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*Edited by*

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[ v. ]

# THE HUMILITY OF HEART

DESIGNED IN THOUGHTS  
AND FEELINGS

FOR EXCITING THE PRACTICE

With an Examination upon Humility, and a  
Moral Doctrine over Pride

*A WORK*

OF P. GAETANO MARIA

From Bergamo Capuchin Priest

*This edition enhanced by a Devotion  
to the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
by the Same Author.*



IN VENICE, MDCCXXXIX

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(this page is a reproduction of the original 1739 title page)*

*First Edition, September 2015*

*taken from*

*Italian Edition, 1739, & 1792 with Imprimatur,*

*First Edition, September 1905*

*Second Edition, September 1906*

[ vii. ]

*Discite a Me quia Mitis sum,. &*  
*Humilis Corde* • Parole di GESU' CRISTO.  
Matth. 11. 19



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# TO READERS



**T**o facilitate the obtaining of this throne of Moral Virtue I intend to propose two general methods. The first is by way of consideration, stopping to ponder the reasons, from those of the stubborn persuasion, and convinced of the amount they be necessary as compared to some of the other Virtues, and how many of those are even helpful; and ponder even those reasons, which may be its most strong to excite in our heart's desire, and the courage to achieve again our very own Virtue.<sup>1</sup>

The second method and by way of exercise, to use is; although not many of the souls are invested of a habit, or good, or bad, that he is, not the frequency of acts, and being the acts of other interior Virtues, and other exterior, you have to start practicing for the interior to aid the practice also of the Exterior, conformed to the emergency that may be presented. So too, having

---

1. This is the original To Readers *A CHI LEGGE*, contained in the 1739, first edition, from Father Bergamo's pen. It is being published here, translated from the original Italian, for the first time. You will also find the final section of this work, translated and published for the very first time, beginning on page 216..

conceived the plan of promoting the virtues of this Holy Humility, this part was they charge, recommended by Jesus Christ, to the other it is so ignored and neglected in Christianity; I expose in this little book various thoughts and affections, and feelings, and the reasons for which it includes the idea of the true Humility, in His excellence, urgency, utility, and importance; so that anyone who reads it will fall in love, and will have a zeal, to take courage and exercise especially with his heart, for wisdom then in certain occurrences to practice most readily with these actions.

Yes, I wrote without order because in an operetta of little size an order is not necessary; and also because the same variety of thoughts seats going out randomly are more delectable; and in some respects it may be even more advantageous; and it is the hope of this advantage, which moved me to write. Then I added an examination to develop the Humility by practice, and to declare a Moral Doctrine that's the opposite of Pride. This Virtue is best known as being the opposite of that Vice, but remember, that Vice is most opposed to this Virtue, there is no love nor is there a price known for this Virtue; nor to admonish this Vice, of whose ugliness is not seen.

Entrance to The Chapel at Bergamo, Italy

---

*"KING AND PROTECTOR"*



## ABOUT THIS EDITION

This edition of *Humility of Heart* is as faithful an attempt as I am able to produce, to publish a complete translation of Father Bergamo's Italian, first edition work from 1739. The layout and order of the pages, the frontispiece engraving and other artworks have all been digitized and retouched for the body of the book but are shown as they appeared originally in 1739 with corresponding page numbers in the Appendix. This includes the publishing of the book's final two sections "Humility From The Heart" and "A Practice to Obtain and Maintain Humility". These sections comprise 58 pages from the 1739 edition and include meditations on the Pater Noster, Ave Maria and the fifteen Mysteries of the Holy Rosary. Also translated and restored is Bergamo's note "*A CHE LEGGE; To Readers*" and the work's first Imprimatur.

I have removed the Title, Introduction and Preface pages written by translator Herbert Cardinal Vaughan and his brother to the appendices. This edition features some small departures from Bergamo's edition e.g. the complete listing of footnote citation sources which would have been known, in their abbreviated forms, to most clergy and laity of 1739 but have since faded into the dust covered shelves of old Catholic libraries and would be unfamiliar to both classes of reader today. We have taken the time to locate current, printed editions of these works where available as well as their digital locales for

online readers. In doing so, it is my prayer that The Reader locate these works that so inspired Father Bergamo and read them on their own.

Another addition to this edition is our identifying passages in Cardinal Vaughan's translation that are authored by him and not part of Bergamo's work.

*[These are noted in the text where they occur and are set in brackets, slightly italicized and indented. This paragraph is an example of this formatting. In nearly every addition, Cardinal Vaughan has added material from external sources to embellish Bergamo's argument. I believe that by performing this editing task we are able to present Humility as it was read and cherished for over 170 years and giving Cardinal Vaughan proper credit for his additions.]*

I have also noted errors in Bergamo's footnotes corrected by Cardinal Vaughan that I corrected and also Vaughan's errors I have corrected. In some citations you will see extended passages from the source most notably in Bergamo and Vaughan's citing of sermons from The Fathers and Doctors of The Church. Again, this is done because of today's lack of intimacy with these source materials, in prayerful hope these small contributions might lead readers to humble, literary discoveries.

- Frederick Michael Augustine Mary

## EDITOR'S FOREWARD

What I have learned from this little book has altered my thinking on and approach to The Faith so profoundly it is difficult to describe, but I will try. In the first paragraph Fr. Gaetano lays out the book's declaratory statement: "in Paradise there is no Saint who was not humble." From there Father leads us on a meditation of what Humility is and how we may learn the disciplines necessary to acquire this most primary of Graces; but Father also cautions against ever coming to believe one has achieved Humility for as Augustine says "If there be holiness in you, fear lest you may lose it. How? Through pride." I have learned through reading, praying and meditating on this work that nearly every human action is either corrupted by Pride or made Graceful by Humility.

Utilizing the lives and works of St Thomas Aquinas, St Augustine, St Bernard and St Gregory of Nanzien; Father guides us through a meditative learning process whereby the inspired words of the Saints is anchored to the greatest examples of Humility in history: the public Ministry of Our Lord, his Humble birth and the penultimate act of Our Lady at the Annunciation. You will be moved to tears and great (sic) "examens of conscience". This book is not meant to be read as a linear novel but rather as a process, much like reading the Consecration to Our Lady by de Montfort. This work is an inspired treasure and we are in the debt of Cardinal Vaughan for

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## HUMILITY OF HEART

his translation, Fr. Cajetan for his authorship and the most Blessed Trinity for the Graces granted to these men and their Humility of Heart.

- *Frederick Michael Augustine Mary*



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*HUMILITY*

*FOR INTERCESSION*

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# HUMILITY OF HEART



## Thoughts and Sentiments on Humility

**I**n Paradise there are many Saints who never gave alms on earth: their poverty justified them. There are many Saints who never mortified their bodies by fasting, or wearing hair shirts: their bodily infirmities excused them. There are many Saints too who were not virgins: their vocation was otherwise. But in Paradise there is no Saint who was not humble.

God banished angels from heaven for their pride; therefore how can we pretend to enter therein, if we do not keep ourselves in a state of humility? Without humility, says St Peter Damian,<sup>1</sup> not even the Virgin Mary herself with her incomparable virginity could have entered into the glory of Christ, and we ought to be convinced of this truth that, though destitute of some of the other virtues, we may yet be saved, but never without humility. There are people who flatter themselves that

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1. Sermon 45. cf Damian to Ambrose c. 1060, Letter 81. *Letters of Peter Damian, 61-90*, translated by Owen J Bloom .



they have done much by pursuing unsullied chastity, and truly chastity is a beautiful adornment; but as the angelic St Thomas says: “Speaking absolutely, humility excels virginity.”<sup>2</sup>

We often study diligently to guard against and correct ourselves of the vices of concupiscence which belong to a sensual and animal nature, and this inward conflict which the body wages *adversus carnem*<sup>3</sup> is truly a spectacle worthy of God and of His angels. But, alas, how rarely do we use this diligence and caution to conquer spiritual vices, of which pride is the first and the greatest of all, and which sufficed of itself to transform an angel into a demon.

## THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS II

Jesus Christ calls us all into His school to learn, not to work miracles nor to, astonish the world by marvelous enterprises, but to be humble of heart. “Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart.”<sup>4</sup> He has not called every one to be doctors, preachers or priests, nor has He bestowed on all the gift of restoring sight to the blind, healing the sick, raising the dead or casting out devils, but to all He has said: “Learn of Me to be humble of heart,” and to all He has given the power to learn humility of Him. Innumerable things are worthy of imitation in the Incarnate Son of God, but He only asks

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2. *Simpliciter loquendo humilitas virginitatem excedit.* (4 dist question 33, article 3 ad 6; and 22, question 161, article 5) - Original citation. The quote does not appear in searchable databases of Aquinas’ work but there is ample discussion from St Thomas on Humility in *Summa, Second Part of the Second Part, Question 161* - Editor.

3. [Galatians 5:17](#).

4. [Matthew 11:29](#).

us to imitate His humility. What then? Must we suppose that all the treasures of Divine Wisdom which were in Christ are to be reduced to the virtue of humility? “So it certainly is,”<sup>5</sup> answers St Augustine. Humility contains all things because in this virtue is truth; therefore God must also dwell therein, since He is the truth.

The Saviour might have said: “Learn of Me to be chaste, humble, prudent, just, wise, abstemious, etc.” But He only says: “Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart”; and in humility alone He includes all things, because, as St Thomas so truly says, “Acquired humility is in a certain sense the greatest good.”<sup>6</sup> Therefore whoever possesses this virtue may be said, as to his proximate disposition, to possess all virtues, and he who lacks it, lacks all.

### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS III

Reading the works of St Augustine we find in them all that his sole idea was the exaltation of God above the creature as far as possible, and as far as possible the humble subjection of the creature to God. The recognition of this truth should find a place in every Christian mind, thus establishing — according to the acuteness and penetration of our intelligence — a sublime conception

---

5. Ita Plane. (Liber of Sancta Virginit. capitulus 35). Book of the Holy Virgin, *de Virginitate*.

6. Humilitas aquisita est maximum bonum secundum quid. (Liber of Veritas Question 1, article 1 and 3; and article 19 and 7. - Original citation cannot be located in the works of St. Thomas, however, for The Book of Truth cf. *Questiones Disputatae de Veritate*. cf also *Si quaeris exemplum humilitatis, respice crucifixum*. St Thomas, *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*).

of God, and a lowly and vile conception of the creature. But we can only succeed in doing this by humility.

Humility is in reality a confession of the greatness of God, who after His voluntary self annihilation was exalted and glorified; wherefore Holy Writ says: "For great is the power of God alone, and He is honoured by the humble."<sup>7</sup>

It was for this reason that God pledged Himself to exalt the humble, and continually showers new graces upon them in return for the glory He constantly receives from them. Hence the inspired word again reminds us: "Be humble, and thou shalt obtain every grace from God."<sup>8</sup>

The humblest man honours God most by his humility, and has the reward of being more glorified by God, who has said: "Whoever honours Me, I will glorify him."<sup>9</sup> Oh, if we could only see how great is the glory of the humble in heaven!

#### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS IV

Humility is a virtue that belongs essentially to Christ, not only as man, but more especially as God, because with God to be good, holy and merciful is not virtue but nature, and humility is only a virtue. God cannot exalt Himself above what He is, in His most high Being, nor can He increase His vast and infinite greatness; but He can humiliate Himself as in fact He did humiliate and lower Himself. "He humbled Himself, He emptied Him-

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7. [Ecclesiastes 3:21](#). (*Ecclesiastes 3:2*).

8. [Ecclesiastes 3:20](#). (*Ecclesiastes 30:2*).

9. [1 Kings 2:30](#).

self,”<sup>10</sup> revealing Himself to us, through His humility, as the Lord of all virtues, the conqueror of the world, of death, hell and sin.

No greater example of humility can be given than that of the Only Son of God when “the Word was made Flesh.” Nothing could be more sublime than the words of St John’s Gospel, “*In principio erat Verbum; In the beginning was the Word.*”<sup>11</sup> And no abasement can be deeper than that which follows: “*Et Verbum caro factum est; And the Word was made Flesh.*” By this union of the Creator with the creature the Highest was united with the lowest. Jesus Christ summed up all His heavenly doctrine in humility, and before teaching it, it was His will to practise it perfectly Himself.

[As St Augustine says: “He was unwilling to teach what He Himself was not, He was unwilling to command what He Himself did not practise.”<sup>12</sup>]

But to what purpose did He do all this if not that by this means all His followers should learn humility by practical example? He is our Master, and we are His disciples; but what profit do we derive from His teachings, which are practical and riot theoretical? How shameful it would be for any one, after studying for many years in a school of art or science, under the teaching of excellent masters, if he were still to remain absolutely ignorant! My shame is great indeed, because I have lived so many years in the school of Jesus Christ, and yet I have learnt

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10. [Philippians 2:7,8.](#)

11. Gospel of St John, 1: 1

12. “Noluit docere quod ipse non esset, noluit jubere quod ipse non faceret.” (Liber of Sancti Virginit capitulo 36). Original citation. cf Book of the Holy Virgin, *de Virginitate*. - This text and citation appear to have been added by Vaughan and do not appear in Bergamo. - Ed.

nothing of that holy humility which He sought so earnestly to teach me.

[“Have mercy upon me according to Thy Word. Thou art good, and in Thy goodness teach me Thy justifications. Give me understanding, and I will learn Thy commandments.”<sup>13</sup>]

### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS V

There is a kind of humility which is of counsel and of perfection such as that which desires and seeks the contempt of others; but there is also a humility which is of necessity and of precept, without which, says Christ, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven: “Thou shalt not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>14</sup> And this consists in not esteeming ourselves and in not wishing to be esteemed by others above what we really are.

[No one can deny this truth, that humility is essential to all those who wish to be saved. “No one reaches the kingdom of heaven except by humility,” says St Augustine.<sup>15</sup>]

But, I ask, what is practically this humility which is so necessary? When we are told that faith and hope are necessary, it is also explained to us what we are to believe and to hope. In like manner, when humility is said to be necessary, in what should its practice consist except in the lowest opinion of ourselves? It is in this moral

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13. [Psalms 118:58,68,73](#).- Ibid.

14. [Matthew 18:3](#).

15. “Ad regnum coelorum nemo venit nisi per humilitatem sine aliis.” (Liber of Salutis capitulus 32). This note and reference do not appear in Fr. Bergamo’s original text. Bergamo’s “V” only spanned 2 paragraphs. Bergamo ends this THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS quoting St Thomas on the “precept of Humility”.- Ibid.

sense that the humility of the heart has been explained by the fathers of the Church. But can I say with truth that I possess this humility which I recognize as necessary and obligatory? What care or solicitude do I display to acquire it? When a virtue is of precept, so is its practice also, as St Thomas teaches. And therefore, as there is a humility which is of precept, “it has its rule in the mind, viz, that one is not to esteem oneself to be above that which one really is.”<sup>16</sup> How and when do I practise its acts, acknowledging and confessing my unworthiness before God?

[The following was the frequent prayer of St Augustine, “Noscam Te, noscam me — May I know Thee; may I know myself!” and by this prayer he asked for humility, which is nothing else but a true knowledge of God and of oneself. To confess that God is what He is, the Omnipotent, “Great is the Lord, and exceedingly to be praised,”<sup>17</sup> and to declare that we are but nothingness before Him: “My substance is as nothing before Thee”<sup>18</sup> — this is to be humble.]

## THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS VI

There is no valid excuse for not being humble, because we have always, within and without, abundant reasons for humility: “And thy humiliation shall be in the

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16. “Et regulam habet in cognitione, ut scilicet, aliquis non se existiment supra id esse quod est.” (St Thomas Aquinas Summa, Second part of the Second part, [question 162, article 6](#)).

17. [Psalms 67:1](#).

18. [Psalms 38:6](#). (*Psalms 33:6*). - This text and citation appear to have been added by Vaughan and do not appear in Bergamo. - Ed.

midst of thee.” It is the Holy Ghost who sends us this warning by the mouth of His prophet Micheas.”<sup>19</sup>

When we consider well what we are in body, and what we are in soul, it seems to me most easy to humble oneself, and even most difficult to be proud. To be humble it suffices that I should nourish within myself that right feeling which belongs to every man who is honourable in the eyes of the world, to be content with one’s own without unjustly depriving our neighbour of what is his. Therefore, as I have nothing of my own but my own nothingness, it is sufficient for humility that I should be content with this nothingness. But if I am proud, I become like a thief, appropriating to myself that which is not mine but God’s. And most assuredly it is a greater sin to rob God of that which belongs to God than to rob man of that which is man’s. To be humble let us listen to the revelation of the Holy Ghost which is infallible. “Behold you are nothing, and your work is of that which hath no being.”<sup>20</sup> But who is really convinced of his own nothingness?

[It is for this reason that in holy Scripture it is said: “Every man is a liar.”<sup>21</sup> For there is no man who from time to time does not entertain some incredible self-esteem, and form some false opinion as to his being, or haying, or achieving something more than is possible to his own nothingness.]

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19. [Micah 6:14](#).

20. [Isaiah 41:24](#). [Fr. Bergamo cited Psalm 41:24, Fr. Vaughan corrected the error. “Ecce vos estis ex nihilo, et opus vestrum ex eo quod non est; abominatio est qui elegit vos.”]

21. [Psalms 115:2](#). - This text and citation appear to have been added by Vaughan and do not appear in Bergamo. - Ed.

## THOUGHTS &amp; SENTIMENTS VII

To know what our body is in reality, it will suffice for us to look into the grave, for, from what we see there, we must inevitably conclude that as it is with those decayed bodies, so it will soon be with us. And with this reflection I must say to myself: “Why is earth and ashes proud?”<sup>22</sup> “Behold the glory of man! for his glory is dung and worms; to-day he is lifted up, and to-morrow he shall not be found, because he is returned into his earth, and his thought is come to nothing.”<sup>23</sup>

O my soul, without going further to seek truth, enter in thought into the heart of thy dwelling which is thy body! “Go in and shut thyself up in the midst of thy house.”<sup>24</sup> “Go in and look well around thee, and thou shalt find nothing but corruption.” “Go into the clay and tread.”<sup>25</sup> Wherever thou turnest thou wilt see nothing but putrefaction oozing forth.

In order to learn what we really are, let us examine our own conscience. And finding therein only our own malice and a capacity to commit every kind of iniquity, shall we not all say to ourselves: “Why dost thou glory in malice, thou that art mighty in iniquity?”<sup>26</sup> What hast thou of thine own, my soul, wherewith to glorify thyself — thou who art a vessel of iniquity, and a sink of sin and vice? Is not all this self-glorification — whether it be for thy bodily or spiritual gifts that thou buildest a reputation

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22. [Ecclesiastes 10:9.](#)

23. 1 Machabees 2:62, 63.

24. [Nahum 3:14.](#)

25. [Ezekiel 3:24.](#)

26. [Psalms 51:1.](#)



for thyself — but vanity and deceit? Oh, how true it is that every man is a Liar, for one need have but little pride in order to be a liar, and there is no one who has not inherited through our first parents something of that pride which they learned in listening to the deceitful promise of the serpent: “And you shall be all Gods.”<sup>27</sup>

Again it may be said that every man is a liar in this sense — that he not infrequently prizes earth more than heaven, the body more than the soul, things temporal more than things eternal, the creature more than the Creator — and it is for this reason that David exclaims: “O ye sons of men, why do ye love vanity and seek after lying?”<sup>28</sup> “The sons of men are liars in the balances.”<sup>29</sup>

But in reality a lie dwells essentially in that pride which makes us esteem ourselves above what we are. Whoever regards himself as more than mere nothingness is filled with pride, and is a liar, it is St Paul’s statement: “If any man think himself to be something whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.”<sup>30</sup>

Every time I esteem myself, preferring myself to others, I deceive myself with this self adulation, and commit an error against truth.

## THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS VIII

It is enough for a virgin to have fallen once for her to lose her virginity; and for a wife to have been but once unfaithful for her to be perpetually dishonoured; even

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27. [Genesis 3:5.](#)

28. [Psalms 4:3.](#)

29. [Psalms 61:10.](#)

30. [Galatians 6:3.](#)

though she may afterwards perform many noble works, still her dishonour can never be effaced, and the sting and painful memory of her shame and guilt must remain for ever in her conscience.

And thus, even though in the whole course of my life I have only committed one sin, the fact will always remain that I have sinned and committed the worst and most ignominious action. And even if I should live a life of continual penance, and be certain of God's forgiveness, and though the sin exist no longer in my conscience, still I shall always have cause for shame and humiliation in the fact that I have sinned: "My sin is always before me, I have sinned and done evil in Thy sight."<sup>31</sup>

## THOUGHTS &amp; SENTIMENTS IX

What should we say if we saw the public executioner walking in the streets and claiming to be esteemed, respected and honoured? We should consider his effrontery as insufferable as his calling is infamous. And thou, my soul, each time that thou hast sinned mortally thou hast indeed been as an executioner, nailing to the cross the Son of God! Thus St Paul describes sinners as "crucifying again to themselves the Son of God."<sup>32</sup>

And with this character of infamy which thou bearest within thee, dost thou still dare to demand honour and esteem? Wilt thou still have the courage to say: "I insist upon being honoured and respected, I will not be slighted"? However much pride may tempt me to boast and seek esteem, I have ample cause to blush with shame

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31. Psalms: [1,5,6](#).

32. [Hebrews 6:6](#).

when I hear the voice of conscience reproaching me for my ignominy and my sins, and not ceasing to reprove me for being a perfidious and ungrateful rebel against God, a traitor and an executioner who co-operated in the passion and death of Jesus Christ. "All the day long my shame is before me, and the confusion of my face hath covered me at the voice of him that reproacheth me."<sup>33</sup>

### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS X

We must acknowledge that one of the five reasons why we do not live in this necessary humility is because we do not fear the justice of God. Look at a criminal, how humbly he stands before the judge, with lowered eyes, pallid face and bowed head: he knows that he has been convicted of atrocious crimes; he knows that thereby he has merited capital punishment, and may justly be condemned to the gallows, and hence he fears, and his fear keeps him humble, chasing from his brain all thought of ambition and vain-glory. So the soul, conscious of the numerous sins it has committed, aware that it has indeed deserved hell, and that from one moment to another it may be condemned to heir by divine justice, fears the wrath of God, and this fear causes the soul to remain humble before Him; and if it does not feel this humility, it can only be because the fear of God is wanting: "There is no fear of God before his eyes."<sup>34</sup> Oh, cry to God from your heart: "Pierce Thou my flesh with Thy fear."<sup>35</sup>

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33. [Psalms 43:16,17](#). - [There is no second verse (17) citation from Psalm 43 in Bergamo's "IX" though the text does quote all of 16 and some of 17: "A voce exprobrantis..." thus, this correction is attributed to Fr. Vaughan.]

34. [Psalms 35:1](#).

35. [Psalms 118:120](#).

And this holy fear which is the beginning of wisdom will also be the beginning of true humility; for, as the inspired Word says, humility and wisdom are inseparable companions: "*ubi autem est humilitas, ibi et sapientia*;" Where humility is, there also is wisdom."<sup>36</sup>

## THOUGHTS &amp; SENTIMENTS XI

There is no saint however holy and innocent who may not truly consider himself the greatest sinner in the world. It is enough that he knows himself to be man to recognize that he is liable to commit all the evil of which man is capable. As man, I have in my corrupt nature a proclivity to every evil; and so far as I am concerned I am quite capable of committing all kinds of sin, and if I do not commit them it is through a special grace of God which preserves and restrains me.

A tree does not fall while bending under its own weight, and this must be attributed to the strength of its support; and in the same way if I have not fallen into every kind of iniquity, it must not be attributed to my own inherent virtue but only to divine grace, which by its goodness has supported me. Therefore how can I esteem myself more than another whilst we are all equal in human weakness? "For what is my strength?"<sup>37</sup> I am a son of Adam like every other man, born in sin, inclined to sin, and ever ready to fall into sin. I have no need of the devil to tempt me to sin; my own concupiscence is only too great a temptation; and if God were to withdraw from me His protecting and helping hand, I know

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36. [Proverbs 11:2](#).

37. [Job 6:11](#).

that I should be precipitated headlong from bad to worse. When St Augustine made his examen of conscience, he did not always find sufficient to excite within him sorrow and contrition, so he dwelt on those sins which he - might or would have committed had he not been preserved from them by God's infinite mercy; and he grieved and accused himself and humbly implored pardon of God for the evil capacity he had to commit all kinds of heinous and impious sins. In this practice is to be found an exercise of true humility.

## THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS XII

It has often happened that those who were more perfect than others have shamefully fallen, and this after a long period of good and virtuous works, showing the marvellous things that a man can do when helped by God's special grace, and who by their terrible fall have also testified to the iniquities of which a man is capable if abandoned to himself and left to the weakness of his own free-will.

God has shown His creative omnipotence by forming me out of nothing and making me a human being. Were God to withdraw his omnipotent preserving hand from me I should at once show what I am capable of when left to myself, by returning immediately into my nothingness. And, in the order of grace, the nothingness into which I relapse when left to myself is sin. How often "I am brought to nothing, and I knew not."<sup>38</sup> And what can I find to be proud of in that nothingness?

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38. [Psalms 72:22](#).

[Give me grace, O my God, to know myself only as much as-is necessary to keep me humble! For if I fully realized the insignificance of my own being and the extent of my malice which is capable of offending Thee in divers inconceivable ways, I fear I should be so filled with horror at myself that I should give way to despair!]<sup>39</sup>

## THOUGHTS &amp; SENTIMENTS XIII

We have within ourselves, in our own experience and feelings, a knowledge of how greatly our frail and fallen nature is inclined to evil. Today we go and confess certain of our faults, making the resolution not to fall into them again, and tomorrow notwithstanding we commit them once more.

At one moment we make up our minds to acquire a certain virtue, and the next we do just the contrary by falling into the opposite vice. At the time when we make these resolutions of amendment we imagine that our will is firm and strong but we soon perceive how weak and unreliable it is, for we behave as though we had never purposed amendment at all.

Our heart is like a reed that bends before every wind, or a barque tossed by every wave. It is sufficient to meet with an occasion of sin, a movement of passion, a breath of temptation, for the will to yield to evil even when in certain moments of fervour we seem most firmly rooted in good. This is a strong reason for us to be humble and not to presume anything of ourselves, praying to God

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39. This text appears to have been added by Vaughan and do not appear in Bergamo. - Ed.

continually that He may deign to confirm in our hearts that which He works through His grace. “Confirm, O God, what Thou hast wrought in us.”<sup>40</sup>

## THOUGHTS &amp; SENTIMENTS XIV

Some masters of the spiritual life teach that it is better to divert our thoughts from certain heroic actions in which our weakness might lead us to doubt whether we should succeed or not; for example: if a persecutor should come and summon me either to renounce the faith or to die, how should I act? or, if I were to receive a terrible public insult, should I practise patience or resentment? No, they say it is not well to indulge in such imaginings because our weakness may cause us to fall before the idea of such a trial. But should such thoughts arise, we can turn them to our good and use our very weakness to practise humility. When such ideas occur it would be well to say: I know what I ought to do on such and such an occasion, but I know not how far I can trust myself, because I know by personal experience that [“my strength is weakened through poverty,”<sup>41</sup>] and I have learnt on several occasions how my reason becomes blinded, my judgement weakened, and my will often perverted easily to evil. O my God, I can do all things if I am strengthened by Thy help; but without this I can do nothing, nor shall I ever be able to do anything! If I had to confess Thee I should miserably deny Thee; if to honour Thee by patience I should give way to vengeance; if I had to obey Thee I should offend Thee by disobedience. “Thou art a

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40. [Psalms 67:29](#).

41. [Psalms 30:11](#).

strong helper: when my strength shall fail, do not Thou forsake me.”<sup>1</sup> Thy saying is quite true; O my God: “Without Me you can do nothing.”<sup>2</sup> Not only without Thee can I never do any meritorious act of virtue whatsoever, but I cannot do anything at all; as St Augustine instructs me: “Whether it be little or whether it be great, it cannot be done without Him without whom nothing can be done.”<sup>3</sup>

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1. [Psalms 70:7,9.](#)

2. [John 15:5.](#)

3. “Sive parum sive multum sine illo fieri non potest.” ([Tractate 31 in John](#)).



## SECTION B.



### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS XV

A beautiful way of asking humility of God was the following which was used by a great saint. Lord, he said, I do not even know what humility is like, but I know that I do not possess it, and cannot of myself obtain it; and that unless I have it I shall not be saved; therefore it only remains for me to ask it of Thee, but give me the grace to ask it as I ought. Thou hast promised, O my God, to grant me all those things which I shall ask of Thee and which are necessary to my eternal salvation; and humility being most necessary to me, faith compels me to believe that Thou wilt grant me this, if I know how to ask it of Thee. But herein lies the difficulty, because I know not how to ask Thee as I ought. Teach me and help me that I may pray to Thee as Thou dost wish me to pray and in that efficacious manner in which Thou Thyself knowest that I shall be heard. And as Thou commandest me to be humble, I am ready to obey; but grant that through Thy help I may in truth become such as Thou dost desire. I ardently do, sire to be

humble, and from whence comes this love and desire for humility if not from Thee, who hast put it into my heart by Thy holy grace? Oh, of Thy goodness grant me therefore what Thou hast made me so love and desire. I hope for it, and I will continue to hope for it. “Strengthen me, O Lord God, that, as Thou hast promised, I may bring to pass that which I have purposed, having a belief that it might be done by Thee.”<sup>1</sup>

## THOUGHTS &amp; SENTIMENTS XVI

We may persuade ourselves that we possess various virtues, because we have a tangible proof within us that we really have them. Thus we may judge ourselves to be chaste, because we feel really attracted to chastity; or we may think ourselves abstemious, because we are so by nature; or obedient, because we practise a ready obedience. But however much a man may exercise humility, he can never form any judgement as to his being really humble, for he who thinks himself humble is no longer so.

In the same way that to recognize that we are proud is the beginning of humility, so to flatter ourselves that we are humble is the beginning of pride, and the more humble we think ourselves the greater is our pride. That self-complacency which the heart feels, making us imagine that we are humble in consequence of some agreeable reflections we have had about ourselves, is a species of vanity; and how can vanity exist with humility which is founded solely on truth? Vanity is nothing but a lie, and it is precisely from a lie that pride springs.

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1. [Judith 13:7](#).

# SECTION C.



## THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS XXVII.

If we examine all our falls into sin, whether venial or grave, the cause will always be found in some hidden pride; and true indeed are the words of the Holy Ghost: “For pride is the beginning of all sin.”<sup>1</sup> Of this truth our Lord Jesus Christ Himself has warned us in His Gospel where He says: “And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled.”<sup>2</sup> God can give no greater humiliation to a soul than to allow it to fall into sin; because sin is the lowest depth of all that is base, vile and ignominious.

Therefore each time that we are humbled by falling into sin, it is certain that we must previously have exalted ourselves by some act of pride; because only the proud are threatened with the punishment of this humiliation: “And he humbled himself afterwards, because his heart had been lifted up.”<sup>3</sup> For thus it is written of King

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1. [Ecclesiastes 10:15.](#)

2. [Matthew 23:12.](#)

3. [2 Paralipomenon 32.](#)

Ezechias in holy Scripture, and the inspired writer has also said: “Before destruction the heart of man is exalted.”<sup>4</sup>

There never has been a case of sin, says St Augustine, nor ever will be one, nor can ever be one, of which pride was not in some measure the occasion: “There never can have been, and never can be, and there never shall be any sin without pride.”<sup>5</sup>

Let us be so truly humble that we may not incur the punishment of this humiliation. No one can fall who lies on the ground; and no one can sin so long as he is humble. My God! My God! let me remain in my nothingness, for it is the surest state for me.

#### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS XXVIII.

We read of many who after being renowned for their holiness, fervent in the exercise of prayer, great penances and signal virtues, and who after being favoured by God with the gifts of ecstasy, revelations and miracles, have nevertheless fallen into the hideous vice of impurity at the slightest approach of temptation. And when I consider it, I find that there is no sin that degrades the soul so much as this impure sin of the senses, because the soul, from being reasoning and spiritual, like the angels, becomes thereby carnal, sensual and like brute beasts “who have no understanding.”<sup>6</sup>

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4. [Proverbs 18:12.](#)

5. “Nullum peccatum esse potuit aut potest aut poterit sine superbia.” (Liber of Salutis, 19 vel alias - original citation) [City of Good Book XIX, Chapter XXV.](#)

6. [Psalms 31:9.](#)

## SECTION D.



### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS XLVI.

**H**owever upright we may be, we must never be scandalized nor amazed at the conduct of evil-doers, nor consider ourselves better than, they, because we do not know what is ordained for them or for us in the supreme dispositions of God, “Who doth great things and unsearchable and wonderful things without number.”<sup>1</sup>

When Zaccheus thought only of usury and oppressing the poor, when Magdalen filled Jerusalem with scandal, when Paul cursed and persecuted the Christian religion, who would have imagined that they would ever have become saints? And on the other hand, who would have believed that Solomon, the oracle of divine wisdom, would die in the midst of wantonness and idols? that Judas, one of the Apostles, would betray his divine Master and then give himself up to despair? Or that many holy men advanced in sanctity would have be-

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1. [Job 5:9.](#)

come apostates? These are examples which should make us tremble when we reflect upon the unfathomable mystery of the judgement and mercy of God: “One He putteth down, and another He lifteth up.”<sup>2</sup> “He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble.”<sup>3</sup>

[Every saint can in a moment become a sinner if he is vain of his sanctity; and a sinner can as quickly become a saint if he is contrite and humbles himself for his sin. How many there are who in the fervour of their prayer “mount up to the heavens” and soon afterwards, at the slightest occasion of sin, they “go down to the depths”!<sup>4</sup> How many there are too who, given up to vanity and stained with the deepest sins, are suddenly changed by having their eyes opened to the knowledge of the truth and who thus attain to Christian perfection! Indeed the high counsels of God are to be adored and not scrutinized, for “The Lord humbleth and exalteth; He raiseth up the needy from the dust, and lifteth up the poor from the dung-hill.”<sup>5</sup>]

#### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS XLVII.

Who knows if the one I judge and speak ill of may not be dearer to God than I am? Whether another whom I esteem but little and despise for his physical or moral defects be not destined to be very happy with God for all eternity? Who knows whether I may not be condemned

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2. [Psalms 74:8.](#)

3. [Luke 1:52.](#)

4. [Psalms 106:26.](#)- This footnote does not appear in the original Italian edition but are cited here for continuity. Vaughan appears to have added the text and the citation..

5. [1 Kings 2:7,8.](#) - Ibid.

## SECTION E.



### THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS LXVII.

Self-knowledge is a great help for acquiring humility; but in the midst of the many passions, faults and vices of which we are aware, to recognize our own pride is the most useful of all. For this vice is the most shameful of all, and even in our confessions it is more difficult for us to say truthfully: “I accuse myself of being proud and of not trying seriously to correct this fault” than to accuse ourselves of many other sins. This knowledge of our pride is most humiliating; for where certain other vices may be pitied and excused for some reason or other, pride can never be pitied or excused, being a sin which is diabolical and odious not only to God but to men — as the inspired word says: “*Odibilis coram Deo est et hominibus superbia, et execrabilis omnis iniquitas gentium*; Pride is hateful before God and men.”<sup>1</sup>

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1. [Ecclesiasticus 10:7](#).

Let us therefore examine ourselves daily on this point; let us accuse ourselves of it in our confessions; and acknowledging our pride in this manner will be an excellent incentive to become humble. Let us pray to Jesus Christ that He may do for us as He did for the blind man whom He healed, and ask Him to put the mud of pride upon our eyes so that we may be made to see. Let us say to God: Thou art my God, that God who “raiseth up the needy from the earth and lifteth up the poor out of the dunghill”<sup>1</sup>, grant that this pride which is my great sin may through Thee serve as an instrument by which I may attain to a virtuous humility!”

## THOUGHTS &amp; SENTIMENTS LXVIII.

Let us consider the things of this world in which we are apt to take a vain delight. One may pride himself on his robust health and bodily strength, another on the science, knowledge, eloquence and other gifts that he has acquired through study and art. Another prides himself upon his wealth and possessions; another upon his nobility and rank; another upon his moral virtues, or other virtues which bring him spiritual grace and perfection: but must not all these gifts be regarded as so many benefits proceeding from God, for which we must render an account if we do not use them to resist temptation and conform to the ordination of God? We are debtors to God for every benefit that we receive, and are bound to employ these gifts and to trade with them for the glory of God like merchants to whom capital is entrusted. When

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1. [Psalms 112:7.](#)



## SECTION F.



### *PRACTICAL EXAMEN ON THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY*

#### VIRTUE OF HUMILITY CI.

**N**OW that you are conversant with the idea of humility, in its necessity, its excellence and its motives, I am persuaded that a fervent desire to practise it has been excited in your heart. But because, on the one hand, you cannot do this without the special help of God, and, on the other, God will work nothing in you without you — that is, without the co-operation of your own will — it therefore follows that when you have invoked the divine help, not doubting but that you will receive it, you must apply yourself to adopt those means which are most likely to help you to attain that virtue.

And because all the masters of spiritual life agree in this, that it is most efficacious to make a particular examen every day on the virtue which we wish to acquire,

I will expound for your enlightenment a practical examen on Christian humility; and, in order that you make a good use of it, I offer you three words of advice.

The first is that in making your examen once a day, at least, in order to mark those faults which you may have committed against humility, you must not examine yourself each time upon every fault that you may have noted down, but begin by choosing not more than one or two of the most flagrant ones which you are in the habit of committing, and thus, after having accustomed yourself to amend these, you will pass on little by little to the others, until pride will gradually be eradicated and humility will spring up in your heart.

This is also the manner in which we ought to meditate. Certain general resolutions, such as to subdue pride and to practise humility, are never of any use; but, on the contrary, they frequently generate confusion and create conflict in the mind: therefore it is necessary to go into particulars of those things in which during the day we have been most sensible of our imperfections, and even then we must not form a general intention not to fall into them again all our life through, but it is enough that we should make a firm resolution not to fall into them again during that one day. It was thus that holy King David made resolutions and renewed them, not trying to keep them from year to year, nor from month to month, but from day to day: "I will pay my vows from day to day."<sup>1</sup> And in order to keep them one cannot sufficiently urge the necessity of imposing upon oneself some penance and of accomplishing it faithfully. For example, as many

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1. [Psalms 60:9](#).

# SECTION G.

## *EXAMEN ON HUMILITY TOWARDS GOD*



### HUMILITY TOWARDS GOD CII

**T**HE first act of humility, says St Thomas,<sup>1</sup> consists in rendering ourselves entirely subject to God with the greatest reverence for His infinite Majesty, before which we are as nothing: “All nations are before Him as if they had no being at all.”<sup>2</sup> But do you ever consider your nothingness before God? — and that all the being you have, you have from God? — and that through intrinsic necessity you depend so entirely upon God that without Him you cannot do anything good — “for without me you can do nothing?”<sup>3</sup> that without God you neither think nor say nor do anything that is good?

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1. St Thomas Aquinas Summa, Second part of the Second part, [question 161, article 2](#) and [3; question 162, article 5](#).

2. [Isaiah 40:17](#).

3. [John 15:5](#).

This is of faith. “No man can say the Lord Jesus but by the Holy Ghost.”<sup>4</sup> “Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God.”<sup>5</sup> “For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish according to His good will.”<sup>6</sup> It is not enough only to say I know all these things, but it is necessary to realize them to become really humble.

The Angelic Doctor teaches that the reason why humility tends principally to render the soul subject to God is because this virtue is nearest to the theological virtues, and as it does not suffice only to know what things we must believe or hope, but it is also necessary for us to make acts of faith and hope, so in the same way we must make like acts of humility.

Christ Himself taught humility of heart, and the heart must not remain idle, nor fail to produce the necessary acts — and what acts of humility do you make before God? How often do you make them? When have you made them? How long is it since you made them?

It would be absurd to hope for the reward which is promised to the humble without being humble, or at least without the desire to be humble, and without making acts of humility; humility of heart without the heart humbling itself— what folly! And are you foolish enough to believe that this can be done?

Sometimes you give utterance to certain words which seem to tend to your own humiliation; you say you are a contemptible wretch, and good for nothing, but do you say such things sincerely from your heart? If you are

4. [1 Corinthians 12:3.](#)

5. [2 Corinthians 3:5.](#)

6. [Philippians 2:13.](#)

# SECTION H.

## *EXAMEN ON HUMILITY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOR*



**A**CCORDING to the doctrine of Saint Thomas<sup>1</sup> the first act of humility consists in subjecting ourselves to God, and the next is to subject — that is to say to humble — ourselves to our neighbour for the love of God; as the Holy Ghost says through St Peter: “Be ye subject therefore to every human creature for God’s sake”<sup>2</sup>; and the same Holy Spirit exhorts us through St Paul to excel each other in humility. “In humility let each esteem others better than themselves.”<sup>3</sup>

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1. [St Thomas Aquinas Summa](#), Second pt of the Second pt, question 161, article 3.

2. [1 Peter 2:13](#).

3. [Philippians 2:3](#).

## HUMILITY TOWARD NEIGHBORS CXX.

Now as your neighbour can be either your superior, your equal or your inferior, it is certain that you must practise humility first of all towards your superior which is of precept, for, as St Peter says, such is the will of God: “For so is the will of God.”<sup>4</sup>

Do you show to your superiors and betters that obedience and everence which your state exacts? How do you receive their reprimands? Do you feel that humility of heart towards them “with a good will serving”<sup>5</sup> which St Paul enjoins? There is a humility necessary for the imitation, of Christ, “Who humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death.”<sup>6</sup> There may sometimes be an excuse of impotence or inadvertence in not obeying those whom God has set over you, but to refuse to obey is always an act of inexcusable pride. As St Bernard says: “To be unwilling to obey is the proud effort of the will.”<sup>7</sup>

## HUMILITY TOWARD NEIGHBORS CXXI.

How do you behave to your equals? Do you wish to be above them, to be preferred before them, not contented with your own state? Every time that you feel this desire in your heart, say to yourself that this was the sin of Lucifer, who said in his heart: “I will ascend.”<sup>8</sup> And St Thomas teaches that the virtue of humility consists

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4. [1 Peter 2:15.](#)

5. [Ephesians 6:7.](#)

6. [Philippians 2:8.](#)

7. Liber de Præcepto et Dispensatione - Caput XI cf. Sancti Bernardi abbatis claræ-vallensis opera omnia, Volume 1, p 1192

8. [Isaiah 14:14.](#)

# SECTION I.

## *EXAMEN ON HUMILITY TOWARDS ONESELF*



**R**ICHARD of St Victor<sup>1</sup> defines humility as the interior contempt of oneself. Examine a little whether you have this feeling towards yourself. When you have dreams of dignity and honour, and you imagine yourself in the midst of grandeur and chimerical honours, how do you behave in these proud and vain imaginings? Do you rejoice and delight in them, desiring to dwell in them more and more? If we love humility we must treat these dreams of worldly ambition and pride with disdain and hatred, just as those who love chastity treat impure thoughts. We ought to pray thus with King David: “Let not the foot of pride come unto me,” because pride first enters into the soul through the thoughts of the mind, and he who accustoms himself to delight in these thoughts has already formed the bad habit of pride in his heart.

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1. “Humilis est qui seipsum apud semetipsum veraciter contemnit.” (Liber capitulus 23, Del Epul. inter Homilia).- No resource could be found. - Ed.

## HUMILITY TOWARD ONESELF CXXVIX.

Do you forget your own nothingness. Have you any self-esteem? If such be the case you are a seducer, a deceiver of your own self, because, as St Paul says: Whoever believes himself to be something “deceiveth himself.”<sup>2</sup> Do you delight and glory in your knowledge, your power, your riches, or in some other gift natural or moral? Remember the word God spoke by the Prophet Jeremiah: “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, and let not the strong man glory in his strength, and let not the rich man glory in his riches.”<sup>3</sup> And again by St Paul: “We ought not to please ourselves.”<sup>4</sup>

This delight and glory insinuates itself insensibly, but he who is humble notices it quickly and repels it as being nothing but vanity and only puffing up and filling the heart with pride.

In the same way with the spiritual life. Do you think yourself virtuous because you sometimes do a little good? You would do well then not to regard yourself as good, but to imagine yourself in Jerusalem repudiated by God, because, as the prophet said, thou art “trusting in thy beauty.”<sup>5</sup> And St Gregory says of such as you: “The soul hath confidence in its beauty when it takes some good action upon itself.”<sup>6</sup>

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2. [Galatians 6:3.](#)

3. [Jeremiah 9:23.](#)

4. [Romans 15:1.](#)

5. [Ezeckiel 16:15.](#)

6. “Fiduciam Pulchritudine sua anima habet quæ in scipsa de justa actione præsumit.” (Epist 126.)- cf. Epistles of St Gregory the Great.



# MORAL DOCTRINE

## *ON THE VICE OF PRIDE, AND THE BEST USE TO BE MADE OF THE PRACTICAL EXAMEN*



### THE PRACTICAL EXAMEN

**S**AIN'T THOMAS<sup>1</sup> defines pride as an inordinate affection against right reason, by which man esteems himself and desires to be esteemed by others above that which he really is; and as this affection is opposed to right reasoning, it is certainly a sin which partakes of the gravity of a mortal sin, because it is in direct opposition to the virtue of humility, and Saint Paul puts the proud in the same category as those whom “God delivered up to a reprobate sense and are worthy of death,”<sup>2</sup> although sometimes it is only a venial sin,

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1. St Thomas Aquinas Summa, Second part of the Second part, [question 162, article 1](#).

2. [Romans 1:28,32](#).

when the reason is not sufficiently enlightened or there is not full consent of the will.

### THE PRACTICAL EXAMEN CXXXVII.

Pride is placed among the deadly sins, because it is from pride that so many other sins are derived, and that is why St Paul, seeing the innumerable wickednesses of the world, called them to the notice of his disciple Timothy, saying: "Look how many are haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents,"<sup>3</sup> without love for their neighbour or for God. From whence do you suppose all these vices derive their origin? This is the source: the inordinate love which every one has for himself. "Men are lovers of themselves." This is the explanation which St Paul gives to it, and as St Augustine observes, "*Hæ omnia mala ab eo veluti fonte manant, quod primum posuit seipsos amantes*"; All these evils flow from the source which he first mentions self-love,"<sup>4</sup> and as the same saint says, "This excess of self-love is only pride."<sup>5</sup>

Therefore we can conclude from this that whoever overcomes pride overcomes a whole host of sins; according to the explanation given by St Gregory<sup>6</sup> of this text of Job: "He smelleth the battle afar off, and the shouting of the army."<sup>7</sup>

### THE PRACTICAL EXAMEN CXXXVII.

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3. 2 [Timothy 3:2](#).

4. Tractates in John. 123.

5. Augustine, The City of God, Book 14

6. *Morals On The Book Of Job By St. Gregory The Great*, Chapter 17.

7. [Job 39:25](#).

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# THE HUMILITY OF THE HEART

Easy to be attained,  
and maintained

WITH THE DEVOTION TO THE ROSARY

*OF THE*

## BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

*added by the Author*

## HUMILITY FROM THE HEART

The Humility that is proposed in this work, as one virtue necessary, desired then and now; now to be hoped for and now to be practiced with the acts of our hearts. But I like to add, that we have set ourselves to this virtue, as an end, addressing all our aspirations and prayers, mental and vocal to obtain it: and even then, did not in fact collect our other hourly profits, this, to be humble; Happy are we! because it contains most of what is necessary to attain the perfection of our state, and our eternal salvation.

But if you want to meditate for a few particular purposes, or to eradicate a vice, or to overcome a dominant passion, or to obtain other such virtues, or to be full of fervor in Christian observance; who does not see, humility, to also be the only means of absolute necessity, required by the providence of God to achieve each of our ends?

If you consider each virtue in the supernatural order, concerning eternal bliss: and certain that can not be obtained without the aid of one special grace of God; potent, and having each one say with the wise<sup>1</sup>: I knew, that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it.... I went to the Lord

Speak more, still, that God rightly refuses the favors of His thanks to the proud; it is written that He alone grants loving mercy to the humble, that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.<sup>2</sup>

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1. [Wisdom 8:21](#).

2. [James 4:6](#). "Majorem autem dat gratiam. Propter quod dicit: Deus superbis resistit, humilibus autem dat gratiam."

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So whether you want to achieve this or that virtue we must be convinced that humility is absolutely necessary, then, that without it we shall never have the grace of being poor in spirit, nor chaste, nor charitable, nor meek, nor fervent, however its pursuit is virtuous, and required by religion, for supernatural reasons.

What if humility is necessary for acquiring the virtues, and is even needed to keep them after you have acquired them? We examine ourselves in the life that has passed, to learn from regularly in the time to come. And if we find we have heretofore fallen several times to some notable faults, and are frequently in an unfaithful state nor had proper walks to see the Confessor, we again find among serious reflections that our every evil originated from from but a few of our secret prides.

Jesus Christ predicted in his Gospel “who is exalted is humbled”<sup>3</sup>; and so, God humiliates, who does not want to be humble, and rightly allows anyone to fall, that He wants to to exalt. Are we fallen at other times into iniquity, and its deplorable consequences? We must first, note with some pride exalted because, as Augustine says “pride is the beginning of all sins, and the cause, and end”<sup>4</sup>; and it is by our same unhappy experiences, that we also learn, how much humility is therefore necessary, for virtue, and to keep us in the Christian fervor. But if this humility is the only way to acquire and keep all the other virtues, what means then is there to acquire, and keep the virtue of humility?

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3. [Matthew 23:12](#).

4. Book of the Saint.

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I propose devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary; and I pray for thou to ponder my reflections here. You will know, that the devotion to the great mother of God is stored in the signs of predestination of souls from all the sacred theologians, and is founded in the authoritative sentiments of the Holy Fathers: if what we want is to know how to reason, I offer this contribution to comfort your heart.

There are two things we are looking for from the Holy Virgin, to the end that they are effectively resting on the hope of eternal salvation. One is, whom she wants to save, she can save, and the other is, he who is devout. Mary can save a prince, who may willingly exalt his own subject, saying “I will exalt him”. If she wants to save he who is devout to her, she certainly can save them also. We see, then, she can save, who she wants to. And this is the foundation her power is built upon.

And certainly, any good person whatever, may be the cause of the salvation of a sinner; because it can be the cause of his conversion, obtaining by his prayers the love of God and contrition of sins<sup>5</sup>. And then, that the custom of entreating onés favor through the prayers of one another as taught by St. James. Pray for each other so: because each can obtain for the other graces, which we are most in need of for our salvation.

This doctrine was readily preached by the Holy Father Augustine, when speaking about the conversion of St. Paul: Who, says he, has changed this son of perdition into a vessel of deliberation? Who has turned a blasphemer of God into a trumpet of the Holy Spirit, a per-

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5. Saint Ambrose on Luke 5:6

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secutor of the Church into an Apostle? We are bound to add to the prayers of the first martyr St. Stephen: For that reason the enemy called Paul is lifted, because he heard Stephen<sup>6</sup>. S. Stephen who was stoned by the Jews, prayed for Paul, who was present there, and soon Paul's name was transcribed from the role of reprobate to the Golden Book of Saints.

But if this can so affect the health of a sinner's Soul, in the end, who can become a saint, even if he is a servant of God, that denies his devotion to Mary? Mary, who as the perfect of Mother of God has in this kingdom unlimited mercy throughout His empire? Oh no: the power is not wanting, says St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, because she is the Mother of the Almighty.<sup>7</sup> How could it be, that the mother of the Almighty, lacks the power to do that? She can save those who are devoted to her, and to those who have doubt, she does not want to save.

To remove from our minds any questions and unreasonable doubt, just think of those sweet words of wisdom, which are applied to Mary by the Holy Church, she being mother of Fair Love: "*Ego mater pulchrae dilectionis*"; I am the mother of fair love<sup>8</sup>; *Ego diligentes me diligo*; who loves all those, who love it: I love<sup>9</sup>. But love does not know you well because of you loving another. Therefore if Mary loves those who love and devoutly honor her, and seek the good of eternal salvation, then is the sum of all the True good to want this for their soul? She wants to save them and is able to; and if you say

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6. Sermon 1. of Saint Stephen, & The Golden Book of Saints chapter 22.

7. Sermon 1, de Salv. Reg., & Sermon Dom. 2, post Epiph.

8. [Ecclesiasticus 24:24](#).

9. [Proverbs 8:17](#).

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otherwise, that is dealing her a disgraceful affront. If she wants she can save her devotées, who can have difficulty in believing that they will be saved more efficaciously?

But consider the way that Mary holds those she saved. It is True, Jesus Christ had said, He is the way that you get to glory: “I am the Way”<sup>10</sup>, and no man is saved, but through him: “No one comes to the Father, but by Me”.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless without violating the parental rights of the Son of God, we can truly say, that his Most Holy Mother is the faithful helper in the execution of all his designs. In what way?

We consult Saint Augustine. What is his prediction? It is the one, says the Saint<sup>12</sup>, to be prepaed for certain graces, for which the elect are infallibly saved. But as that which these graces give there is one who lives worthy of merit and, of justice, except for Jesus Christ; behold how you turn to Mary.

That His devout might be saved, as He desires, she works through the merits of Jesus Christ so those merits are most efficaciously applied: Thus providing you those succours of saving grace, He happily offers from his own dominion which are most suitable to obtain health. I can not unfold this, as I would like to, so I’ll explain by giving an example.

Here is one: there are bad habits in all vices, so judge, and rejudge your culpability in falling into grave sins from them. Being that his greatest desire of all, is for you to be saved, began your devotion to Mary for this helpful purpose. Now, will Mary vigorously assist you in doing

10. Jo. 10:9.

11. Jo. 14:6.

12. The Golden Book of Saints Chapter 14.

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this? You know exceedingly well, that she wants to help save a soul; and knowing also, that God's grace is not, in the not humble; here now she begins the succours, that transfuse in the spirit certain lights, which can benefit you to acquire humility.

It is worth all to acquire through humility the knowledge of your cowardice, meanness and weakness; the knowledge of the severity of your own sins in his pristine dominion, which are offensive to God; the remembrance of the Passion of Jesus Christ, of the death, of the judgment, of eternity, of Hell; and these are the lights, you will know by communication with Mary and there is no sweetness, which is as strong. And therefore, you become humble, without being aware of being humble and insinuating then the graces, one after another, channelled through humility to your heart; and then afterwards, you know perfectly well how to amend, and be happily dedicated to a good life for salvation.

Therefore, in essence this is the order, which I would like to be understood: Man, to better attempt to save himself with the perseverance necessary that Jesus Christ has taught us in his Gospel: But that he shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved<sup>13</sup>. For perserverence and well being, creates needs, that God concurs to aid with his special grace; so the same God had protested to the Prophet: Only in me is thine help<sup>14</sup>. To obtain from God the assistance of the context of his grace, we should have humility; because God has no concerns with the eye of his mercy, the humble: God raiseth concerns "*Deus hu-*

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13. [Matthew 10:22](#).

14. [Osee 13:9](#).

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# The Rosary

*conceived in her prayers, and its Mysteries to implore.*

*HUMILITY*

*FOR INTERCESSION*

**OF THE B. V. MARY**

**K**nowing Jesus Christ, that we ourselves are not good for anything for what is expected to operate on our eternal salvation; and also knowing, there is therefore a need to have recourse to the prayer of the Eternal Father; he offered for our own good to instruct us in the right way of saying this

prayer: *Sic ergo cos orabitur*: so therefore you pray, what is in his Gospels<sup>1</sup>: Pater noster, qui es in Caelis, with that which he followeth; and he said as much, and is clear, that in practice this prayer, we are sure to pray to the Eternal Father as it should, because we pray to him in the form that it has been taught by his Son made man.

Whatever the need in which we find ourselves, is always good for all the prayer of the Our Father; but in need, we have to be humble, to ask God for the grace of humility certainly can not be this more own mind, every word is a source, that redounds humility. Penetrate the senses, and apply them to your heart, if you want to be humble.



## SUNDAY PRAYERS

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## PATER NOSTER

[OUR FATHER]:

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1. [Matthew 6:9](#).

I blush to call you Father, O' my God, because this name "the Father" makes me account for my monstrous ingratitude. No Father is as loving, as you are, and between all those who have been made worthy to be your children, are there not already some, that are ungrateful, as am I?

## SANCTIFICETUR NOMEN TUUM [HALLOWED BE THY NAME]:

This is the first plea, that I offer. Destine, O! ruler of hearts, that your holy name be honored, and glorified by all. But who is it that can give you honor, and glory, if not he that is humble? Effectively humbled with your almighty virtue; and having much more humility, I have likewise more ability to celebrate, and adore your August greatness.

## ADVENIAT REGNUM TUUM [THY KINGDOM COME]:

You have created me for a very high end, to pray with you for your graces to rule in your glory now and also in eternity. And hence never to honor this sordid worm? I give thanks to your infinite goodness. I pray you will give me the gift of humility, and by that law, that have you made, to never give your grace, or your glory, but only to the humble.

## FIAT VOLUNTAS TUA [THY WILL BE DONE]:

Do not let me do my own will in anything, O my God; because; I am inclined to evil; and your will, that deserves



### ANGELIC SALUTATION

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#### AVE MARIA

[HAIL MARY]:

God save you Mary. There will never be thanked enough the Holy Trinity, who wanted to make use of your humility, and obedience, to repair the great harm, that was caused by Eve with her disobedient pride.

#### GRATIA PLENA

[FULL OF GRACE]:

You are full of Grace, much more than the Apostles, much more than all the Saints, and that of all the angels; because you were more humble than all par excellence.

#### DOMINUS TECUM:

[THE LORD IS WITH THEE].

With the Eternal Father, recognizes you as his humble Daughter. With you the Eternal Son, has selected the humblest of Mothers. With you the Holy Ghost, has selected his

most humble spouse, you are the shrine of the Holy Trinity, that is captivated by your state of profound humility.

BENEDICTA TU IN MULIERIBUS:

[BLESSED ART THOU AMONG WOMEN]

You are blessed among women; for the privilege, of being a virgin and a mother: and you are singularly blessed for your great humility; that being proclaimed Mother of God, and his reputed hand-maiden.

ET BENEDICTUS FRUCTUS VENTRIS  
TUI, JESUS:

[AND BLESSED BE THE FRUIT OF THY WOMB JESUS]

And Blessed is the Fruit of your womb, Jesus, that is he, who has come to save the World with his humility; and is the author of all the Blessings; the fullness of which is a redundant Blessing also to you, and all the sons of Adam.

SANCTA MARIA, MATER DEI:

[HOLY MARY, MOTHER OF GOD]

Holy Mary, you are our Mother of Mercy, by being the Mother of God. Your name, and your dignity, which is the fruit of your humility, fills up my heart again with confidence. And is it not good to have hope from you, of what hour you will next intercede through your Son for me?



## THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

### FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY

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#### The Annunciation To Mary

In considering the Mystery in these three lessons of humility that is presented: from Archangel Gabriel, who humbles himself to Mary; Mary, who humbles herself to God; the Son of God who humbles himself to become man. Oh! how much is worthy of imitation in the humility of these three characters?

I rejoice with you, Mary, for the joy that you had, when the Angel appeared as the Ambassador of the Divine Maternity. I thank you for the example that he gave of your humility, calling you the Servant of the Lord, while you were to be His mother. Pray to the Eternal Father, who through the merits of Jesus Christ, and for

her, and her humility, hear this prayer. Now Say the Pater noster, et cetera.

## SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY

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### The Visitation of Saint Elizabeth.

Consider Mary, entering the house of Zechariah, being pregnant with Jesus Christ. At this first meeting St. John the Baptist shall humble himself in the Belly of Elizabeth, when he realizes his Savior is the visitor: this humbles Elizabeth with astonishment at Mary, that the Mother of God lowered herself to the accommodations, by honoring her with a Visit. The presence of the Mother of God, has influenced her humility.

I rejoice with you, Oh Mary, for the comfort that you brought to Jesus for nine months in your belly. I thank you for that humility, that you communicated to St. Elizabeth and St. John the Baptist. But I also communicated it by my prayer to the Eternal Father, who through the merits of Jesus Christ, and for his, and your humility, heard this prayer. Pater noster. & c.

## THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY

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### The Nativity and Birth of Jesus.

Consider Mary with her baby in the crib. Jesus as the King, Mary as Queen of the Universe: and they have for their accommodation a stable. He could be born the Son of God in a King's Court; and yet was born in a vile hut,



### THIRD SORROWFUL MYSTERY

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#### Jesus Crowned with Thorns

Consider Jesus with a Crown of Thorns around his head. These Thorns are long, hard, sharp, and pierce the skull, until they are sunk into the skull. Oh what pain! They strike him with the reeds, and spit in his face, they mock: but he is silent, he is humble and offereth us all his pangs, and dishonor to the eternal Father. Oh what humility! and true humility of heart!

O Mary, for me you shall offer to the divine Majesty the humility of the King of Glory, now the most abject: and of the disgraceful men with the division of this humility, He has come to curse the Proud: but you assist me to live now in this way, that I might enjoy that blessing, that will hand over myself to the humble. Pray to the Eternal Father, that, through the merits of Jesus Christ, and for his and your humility this prayer is heard. *Pater noster.* & c.

### FOURTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY

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#### Jesus Carrying the Cross.

Consider Jesus, that with a great love for the Cross, and the burden from it upon his shoulders; and being debilitated by his many Wounds, and the shedding of much blood, walks with it to Calvary. He kisses it, and teaches

us, that to be predestined to glory, don't just carry the Cross, but you need to know to carry it with humility.

O Holy Mary, ye shall offer myself to the Divine Majesty of the most humble heart of Jesus, that groaning, He enjoys under the weight of His cross. The crosses are not missing nor also are mine, nor are missing from my course in life. I am lacking humility; and so for this, I will offer my most fervent requests. Pray to the Eternal Father, that, through the merits of Jesus Christ, and for his and your humility this prayer is heard. Pater noster. & c.

#### FIFTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY

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### Jesus' Crucifixion

Consider Jesus, His body now distended and relaxed on the Cross, and is forsaken to be nailed through his hands, and his feet, then, so-nailed, is raised in the air, where after three hours of very painful agony He dies. All this was witnessed by His Mother, who was also crucified in her heart: and this that the world and world, not ever cease glorifying God himself, now from the humility of Jesus, and Mary on Calvary.

Oh Holy Mary, most martyred at the foot of The Cross, ye shall offer thyself to the divine Majesty's Crucifixion, the agony, and the death of your most humble Son, He is the view of Jesus's Crucifixion, I most know my pride: and when it will never, that I am obliged to humble myself. O Mother of mercy, have mercy on me, Pray to the Eternal Father, that, through the merits of Je-

sus Christ, and for his and your humility this prayer is heard. Pater noster. & c.

## THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

### First Glorious Mystery

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#### The Resurrection Of Jesus Christ

Consider Jesus, that resurrected from death to a life of glory, appears to his grieving Mother, who was mourning the sorrowful Passion, What joy must Mary have heard, to see her Son in all His Glory, that a little while before she had seen die with such infamy! The glory is always preceded by humility, and God is not slow to remunerate, and console the humble.

I rejoice with you, O glorious Mary, for the humility which glorified your Son, and for the humility which consoled your heart. You most of all, had heard the pain of his humiliating passion; and most of all also heard the jubilations of his triumphant Resurrection. I will not beg to be a part of your humility. Pray to the Eternal Father, that, through the merits of Jesus Christ, and for his and your humility this prayer is heard. Pater noster. & c.

### SECOND GLORIOUS MYSTERY

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#### The Ascension Of Jesus Christ

Consider Jesus, which is surrounded by a resplendent cloud going up to Heaven, accompanied by a multitude of Angels, that they came out facing with jubilation. That jubilation had to hear Mary, to see her son ascend to the glory of Paradise, in which none of humanity had since then been allowed to enter? He was the Son of God and came from heaven to earth to teach humility; and going up from earth to heaven, He has demonstrated the glory, which is reserved for the humble.

I rejoice with you, O glorious Mary, for the great glory of your Son, Jesus. He has opened wide the gates of Heaven, that were closed to pride, and shall not be opened, that to the humble; I humble myself to ask for the grace and virtue of holy humility. Pray to the Eternal Father, that, through the merits of Jesus Christ, and for his and your humility this prayer is heard. Pater noster. & c.

### THIRD GLORIOUS MYSTERY

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## The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Consider, being Mary with the Apostles in Genacolo, It came in the form of the Holy Ghost to kindle a flame in their hearts for the love of God. They were filled with the Holy Spirit most of all Mary; because of all them, she was most humble: and it is true, that the Holy Ghost, deservedly, was sent by Jesus Christ, but he does not come except to the humble.

I rejoice with you, O glorious Mary, for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, it remains all inflamed in your heart,

IMPRIMATUR

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It is from Reverend Father Mag. Sac. Pal. Apostol.

Franc. X. Passeri Archlep. Larisien ac Vicesg.

I read the orders of The Reverend Father Master of the S. Palace; of the pamphlet entitled Humility of the Heart of by P. F. Gaetano Mary de Bergamo Cappuchin already printed in Bassano and I have found nothing worthy of opposition against the purity of dogma and morality, but rather I have been delighted by a deep, true wisdom and pious companion, which together formed the character of a clear author.

Given at the Convent of Minerva on this day 05 May, 1792

Fr. Giuseppe Faraldi of The Order of Predicatore Apostolico. Professor S. Theology and Master of Novices

IMPRIMATUR

Fr. Dominicus Baccius Ord. Praed. Reverendissimo P. M. Sacri Pal. Apost. Socius.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. B. Si videbitur Reverendissimo Patri Sacri Pal. Apost. Magist. F. Xaverius Passeri Archiep. Lariss. Vicesgerens; Fr. Dominicus Baccius Ord. Praed. Reverendissimo P.M. Sacri Pal. Apost. Socius. ([http://web3.uniroma2.it/personale/caputo\\_rino/VecchiaImplementazione/html/it/codiciimprimatur.html](http://web3.uniroma2.it/personale/caputo_rino/VecchiaImplementazione/html/it/codiciimprimatur.html))

# APPENDIX A

Materials from the 1906 English Translation

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*To*  
*The PRIESTS ORDAINED by ME*  
*for the Diocese of Salford*  
*And the Archdiocese of Westminster*  
*and for the*  
FOREIGN MISSIONS

*Also to*  
*The LADIES of CHARITY*  
*established by me in*  
SALFORD & WESTMINSTER

*In the Conviction that*  
*their works of Charity, if planted in*  
*the Garden of Humility*  
*Will bear*  
*a Fuller and Richer Harvest than if sown, in*  
*any other Soil*

HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN

*Archbishop of Westminster*

*April 23, 1903*

*(this page is a reproduction of the original 1906 credits page)*

## PREFACE to VAUGHAN

These “Thoughts and Sentiments on Humility” were written by Cardinal Vaughan during the last months of his life. Being ordered by his medical advisers out of London, the Cardinal went to Derwent, where, as the guest of Lord and Lady Edmund Talbot, he found that perfect freedom and multitude of peace of which he had long felt the need.

It was while reposing his soul in quiet prayer and feasting his sight on the fine scenery of this ideal spot among the moorlands of Derbyshire that the thought came to him of translating while yet there was time, Father Cajetan’s treatise on Humility.

For more than thirty years Cardinal Vaughan had known and studied that work, and it is scarcely an exaggeration to say he had made it during the last fourteen years of his life his constant companion, his *vade mecum*.

What THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS it had taught him, what sights it had shown him, what stories it had told him those only know to whom he revealed his inmost soul. However even those who knew the Cardinal less intimately could scarcely fail to realize in their dealings with him that they were treating with a man whose growing characteristic was humility of heart. A more truly humble man I have seldom, if ever, come across. It was the humility of a child, it was so sweet and simple, and yet so strong and saint-like — may I not “even venture to say, Christ-like?” It was the sort

of humility that could not go wrong, for it was founded on truth. It was truth. Does not St Bernard remind us that “Humility is Truth?” It is a truth which, inasmuch as it is a home-thrusting truth, none of us can afford to ignore. It is the truth all about oneself in one’s triple alliance with God, with one’s neighbour, with one’s own soul.

Humility may not inappropriately be called the starting post in that race for heaven of which the Apostle speaks. It is the terminus a quo in the spiritual life. It is the first of the many THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS set before us in the school of sanctity — a difficult THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS, I grant you, and one which nature seeks to shirk or to put off indefinitely, but for the man who means to graduate for heaven there is no escaping it. Accordingly our divine Master who is not exacting, reminds all His would-be followers, without distinction, that they must learn this THOUGHTS & SENTIMENTS, get it well by heart, and into the heart; for Humility is the alphabet out of which every other virtue is formed and omit up. It is the soil of the garden of the soul, on which the divine Sower goes forth to sow His seed.

It is in the school of Christ, and from the lips of Christ Himself that we must learn Humility. “Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart.” By following the Master Himself, by studying His own Heart, we have to acquire, to appreciate and to practise this first, this vital, this vitalizing, energizing virtue, without which no man can hope to make any progress at all on the Royal Road heavenward.



## INTRODUCTION to VAUGHAN

FATHER CAJETAN, or Padre Gaetano Maria da Bergamo, was one of the great Italian Missionaries of the eighteenth century. Born in 1672 he was professed a Minor Capuchin in 1692, and died in 1753. His eulogy, contained in the work on Illustrious Writers of the Order of Minor Capuchins, is brief and pregnant: “In religiosae vitae moribus nemini secundus, in omni genere scribendi facile primus.”

He was one of the reformers of the Italian pulpit, substituting for the vapid, empty rhetoric which prevailed, a solid, learned and instructive style, animated by zeal and real devotion.

His religious works, written amid missions and courses of sermons, are contained in thirty volumes; of his writings Benedict XIV says that: “they have this rare quality in our day, that they satisfy the intellect and the heart; their solid doctrine in no way dries up their tender devotion, and their devotional sweetness in no way detracts from the perfect solidity of their doctrine.” He was a model Religious, remarkable for his charity, zeal and love for God and for souls, which he had built up in the solid foundation of profound humility, with which he united a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

I confess that, though I have been in possession of the Monza edition of his work for over thirty years, it was not till recently that I looked seriously into them.

The first of his volumes is the one that has most struck me; and this I took up thirteen or fourteen years ago and have never put it down since. For it seems to supply so much of what the soul most needs, and which every one must feel that he can never possess sufficiently, if even he possess it really at all, namely *Humility of Heart*.

There is a great advantage in using such a book as this for two or three years consecutively as a meditation book. The human mind is so volatile, the character so restless, convictions are so slow in taking a deep and permanent hold on our practical life, that I have always considered that a retreat made upon one idea, and two or three years given to the meditation of one great subject is productive of more solid good than the following out of the ordinary system, which, of course, has its own advantages, commending it to the greater number. I venture even to think that for many persons living amidst the distractions of the world, such as priests engaged in the active ministry, and devout men and women of the laity, who are deeply in earnest about the work of their sanctification, the persevering study of one book for years, such as the "Spiritual Combat," St Alphonsus on "Prayer," Blessed de Montfort on "True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary," Padre Gaetano on "Humility of Heart," Palma on "The Passion," and certain other treatises which need not be named here, is far more important than for recluses and good people living out of the world. We never get a proper hold of a great spiritual doctrine until we have lived in it and been saturated by it. The soul must soak in the brine until it has become wholly impregnated with its qualities. And is this process likely to be carried out

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HUMILITY OF HEART

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