

## **Day 11 of 33**

Imitation of Christ, by Thomas á Kempis: Book 1, Chapter 25  
On the Fervent Amendment of our Whole Life

When a certain anxious person, who often times wavered between hope and fear, once overcome with sadness, threw himself upon the ground in prayer, before one of the altars in the Church and thinking these things in his mind, said "Oh, if I only knew how to persevere," that very instant he heard within him, this heavenly answer: "And if thou didst know this, what would thou do? Do now what you would do, and thou shall be perfectly secure." And immediately being consoled, and comforted, he committed himself to the Divine Will, and his anxious thoughts ceased. He no longer wished for curious things; searching to find out what would happen to him, but studied rather to learn what was the acceptable and perfect will of God for the beginning and the perfection of every good work.

"Hope in the Lord," said the Prophet, "And do all good, and inhabit the land, and thou shall be fed of the riches thereof." There is one thing that keeps many back from spiritual progress, and from fervor in amendment namely: the labor that is necessary for the struggle. And assuredly they especially advance beyond others in virtues, who strive the most manfully to overcome the very things which are the hardest and most contrary to them. For there a man does profit more and merit more abundant grace, when he does most to overcome himself and mortify his spirit. All have not, indeed, equal difficulties to overcome and mortify, but a diligent and zealous person will make a greater progress though he have more passions than another, who is well regulated but less fervent in the pursuit of virtues.

Recite: Veni Creator, Ave Maris Stella, Magnificat, and Glory Be (See Appendix)

## THE VIRGIN MARY IN THE KINGDOM

### Day 11

**The Virgin Mary's first years of life on earth. She forms  
the most splendid dawn that hastens the longed-for day  
of grace in the hearts of men**

*The soul to the Little Infant Queen:*

Here I am again near your cradle, little heavenly mother. My little heart is charmed by your beauty; I cannot remove my gaze from a beauty so rare. How sweet your gaze is! The motion of your little hands calls me to hug you and cleave to your Heart which is engulfed in love. Little holy mother, consume my human will with your flames [of love], so that I may live together with you in the Divine Will and make you happy.

*Lesson of the Queen of Heaven:*

My child, if you knew how my maternal little Heart rejoices in seeing you close to my cradle to listen closely to what I, your tender mother, wish to tell you! Indeed, I feel comforted as your queen and mother, for in having you near me, unlike a sterile mother or a queen bereft of her children, I am comforted as a fruitful mother who is with her dear child who loves me so much, and who wants me to

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be her mother and queen. So, you are the bearer of joy to your mother.

What is more, you have come onto my lap so that I may teach you how to live in the Kingdom of the Divine Will. To have a child who wants to live with me in this kingdom that is so holy, is the greatest glory, honour and festivity for me, your mother. So be attentive to what I say, my dear child, and I will continue to narrate to you the prodigies of my birth.

My cradle was surrounded by angels who vied in singing lullabies to me, their Sovereign Queen. And since I was endowed with reason and knowledge, which had been infused in me [at my Immaculate Conception] by my Creator, I fulfilled my first obligation of adoring the Most Holy and Adorable Trinity with my intelligence and with my stammering childish voice. And my love for such a Holy Majesty was so ardent and great that, languishing, I felt overwhelmed with the desire of being in the arms of the divinity. I desired to receive the embraces of the three divine Persons and exchange them with my own embraces.

And since my desires were commands for the angels, they picked me up, carried me on their wings and placed me into the loving arms of my Heavenly Father. Oh, with how much love the divine Persons awaited me! I was coming from the land of exile and the brief pauses of separation between us were the cause of new fiery surgings of love; they were new gifts the divine Persons had prepared for me. And I would find new ways of petitioning

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them for clemency and mercy for my children who, living in exile, were under the scourge of the Divine Justice. Fusing myself entirely in God's divine love, I said to them: "Adorable Trinity, I am overjoyed; I am endowed with Queenship. I know neither unhappiness nor slavery, for the joys and happiness of your Will reigning in me are so great and overwhelming that, little as I am, I cannot embrace them all. And although I enjoy so much happiness, a current of intense bitterness remains in my little Heart: I feel in my Heart the unhappiness of my children who have become slaves to their own rebellious will. Have mercy, Holy Father, have mercy! Make my happiness complete by making happy all of these sad children whom I carry within my maternal womb with more love than any mother. Let the Divine Word descend to earth, and everything will be granted! I shall not come down from your paternal lap if you do not guarantee me this grace, for with it, I shall bring to my children the good news of their Redemption."

The divinity was moved at my prayers and, filling me with new gifts, the divine Persons said to me: "*Return to the land of exile and continue your prayers. Extend the Kingdom of Our Will in all of your acts and, at the appropriate time, We will make you happy.*" But they did not tell me either when or where the Divine Word would come to earth. So I departed from heaven only to do the Divine Will.<sup>11</sup> This was the most heroic sacrifice for me,

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<sup>11</sup> Mary's visitations to the three divine Persons at the hands of the angels were bilocative acts of the soul (cf. footnote 52, pp. 187-188). Mary's body and soul remained in the crib, while her soul, by the

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but I did it gladly so that the Divine Will alone might have dominion over me.

Now, listen closely to what your tender mother wishes to tell you, my child. How much your soul cost me, to the point of embittering the infinite expanses of my joys and happiness! Every time you do your will, you become a slave and experience your own unhappiness, and I, being your mother, feel the unhappiness of my child within my Heart. Oh, how sorrowful it is to see my children unhappy. In acknowledging that I came all the way down from heaven for the purpose of not allowing my human will to have its own life in me, you should take to heart the importance of doing the Divine Will.

Now, my child, continue to listen closely to what your tender mother wishes to tell you. In each one of your acts, may your first obligation be this: to adore your Creator, to know him and to love him. This places you in the [divine] order of creation, whereby you come to recognize the One who created you. Such is the holiest obligation of every soul: to acknowledge where it came from.

Now, my going up to heaven and coming [back to earth] accompanied by my prayers, formed the dawn about me which, casting its light over the whole world, surrounded the hearts of my children. And in this way, it

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power of God, was simultaneously transported into heaven. Otherwise put, God empowered Mary's soul to bilocate into heaven while remaining in her little body in the crib.

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was possible for daybreak to follow the dawn and engender the long-awaited serene day when the Divine Word would come to earth.

### *The soul:*

Little heavenly mother, seeing you barely born and imparting to me such holy lessons, makes me feel enraptured. I understand how great your love is, to the point of becoming unhappy because of me. Holy mother, you who love me so much, let the power, the love and the joys which inundate you, descend into my heart, so that in being filled with them, my will may find no place to have a life of its own, but may freely give up its place to the dominion of the Divine Will.

### *Aspiration:*

Today, to honour me, make three acts of adoration to your Creator, reciting three *Gloria's* to thank him for the many times I received the grace of being admitted to their presence.

### *Exclamation:*

Heavenly Mother, let the daybreak of the Divine Will arise in my soul.

## 3 AM HOUR

### Eleventh Hour

#### 3 AM

#### **Jesus is presented to Caiaphas**

My afflicted and abandoned good Jesus, while my weak nature sleeps in your sorrowful Heart, my sleep is often interrupted by the pangs of love and sorrow of your Divine Heart... Between [my] vigils and sleep I hear the blows your executioners give You, and upon awakening I say, “My poor Jesus, abandoned by everyone, there is no one who defends You!” So from within your Heart I offer You my life to sustain You as they shove You around. And I fall asleep again, but another pang of love of your Divine Heart wakes me up, and I am deafened by the insults they shout at You; I hear their whispered plots against You and the shouting and scurried footsteps of the people.

My love, how is it that they are all against You? What have You done to make them want to tear You to pieces like many rabid wolves? In hearing the plotting of your enemies, I feel my blood freeze and I tremble in anguish thinking of what to do to defend You. But my afflicted Jesus, keeping me within his Heart, presses me more tightly to himself and says:

**“My child, I have done nothing wrong, and yet I have done everything: Mine is the crime of love that contains all sacrifices and love of immeasurable cost.**

### 3 AM HOUR

**We are still at the beginning. Remain in My Heart while observing everything, loving Me, remaining silent and learning. Let your ice-cold blood flow in My veins so as to refresh My Blood which is all in flames. Let your trembling flow within My limbs, so that assimilated to Me, you may be strengthened, warmed and experience part of My sorrows and, in seeing Me suffer so much, you may acquire strength. This is the most beautiful defense you can provide for Me. Be faithful and attentive to Me.”**

Sweet love of mine, the clamor of your enemies is so intense and overwhelming that I can no longer sleep. The shoves become more violent. I hear the noise of the chains with which they bound You so tightly that your life Blood flows from your wrists and marks the streets... Remember Jesus that my blood is in yours; as You shed your Blood, mine kisses it, adores it and offers it reparation.

My love and my all, may your Blood be a light to all those who offend You at night and a magnet to draw all hearts round You. While they drag You, the air is filled with shouts and whistles. And You arrive before Caiaphas; You are the perfect icon of meekness, modesty and humility. Your sweetness and patience are so [magnanimous] that they cause even your enemies to tremble. And Caiaphas, seething with rage, seeks to utterly destroy You. Oh, how well innocence and sin are here distinguished!



### 3 AM HOUR

My love, You are before Caiaphas as the guiltiest of all and are in the act of being condemned. Caiaphas asks the witnesses what your crimes are. Oh, he should rather have inquired about your love! And some accuse You of one thing, others of another, speaking nonsense and contradicting themselves. As they accuse You, the soldiers who are near You tear your hair and unload such horrible slaps on your most sacred face that they resound throughout the whole room. They twist your lips and hit You while You remain silent and suffer. And if You look at them, the light of your eyes descends into their hearts where, unable to sustain your gaze, they step away from You, but others take their place to make You suffer greater torments.

Among the many accusations and offenses I witness, You attune your ears, your Heart pounds heavily and it is about to break with sorrow... Tell me, my afflicted good Jesus, what is it? I see that your love is so great that You eagerly anticipate your enemies torments and offer it up for our salvation. With complete peacefulness your Heart makes reparation for slanders, hatred, false witness and for the premeditated evils against the innocent. Through these torments You make reparation for those who incite instigations in order to mistreat those over whom they hold authority and for the offenses of ecclesiastics. And while I am united to You, following your own reparations, I experience in You a new sorrow that You have not experienced before. Tell me, tell me, what is it? Share with me everything, O Jesus.

**“Child, do you wish to know? I hear the voice of Peter who says he does not know Me. Then he swears time and again, he swears and condemns the idea of ever having known Me. Oh Peter, how could you do this? You do not know Me? Don’t you remember the many gifts with which I fully endowed you? Oh, if others make Me die of pains, you make Me die of sorrow! Oh, how wrong it was of you to follow Me from a distance, thereby exposing yourself to the occasions of sin!”**

In the meantime, your enemies continue to accuse You. In seeing that You do not answer their accusations, Caiaphas says to You; **“I adjure you by the living God, tell me, are You really the true Son of God?”**

And You, my love, having the word of truth always on your lips, with Supreme Majesty and in your gentle and resounding voice – such that all are struck, and the very demons plunge themselves into the abyss – reply: **“You have said so; Yes, I am the true Son of God, and I will one day descend on the clouds of heaven to judge all nations [of the earth].”**

At your creative words, all remain silent and shudder with fear, but Caiaphas, recovering after a few moments of fright, completely enraged, more than a fierce animal, exclaims to all: “What need do we have of more witnesses? He has already uttered a great blasphemy! What more are we waiting for to condemn him? He is already guilty of death!”

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And to give more strength to his words he tears his clothes with such rage and fury that all, as though one, hurl themselves at You my love. Some punch your head, others tear your hair, some slap You, others spit on your face and yet others stomp on You. The torments they impose on You are so intense and overwhelming that the earth trembles and the heavens are shaken.

My love and my life, Jesus, as they torment You my poor heart is lacerated with the sorrow. O please, allow me to come out from within your Sorrowful Heart to face all these offenses for You. Oh, if it were possible, I would snatch You from the hands of your enemies, but You do not desire this, as the salvation of all requires your sacrifice, and I am forced to resign myself. But, sweet love of mine, let me tidy You up, fix your hair, remove the spittle, dry your Blood and enclose myself in your Heart. I now see that Caiaphas has grown tired and wants to withdraw, and so he delivers You into the hands of the soldiers.

I bless You, and I ask You for your blessing and for the kiss of your love. I enclose myself in the furnace of your Divine Heart to sleep. I place my mouth on your Heart, so that as I breathe I may kiss You and, with the fluctuations of your heartbeats that vary in intensity, I may sense whether You are suffering or resting. Therefore with my arms, as if they were wings to keep You sheltered, I hug You and I cling to your Heart as I now sleep.