

THE ANNUNCIATION AND THE TRINITY¹

Classic studies of the Trinity explain that doctrine and draw widely on Scripture to illustrate it (see, e.g., Gilles Emery). Supplementing these works, this study explores how, when and to whom God revealed His Three Persons, for this can teach us more of how we are to respond to Him. The Virgin Mary has always been recognized as our uniquely perfect model of theosis, with her maternity an analogy for the individual Christian's openness to God and fruitfulness for Him. At the Annunciation, ὁ Ευαγγελισμός, in her conversation with the angel Gabriel two momentous events occurred: God revealed to her – first of all mankind – His Three Persons, and then she – first of all mankind – voiced her assent to God's will. These two events were the necessary prelude to the actual moment of the Son's beginning His Incarnation. Moreover, Mary exemplifies the new autonomy ushered in by Christianity, by being the first person to assent overtly to God. Recognizing all this is a development in doctrine as defined by John Henry Newman. This analysis also affirms in more detail how the Theotokos is a model for everyone in living in relation to God.

Keywords: Annunciation, development of doctrine, Theosis, Trinity, Virgin Mary

Introduction

The opening instant and early months of the Incarnation have for twenty years been the focus of studies that show how these events accomplished the resanctification of male and female humanity equally, through God's exquisitely designed Creation. My most recent research on this, published in the *Analecta of the Ukrainian Catholic University* in 2016, draws on genetics, modern human reproductive science, and embryology and consistently finds that science affirms

¹ First presented as a lecture for the Theology Department of the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, September 24, 2021, then reprised for the Aquinas Institute at Oxford University, September 28, 2021.

theology². Today's companion topic is purely theological and treats the prelude to the Incarnation, ὁ Ευαγγελισμός, the encounter between the angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary which culminated in her assent and the historical moment when the Incarnation began.

Since the first century Mary's holy motherhood has been the subject of marvel and contemplation. Venerable Christian tradition holds that the Ever-Virgin Mary is a model for every Christian, showing faith and fruitful obedience. Her real maternity is itself a paradigm for how all souls are to conceive and present the Lord Jesus in their lives³.

An overlooked aspect of the Annunciation shows more of its awesome beauty: God chose a young woman, the Virgin Mary, to be the first human being to whom he disclosed the reality of the three Persons of the Trinity. He did more than allude to His triune nature: he taught her the distinct reality of each of his three persons. This is attested by Luke. Mary's role as first to know of the Trinity, however, is not discussed in the New Testament and seems not to have been treated by the Latin, Greek or Syriac Fathers, nor by medieval or Byzantine theologians, nor by modern scholars. Although many of the Fathers identify intimations of the Trinity in the Annunciation, they focus on terms that would not clearly indicate each of the three Persons to Mary. Thus, they require Mary to have assumed a Trinitarian interpretation of the terms "Most High" and "Power"⁴.

Perhaps only now, in the Third Millennium, is it stated that at the Annunciation the angel imparted to Mary clear knowledge of each of the three Persons of God and indeed named two of them. The fact that Mary was the first to be granted knowledge of the Trinity requires exposition first, to demonstrate that

² Catherine Brown Tkacz. *І Слово Стало Тілом: Воплочення Христа з перспективи ембріології і генетики* [And the Word Became Flesh: The Incarnation of Christ from the Perspective of Embryology and Genetics] // *Наукові записки УКУ: Богослов'я* [Analecta of the UCU: Theology] 3 (2016) 242-264.

³ Catherine Brown Tkacz. *The Ruthenian Liturgy: An Historical-Theological Explication* / foreword by Jeffrey Burton Russell. Lewiston, NY 2011, pp. 23-24.

⁴ Victor of Antioch wrote, "Observe, how the Angel has declared the whole Trinity to the Virgin, making mention of the Holy Spirit, the Power, and the Most High, for the Trinity is indivisible": *A Commentary on the Epistles and Gospels in the Book of Common Prayer*, Part III: *Trinity*. Oxford 1876, p. 457. St. Thomas Aquinas cited Victor in *Catena Aurea*, vol. III, Part I: *St. Luke*. Albany 1999, p. 34. In Syriac "there are two different ways of taking [Luke 1:35]: Either: the Holy Spirit and the Power of the Most High are the same; Or: the Power is the Word. The second way of taking it of course provides a clear reference to the Trinity; I suspect this is specifically pointed out by some Syriac writer(s)": Sebastian Brock, private communication, June 19, 2022. These views assume Mary's Trinitarian interpretation of those terms. Other Fathers marvel at the event, without ascribing knowledge of the Trinity to Mary: For instance, Andrew of Jerusalem cited the three Persons of the Trinity in a sticheron for the Litye for the feast of the Annunciation: "a virgin womb receives the Son. The Holy Spirit is sent down; the Father on high gives his consent...". See *The Festal Menaion* / tr. Mother Mary & Archimandrite Kallistos Ware. London 1969, p. 445.

this is so; and then consideration of why God chose this for Mary. The present study represents, it appears, a development of doctrine, in the sense expounded by John Henry Cardinal Newman in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845)⁵. As he expressed it:

A true development [is] one which is conservative of the course of antecedent developments[,] being really those antecedents and something besides them; it is an addition which illustrates, not obscures, corroborates, not corrects, the body of thought from which it proceeds; and this is its characteristic as contrasted with a corruption.⁶

When we read the Gospels, we read it as people who are already Christians, more or less familiar with salvation history and doctrines such as the Incarnation and the Trinity. We pray in the name of the Trinity, we bless ourselves and each other in that name. The fountainhead of this is that we are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. For the first followers of Christ, however, the Trinity and other mysteries were unexpected. We do well to note how God revealed them, so that we can begin to appreciate the blessings and teachings to be derived from the very way in which those mysteries were first communicated.

This approach is therefore unlike the usual one, as seen for instance in the classic work on *The Trinity* by P. Gilles Emery, O.P.⁷ Usually the evidence of the Lord's teachings as recorded in the Gospels and the explanations of the Church Fathers are examined. The ordinary pastoral and intellectual intent is to set forth the theology of the Trinity and to articulate how it is well founded. The deeper intent of these studies is to teach also that knowledge of the Trinity is "not only conceptual. It is an 'experiential' knowledge, a gift of God that prepares us to contemplate him in the joy of heaven"⁸. Now, as a supplement to the precious body of work giving the faithful essential grounding in the doctrine of the Trinity, it is useful to begin to recover the way in which God imparted the revelation of the existence of His three Persons, how and when and to whom.

⁵ See, e.g., Jan Hendrik Walgrave, O.P. *Unfolding Revelation: The Nature of Doctrinal Development*. Philadelphia 1972; and Francesco Turvasi. *The Development of Doctrine in John Cardinal Newman and Alfred Loisy // John Henry Newman: Theology and Reform* / ed. Michael E. Allsopp, Ronald R. Burke. New York 2018, pp. 145-188.

⁶ John Henry Cardinal Newman. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. Notre Dame 1989, p. 200, quoted and discussed in Sara Butler, M.S.B.T. *The Catholic Priesthood and Women: A Guide to the Teaching of the Church*. Chicago 2006, pp. 107-112.

⁷ Gilles Emery, O.P. *The Trinity: An Introduction to the Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God* / tr. Matthew Levering. Washington, D.C. 2011.

⁸ Emery. *Trinity*, xiii-xiv. Mary is treated in a few sentences (p. 37).

Intimations of the Trinity in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament various passages were in the Christian Era recognized as prefiguring the Trinity, notably the account of the three angels who visited Abraham at Mamre (Gen. 18:1-2). The threefold angelic acclamation of Holy! Holy! Holy! also suggests the threeness of God (Is. 6:3, reiterated in Rev. 4:8). Likewise is the treble reiteration of ἅγιον πνεῦμα ... πνεῦμα ... πνεῦμα in Wisdom 1:5, 6, 7. Even the threefold affirmation of the covenant with the three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob may suggest that. Within the Creation account in Genesis itself, when God declared, “Behold, Adam has become like one of *us*, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:22), St. Ephrem the Syrian found reference in the plural pronoun to the Trinity⁹. Indeed, Sebastian Brock notes that “most of the Fathers [understood] passages where God speaks in the first person plural . . . as pointing to the Trinity”¹⁰. While these passages indicate the Three-ness of God, however, they do not point to the particularity of His three Persons.

The Holy Spirit is vividly indicated in the Old Testament, but rarely, and not in a way that clarifies that this is a distinct person of God. The strongest possible version of the combination of πνεῦμα and ἅγιον, with the article τὸ before both “spirit” and “holy” – τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον – is found in the Psalter and the prophets Isaiah and Daniel. The Psalmist beseeched, “take not thy Holy Spirit from me” (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον σου, LXX Ps. 50:13). Isaiah proclaimed that the house of Israel had afflicted “[God’s] Holy Spirit” (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ, LXX Isa. 63:10, 11)¹¹.

Notably, in the century before Christ the text of the Book of Daniel received unique attention from a Jewish scholar who restored a great deal to that text, including statements naming “the Holy Spirit”¹². The restorer was evidently “disturbed by the fact that the Alexandrian Old Greek (LXX) of Daniel was at times less than accurate in relation to the Hebrew and Aramaic of the book”¹³.

⁹ St. Ephrem the Syrian. *The Commentary on Genesis* (section II), par. 34 on p. 222 of *St. Ephrem the Syrian, Hymns on Paradise* / intr. and transl. by Sebastian Brock. Crestwood, NY 1990.

¹⁰ Brock in *Ephrem, Hymns on Paradise*, p. 227.

¹¹ Vulgate Isaiah 63:10: *spiritum sancti eius*. Codex Amiatinus has *spiritum sanctum eius*.

¹² Daniel is the only book of the Jewish Scriptures which Palestinian rabbis revised carefully in the first century before Christ: Catherine Brown Tkacz. Ἀνεβόησεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ: Susanna and the Synoptic Passion Narratives // *Gregorianum* 87/3 (2006) 449-486, pp. 474-475; Dominique Barthélémy, O.P. *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du text du fragments du Dodéceprophéton* [= Vetus Testamentum, Supplements, 10]. Leiden 2014, pp.144-148; Alexander Di Lella. The Textual History of Septuagint-Daniel and Theodotion-Daniel // *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception* / ed. John J. Collins & Peter W. Flint, vol. 2. Leiden 2002, 586-607 (here 595-96, 604-605). On the superiority of Theodotion-Daniel over the Septuagint, see e.g., Catherine Brown Tkacz. Ἀλήθειᾶ Ἑλληνική: *The Authority of the Greek Old Testament*. Etna, CA, pp. 45-48.

¹³ Alexander Di Lella, OFM. *The Book of Daniel*. A New Translation with Notes and Commentary on Chapters 1-9 by †Louis F. Hartman, CSSR; Introduction and Commentary on Chapters 10-12 by

Accordingly, he made use of the “more thoroughly edited Hebrew manuscripts circulating in Palestine in the first century B.C.”¹⁴ His work is now known as “Theodotion-Daniel” because Theodotion in the first century of the Christian Era adopted this corrected edition into his Greek version of the OT¹⁵. Given the distinctive history of the text of the Book of Daniel, Christians may recognize its corrected edition made one hundred years before Christ as inspired by God, and may thus see in Daniel’s references to the Holy Spirit statements particularly worthy of note.

For the prophet Daniel refers to the “Holy Spirit of God” several times, once in the book’s opening chapter, and then several times in a later chapter. All but one of these occurrences are only in material recovered by the pre-Christian Jewish restorer. In the later chapter, Daniel repeats the phrase, although he omits the articles (πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἅγιον, Theodotion only, Dan. 4:8, 9, 18; see also 5:11)¹⁶.

Strikingly, Daniel reports the action of the Holy Spirit in the opening chapter of his book, and this statement is part of his presentation of each of the three Persons of God, though this can be recognized only in the light of Christian revelation. Through this prophet¹⁷ the Lord disclosed intimations of His three Persons in the two chapters which are emphasized both by position and by being linked through parallels of event and unique phrases¹⁸. Originally, Susanna’s history opened this biblical book, and she has proven to be in great detail a type of Christ in his passion: arrested in a garden, condemned by the “Elders of the People” on the false testimony of two witnesses, subjected to two trials, etc.¹⁹ The synoptic Gospels used the Old Testament account of Susanna’s ordeal as the narrative template for the Passion Narrative. In Matthew’s Gospel, for instance, seventeen passages have direct verbal borrowings from Susanna’s history, including five-

Alexander A. Di Lella, OFM [= Anchor Bible, 23]. Garden City, N.Y. 1978, pp. 81-82; also Di Lella. *Textual History*, pp. 595-596, 604-605.

¹⁴ P. W. Skehan. Bible, IV.8: Theodotion // *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 2 (1967) 430; Barthelémy. *Devanciers d’Aquila*, pp. 144-148.

¹⁵ Tkacz. *Ἀλήθεια Ἑλληνική*, pp. 21, 45-48.

¹⁶ While Theodotion-Daniel has this phrase four times here, the Septuagint lacks most of these verses and has πνεῦμα ἅγιον only in Dan. 5:11.

¹⁷ Jesus called Daniel “the prophet”: Matt. 24:15. Nonetheless, many contemporary biblical scholars deem the book of Daniel fiction. For instance, John J. Collins vaunts the modern rejection of Daniel as prophet: Current Issues in the Study of Daniel // *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception* / ed. John J. Collins & Peter W. Flint, vol. 1 [= *Vetus Testamentum Supplements*, 38/1]. Leiden 2014, 1-15, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸ Catherine Brown Tkacz. Susanna and the Pre-Christian Book of Daniel: Structure and Meaning // *The Heythrop Journal* 49/2 (2008) 181-196.

¹⁹ See Catherine Brown Tkacz. A Heroine for the Greek Catholic Church: Susanna, the First Female Type of Christ // *Науккові записки УКУ: Богослов’я [Analecta of the UCU: Theology]* 8 (2021) 93-107.

and six-word clauses²⁰. Ambrose, Augustine, and Maximus of Turin were among the Church Fathers to teach that Susanna prefigured the Lord²¹.

The Holy Spirit's role in Susanna's experiences was pivotal: she was delivered from death when God raised up in the boy Daniel "the Holy Spirit" (Theod. Sus. 45)²². This passage is remarkable. Theodotion-Susanna records the strongest possible version of the designation, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον²³. Significantly, this full phrase is not in the unrevised Septuagint, but only in Theodotion-Daniel, which conveys the corrected Greek prepared by Palestinian rabbis in the century before Christ. The Septuagint has instead πνεῦμα συνέσεως, "the spirit of wisdom / understanding / insight / quick wit" (LXX Sus 45). In the New Testament τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον is reserved for designating "The Holy Spirit"²⁴. Susanna's history opens the first half of the Book of Daniel, the chapters recounting the deeds of faithful Jews in exile in Babylon.

The second half of this prophet book is devoted to Daniel's visions, and in the first vision God intimated the First and Second Persons of the Trinity. This is in Daniel's vision of one "like a son of man" (ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου) coming in clouds of glory before the "Ancient of Days". Hippolytus of Rome and the Syriac

²⁰ Tkacz. Ἀνεβόησεν φωνῆ μεγάλη, pp. 449-486.

²¹ Catherine Brown Tkacz. *Women as Types of Christ: Susanna and Jephthah's Daughter // Gregorianum* 85 (2004) 278-311; and idem. *Women as Types of Christ: An Apostolic Tradition in East and West*. Etna, CA (in press).

²² Jerome in the Vulgate has *spiritum sanctum*.

²³ In this passage especially one wishes the original Hebrew were extant, to see what Hebrew phrasing led to the strong Theodotion wording. In Hebrew, *ruach qodesh* indicates the indwelling power of God. See E. W. Bullinger. *The Companion Bible*. Grand Rapids 1993, appendix 9 (*ruach*) and 101 (*pneuma*). For *ruach* elsewhere in the Book of Daniel, see Di Lella. *Book of Daniel*, p. 171.

In turn, perhaps this naming of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Daniel was one of the reasons that the Jews in the Christian Era took great pains to demote that writing by removing from it the designation of prophecy: they presumably rejected as blasphemous the new Christian idea that the Holy Spirit was a Person of God. See, e.g., Tkacz. *Ἀλήθειᾶ Ἑλληνική*, pp. 45-46. On rejection of Susanna's history as a rabbinic response to the Christian interpretation of this woman as a type of Christ, see *Ibid.*, pp. 46-48, 50-51.

²⁴ For naming of the Holy Spirit with the Greek articles in the New Testament, see, e.g., Luke's report of Symeon's inspiration (Luke 2:26). On the role of articles in NT Greek, see Samuel Sandmel. *Son of Man // In Time of Harvest: Essays in Honor of Abba Hillel Silver*. New York 1963, 355-367, p. 355. On Jesus' elevating the OT phrase "son of man" into his preferred title, "Son of Man", by such a use of articles, see also Catherine Brown Tkacz. *Susanna and the Son of Man in the Gospel of Matthew // The Church and Her Scriptures: Essays in Honor of Patrick J. Hartin* / ed. Catherine Brown Tkacz & Douglas Kries. Eugene, OR 2022, 161-191, p. 166; and Raymond E. Brown, SS. *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, 2 vols. New York 1994, vol. 1, p. 507. Another instance within the NT of the use of articles to strengthen the importance of a phrase is in Jesus' dialogue with the woman at the well (John 4:10-11): he told her of the "water of life" (ὕδωρ ζωῆν) and the idea so arrested her that she asked about it as "the Water of Life" (τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ζωῆν).

Fathers understood the Ancient of Days as God the Father²⁵. All four Gospels recount that Jesus often identified himself as the Son of Man. Indeed, he elevated that phrase by adding the articles to it: ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.²⁶ The Lord made clear that this self-title derived specifically from Daniel's first vision by using details from that vision, especially "coming in clouds of glory", to prophesy his Second Coming²⁷.

This vision is linked to Susanna's narrative through the themes and diction of judge, judgment, the righteous, and two unique titles: the first title Daniel invented to disparage an Elder as "one-grown-ancient of evil days" (Sus. 52), and the other title Daniel reported in his vision of the "Ancient of Days"²⁸. For Christians the connection between these two chapters is much stronger because this pair of chapters is prophetic of Christ: Susanna as a type of Christ is in the chapter naming "the Holy Spirit", and Jesus drew his self-title "Son of Man" and also the prophecy of his coming in clouds of glory from Daniel's first vision. Daniel's first recorded action in Scripture was to receive the Holy Spirit (Theod. Sus. 45)²⁹ and his first vision was of the Ancient of Days and one like a son of man.³⁰ God's three Persons are strongly intimated here, but no more: this is not yet the clarity of overt revelation.

²⁵ Notably, patristic voices are varied on this. For Hippolytus of Rome on the Ancient of Days as "the Father of Christ himself", see Wilfred Sophrony Royer. *The Ancient of Days: Patristic and Modern Views of Daniel 7:9-14 // St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 45/2 (2001) 137-162 (here 139). Sebastian Brock clarifies how the differing interpretations arose: in the Book of Daniel, "... The Ancient of Days is distinct from the 'Son of Man', mentioned earlier in the verse. Accordingly, Ephrem and other early Syriac writers take the Ancient of Days as referring to the Father. In the Old Greek translation of Daniel, however, the 'Son of Man' is described as being 'like (or: as) the Ancient of Days', thus allowing for the latter to become a title referring to Christ, rather than to the Father": Brock. *Treasure House of Mysteries: Explorations of the Sacred Text Through Poetry in the Syriac Tradition*. Crestwood, NY 2012, p. 167. Thus, preaching on the Lord's birth, St. John Chrysostom offered the surprise of the "Ancient of Days" present as an infant in a manger (PG 49:351-362).

²⁶ For discussion of the articles here, see Tkacz. *Susanna and the Son of Man*, p. 166.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Each consists of a form of the adjective for "ancient" and the genitive plural of "days": literally "one-grown-ancient of evil days" (πεπαλαιωμένε ἡμερῶν κακῶν, v. 52), the young Daniel's epithet for the first Elder, and "Ancient of days" (παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν, Dan. 8[7]:9, 13, 22), prominent in the prophet's first vision. On the uniqueness of these titles, see Tkacz. *Susanna and the Pre-Christian Book of Daniel*, p. 187.

²⁹ This implies that the adult Daniel by the time that he composed his Book, knew that it was the Holy Spirit that had inspired him. *Pace* scholars who doubt the historicity of Daniel, e.g., Maurice Casey. *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7*. London 1979.

³⁰ Tkacz. *Susanna and the Son of Man*.

The Trinity in the Gospels

Each Person of the Trinity is active at the Baptism of Christ, but not all were immediately identified. All four Gospels report that a voice from heaven (the Father) and the Holy Spirit (τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον) in the form of a dove honored the Son at his own baptism³¹. But Jesus did not at once explain that revelation. Mindful of the human limitations of his disciples, the Lord generously paced his revelations about the three Persons of God³².

Thus the Lord spoke only rarely of the Holy Spirit. He taught that the one unforgivable sin is to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit³³. His Disciples need not fear how to answer persecutors, for the Holy Spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον) would speak through them (Mark 13:11). At the Last Supper, Jesus told his Disciples he was going back to the Father, but that “the Spirit of Truth” (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας) would come and would relay to them what the Son gives him to make plain (John 16:12-15). These remarks are far outnumbered, however, by the Lord’s references to Father and Son.

Jesus sometimes spoke of the Father alone³⁴. Often he spoke of the Father and himself. Even as a boy of twelve he spoke of God as his Father when he stayed behind in the Temple (Luke 2:49). Repeatedly he indicated the perfect relationship of the Father and the Son, e.g., “*No one knows the Son truly except the Father, and no one knows the Father truly except the Son*” (Matt. 11:25-27)³⁵. Their relationship animates the parable of the vineyard in which the Father sends his only Son and the parable of the king’s marriage feast for his Son³⁶. Moreover, “Son” is the Lord’s most frequent self-designation. “The Son of Man” is His preferred way of referring to himself: eighty-four passages in the Gospels record that he called himself that³⁷. The evangelists supplemented this title with the explicit phrase, “Son of God”³⁸.

The Lord’s strategy was pastoral and pedagogical: first his followers needed to learn well that Jesus is God and that he is Son to the Father, thus demonstrating

³¹ The Trinity evident at the Lord’s baptism, with “my son” (ὁ υἱός μου) in the synoptics (Matt. 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22) and “the son of God” (ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ): John 1:34. This implies, but does not name, the Father.

³² In this essay I will use the capital letter to mark the twelve Disciples and reserve the lower-case d- for larger groups of disciples.

³³ Matt. 12:31, using only the word “Spirit”; Mark 3:29 using τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον; Luke 12:10 + 12 using τὸ πνεῦμα ἅγιον.

³⁴ Jesus on the Father alone, e.g., Matt. 5:45, 48, Luke 6:37, and Matt. 10:29.

³⁵ See also Matt. 13:36-43, 24:36-37, 25:31-34, and 26:39, 42, and 45.

³⁶ Vineyard: Matt. 21:33-41, Mark 12:1-9, Luke 20:9-17. Marriage feast: Matt. 22:2-14.

³⁷ Brown. *Death of the Messiah*, vol. 1, p. 507, and vol. 2, Appendix VIII; and Tkacz. *Ἀλήθεια Ἑλληνική*, pp. 47-48.

³⁸ See, e.g., Brown. *Death of the Messiah*, vol. 1, p. 507.

the reality of two divine Persons, and further showing that these two Persons are united yet distinct. Only after that had been emphasized were the disciples ready to understand that a third divine Person exists, equal and different, with such perfect harmony among the three Persons that their relationship is unity.

That is disclosed with clarity only after the Resurrection. Then the Lord breathed upon his Disciples, saying “Receive the Holy Spirit”, and commissioned them to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19)³⁹. This is the only time in the Gospels that the three Persons of the Trinity are named together. Jesus indicates the unity of these three by the singular of the noun ὄνομα “name” for all three persons: “in the *name* of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”.

Private revelation of the Holy Spirit to four persons

Luke recorded what we can now recognize as a fresh mystery, namely that the Triune God evidently wanted four specific individuals to learn of the Holy Spirit by private revelation before the Son made the Holy Spirit known. Three were relatives of Jesus: Zachariah, his son John, and pre-eminently the virgin Mary (who will be treated last here); the fourth was Jesus’ foster father, Joseph. Luke recounted that the angel of the Lord who told Zachariah that his wife Elizabeth would bear a son also explained that even while the child was in the womb, he would be full of the Holy Spirit (Πνεύματος Ἁγίου: Luke 1:15). Thirty years later, at the start of Jesus’s public ministry, John the Baptist proclaimed that the Lord would baptize in the Holy Spirit⁴⁰. John thus spoke of the Holy Spirit before Jesus did. Further, it was John, not Jesus, who explained the meaning of the dove that descended on Jesus at his Baptism: John testified that God had told him the Holy Spirit would manifest itself thus (John 1:33-34).

Strikingly, each of the three members of this family was blessed with prophesying in the Holy Spirit: first Elizabeth at the Visitation (Luke 1:41-42), then Zachariah at the naming of his son (Luke 1:67), and years later John when he foretold Christ⁴¹. The inspired praises and declarations from these three relatives of Jesus readily became part of Christian worship – Zachariah’s *Benedictus* (Luke 1:67-80), Elizabeth’s acclamation (Luke 1:42) which opens the *Ave Maria* in the West and is incorporated into several Eastern Annunciation hymns⁴², and John’s heraldic “*Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world*”

³⁹ Matthew uses the article τοῦ with each Person.

⁴⁰ John the Baptist on the Lord baptizing with the Holy Spirit (no articles): Matt. 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16. Likewise, no articles are used in the Gospel report of The Baptist in John 1:33: “with the Holy Spirit” (ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ). See also Matt. 3:11.

⁴¹ None of these passages in Greek use articles with “Holy Spirit”.

⁴² Tkacz. *Ruthenian Liturgy*, pp. 92-93.

(John 1:29), echoed in the Latin mass. This righteous family, related to Mary and thus to her Son, were granted to foretell blessings her Son would confer. In addition, the father Zachariah and the son John were blessed with personal revelation naming the Holy Spirit⁴³.

Joseph was given revelation through a dream, in which an angel of the Lord told him, “*Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit (ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου); she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins*” (Matt. 1:20-21)⁴⁴. This annunciation to Joseph is in accord with Gabriel’s prior annunciation to Mary. It is not clear, though, that Joseph would have recognized πνεύματος ἁγίου as identifying a distinct Person of God.

Thrice, then, God gave private revelation of the Holy Spirit before the ministry of Jesus began: first the elderly Zachariah was told by the angel Gabriel and decades later the then-thirty-year-old John was told by God directly of the Holy Spirit. Between these revelations was the Annunciation⁴⁵. Thus, to Zachariah, Mary, and John, representatives of three generations of one extended family within the Chosen people, God granted personal revelation of the Holy Spirit. To the Ever-Virgin Mary alone was accorded a greater blessing.

Unique revelation of the entire Trinity to Mary

Of all mankind the first to whom God revealed the Trinity was the Virgin Mary. Only to that one young soul were all three Persons of God disclosed; not just the Holy Spirit, but the full complement of the Trinity. Mary learned from Gabriel of each of them. That fact has apparently passed unnoticed until now. That oversight is not surprising, for the Incarnation itself was the primary and astounding revelation made during the Annunciation. Now that this additional role of Mary is here pointed out, we may acknowledge this private disclosure of the Trinity and contemplate the implications of God’s so disclosing it to the Virgin Mary.

Notably, God prepared us to see the Annunciation aright by setting up a striking contrast between the elderly priest Zachariah and the young Virgin Mary. Gabriel went first to Zachariah, when he was in the act of fulfilling his priestly

⁴³ One might assume that Elizabeth knew of the Holy Spirit as a Person of God, but all that Luke recorded is that she was filled with the Holy Spirit, not that she knew specifically that it was the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:41). It seems likely that Elizabeth and Zachariah together realized that it had been the Holy Spirit that had inspired her. After their son’s birth, Zachariah could speak again, and he would have told her about Gabriel’s message.

⁴⁴ With Joseph, as with Mary, the angel echoed Isaiah’s prophecy of the virgin birth (Isa. 7:14): Tkacz. *Ruthenian Liturgy*, p. 18.

⁴⁵ The only person I know who has perhaps called attention to Mary’s learning of the Holy Spirit from the angel is Stephen Dominic Hayes, O.P., in a sermon for the Dominican Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary, Heath, Ohio: personal letter from Sr. Anna Marie of Jesus, O.P., 1-22-21.

office in the Temple in Jerusalem (Luke 1:9). The angel, standing on the right side of the altar of incense, saw that the man was frightened and reassured him, “*Fear not, thy prayer is heard*” and foretold the conception and life of his son (vv. 11-17). He concluded his message by quoting the prophet Malachi⁴⁶. Zachariah, however, doubted and asked for proof: “*Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years*” (v. 18). The angel then revealed his name and declared, “*thou shalt be dumb*” until the prophesied birth had occurred (v. 20). Some six months later Gabriel went – not to the Temple in Jerusalem, but to a home in Nazareth (vv. 26-28). Although the experienced priest of many years, performing an act of worship in the Temple in Jerusalem, had been afraid and had doubted, Mary was poised and responsive. Something quite new was occurring.

Indeed, every aspect of the Annunciation was astounding. An angel spoke to a woman. This itself was rare. The Lord had spoken with Adam and Eve, together and individually⁴⁷. Beyond that, the few divine communications with women always concerned their children: the Lord spoke to Hagar when she was pregnant and to Rebecca, about to give birth⁴⁸. The angel of the Lord told the barren wife of Manue that she would have a son, Samson⁴⁹. But never before had God sent an angel to address a virgin.⁵⁰ Thus it was something new when Gabriel came before the virgin Mary and spoke to her. Moreover, Gabriel’s greeting was unprecedented: “*Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women*” (Luke 1:28). He affirmed again, “*Thou hast found grace with God*” (Luke 1:30).

The angel told her she would conceive in her womb and bear a son, whom she would call Jesus. In this, Gabriel echoed the very words of Isaiah’s prophecy of the virgin birth (Is. 7:14)⁵¹. The messenger explained that this child would be called the Son of the Most High (Luke 1:32) and have an endless kingdom. Mary responded in her desire to understand more fully, and note that her response opened the way for the revelation of all Persons of the Trinity⁵². She asked, “*How shall this be done, because I do not know (γινώσκω) man?*” (Luke 1:34). The angel explained that the means would be supernatural: “*The Holy Spirit (Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον)*

⁴⁶ Luke 1:17 citing Mal. 4:6.

⁴⁷ Gen. 1:28-30, with Eve alone: Gen. 3:13, 16.

⁴⁸ The Lord to Hagar: Gen. 16:13; Rebecca Gen. 25:22-23. The angel of the Lord also spoke with Hagar: Gen. 16:7-13, 21:17-21, regarding her twins.

⁴⁹ Judg. 13:3-5.

⁵⁰ Luke’s describing Mary as a Virgin stresses this fact about her.

⁵¹ Tkacz. *Ruthenian Liturgy*, p. 18. Gabriel used the words of the prophet, ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται ὁ υἱὸν (“conceive in her womb and bear [i.e., give birth to, τέξεται] a son”) and personalized them to Mary in the second-person singular: συλλήμψη ἐν γαστρὶ καὶ τέξει υἱόν.

⁵² Different was Zachariah’s question to Gabriel – “Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years” – which showed doubt in what the angel said (Luke 1:18).

shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Υἱὸς Θεοῦ: Luke 1:35)⁵³. Gabriel had first referred to "*the Son of the Most High*": then in response to Mary's question he was explicit that this will be "the Son of God". The fact that God has a Son shows that God is Father⁵⁴. Thus, the existence of all three Persons of the Trinity is made known to Mary by divine revelation. Implicit in the angel's message is the further truth that the Three Persons of God act and will in unison, an understanding that centuries later Church Councils would articulate⁵⁵.

Mary's innovative assent

Only then did Mary give her assent. God evidently wanted her to know of his Triune nature before she accepted his will in this. Knowing God's will, and glimpsing his Triune nature, Mary voluntarily chose to participate in the fulfilment of God's will: "*And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word*" (Luke 1:36).

The very fact that Mary voiced her affirmation of God's will is notable. She was apparently the first to do so⁵⁶. Certainly, no one was ever asked to accept God's will. Mary herself was not asked to do so. Rather, she saw that it was fitting for her to voice her unity with God's will, and she did so. When God had told Moses what he was to do, Moses asked questions, but in the end he did not state that he would obey, and the last one to speak in that conversation was God (Exod. 3:1-4:14). When God commissioned someone to prophesy, that person either obeyed, or like Jonah sought to evade the command, but no one said either "Yay" or "Nay" to God. Even Jehu, who "took no heed" of what God told him, did not state his rejection (4 Kings 10:30)⁵⁷. But it was Mary who concluded the conversation with Gabriel, and she did this by giving her voluntary consent.

⁵³ The Annunciation is recounted in direct discourse uniquely in Luke 1:35, which is reasonably assumed to be Luke's relaying of Mary's report of the event. Other Gospels also report the manner of this conception: ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ (Mark 1:8) and ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου (Matt. 1:18, also 1:20 where the angel tells of this conception to Joseph). This language is echoed in the Nicene Creed's statement about the Incarnation: τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ σαρκωθέντα ἐκ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου, καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα.

⁵⁴ This pattern is seen also in the Gospel accounts of the Baptism of Christ, which name the Spirit and the Son and imply the Father: see n. 31 above.

⁵⁵ This unity is perhaps alluded to in the fact that three times Gabriel tells Mary of her "son", "the son of the Most High", and finally the "Son of God" (Luke 1:31,32,35). This threefold iteration may suggest the Lord's reality as one of the Trinity.

⁵⁶ See this essay's appendix: God Speaking to His People.

⁵⁷ See also Manasses: 2 Paralip. 33:10.

Her assent is theologically important. It indicates the importance of created human free will. It is basic belief that God always acts voluntarily and that the Son of God, in concert with the other two Persons of the Trinity, willed his redemptive sacrifice.⁵⁸ For this reason John Chrysostom's Divine Liturgy has the entire congregation acclaim, after receiving communion, "the Trinity has saved us"⁵⁹. Jesus' own volition is evident in the wording of the Creed: He *became* incarnate.⁶⁰ It does not state that the Father caused the Son to become incarnate. Jesus became incarnate and endured the passion willingly, not under compulsion. In parallel, at the Annunciation the importance of the human soul's free will is evident. Notably, the angel did not tell Mary that she had already conceived; he laid God's plan before her, and she chose it freely. Many Christian texts of antiquity, Syriac and Greek, indicate that upon hearing Gabriel's message, Mary conceived⁶¹. Jacob of Serug suggested a different moment: "The moment she replied in the affirmative, she conceived in her womb"⁶².

To use the language of St. Thomas Aquinas in speaking of the Annunciation, this seems "better and more fitting" (*melius et convenientius*)⁶³ and therefore most likely: when she, having heard the message, gave her assent, that very moment of her choosing to align her will with God's in this was the moment when she conceived. This suggests that God timed the Annunciation to coincide with Mary's imminent ovulation, delicately arranging events so that she might voice her voluntary assent at the very moment that the involuntary, unseen event of ovulation occurred. At once the Holy Spirit could then have acted upon Mary's egg cell to form the Incarnational zygote⁶⁴.

⁵⁸ As was professed in 553 at Constantinople: *Catechism* §468.

⁵⁹ In the Greek, the word Τριάδα is in the previous phrase ("worshipping the undivided Trinity") and the pronoun αὐτή in the final clause refers to Τριάδα.

⁶⁰ This is conveyed through use of the active participles κατελθόντα, σαρκωθέντα and ἐνανθρωπήσαντα: see note on the Creed above.

⁶¹ For instance, in the opening of the Akathistos Hymn to the Theotokos: "Seeing Thee, O Lord, take bodily form at the sound of his voice", the angel proclaims, etc. Ephrem the Syrian writes often that the conception of Jesus occurred when Mary heard through her ears the Annunciation: e.g., *Hymns on the Church in Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Ecclesia [Textus]* / ed. Edmund Beck, vol. 1 [= CSCO, 199; Scriptorum Syri, 85] Louvain 1960, p. 122. See also Sebastian P. Brock. *Mary in Syriac Tradition*. London 1973, p. 184. Other Syriac Fathers use this idea, found in, e.g., an anonymous dialogue hymn: see Brock. *Bride of Light: Hymns on Mary from the Syriac Churches*. Piscataway, NJ 2010, hymn 27:4-6, pp. 92-93. See also Jeanne-Nicole Mellon Saint-Laurent. *St. Ephrem's Mary: Icon of Wonder, Icon of Beauty // The Church and Her Scriptures: Essays in Honor of Patrick J. Martin* / ed. Catherine Brown Tkacz & Douglas Kries. Eugene, OR 2022, 61-86, p. 80.

⁶² Jacob of Sarug (b. 739), quoted by Brock in Jacob of Sarug. *On the Mother of God* / tr. Mary Hanbury, intr. Sebastian Brock. Crestwood, NY 1998, p. 4. Here "conceived" translates what literally means "received the fruit".

⁶³ Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica*, pars 3, qu. 30, quoted words from *Respondeo*.

⁶⁴ Tkacz. *І Слово стало тілом*, pp. 255-256.

Compare Mary's unique circumstances to all other divine communications in the Bible. In the other cases when God directly communicated with one of his people, that person could show faith and obedience by some deed, specifically the deed that God had commanded⁶⁵. God sent Moses to Pharaoh, and Moses went and confronted the ruler of Egypt. God sent David against the Philistines, and David went and defeated them (1 Sam. 23:4ff.). But when God had Gabriel announce to Mary that she would conceive and bear the Son of God, no outward visible action could show her choice to make the will of God her own. No voluntary physical action could show assent, for ovulation is involuntary and invisibly interior⁶⁶. In light of this, Mary's spoken assent is shown to be essential: speaking was the action open to her to express her commitment to God's will. Her affirmation that she was the handmaid of the Lord and her request, "*Let it be done to me according to all that you have said*", show her active will.

It has long seemed to me that a major reason for the Annunciation was to make possible Mary's free and knowing consent. Mary had to know of God's plan so that she could choose freely to join in willing it and, by her voluntary act of choice, make the Incarnation possible. She had to assent, and it had to be informed consent. This was essential for the Incarnation and important also in showing how each human soul is to live in union with God's will. This union, aimed at theosis, requires free will⁶⁷.

Now it seems, further, that God wanted Mary to be the first one to have a true, clear glimpse of the mystery of the Trinity. He wanted her to know of the Holy Spirit at the Annunciation, and for her later to be present at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon all the faithful in a manner intended to make their souls fecund for heaven. But more than that, He wanted the woman who was to be the mother of his Son to be the first human being to hear of all three Persons of God. In turn, she exemplifies for us that we are to seek to be in relation to all three Persons of God. Significantly, the Church Fathers who encourage us to imitate Mary in fruitfulness see our capacity so to imitate her as beginning at baptism, which is Trinitarian. Anastasius of Sinai wrote that baptism generates new life in likeness of God, and Pseudo-Dionysius agreed,

⁶⁵ A rare instance in which someone responds to the Lord's command conveyed indirectly through prophecy occurred when David had intended to build a permanent dwelling for the Ark, but the "word of God" came to Nathan and directed him to tell David not to do so (1 Parap. 17:3-5). David responded by praying to God and, in the midst of praises, affirmed that it would be as the Lord had indicated (vv. 16-27 at v. 23). Unlike the Annunciation, however, the divine communication to David was indirect and he did not respond immediately.

⁶⁶ Also, in antiquity it was as yet unimagined.

⁶⁷ For the tradition of seeing the Virgin Mary as the exemplar of theosis, see Hugo Rahner, S.J. *Die Gottesgeburt: Die Lehre der Kirchenvater von der Geburt Christi im Herzen der Glaubigen* // *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 59 (1935) 333-418.

calling it *Theogenesis*⁶⁸. This seems related to the word play on “heavenly” / “fecund” in Ephrem’s *Hymn X on Paradise*⁶⁹.

Mary’s *Fiat mihi* and the act of Incarnating

Mary chose God’s will, modeling for all mankind how to respond to God. At Creation the Lord had pronounced, *Fiat*, “let it be”, and his creative word was at once realized. A creature, however, cannot replicate the powerful *fiat* of God. Accordingly, at the Annunciation Mary expressed her agreement with *Fiat mihi*, “Let it be, with respect to me”, and thus she exemplified how human will in accordance with God’s will is powerful and creative⁷⁰. The implications are significant: Mary’s assent is an important instance of Christian recognition of female autonomy, and more profoundly God exemplified through her that all human action in concert with the will of God is imbued with a creative character. Mary voiced her assent, *Fiat mihi*, and God at once effected the Incarnation.

A note on the Greek noun commonly translated “word” in this passage. Gabriel declares that no “word” shall be impossible with God, and Mary responds, “Let it be done to me according to thy word” (Luke 1:37-38). That Greek noun here is not λόγος, but ῥῆμά: “that which you have said” or “what you have said” (κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου). That accurate English translation, however, is scarcely pithy or eloquent. While one understands why translators have chosen the brief solution, the single noun “word”, it must be noted that Luke did not use here the potent term *logos* which so often indicates the Second Person of the Trinity (e.g., John 1:1). Rather, Mary’s utterance indicates that she as accepting the entire message from Gabriel as the will of God and assents to it⁷¹.

Conclusion

God is eternal, the creator of time, the illimitable ὁ ὢν, I AM, that He proclaimed himself to be when he spoke to Moses from the Burning Bush. The Incarnation, however, had an historical beginning. The Three Persons of God chose for

⁶⁸ Tkacz. *Ruthenian Liturgy*, p. 23.

⁶⁹ Brock. *Ephrem, Hymns on Paradise*, text on p. 149, note on p. 193: “heavenly: the text can be vocalized either as *shmayāna* ‘heavenly’ or as *shamīnā* ‘fecund’”.

⁷⁰ The contrast between God’s powerful *Fiat* and Mary’s human *fiat mihi* is vivid in Latin. A comparison of the Greek here in Genesis and Luke would be useful.

⁷¹ That phrase is used elsewhere in the Bible: the Lord tells Moses he will forgive the people of Israel “according to thy word”, i.e., “according to what you have explained” (κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου, Num. 14:20). Simeon also uses that phrase in the Nunc Dimittis (Luke 2:29) and in the Old Testament it is used by Laban (Gen. 30:34) and by Elijah to the widow of Zarephath (1 Kgs 17:13). Luke uses the same noun when recounting the experience of the shepherds who came to the manger and thus knew that “what the angels had reported” was true (2:17).

the Son to become incarnate and also chose that the woman who was to be His Mother should know of those Three Persons before she entered the mystery of being the Mother of God. Further, each Person of the Trinity willed that Mary's own act, the Virgin's own conversation with Gabriel, should lead to the revelation to her of the existence of those three Persons. In the year 2000 as the new millennium opened, the Church proclaimed: "The Catholic faith . . . considers the salvific incarnation of the Word as a trinitarian event"⁷². Now we can contemplate the reality that the Incarnation was Trinitarian from its inception, in the event itself and in the understanding of the Ever-Virgin Mary. Not only was she given knowledge of the names of the Three Persons of God: she lived in relationship with them, as she prayerfully pondered the Annunciation throughout her lifetime.

She had told Gabriel that she "did not know" man. In response, God had Gabriel give her new knowledge so that she might know God more fully, and so that for us she might give the guidance of her example in a life seeking theosis.

Appendix: God Speaking to His People

Mary's communication with the angel we do well to consider in light of all previous divine communications recounted in the Bible. These are recorded in the Old Testament and in the opening of the Gospel of Luke. These divine communications include instances in which the narrative reports that "the Lord" / "God" spoke to someone and also those in which "an angel of the Lord" or simply "an angel" did so. Only direct discourse is considered here; left aside are reports in which someone later asserts "Thus saith the Lord" (e.g., 1 Sam. 2:27-36, see also Psalm 68:22-23).

Throughout the Bible clear patterns are reported in how God communicated verbally with one of his people. Scores of instances of God or one of his angels speaking to a person or a few persons are recounted in the Scriptures. Moses more than perhaps any other biblical figure heard the voice of God, beginning when the Lord initially called Moses from the burning bush and extending through the events of forty years recorded in four books of the Torah⁷³. Others to whom God spoke include the patriarchs and Joseph⁷⁴, as well as other leaders of

⁷² Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect. "*Dominus Iesus*": *On the Unity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church*. Declaration of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, promulgated August 6, 2000. See par. 12.

⁷³ Burning Bush: Exod. 3:2—4:17, with God calling "Moses, Moses" (3:4). Some messages were brief (e.g., Exod. 4:19), others lengthy (e.g., Exod. 5:22—6:8, 25:1—40, Lev. 1:1—3:17, and whole chapters, e.g., Lev. 25, 26, 27). See also Num. 1:1-15. The final divine message to Moses is recorded in Deut. 34:4.

⁷⁴ For instance: Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 17:1-23), Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5), Jacob through a dream (28:11-15), his son Joseph through a dream (Gen. 37:5-7).

the people and prophets, such as Aaron, Balaam, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, David, Nathan, Solomon, Semeias, Ahias, Jehu and Elias⁷⁵.

Often a biblical book will give a fuller identification of, e.g. “the Lord God” at the first communication reported, and subsequently use “Lord” or “God”⁷⁶. Similarly, the pattern of “angel of the Lord” and then “angel” is seen⁷⁷. The first reference is the fullest.

Most, but not all, persons to whom God or an angel spoke were male. Women to whom God spoke include Eve, Hagar, Rebecca, Miriam, and the wife of Manne, for instance⁷⁸. Mary is evidently the youngest female to be granted a divine communication.

God spoke, directly or through an angel. Sometimes the person he addressed responded and they conversed. In almost every instance, the final speaker was God. The faith and obedience of the person he had addressed was shown, not by words, but by his acting in accordance with what God or an angel of the Lord had told him. In very few cases did a person have the last word. Adam and Eve each answer God, but in a self-serving way, to deny their guilt in the fall (Gen. 3:8-13). Quite different was the event when the children of Israel confessed their sins to God and asked for mercy, a request they showed was sincere by putting away idols (Judges 10:10-11, 15). God responded to them without words, by the powerful expedient of showing mercy.

When God called the young Samuel by name, the boy showed that he was receptive to God’s will by answering “Here am I” (1 Sam. 3:4). This, however, was not explicitly assent to God’s directions, which had not yet been given.

Bibliography

Sources

St. Ephrem the Syrian, Hymns on Paradise / intr., tr. Sebastian Brock. Crestwood, NY1990.

Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers Hymnen de Ecclesia [Textus] / ed. Edmund Beck, vol. 1 of 2 [= CSCO, 199; Scriptorum Syri, 85]. Louvain 1960.

⁷⁵ Aaron, first in Exod. 4:27 and then often; Balaam (Num. 22:8-12), Joshua (Deut. 31:23 first, then often throughout the book of Joshua), Gideon (Judg. 6:11-13), Samuel whom the Lord called four times from sleep (“Samuel, Samuel”: 1 Sam. 3:4, 6, 8, 10), David (1 Sam. 23:4, 10-12), Nathan (2 Sam. 7:4-17), Solomon (3 Kgs. 3:5-14, a dream), Semeias (3 Kgs 12:22-24), Ahias (3 Kgs 14:5), Jehu (3 Kgs 16:1-4) and Elias (3 Kgs17:2-4).

⁷⁶ For instance, “the Lord God” (Gen. 3:8-12) and then “Lord” (Gen. 4:6-7) or “God” (Gen. 6:12-22).

⁷⁷ For instance, “angel of the Lord” (Gen. 16:7-13) and then “angel” (Gen. 21:17-21).

⁷⁸ God speaks to Eve (Gen. 1:28-30; 3:13 + 16); his angel speaks to Hagar (Gen. 16:7-13, 21:17-20); Rebecca calls on the Lord and he answers (Gen. 25:22-23); the Lord speaks to Miriam (Num. 12:5-8). An angel of the Lord speaks to the wife of Manne (Judg. 13:3-5 + 8 + 21).

- The Festal Menaion* / tr. Mother Mary & Archimandrite Kallistos Ware. London 1969.
- Jacob of Sarug. *On the Mother of God* / tr. Mary Hanbury, intr. Sebastian Brock. Crestwood, NY 1998.
- Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect. “*Dominus Iesus*”: *On the Unity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church*. Declaration of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, August 6, 2000.
- Thomas Aquinas. *Catena Aurea*, vol. III, Part I: *St. Luke*. Albany 1999.

Studies

- Barthelémy, Dominique, O.P. *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du text du fragments du Dodéceprophéton* [= *Vetus Testamentum*, Supplements, 10]. Leiden 2014.
- Brock, Sebastian. *Bride of Light: Hymns on Mary from the Syriac Churches*. Piscataway, NJ 2010.
- Brock, Sebastian P. *Mary in Syriac Tradition*. London 1973.
- Brock, Sebastian. *Treasure House of Mysteries: Explorations of the Sacred Text Through Poetry in the Syriac Tradition*. Crestwood, NY 2012.
- Brown, Raymond E., SS. *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, 2 vols. New York 1994.
- Brown Tkacz, Catherine. *Ἀλήθειᾶ Ἑλληνικῆ: The Authority of the Greek Old Testament*. Etna, CA 2011.
- *Ἀνεβόρσεν φωνῆ μεγάλῃ: Susanna and the Synoptic Passion Narratives // Gregorianum* 87/3 (2006) 449-486.
 - *І Слово стало тілом: Воплочення Христа з перспективи ембріології і генетики [And the Word Became Flesh: The Incarnation of Christ from the Perspective of Embryology and Genetics] // Наукові записки УКУ: Богослов'я [Analecta of the UCU: Theology]* 3 (2016) 242-264.
 - *A Heroine for the Greek Catholic Church: Susanna, the First Female Type of Christ // Наукові записки УКУ: Богослов'я [Analecta of the UCU: Theology]* 8 (2021) 93-107.
 - *The Ruthenian Liturgy: An Historical-Theological Explication* / foreword by Jeffrey Burton Russell. Lewiston, NY 2011.
 - *Susanna and the Pre-Christian Book of Daniel: Structure and Meaning // The Heythrop Journal* 49/2 (2008) 181-196.
 - *Susanna and the Son of Man in the Gospel of Matthew // The Church and Her Scriptures: Essays in Honor of Patrick J. Hartin* / ed. Catherine Brown Tkacz & Douglas Kries. Eugene, OR 2022, 161-191.
 - *Women as Types of Christ: Susanna and Jephthah's Daughter // Gregorianum* 85 (2004) 278-311.

- A Commentary on the Epistles and Gospels in the Book of Common Prayer, Extracted from Writers of the Holy Catholic Church, Anterior to the Division of the East and West, by a lay member of the Church. In four parts. Part III: Trinity.* Oxford 1876.
- Bullinger, E. W. *The Companion Bible.* Grand Rapids 1993.
- Butler, Sara, M.S.B.T. *The Catholic Priesthood and Women: A Guide to the Teaching of the Church.* Chicago 2006.
- Casey, Maurice. *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7.* London 1979.
- Collins, John J. Current Issues in the Study of Daniel // *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception* / ed. John J. Collins & Peter W. Flint, vol. 1 [= *Vetus Testamentum Supplements*, 38/1]. Leiden 2014, 1-15.
- Di Lella, Alexander, OFM. *The Book of Daniel: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary on Chapters 1-9 by †Louis F. Hartman, CSSR; Introduction and Commentary on Chapters 10-12 by Alexander A. Di Lella, OFM* [= *Anchor Bible*, 23]. Garden City, N.Y. 1978.
- . The Textual History of Septuagint-Daniel and Theodotion-Daniel // *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception* / ed. John J. Collins & Peter W. Flint, vol. 2 [= *Vetus Testamentum Supplements*, 38/2]. Leiden 2002, 586-607.
- Emery, Gilles, O.P. *The Trinity: An Introduction to the Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God* / tr. Matthew Levering. Washington, D.C. 2011.
- Newman, John Henry, Cardinal. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* [1845]. Notre Dame 1989.
- Rahner, Hugo, S.J. Die Gottesgeburt: Die Lehre der Kirchenvater von der Geburt Christi im Herzen der Glaubigen // *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 59 (1935) 333-418.
- Royer, Wilfred Sophrony. The Ancient of Days: Patristic and Modern Views of Daniel 7:9-14 // *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 45/2 (2001) 137-162.
- Saint-Laurent, Jeanne-Nicole Mellon. St. Ephrem's Mary: Icon of Wonder, Icon of Beauty / *The Church and Her Scriptures: Essays in Honor of Patrick J. Hartin* / ed. Catherine Brown Tkacz & Douglas Kries. Eugene, OR 2022, 61-86.
- Sandmel, Samuel. Son of Man // *In Time of Harvest: Essays in Honor of Abba Hillel Silver.* New York 1963.
- Turvasi, Francesco. The Development of Doctrine in John Cardinal Newman and Alfred Loisy // *John Henry Newman: Theology and Reform* / ed. Michael E. Allsopp & Ronald R. Burke. New York 2018.
- Walgrave, Jan Hendrik, O.P. *Unfolding Revelation: The Nature of Doctrinal Development.* Philadelphia 1972.

Кетрін Браун Ткач

БЛАГОВІЩЕННЯ І ТРІЙЦЯ

Класичні дослідження Трійці пояснюють тринітарну доктрину і широко використовують Святе Письмо для її ілюстрації (див., наприклад, праці Жіля Емері). Доповнюючи їх, це дослідження розглядає, як, коли і кому Бог об'явив Свої Три Особи, оскільки це може краще навчити нас, як ми повинні Йому відповідати. Діву Марію завжди визнавали унікальним досконалим зразком обоження, а її материнство – аналогією відкритості кожного християнина до Бога та плідності для Нього. У Благовіщенні (ὁ Ευαγγελισμός), у розмові Марії з ангелом Гавриїлом відбулися дві доленосні події: Бог відкрив їй – першій з усіх людей – Свої Три Особи, а потім вона – перша з усіх людей – висловила свою згоду на Божу волю. Ці дві події стали необхідною прелюдією до самого моменту початку Воплочення Сина. Крім того, Марія є прикладом нової, започаткованої християнством автономії, ставши першою особою, яка відкрито підкорилася Богові. Визнання всього цього є розвитком учення, як визначив Джон Генрі Ньюман. Цей аналіз також показує детальніше Пресвяту Богородицю як взірєць для кожного в житті у стосунку до Бога.

Ключові слова: Благовіщення, розвиток доктрини, обоження, Трійця, Діва Марія.