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Tony's Spiritual Tidbit...

Anthony C. Brancato

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Editor's Note: The following are spiritual thoughts of Anthony C. Brancato, M.D. of Philadelphia, a member of the staff of St. Agnes Hospital in Philadelphia. Dr. Brancato is an otolaryngologist. He was the editor of the bi-monthly news-letter sent to the members of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Physicians' Guild of Philadelphia. In each news-letter Dr. Brancato included a spiritual message. The following I consider his best.

GINO G. PAPOLA, M.D., *Associate Editor*

THE INFINITE HUMILITY OF GOD

The angelic world was created instantaneously — not through procreation, but through a single and unique act of God's will when He willed that the angelic orders were to partake in the happiness He wanted all creatures to share. Immediately on the dawn of their existence there was engendered in the minds of all the angels a cognizance of the spontaneity of creation. Blessed with highly gifted intelligence, and being pure and without defects, the angels made a quick inventory of themselves and came to a quick realization of the laws of causality. They were not, and now they were! They knew through their natural intelligence that God preceded them and that they owed Him their volitional adoration as a sign of gratitude. How long God permitted them to be in this state of contentment and complacency before He tested them, no one knows. But God was not to grant them heaven and the Beatific Vision without their merit. Without effort on their part, they had become

possessors of a pure image and likeness of God, the purity of which transcended in degree and quality that which was later to be bestowed on man. Since they were of a higher order of intelligence than man, their test had to be instantaneous.

An acknowledgment of dependency, a simple act of humility, was demanded of them. Theologians have surmised that, perhaps, the angels were presented with the image of our Blessed Lord in the form of crucified man, and were asked to adore Him. One of the highest angels, the bearer of light — Lucifer as he was called — felt it to be below his dignity to worship God in this debased form, as one willing to undergo humiliation and suffering. Lucifer refused, desiring in this refusal not to be greater than God — for this he knew to be impossible — but to be at least equal. He persuaded others to refuse, thus causing the downfall of a whole host of angels, and becoming the bearer of darkness and evil.

God's humility — which certain angels refused to acknowledge — consisted of assuming the defects of man, the very defects that most men try to avoid: suffering, abandonment, derision, scorn, mockery, false accusation, crucifixion, death! Indeed, God's humility extended even further. Not content with these signs of love, He willed to assume even the form of inanimate matter, so as to seem in the eyes of men to be nothing more than

bread and wine, allowing Himself to be assimilated into the bodies of men, subjecting Himself to the very laws of nature He Himself created, allowing Himself at times to be desecrated by sinful men. He proved

to the fallen angels, as to fallen men, that He was not demanding of them a virtue that He Himself disdained to practice.

Before such humility, what man can refuse to humble himself?



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