**Sin of the Angels**

Taken from Joseph Tetlow, S.J., *Choosing Christ in the World*

1.         I come into God's presence and offer myself to Him.

2.          Then, I compose myself in my real world. I am one of many human persons. I hear about many wars, about dictators who make for­ tunes dealing in drugs. I read about murders every day, in my own city. I breathe air that people have filled with harmful and noxious chemicals. I eat foods that clog my arteries, tax my digestive system, and alter my con­sciousness. Perhaps I learned to smoke before we knew it harms us. Perhaps I have gotten used to some drugs. I help pay for weapons systems that are so deadly that they make im­possible the security we intend them to achieve and threaten the entire earth. I am sold on things by advertising that skirts the  
truth. My culture is sated with pleasure, and it makes life choices simply because of pleas­ure. When the media do not tell me outright lies, they deceive by error and false worldviews. Even if I wanted a more equi­table distribution of healthy water and nour­ishing foods, I know that millions die of dis­eases while I can drink water from any tap and eat cuisines from all over the earth.

So I continue listing wrongs and evils until I get a deep sense of how my life world really goes on. This is my real world, however se­cure and safe I may feel in my own situation. Without being lugubrious or silly, I see my life world and myself in it—for what they truly are.

3.          And now I ask of God what I yearn for: I ask God to let me feel shame at my thought­ less sins and my deliberate sins; I want to feel confounded by the truth that others suffer such dire things because of human sinfulness, and I have suffered so little, although I know I have sinned and do sin.

*Now about the angels …*

1.         First, I recall that Jesus said He had seen Satan plunging down from heaven like light­ning (Luke 10:18).

2.         Then I think about this. Do I believe that God creates intelligent beings other than hu­mans? Do all intelligent beings have to have bodies? St. Thomas says that because angels have enormously powerful intelligences, they know things amazingly swiftly and make up their minds with their whole being. Once an angel decides for or against serving God, that angel's whole self has moved to enact the deci­sion. What do I think about this? Suppose one vastly powerful being managed all the forces of our galaxy—and that being deter­mined to take things into its own hands in­stead of keeping the laws God had set. What kind of destruction would that be? Suppose once I made up my mind and chose, that would be the end of it, and that same kind of destruction would wrack my whole self.

3.         Then I see how I feel about the times I have chosen to do what I wanted instead of what I  
knew was right. How can it be that the angels are now soaked in hatred, and I can still change?

*At the end, I turn to Jesus Christ, hanging on His cross, and I talk with Him. I ask how can it be that the Lord and Creator should have come from the infinite reaches of eternity to this death here on earth, so that He could die for our sins. And then I reflect upon myself, and ask:*

*What have I done for Christ?*

*What am I doing for Christ?*

*What ought I do for Christ?*

*And I talk with Him like a friend. I end with the Our Father.*♦