“Nothing implanted in our nature by God was lacking in the human nature assumed by the Word of God”: A metaphysics of human nature in the Christology of Aquinas

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This paper shall examine how Aquinas’s Christology, while affirming the Incarnation as an object of faith, that is, as a truth received in and known only by the gift of faith, in a second speculative move yet brings a robust metaphysics of human nature, indebted in large measure to Aristotle (though no merely to Aristotle), to bear fully on this mystery of the faith. And this is where Aquinas makes his distinctive mark on western Christology, and in particular in his anti-docetic insistence upon the full humanity of Christ. We see this metaphysics of human nature exhibited in Aquinas’s treatment of Christ’s human consubstantiality; namely, of a hylemorphically constituted humanity of Christ, of a full human affectivity in Christ, and of the Word’s instrumental use (in the Aristotelian sense) of his assumed humanity for soteriological purposes.