

Anniversary

by [Penelope Duckworth](#) in the [March 22, 2005](#) issue

Did the blessed mother note the measure of the moon?
Ancient church tradition says they came on the same day—
that Gabriel's whispered "hail" shared Golgotha's dark noon,
that her pain embraced perfection and who are we to say?

It was exquisite sorrow to have her melody become
counterpoint to her son's words arduously spoken
that afternoon of agony; below she stood mute, numb,
to watch his body slowly punctured, torn and broken.

How did she ponder and how could her heart sustain
a moment of astonishment, an anniversary gloss,
now—forlorn as vinegar; bitter balm for pain.
But she would hold to his wine, hard-won from torture, loss,

his new wine of forgiveness, now soaking into sod;
trusting it could endow her to forgive even her God.