Limbo

by Sister Mary Ada, OSJ

The ancient grayness shifted
Suddenly and thinned
Like mist upon the moors
Before a wind.
An old, old prophet lifted
A shining face and said:
“He will be coming soon.
The Son of God is dead;
He died this afternoon.”

A murmurous excitement stirred
All souls.
They wondered if they dreamed –
Save one old man who seemed
Not even to have heard.

And Moses, standing,
Hushed them all to ask
If any had a welcome song prepared.
If not, would David take the task?
And if they cared
Could not the three young children sing
The Benedicite, the canticle of praise
They made when God kept them from perishing
In the fiery blaze?
A breath of spring surprised them,
Stilling Moses’ words.
No one could speak, remembering
The first fresh flowers,
The little singing birds.
Still others thought of fields new ploughed
Or apple trees
All blossom-boughed.
Or some, the way a dried bed fills
With water
Laughing down green hills.
The fisherfolk dreamed of the foam
On bright blue seas.
The one old man who had not stirred
Remembered home.

And there He was
Splendid as the morning sun and fair
As only God is fair.
And they, confused with joy,
Knelt to adore
Seeing that He wore
Five crimson stars
He never had before.

No canticle at all was sung
None toned a psalm, or raised a greeting song,
A silent man alone
Of all that throng
Found tongue –
Not any other.
Close to His heart
When the embrace was done,
Old Joseph said,
“How is Your Mother,
How is Your Mother, Son?”