

In the Well of Grace: Mission San José  
*Jessica A. Deckard*

Inside, the church reminds me  
of my baptism—something I cannot remember  
but that is soaked into me. Behind the altar,

cool watery grottoes for three  
saints I cannot recognize, and Michael,  
whom I can. Jesus hangs on his cross

beneath a shell that drips water, and  
I think about the moment the spirit enters  
and the moment the spirit leaves.

There is so much between  
the two. I too am in a liminal  
state: still-married-not-yet-divorced.

Under this high barrel vault, confronted  
with images of *moments* and a frieze  
of angels and gold rings, how can I not

think about entrance and exit?  
The moment love enters and the moment  
love leaves. There is so much between

the two: a twining vine, the verdant smell  
of cut grass, a thicket of begonia, the glow  
of wax and wood. I arrived at the mission

at the tail-end of a wedding. Now, another  
bride's flowers scent the air. Will I receive  
the sacraments in the same manner she did?

I hope so. I will place my mouth where  
hers was, drink wine and honeyed happiness,  
send up a prayer for myself.