

Blood

by [Penelope Duckworth](#) in the [November 28, 2012](#) issue

When we think of the blood of Christ,
we think of the unnumbered insults;
the five wounds; the blood
beading from the thorn incisors
encircling his head

But what if, instead,
we thought of the blue and red
twining vessels of the umbilicus,
what if we pictured the roseate and warm
web of nutrients we call placenta?

Why not envision the body of Mary
her autonomic brain as it was building,
creating a network of feeding and growing:
caring and corpuscle, healing and hemoglobin,
making a mammal's four-chambered heart,
fed by the rich cake we call placenta,
shaping salvation's vascular system?

Christ's heart took shape in Mary's body.
His blood first coursed her valves and veins.
It was made with her womb's weaving,
overcast by heaven's venture,
manifest through serving love,
cell by alizarin cell.