ADVENT MEDITATION

One of the sisters’ most treasured traditions is the celebration of the Prayer of Preparation for Christmas, a.k.a., the Christmas Novena, although presently it consists of seven days, not nine, to correspond with the seven prophecies and seven O antiphons.

The Prayer begins with a candlelight procession during which a hymn is sung. The first of those hymns, “Drop Down Dew, O Gracious Heaven” is illustrated on the following pages.

On this first page are the seven O Antiphons. The wording captures the heart of the longer text. The antiphons, sung one each night, bracket the Magnificat [Canticle of Mary].

The editor hopes that this newsletter may serve to help the reader prepare for the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord.
Thus the Patriarchs were crying
When the earth in bondage sighing

Drop down dew,
O gracious heaven,
Let the clouds
rain down the Just.

Let the earth bud
forth a Savior
In thy promise
Lord we trust.”

Sought in vain
for heaven’s gate
Closed by sin
and satan’s hate.
God the Father in His mercy
Planned to save our fallen race,

While the burden of our sinning
God the Son deigned to embrace.

God the Spirit
gave
His token
Through the Virgin who had spoken:

“Lo, Thy handmaid, Lord, has heard;
Work in me Thy wond’rous word.”

Credits, stanza 2
God the Father by Cima da Conegliano, wikipedia/commons
Earth, https://jointmission.gsfc.nasa.gov/
Expulsion of Adam & Eve by Masaccio, wikipedia/commons
The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things by Hieronymus Bosch,
wikipedia/commons altered
Cross cropped from Altar do Senhor Morto, photo by Regianna, 11 June 2011,
https://commons.wikimedia.org
Annunciation & Mary with Jesus, CPPS own collection
Then the Son took our frail nature was made flesh and dwelled on earth.

Life and Light with grace abundant He bestowed of priceless worth.

Earth, rejoice, exult with gladness, A new Sun dispels our sadness.

Let us then our voices raise. Let us sing our Savior’s praise.

Credits, stanza 3
Nativity scene, congregation in chapel – CPPS own collection
All Saints, photo, https://www.catholicculture.org/
infant superimposed on sun – CPPS own collection