



Anima Mariae

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate Queen

Dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus and Mary!

As this newsletter reaches you, we will have already embarked upon the holy season of Lent, that very special time of penance and prayer. It is also a time to reflect upon the sufferings of our Divine Lord, and by this means to grow in our love for Him. And how can we not grow in love, when we see our Savior, the loving gentle Jesus, crushed to the ground under the appalling burden of the Cross? The eyes of faith are well aware that what bears Christ down is not the physical weight of the wooden cross, but our sins — *my sins* — the incalculable mass of the moral evil of the entire human race. He, in a sense, “became” sin for us. To free us from the slavery of the devil, He ransomed us at the price of His Own Blood. Not content with the infinite value and satisfaction He could have made by the very least action of His Divine Person, His Love would prove itself in the prodigality of the redemption, and through this also, would He teach us the unfathomable evil of our rebellion against the Divine Will.

Now let us turn to the one who is called “our tainted nature’s solitary boast.” Mary alone stands guiltless before her Son; not one feather’s weight of the burden is of her making. Indeed, so at one is she with the design of His Will that she suffers with Him, offers the sacrifice with Him, bears the sorrow with Him.



Surely her heart must break as she witnesses the suffering of her well-Beloved Child, her very God! Alas, selfless in her sorrow, spiritual writers tell us that she would have nailed Jesus to the cross herself had such been necessary for the accomplishment of His design. The pangs of her grief were the labor pains by which she brought forth her other children to the life of grace.

As we make the Way of the Cross dur-



What? Why? How? Vocations Weekend 2014: This year’s participants gather with some Sisters to have their questions about the Religious Life answered.

ing Lent and contemplate the sufferings our Savior bore for us, let us walk alongside His Mother, feeling also the pain and grief that pierced her heart. Let us contemplate the Passion through her eyes and try to console her. What better motive could we have for offering, and not just enduring the purifying Lenten fast? How can we behold the sorrowing heart of our Mother, and not resolve to turn away from every slightest offense that wounds her heart as well as His?

During this month of March we also celebrate the feast of the Annunciation, the first Joyful mystery of the Rosary. As we see Mary accepting this tremendous role of Mother of God with its high privilege and fearful responsibility, as we see her accepting all the consequences of that decision, those known and those unknown with all their possibilities of suffering, I wonder how this mystery can be considered joyful. Yet true joy is not in superficial happiness, but in peace and in union with God. True joy mingles with sorrow in this life, and both work to deepen the souls upon whom they descend. Mary, of all people, must have been a cheerful giver whom God loved. Let us ask for her spirit to be in us this Lent: her willingness to do God’s bidding, to sacrifice herself, and her Child, her deep joy amidst suffering which flowed from her union with the Will of God and her knowledge that in the end the victory would be His. This victory He shares with us as well, in the degree that we follow Him in His sufferings during Lent.



The Sisters spread some Christmas cheer, caroling at the airport when picking up the Sisters coming home from the missions for the holidays.



Sr. Giovanna Marie helps her students prepare for the procession of the Infant Jesus immediately before the Christmas midnight Mass.



Mariah the cat looks to see just how many orders Sr. Mary Bridget has filled at Mary Immaculate Queen Center.



His Excellency shows some of the Sisters a very special chalice he was recently given — it had been used by the anti-Communist hero, Cardinal Mindszenty, and also by Pope Pius XII.



Tons of fun! Sr. Mary Veronica watches the kindergarten class enjoying one of Spokane's many snowfalls this winter.



Fr. Bernard Welp, CMRI, leads the Rosary procession around Mount St. Michael's, in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes on her feastday.



Receiving blessed ashes on Ash Wednesday, the Sisters begin their Lent with a grace-filled boost, a tradition dating back to the early ages of the Church.



Save the pigs! Melting snow caused a flood down by the Novitiate pig pen, not once, but three times. The pen was extended uphill to "drier" soil.



Sr. Bernadine Marie works with one of the sodalists at St. Mary's Church, helping her with a sewing project.



Mother Mary Dominica is pictured with the students of St. Mary's Academy in Tacoma, WA, caroling at retirement homes during the Christmas season.



The students of St. Joseph's School in Wayne, MI, gather before the shrine of good St. Joseph to recite their morning prayers.



Sr. Mary Petra directs the choir for Ash Wednesday at St. Joseph's Church in Olathe, CO. It was the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders' first time singing with the Junior High at a High Mass.

Our Apostolate of Prayer

Are you or someone you love in need of special prayers? Send your intentions to the Sisters to be remembered in our daily prayers, Masses and good works.



Vocational Questions

Dear Sister,

I'm so happy that Leah entered. If I knew for sure that God wants me to enter the convent, I would have joined her in a heartbeat. But I've prayed and read books, and talked to nuns and to Father, and I'm still not absolutely sure. So I'm just waiting for something to happen so I know what to do with my life. That makes sense, doesn't it? I mean, what else can I do? —Natalie

Dear Natalie,

It may surprise you to learn that when a girl enters the convent, it is not because she *knows* she has a vocation. She may *believe* or *hope* she does, but her time in the postulancy and novitiate will determine whether her superiors agree that her vocation is true.

I like to think that a girl enters the convent if *she wants to make sure that she says "Yes" to God no matter what He asks of her*. Of course, I am assuming that the superiors of the community or circumstances have not already ruled out a religious vocation.

Perhaps you need this "absolute certainty" because you are afraid, either of the sacrifice or of possible failure. This is a normal, human reaction. But remember, the religious life is a *supernatural* life — that is, it is based on *faith*. To become a religious, one makes a *conscious and deliberate choice to give up what is natural and normal to desire* — a spouse, a home and family of your own, independence, and so forth.

In other words, Sisters are normal women who had the same kind of aspirations you have. They gave up careers, family, worldly success. Some of them gave up a "Mr. Perfect" in order to consecrate themselves entirely to God and His service; others knowingly gave up even the possibility of meeting a first love by giving themselves to God as soon as they could.

But if you just "wait for something to happen," you will most likely soon-



Anima Mariae is the free quarterly newsletter of the CMRI Sisters.

To join our mailing list, or to send comments, questions, prayer intentions or donations, please write or email:

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Calendar

March	4	Sr. Maria Kazimiera's feastday
	7-9	Vocations' Weekend
	9	Mother Mary Dominica's feastday
	19	Feast of St. Joseph; Sr. Mary Josephine's feastday
April	6	Sr. Mary Julianna's feastday
	20	Easter Sunday
	26	Feast of Our Mother of Good Counsel
	28	Feast of St. Louis Marie de Montfort Sr. Louise Marie's feastday; begin preparation for renewal of Total Consecration to Mary
May	12	Sr. Mary Imelda's feastday
	14	Sr. Mary Gemma's feastday
	20	Sr. Bernardine Marie's feastday
	25	Sr. Madeleine Marie's feastday
	30	Sr. Marie Janae's feastday
	31	Feast of the Queenship BVM; renewal of Total Consecration to Mary Sr. Maria Regina's feastday
June	13	Sr. Mary Antoinette's feastday
	23-26	Sisters' Annual Retreat
	27	Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; Feast of Our Mother of Perpetual Help; Sisters' vows cere- monies Sr. Corinne Marie's feastday
	29	Sr. Mary Petra's feastday
	30	Sr. Mary Paula's feastday

er or later meet and "fall in love" with some young man, which in turn may eventually lead to marriage. Will that mean that you never had a religious vocation? No — it will simply mean that for you, a normal young woman living in the world, nature has followed its course.

A religious vocation, on the other hand, does not start with a strong natural attraction, but from some degree of supernatural faith. It is a deliberate choice to give oneself wholly to the service of a God one sees and knows only by faith. It is to embrace the cross and follow behind Jesus, Who carried the cross and gave His life on it for you and me. It is to trust wholly in Him, Who gave Himself wholly for you and me, and to find no joy in anything but Him. For it is by choosing to *not* seek earthly happiness that a Sister gets a foretaste of Heaven, where all other things will have passed away, and she will see and love God, face to face for all eternity. Isn't that an amazing thought? —Sister Mary

Convent Trivia

Did you know that three Masses are offered each month for the benefactors of our Congregation? They are in honor of the Holy Ghost, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and good St. Joseph.