

Anima Mariae

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate Queen



Dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus and Mary!

Once again November has eased quietly into December, and the new liturgical year has begun with little external fanfare. While the world has plunged into a mad rush of shopping, a reverent hush has settled upon those who remember what Christmas is truly about. It began when the Gospels of these recent Sundays presented to us with the earth- and soul-shaking scenes of the end of the world and the Second Coming. Our Lord Himself tells us that no one knows the day nor the hour, and that we must always hold ourselves in readiness — which, of course, has not stopped people from endless speculation about the last days. What can *I* do to be ready for Christ's second coming? But perhaps more importantly, do I make sure He is *always* welcome at every moment of my life, in every aspect of my life? After all, Christ ought to be a constant living Presence in my life, in my soul. And during Advent, our Mother Mary is more than ever a model in this regard.

The 18th of December is a devotional feast referred to as Our Lady's Expectation. Think of how Our Lady's internal gaze was constantly fixed on the tiny Babe growing within her womb. If Mary and Joseph were not already on the road to Bethlehem at that

time, they must certainly have been preparing to leave. Those simple external preparations for the journey and the birth of the Christ Child were nothing compared to the interior preparation of prayer and surrender to God's Will that Mary and St. Joseph had been making ever since the Incarnation of the Son of God was revealed to them. And now they had to leave their home for Bethlehem, and then from there to flee into Egypt, where they lived in exile for some years. But because *He* was with them, nothing else mattered. As for us, we may live comfortably enough in our homes, but we must remember that this life is but a journey to our heavenly homeland, and that if *He* is always with us, we will make a fitting preparation for the life that really matters — eternity. If Christ is welcome in every aspect of our lives, our homes, our activities, He in turn will one day welcome us into His heavenly kingdom.

Remember, too, that at times, we, like Mary, have Jesus physically within us when we receive

Him in Holy Communion. And each time, He comes to us through Our Lady. This is not only because it was from her that Christ received the human nature in which He visits us, but also because He has given her all the graces He gained during His life and through His Passion to distribute according to the Will of God, for the good of His Mys-



Sr. Marie Emmanuel prepares an Advent wreath for display in the gift shop.

tical Body. This includes the graces we receive from the sacraments, and especially from Holy Communion.

St. Louis de Montfort says that as Our Lady was the path which Jesus took to come to us in His Incarnation, that she will also be the way by which He comes in what is commonly referred to as His second coming: His victorious advent as our Judge at the end of the world: "It was through Mary that the salvation of the world was begun, and it is through Mary that it must be consummated." He goes on to call Our Lady the dawn which precedes



the Sun of Justice. Mary must be known and loved in these latter days, in order that people may come to a proper knowledge of Jesus. So as we prepare for the coming of Christ, in whatever way or time He chooses to come for us, let us join with Our Lady's expectation, asking her to help us make our hearts ready for Him.

