



MARYMOUNT HERMITAGE NEWSLETTER

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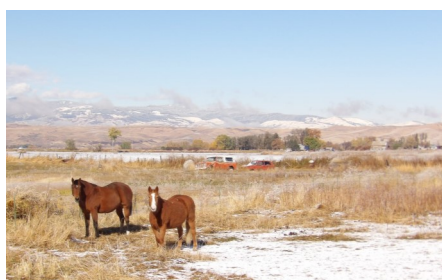
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LIFE IS CHANGED, NOT ENDED



By Sister Mary Beverly, HSM

I live on a mesa in the high desert of west-central Idaho. The rugged land here is quite varied however, so when I drive about 6 miles south to Indian Valley, I am in different scenery. This little locality (not even a city) has the nearest post office and I went there one day last week to buy Christmas stamps. Indian Valley, as the name implies, is lower geographically than Mesa. It has trees and bushes, creeks and streams, irrigated fields and agricultural animals. That day I decided that, instead of taking my walk at Mesa when I went for the mail, I would walk around Indian Valley. The change of views was invigorating. The same mountains are there, but from cultivated fields, they look different, elegantly framed.

I had been inspired to take my camera because this is a season of transition. Summer was slow to ease into autumn and now the snow has come early, even before All-Hallow's Eve. The trees have leaves that are turning colors, but they were covered with snow that day. The sunlight was bright, but the wind was crisp and cold. I wore my winter parka for the first time. My favorite photos are to the left with no captions. I will let them speak for themselves. Walk with me south down the lane from the post office.

This day of beauty and changes of scenery and seasons has become an image of the transition we are making liturgically these days. On November 1, we joined the joy and praise of all the saints of all ages, who are enjoying the beatific vision of God, a promise and a place we also hope to obtain by God's grace. Then on November 2, we prayed for all the holy souls in purgatory, who, though rejoicing in being saved and on their way to heaven, still suffer the purification needed to enter the pure presence of Almighty God. It is our beautiful Catholic belief and tradition to pray for the holy souls all during the month of November. The daily Mass readings feature passages about dying and death. Certainly death is the door to life and that passage is the greatest transition we can experience in this created world. As the funeral liturgy proclaims: "Life is changed not ended."

We have all lost loved ones through death recently. In previous newsletters, I featured two good friends who died in June and September of this year. We live in a culture which avoids the topic and reality of death. Even the euphemism of a person "passing" always makes me want to ask: "Passed from what to where?" Truthfully, that is the point about death. Life in this created world has ended and another eternal life has begun. We pass from the visible to the invisible world. Of course, it is only "invisible" to our earthly eyes. It will take new eyes, trained by faith, to see what God has in store for us in heaven. As St. Paul writes, "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has

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prepared for those who love him.” (1 Cor. 2:9)

November itself seems to be a transition from summer to winter, from Ordinary time to Advent/Christmas time. Fifty-five years ago when I was a novice in my first religious community, we used to have one Sunday a month, which was a retreat day with time for more silence and prayer. It was called “Preparation for Death Sunday”. As an 18-year old, that sounded very somber to me, but I came to see the wisdom of remembering regularly that in fact I will die some day. It seemed reasonable to seriously ask myself if I was preparing for death. The salient fact from such reflections is this: I am in need of a Savior! I cannot become a saint by my own efforts and merits. So the month of November, when I am praying for the dead, who may be in purgatory, I am remembering that one day, I too will die. I can prepare more fervently in Advent to be ready to welcome my Savior as a baby in Bethlehem, as well as being ready for the day when I will welcome him to take me home to heaven to the Heart of the Father. Jesus came to save me/us and he will do what he has promised, if only I/we allow it, by his grace.

Advent begins on November 27, only about two weeks away. Let me close with a quote, which I love, from St. Ignatius of Antioch. This bishop was under arrest, on his way to Rome in 107 A.D., where he knew he would be executed. This quote comes in the Office of Readings on October 17, which is the feast day of St. Ignatius of Antioch. This is from a letter he wrote to the Romans ahead of his arrival in their city: “For though I am alive as I write to you, still my real desire is to die. My love of this life has been crucified, and there is no yearning in me for any earthly thing. Rather within me is the living water which says deep inside me: *‘Come to the Father’.*” May we



all receive the grace to hear this living stream speaking within us.

COMMUNITY NEWS

By Sister Mary Beverly, HSM

CORRESPONDENCE: You will receive a small Christmas post card in early December. It is the only piece of US mail sent to you from Marymount Hermitage to keep you updated with our annual news. If you are not on the mailing list, please send me your US mailing address and I will be happy to add you to the list of friends and benefactors. Not everyone has time to read these monthly online newsletters and you would be amazed at the number of people who do not have the Internet or computers or cell phones. Your privacy and trust are held sacred and I never sell the information on this mailing list. Donations to Marymount Hermitage are acknowledge with a handwritten note by me in the US mail. Christmas correspondence easily occupies November to January each year. We pray daily for our family, friends, neighbors and benefactors. Mass is offered once a month for you by Father Bill McCann.

WORK: Father Bill makes himself available to substitute for pastors, who need to be gone from the parishes for vacation, in his Diocese of Las Cruces, NM. He will be working in New Mexico from December, 2022 through February, 2023.

I have spent most of this year printing flower cards and building back my sales inventory. I last printed in quantity like this seven years ago and the time had come to re-supply! This is an “in-house” production and I have a whole room dedicated to the printers and printing supplies. Now I have switched my work to creating the real flower cards. I had no such cards left to sell and I realized I either needed to tell people I was out of that business or start building up that inventory again. I have been working between 1-4 hours daily at the library since late October. I am not doing monthly sales at parishes like I did for the last 20 years, but the Gift Shop is open for Days of Pilgrimage and I receive mail orders on a regular basis. Guests and retreatants are also able to visit the Gift Shop when they are here. I will say working with flowers, when it is snowing outside, seems like the height of luxury. The flowers are beautiful and designing with God’s creations is such a peaceful work. The creativity and concentration involved contribute to a better focus for prayer, which is a grace.

PRAYERS: I ask for prayers for the repose of the soul of my Aunt Minnie Echeveste (age 94), who died in AZ on November 7. Thank you and God bless you!

The MARYMOUNT HERMITAGE NEWSLETTER is published by Marymount Hermitage, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation in the State of Idaho. The Hermit Sisters of Mary are a canonically approved, Catholic community of women hermits, following the Rule of St. Benedict. The newsletter is published each month by the 15th on our website only. The purpose of the newsletter is to share the spirituality and material progress of Marymount Hermitage. Please pray that we may be faithful to our way of life in prayer and penance, solitude and silence for the sake of the Church and the world. Donations are sincerely appreciated and are tax-deductible. Thank you in advance to those who have remembered Marymount Hermitage in their wills. God bless you!