

Maryfarm

By Dorothy Day

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Summary: Describes life at Maryfarm during Winter: guests, visitors, gifts of a statue of the Blessed Mother and a phonograph, and pies, furniture repair and refurbishing. Mentions books read as spiritual reading during silent meals. (DDLW #945).

Newburgh, New York

“Life is a night spent in an uncomfortable inn,” St. Teresa of Avila wrote, but we try to make it as comfortable as possible at Maryfarm. One night last month a 64-year-old woman who was hitchhiking to buffalo was brought to us by the highway police who notified her relatives. They drove down from Buffalo for her the next day. Jim and Antoinette were sent to us by the Red Cross; still another woman who evidently just came from a mental institution also came for the night. She woke up in the night however and becoming fearful that she was again locked in, she climbed out the window, throwing out her suitcase first. She left only her alarm clock behind her. Three or four men come in off the road every night for supper and breakfast, and sometimes stay longer if they are ill or need the rest. They never speak at meals, and that is one reason why we have spiritual reading at table. (Also Fr. Faley says it does away with useless arguments.) We have read *The Way of a Pilgrim*, *Seven Story Mountain*, recently and now we are reading Goodier’s *Public Life of Our Lord*. At breakfast there is the Epistle and Gospel for the day and a chapter of the Imitation.

During the month a gift of a statue of the Blessed Mother was sent to us from an anonymous donor for the dining room and the deep window sill between kitchen and dining room makes a beautiful grotto. The walls of our old house are a foot thick or more.

Not many guests during the months of January and February. Mary McConnaghy from Delaware, Catherine Odlevak from New York, Fr. Lekan from Beacon, Marcella and Ann Cacosia from Newburgh, Jeanne Mahoney from New York, some Anglican Sisters of St. Helena from Newburgh. Mary Roberts from Maine and Mary McArdle, of Peter Maurin Farm, are here for a longer visit.

Duncan Ford who stayed with us for a while has settled in Newburgh and resumes his profession of magician on a local stage.

Welcome gifts during the month were pies from a baker in Newburgh and a record player from Mary McArdle. Now we are playing The Messiah and other records for an occasional concert in the evening.

Activities of the farm these winter months besides cooking, washing and cleaning, are furniture polishing and repairing—there is a great interest in getting down to the natural wood, and wood chopping to save coal.

Our great needs are for sheets and towel for the coming retreats, and another tractor plough for John Filliger.

There will be a mid-Lenten retreat the week end of March 27, over Laetare Sunday.