

To Marguerite



You walked this earth in earlier
times when carbon footprints
did not lead to global warming,
in days when human kind had not
begun to damage, plunder and
destroy our planet earth, our
only home.

What would you do today in this,
our tired world?

How best to mend its broken
heart, to meet its many needs,
respond to calls from everywhere?

You left us words to guide
our attitudes, strong yet gentle.
No lengthy lists of rules, no tract
or treatise. No steps spelled
out for living simply.

You simply did it, helping others
learn as well.

The filles du roi you welcomed to
their home, a simple lifestyle—
with ordinary bread, tasty soup,
at times austere, but also
warmth amid the cold.

Your spoke of kindness, littleness,
prayer and service, not being
fussy or fastidious, just grateful for
what's given—or taken, as were
your loved ones, by fire or
distance or God's dear will,

all the while living your Fiat
in deep and loving trust.

To you, only Mary is the crystal-
clear and precious water
that we need. We are not.
You knew the difference, saved
the best for others, even gave
away your mattress and
who-knows-what-else.

We treasure your wry remarks
about lost luggage on an
ocean trip, of sleeping under
stars for “only thirty-one days.”
No luxury. No penury. No big
house when a small one would
do. But when a big one is needed,
build it. Move in. No guilt.
No stale excuses.

Good mother, compassionate sister,
caring friend, teach us too to learn
your healing ways, to be open to
change, aware of inconvenient
truths, alert to the calls of creation,
choosing to walk joyful and free
where you have led, in this, our
beautiful world.