

## THE BIRTH OF WONDER

When I am able to pray with the mind in the heart, I am joyfully  
able to affirm the irrationality of Christmas.

As I grow older  
I get surer  
Man's heart is colder,  
His life no purer.  
As I grow steadily  
More austere  
I come less readily  
To Christmas each year.  
I can't keep taking  
Without a thought  
Forced merrymaking  
And presents bought  
In crowds jostling.  
Alas, there's naught  
In empty wassailing  
Where oblivion's sought.  
Oh, I'd be waiting  
With quiet fasting  
Anticipating  
A joy more lasting.  
And so I rhyme  
With no apology  
During this time  
Of eschatology:  
Judgment and warning  
Come like thunder.  
But now is the hour  
When I remember  
An infant's power  
On a cold December.  
Midnight is dawning  
And the birth of wonder.

*-Madeleine L'Engle*