

# Making the House Ready for the Lord

Mary Oliver

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but  
still nothing is as shining as it should be  
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an  
uproar of mice—it is the season of their  
many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves  
and through the walls the squirrels  
have gnawed their ragged entrances—but it is the season  
when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And  
the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard  
while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;  
what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling  
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly  
up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will  
come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox,  
the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know  
that really I am speaking to you whenever I say,  
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.