IN OUR TIME

Newsletter of the Dorothy Day Guild
Volume 5, Double Issue
Summer / Fall 2020

The Dorothy Day Guild

A Woman of Conscience
A Saint for Our Time

Dear Friends,

Greetings of peace to you from the Guild!

In these deeply troubled times – in spite of the Cause for Dorothy Day's canonization growing ever closer to being transmitted to Rome or perhaps even because of this impending huge step forward – we find ourselves asking, "Why do saints really matter?" In *Saints and Postmodernism*, Edith Wyschogrod suggests saints' significance lies in their offering a possible new moral path in an age "grown cynical and hardened to catastrophe: war, genocide, the threat of world-wide ecological collapse…the emergence of new diseases." We need, she says, that kind of "saintly boldness and risk" for an effort to develop more altruism, more kindness, more – no one need to be ashamed to say – more love.

Dorothy Day's life is a testament to the inspired yet arduous task of building a communion of love in a social order based on the common good and the gospel (see "Imagining Virtue," p. 9). So much so that five years ago this September 24, Pope Francis in his historic address before the U.S. Congress, acknowledged her fortitude – "her tireless work" – placing her beside Lincoln, Martin Luther King, and Thomas Merton. (See "Pope Francis and the Courage to Carry On," p. 7.)

Fortitude is the last in our series of newsletters on the practice of those virtues deemed essential to the "proof" of holiness. We thank Kevin Ahern (see "Good Talk," p. 2) for illuminating fortitude's many facets. Courage is one but, unlike the more classical ideal of bravery on a battlefield, fortitude is more about endurance over time, like the endurance of a Martin Luther King or a John Lewis waging a non-violent struggle, posing an alternative to violence.

Saints matter because they point out radically needed alternatives, new ways of being faithful. Their lived-example is what invites others to join them (see "Saintly Matters," p. 6), like the two thousand people who joined Dorothy Day in what had been in prior years' air-raid drill demonstrations only a mere handful of anti-nuclear protestors (see "Spiritual Exercises," p. 10).

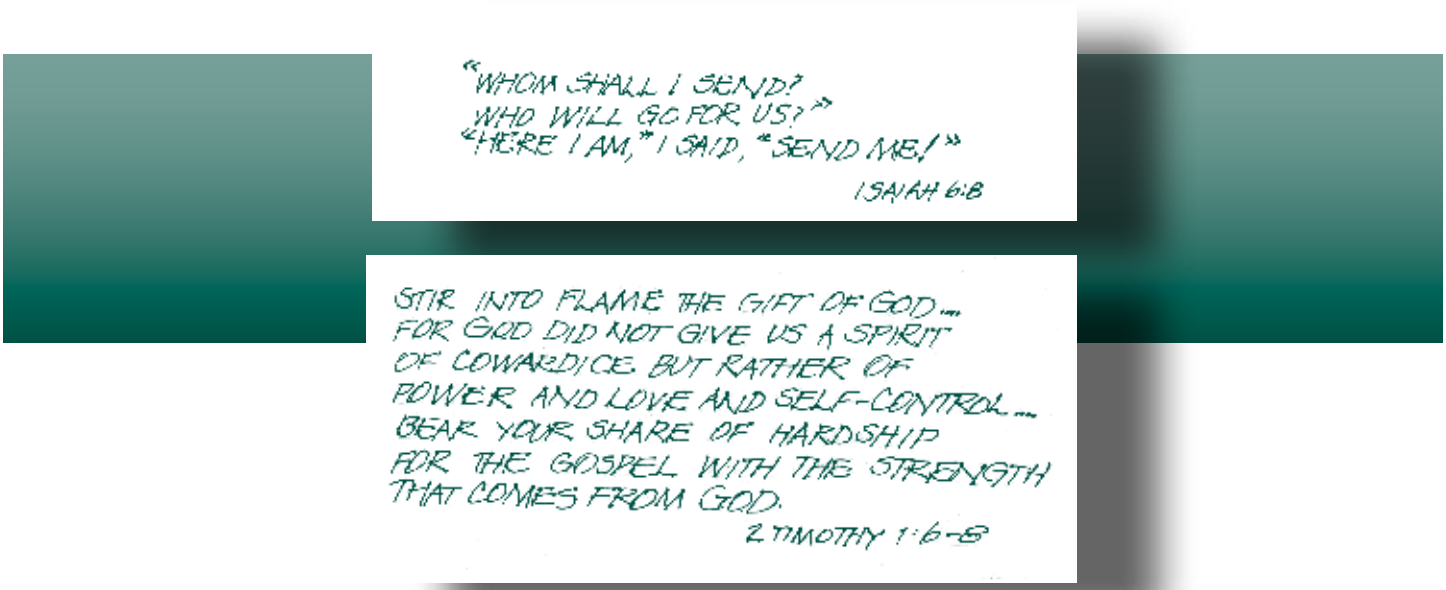
The moral arc of the universe is long, Martin Luther King told us – but it bends toward justice. Dorothy always counseled a long view of history (see "Fear in Our Time," p 12), but she believed in a daily kind of fortitude. She believed we are all potentially the "everyday saints," who are so dear to Pope Francis. That we are the benders. That every act of love, every "voluntary taking on oneself of some of the pain of this world, increases the courage and love and hope of all." (Special thanks go to the Cornell family for their "Breaking Bread," see p. 17.)

As always, we thank you for the support we so count on. (See "Dispatches," p. 5.) If timely, **please do remember to renew your membership** (form on p.19). Please also consider contributing to our Loaves and Fishes Campaign, where no amount is ever deemed too small to be of help. Together, in the words of John Lewis, let us "keep on marching." These times call out for nothing less than our wholehearted fortitude and perseverance. They call out for saints like Dorothy Day.

HOW MANY MEN AND WOMEN THERE ARE – WE DO NOT KNOW THEIR NAMES – WHO HONOR OUR PEOPLE: STRONG IN CARRYING FORWARD THEIR LIVES, THEIR FAMILY, THEIR WORK, THEIR FAITH. EVERYDAY SAINTS, HIDDEN SAINTS: THE GIFT OF FORTITUDE IS WHAT ENABLES THEM TO CARRY ON WITH THEIR DUTIES AS INDIVIDUALS, FATHERS, MOTHERS, BROTHERS, SISTERS, CITIZENS.

POPE FRANCIS

**The "Ichthus" image ("the sign of the fish") was used by the early Christians as an easily recognizable symbol for Jesus. Dorothy Day's saintliness, we pray, will become increasingly recognizable–easy for all to see.*



GOOD TALK

with Kevin Glauber Ahern

(We deeply appreciate the following conversation with Kevin Glauber Ahern, Ph.D. He is a Catholic theologian who specializes in the ethics of church movements and structures. The author of several books, including ***Structures of Grace: Catholic Organizations Serving the Global Common Good*** *[Orbis Books], Kevin is assistant professor of religious studies at Manhattan College. He also serves on the board of the Dorothy Day Guild, and is a member of the leadership of the International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs [ICMICA-Pax Romana], a global movement of intellectuals and professionals committed to social transformation.)*

Help us examine the Christian understanding of fortitude since its practice is part of what demonstrates holiness. I think of it as a kind of courage.

As the world has struggled to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic and a growing awareness of the systemic nature of racism, I've been thinking a lot about the virtue of fortitude. Now more than ever, it seems, we need a virtue that can help us stand firm in the face of unexpected challenges, structural injustice, and the risks associated with a global pandemic. From the point of view of Christian discipleship, fortitude–both as a virtue and a gift of the Holy Spirit–is essential if we are to endure on the pilgrim path in a world so marked by suffering and injustice.

St. Thomas Aquinas speaks beautifully about fortitude in his *Summa Theologiae,* and he offers a uniquely Christian understanding of this cardinal virtue. Here, he differs somewhat from Aristotle who exemplified fortitude with the courage of a soldier. For Aquinas, writing with a Christian lens, fortitude looks to the martyr, not the soldier, as the model for greatness. He slightly reframes Aristotle's approach and focuses on four parts or related virtues, including magnanimity (the habit of striving for greatness in the face of difficulty); magnificence; patience; and perseverance. So, while fortitude is related to courage, it is more profound than simply being brave in the face of danger. Rather, it is about reaching for great things in the face of difficulty and having the endurance and patience to persevere in this task. In many ways, Christian fortitude is about sustaining a pilgrim journey in a world marked by sin and injustice.

Dorothy talked about the "folly of the cross," suggesting that part of fortitude is the willingness to sacrifice and, perhaps, even harder, to fail.

For me, this is one of the most challenging parts of Dorothy's witness. She was willing to take great risks in the service of the Gospel. She was an intelligent and skilled journalist who could have had a promising career. Rather than take a path that many would see as logical and safe, especially for a single mother, she gave up job security to start communities and a newspaper without any guarantees of so-called success. Dorothy understood what needed to happen, and she was willing to take risks–and even to fail publicly.

When you read *The Long Loneliness* and Dorothy's diaries, the latter so beautifully edited by Robert Ellsberg in *The Duty of Delight*, you get a sense of how difficult it was for her at times. Like so many of us, Dorothy struggled, *but* she did not give up. To build off a slogan from contemporary feminist movements, Dorothy persisted. When the readership of *The Catholic Worker* newspaper and support for her movement dropped significantly because of her pacifist stance during the Second World War, she persisted. When the communities she founded experienced internal tensions or were forced to close, she persisted. When the money ran out, she persisted. When leaders in the church turned away from her, she persisted.

Thanks to a generous donor, I've been able to work with Manhattan College students over the past five years in summer research related to Dorothy's work. The students I have worked with, young women from different faith traditions, have all remarked on Dorothy's drive and persistence in putting her faith into action. This persistence and willingness to risk everything for what one believes is so counter cultural in an age of instant gratification. But this is part of the reason so many of us are attracted to Dorothy and her legacy.

PHOTO: BOB FITCH

Dorothy with striking farm workers. Aquinas referred to fortitude as "a certain firmness of mind." Dorothy had a look (and a chin) to match.

"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be satisfied."

I know I find this deeply challenging. How many Christians are willing to take real risks for the Gospel? Am I? How far am I willing to go for what I believe? I often pray about this and I would be lying if I said I was completely comfortable with what my discernment reveals.

While listening recently to some of the moving tributes to the late Congressman John Lewis, I heard a lot about hope: That no one in despair can ever be courageous. That hope – in the face of difficulty – is what makes courage. John Lewis really believed in the possibility, here and now, of the Beloved Community. As did Dorothy.

The virtues of magnanimity and fortitude are deeply connected to the virtue of hope. Having fortitude is not simply about doing great things and having endurance to see it through. It's about staying the course toward a good goal that is difficult, but also possible to achieve. If our goal was not difficult, we would not need fortitude and it would not be a great task. If our goal was not possible to achieve, we would risk being presumptuous or giving into despair. Like hope, fortitude points us toward something. It's outward looking.

Both John Lewis and Dorothy Day lived a life that pointed toward something greater, something good. I don't think it's a coincidence that the word pilgrimage is associated with both Lewis and Dorothy. Ultimately, they both looked toward the Kingdom of God. Both saw themselves on a journey toward the Kingdom and felt compelled to contribute to building a more just society, albeit in two very different ways.

Interestingly, both St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas link the gift of fortitude with the fourth beatitude in the Gospel of Matthew, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice" (Mt: 5-6). I find this really insightful. Working for justice, and particularly justice for the excluded, the outcast, and the marginalized, is not an easy task. Efforts for social justice are nearly always opposed by some powerful interests. This can be seen clearly in the ways John Lewis and Dorothy experienced ridicule, the many sacrifices they had to make for what they believed in, and their willingness to get arrested and put their lives on the line for others. Just consider the iconic photos of Lewis and other young civil rights leaders being beaten in their protests or an elderly Dorothy just before her last arrest in her support of farm workers in the hot California sun. With hope for a new reality, these actions of civil disobedience acquire a tremendous power. How many Christians today are willing

(Good Talk, cont'd on p. 4)

(Good Talk, cont'd from p. 3)

to undertake such actions for what they believe?

I wonder about the relationship between fortitude and fear.

I'm so glad you asked this. Like fortitude, fear can also be a gift of the Holy Spirit, fear of the Lord. Dorothy seems keenly aware of an appropriate type of fear we are called to have. For Aquinas, fortitude functions to moderate both fear and daring. On the one hand, an excess of daring or fearlessness can be dangerous and destructive and can divert us from the path. On the other hand, an inordinate or excess of fear stands as a vice in opposition to fortitude as it keeps us from going out of our comfort bubbles. If Dorothy gave into fear, such as the fear of letting someone you don't know into your home or the fear of being arrested, we would not be talking about her today. The recent experience of COVID-19 highlights the need to find a right mix between a paralyzing fear and a reckless fearlessness.

The truly magnanimous person will navigate between these extremes. Fortitude will help, but so will the habits of prudential discernment and humility. Dorothy Day clearly had both of these habits, which she nourished though constant prayer. For me, I find my weekly faith sharing community as providing an important space to keep these extremes in check and to keep focused on the Kingdom even in the face of a pandemic.

Fortitude is one of those virtues whose practice feels better left to other people. After all, as you said, Aristotle links its practice to soldiers and Aquinas to martyrs! But Dorothy seemed to stress its dailiness, its quiet ordinariness.

The long road to freedom, marching for the vote, Selma to Montgomery, March 1965

Yes, you are right. St. Thomas departs from Aristotle on this point. For Aristotle, the model of greatness was the extraordinary soldier without fear on the battlefield. Humility in this model is more of a vice than a virtue. For Aquinas, this is a problem. The radical reality of the humble incarnate God (Phil: 2), a God of peace, and a God who cares for the poor and the outcast, points to a different logic. Consider the many examples in the Gospel of Luke of what biblical scholars call the great reversal. A colorful example of this is the Gospel story of the Rich man and Lazarus (Lk: 16:19-31). Here Jesus speaks of a rich man, who by many accounts should be considered "great" or magnanimous. He had wealth, power, friends, good food, and fine clothes. Meanwhile, Lazarus, the poor man outside his door, had nothing. Similar themes can be found in Luke's telling of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk: 10: 25-37). Here, Jesus, like many of the Hebrew prophets before him, flips the script in understanding what greatness is about. Ultimately, true greatness is not found in power and wealth, the goods of fortune, but in our relationships with God and each other, and in particular in how we treat the poor.

Far too often today, many people, including many Christians, have a model of magnanimity, of greatness and fortitude that looks a lot more like Aristotle's soldier or the rich man in Luke's Gospel. From social media and consumerism, there are many forces in our society that do not want us to have a sense of humility, that do not want us to think or to go out beyond ourselves, especially to the poor. The self-centered "me culture", or what Pope Francis frequently describes as an *auto-referentiality* (self-centeredness), is uplifted as the way to achieve greatness.

True greatness lies in a different direction, as the life of Dorothy Day reveals. True greatness is not found in power, privilege, or wealth. Rather, greatness is found in going forth beyond one's self to the other on the path to the kingdom of God. This path, however, is not easy and demands perseverance and patience, two of the key components of fortitude.

Thankfully, one does not have to be a martyr to witness to the gospel in this way. With God's help, it's something all of us can do in our own lives. Dorothy's personalism, like the Little Way of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, calls us to great tasks in our small everyday experiences. In *Gaudete et Exsultate*, Pope Francis beautifully speaks about this. "I like to contemplate the holiness present in the patience of God's people," he writes, "in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile. In their daily perseverance I see the holiness of the Church militant. Very often it is a holiness found in our next-door

(Good Talk, cont'd on p. 15)

VOX POP

Prayer – in its original form as a prayer of petition – is nothing other than the voicing of hope. "The people" continue to sign the petition (available on back cover of this newsletter and at www.dorothydayguild.org), asking that Dorothy Day be named a saint – and to hope they will be heard. Here are some of the reasons why:

There is no doubt in my mind that Dorothy Day should be canonized.
Taylor Erickson, Nashville, TN

A prophet to me!
Brittany Harrison, North Haldeon, NJ

She was what it means to be saintly – a person of deep moral commitment.
Rachel Dehragor, New York City

I have raised five children to try to act as a disciple of Dorothy Day.
Marisa Raize, Washington, D.C.

The fact that we are living in uncertain times has made me wonder about how saints have endured similar and worse circumstances.
Zavala Esteban, Jr., Los Angeles, CA

Dorothy is an inspiration needed today: faith, justice, detachment, and devotion.
Bernard Cook, Alexandria, VA

DISPATCHES!

Even Covid-19 couldn't stop the progress of the Dorothy Day Inquiry this summer. Staff and volunteers packed their suitcases full of work to take home as New York's lock downs began. By mid-August, volunteers completed transcribing all of Dorothy Day's historically significant letters (about 500), as determined by the Historical Commission. Review and printing of the letters has begun, and a special review by a theological censor is underway. Transcribers celebrated this milestone in late August, convening a special online discussion with filmmaker Martin Doblmeier, director of *Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story*.

The Inquiry continues to gather testaments to "graces and favors" prayed for through the sole intercession of Dorothy Day. Please consider sharing *any* personal experience of Dorothy's perceived efficacy, not limited by the commonly held, more restrictive notion of "miracle." Contact: George Horton, vice-postulator, george.horton@archny.org. And please know that this sharing – a true act of "generosity of spirit" – is vital to the Cause's forward movement. Thank you!

Attention now turns toward copying selected works *about* Dorothy Day. Throughout the fall of 2020, staff and volunteers will be preparing all evidence in a format acceptable to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Each document submitted must be printed on A4 size paper (not used in the U.S) and have left and bottom margins no smaller than 3.5 cm. These requirements are due to the tight binding used when the papers are bound by a specific Roman bindery and because of the required stamps and signatures on every page. Pray for us!

Dorothy Day's being a saint "for our time," inspired a timely action of our own: the crafting of a novena, nine days of prayers and petitions, titled, "Hope in Hard Times: A Novena with Dorothy Day," available on the Guild's website (www.dorothydayguild.org). Created for Holy Week at the beginning of the pandemic at the suggestion of Guild Advisory Committee member, Deirdre Cornell, the novena still remains, unfortunately, relevant. Anthony Santella is owed special thanks for capturing the artful photographic images that complement the respective texts.

We say a sad but deeply grateful farewell to Fr. Richard Welch, CssR, leaving us to work in Rome's Congregation for Religious, who has served so faithfully as Cardinal Dolan's delegate to the Cause. And we welcome warmly his replacement, Fr. Robert Hospodor, as Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese and Cardinal's delegate, who holds a licentiate and doctorate in canon law.

("The Vine and the Branches"–a metaphor for Christian discipleship and an apt image for the growing Guild–inspired the iconography in this column by Catholic Worker artist, Ade Bethune.)

SAINTLY MATTERS

"So many people beating a path to our door," Dorothy mused in her "On Pilgrimage" column (May, 1970). So many ask, "What is it all about, this Catholic Worker movement?" Sometimes Dorothy would liken it to a family or a community in need. But more often she explained it "as a school not only for the students, the young, who come to us, but for all of us." A school that drew heavily from the lives of the saints and other saintly persons, outside the confines of canonization. In Lawrence Cunningham's illuminating study, *A Brief History of the Saints* (Blackwell Publishing, 2005), we're reminded of her love of St. Francis of Assisi for his love of the poor, of St. Benedict for his sense of the liturgical life, of Théreèse of Lisieux for her "little way," of Mohandas Gandhi for his doctrine of non-violence.

If their memories have been sustained long enough and a clear appeal to a "discernible, spiritual ancestry" is established, "schools of theology" are actually credited to some saints, Cunningham explains. A "spiritual pedagogical tradition" – "persistence over time" – is what distinguishes a school from a more immediate movement or expression of faith (e.g., the Taize Prayer). A kind of fortitude, in other words.

Often, such schools begin with a saintly founder's reformist impulse or religious intuition about the needs of the times and the gathering together of a small group of people to live out a new way of discipleship. Though schools are unique, Cunningham suggests they share some constants from what has been called a "source experience." (The Franciscan school, for example, stresses itinerancy and a love of voluntary poverty.) Each school develops a certain way of praying in keeping with its mission. (St. Ignatius of Loyola's Jesuits, the Ignatian school, seeking to be "contemplatives in action," emphasize meditative prayer, informing one's active life and vice versa.) Each develops a "canon within the canon," certain texts from sacred Scripture they hold particularly dear. Critically, they seek to cultivate an intensity of spiritual experience modeled by their founders.

Typically, these schools have been enfleshed in the Church's many religious orders (Benedictine, Ursuline, Augustinian, to name more) of "professed" men and women. The Catholic Worker, in contrast, is a movement of lay people like its holy founders with no vows ever sought or taken. Close now to forty years after Dorothy's death (and over seventy after Peter Maurin's), the movement's commitment to the unity of love of God and neighbor lived in voluntary poverty and nonviolent witness – in approximately 175 houses of hospitality strung across the country and some abroad – remains strikingly consistent with their vision. Their canon remains the Sermon on the Mount. Yet whether the Catholic Worker ever becomes a formal "school of theology" (of the spirituality of non-violence?) remains to be seen. But having just marked the stark observance of the 75th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb, we know it still has as much to teach us as we have yet to learn.

At Root…

Dorothy Day always derived sustenance and strength from the saints. Here is a little of their insight into the virtue of fortitude.

To have courage for whatever comes in life, everything lies in that.

St. Teresa of Avila

Though the path is plain and smooth for men of good will, he who walks it will not travel far, and will do so only with difficulty, if he does not have good feet: that is courage and a persevering spirit.

St. John of the Cross

Resolve: Generously and with no half-hearted, timorous dread of the opinions of Church and men to manifest my mission…. You have no time to occupy your thoughts with that complacency or consideration of what others will think. Your business is simply, "What will my Father in heaven think?"

St. Katherine Drexel

When one is convinced that his cause is just, he will fear nothing.

St. John Bosco

The principal act of courage is to endure and withstand dangers doggedly rather than to attack them.

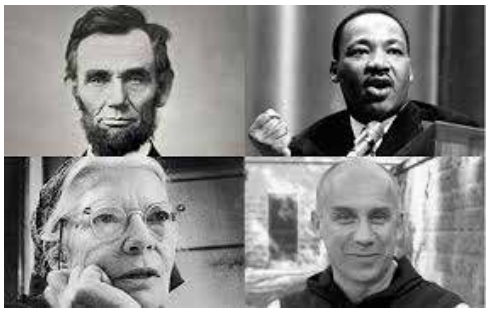
St. Thomas Aquinas

After knowing the will of God in regard to a work which we undertake, we should continue courageously, however difficult it may be. We should follow it to the end with as much constancy as the obstacles we encounter are great.

St. Vincent de Paul

Pope Francis
and the Courage To Carry On

Pope Francis had intended to read from America's founding creed that historic day – five years ago this September 24th – before the U.S. Congress. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." But his hand, guiding his way down the prepared text, jumped over the paragraph cradling it. No matter. We heard its cry in the quartet of Americans he held up to us: Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Thomas Merton, and Dorothy Day.



Of Dorothy, he said:

In these times when social concerns are so important, I cannot fail to mention the Servant of God Dorothy Day, who founded the Catholic Worker Movement. Her social activism, her passion for justice and for the cause of the oppressed, were inspired by the Gospel, her faith, and the example of the saints.

Certainly for a number of Americans, Catholic or not, Day's recognition caused amazed yelps of joy followed by the wiping away of tears. For others, including many U.S. congressman, it caused puzzled looks, begging the question, "Who is Dorothy Day?" (We're confident by now they know. Interestingly, it wasn't her first mention before this august body. In 1997, the centennial anniversary of her birth was honored in a resolution introduced by New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, designating the week of November 8 through November 14, "National Week of Recognition for Dorothy Day and Those Whom She Served.")

But many of us may still wonder what lay behind Francis's arguably startling selection. Why *this* grouping of *these* four individuals? What drew him to choose them? Presumably he had a long list, including undoubtedly even canonized American saints. (Though on the ladder to sainthood, Dorothy is still on the bottom rung.)

DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

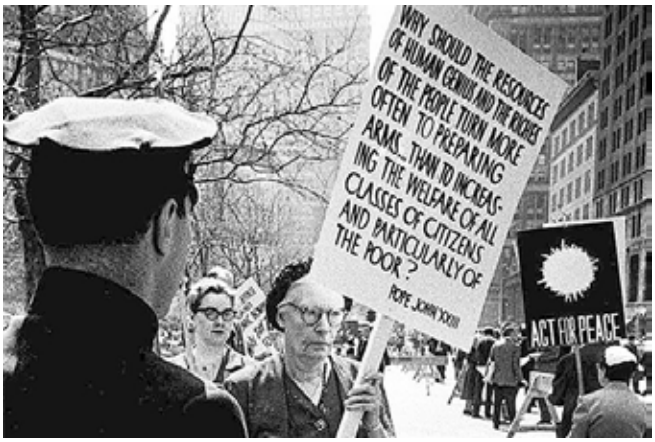
Francis suggests that part of it has to with his understanding of greatness, one unlike current popular understandings of greatness touted in recent years in our country and world:

A nation can be considered great when it defends liberty as Lincoln did, when it fosters a culture which enables people to "dream" of full rights for all their brothers and sisters, as Martin Luther King sought to do; when it strives for justice and the cause of the oppressed, as Dorothy Day did by her tireless work, the fruit of a faith which becomes dialogue and sows peace in the contemplative style of Thomas Merton.

Each of Francis's Rushmore was a prophet. Each was willing to take risks – even, perhaps especially, among their own ranks. Lincoln's Second Inaugural ("with malice for none, with charity for all") confounded many a Union sympathizer, causing him to wryly observe that "men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them." Not long after the movement's greatest legislative victory, King risked alienating civil rights' most powerful ally, Lyndon Johnson, denouncing the Vietnam War in spite of

(Francis, cont'd on p. 8)

(Francis, cont'd from p. 7)



fearful warnings from within his inner circle. Even at the height of World War II, Day insisted that no war could be a "good" war, losing many of her closest Catholic Workers. And Merton scandalized more than a few of his fellow monks by asserting their monastic (not to mention their Christian) vocation must extend outward to a suffering world and confront the linked sins of racism, militarism, and unbridled capitalism.

None of the four were blind to their own sins and failings. A fact that Francis, who asks repeatedly for prayers for himself – ending this talk, as he does every talk, with a humble request – would appreciate. Sins, in the Catholic vernacular, of "commission and omission." Merton called himself a "guilty bystander." Day consistently found her conscience wanting, writing in her journal at the end of her life that she had not yet begun to love.

All relied on faith to sustain them. It was his firm belief in the "Beloved Community" that King credited with keeping him on marching. Day confided that "without sacraments, don't think I could go on." "The weight of the world is on me, and until I get to Mass." She was a daily communicant.

Ultimately, it was a vision of "holy communion" Francis upheld to us. One that America's founders, he wanted to remind us, dared to declare.

This fifth anniversary of his visit – in this unprecedented time of inequities laid bare by pandemic and protest – poses a new chance to stop and critically reflect on some other bypassed text and exhortation:

Politics is an expression of our compelling need to live as one, in order to build as one the greatest common good: that of a community which sacrifices particular interests in order to share, in justice and peace, its goods, its interests, its social life.

I do not underestimate the difficulty that this involves, but I encourage you in this effort.

As do the president, martyr, monk, and would-be-saint he chose so rightly. D

Crying Within…

Pope Francis could well have named another American prophet: the recently deceased Congressman John Lewis. Lewis knew all too well the holy march Francis did cite. "Here too I think of the march which Martin Luther King led from Selma to Montgomery fifty years ago as part of the campaign to fulfill his 'dream' of full civil and political rights for African Americans. That dream continues to inspire us all."

"Though I was reluctant," Lewis wrote immediately following the address, "to openly shed tears, I cried within to hear his words. I was deeply moved to realize I had a connection in some way with some of those mentioned. When TIME magazine, years ago, did a story on "living saints," they actually included Dorothy Day and I in the story. Also Thomas Merton was a monk whose words I studied during non-violence training in the Civil Rights Movement. It was amazing that the Pope mentioned the Selma-to-Washington march because during the first attempt to march to Montgomery, now known as Bloody Sunday, I carried one of Thomas Merton's books*in my backpack."

"Pope Francis spoke to the heart and soul of Congress and America. It is my hope and prayer that members of Congress will heed his simple call to respect the dignity and divinity of every human being, then we would be better servants of the American people, this would be a better country, and a better world."

* Merton's *New Seeds of Contemplation* was the spiritual complement to the practical toothbrush Lewis also famously carried, in anticipation of his being jailed. Before its publication, Merton had sent its chapter on war for printing in *The Catholic Worker.*

IMAGINING VIRTUE

One of Peter Maurin's most famous "Easy Essays," entitled "Blowing the Dynamite," urges releasing the energy inherent in the Christian message but too often "placed in a hermetic container" by Catholic scholars and the Church alike. He may well have penned it in the vast Reading Room of New York City's great central library where he sat days on end studying and imagining the building of a society transformed by the light of the gospel.

Dorothy too was an eager student and a passionate reader who, as *New York Times* columnist and commentator, David Brooks, observed, "not only wanted to *do* good, she wanted to *be* good." If the Catholic social teaching and stories of the saints Peter brought her set free her moral energy – and gave it a form in the combustible mix of faith, will, and love that is the Catholic Worker they founded – it was her lifelong love of literature that first set it burning.

Decades before her conversion to Catholicism, Day was a great reader of 19th century novels. By the age of 10, she read in the gas-lit library of her family's home in Chicago the likes of Victor Hugo, Charles Dickens, Robert Louis Stevenson, James Fenimore Cooper, and Edgar Allen Poe. This reading cultivated early wonder about people treated with contempt by their society, aroused her curiosity and empathy, and would prepare her later practice of the Works of Mercy.

She told Robert Coles, the psychiatrist, author, and teacher of the moral life (including a biography of Day) that she found God's love in the "long-suffering little Dorrit" of Charles Dickens, "born inside the lock." Living with her father in prison, little Dorrit offers him corporal and spiritual support, embodying Dickens' (and the Catholic Worker's, not to mention Pope Francis's) classic themes of forgiveness and mercy.

Dorothy wrote in her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, that while in college, she was only really interested in reading the books she selected for herself. "The Russian writers appealed to me… and I read everything of Dostoevsky as well as the stories of… Tolstoy. Both Dostoevsky and Tolstoy made me cling to a faith in God…."

In the July-August 1971 issue of *The Catholic Worker*, Dorothy recalled this early fascination – one that never left her. "I was haunted by Levin's struggle for faith in *Anna Karenina*; by the reminiscences of Fr. Zossima in the *Brothers Karamazov*; Raskolnikov's in *Crime and Punishment*, turning to the gospels in Siberia; Turgenev's story of the crippled yet radiant peasant girl in one of his *Sportsman's Sketches*."

Dostoevsky likely had the greatest impact. (Dostoevsky who wrote to a friend, "There is a thought that has haunted me for a long time…. It is to portray a wholly good man. Nothing is more difficult…especially in our time.") Dorothy once told another Worker that "the only way he could ever understand the Catholic Worker was by reading Dostoevsky." As late as May 1973, she wrote in the paper, "I do not think I could have carried on with a loving heart all these years without Dostoevsky's understanding of poverty, suffering, and drunkenness."

Besides Dostoevsky and her beloved Dickens, she steeped herself in the moral novels of Dickens' great female counterparts: Jane Austen, the Brontes, George Eliot. "She loved *Middlemarch*," says Robert Coles, "had read it 'several times' and quoted from it often." Her "reading room" was often the Greyhound bus, her dedicated mode of travel on her interminable visits to give counsel and courage to Catholic Worker houses of hospitality across the country. ("Bus riding always reminds me of Dickens and stagecoach rides," she says in her diary in 1960.) "I'm always telling people to read Dickens or Tolstoy," she said, or read Orwell, or read Silone."

Lion in front of New York Public Library – re-named "Fortitude" by Mayor LaGuardia in the heart of the Great Depression – greeted Peter Maurin on his many visits there.

Dorothy's devotion to literature was so strong, the connection between "art" and "life" so real, Coles says, that it opened her up to the sanctity

(Imagining Virtue, cont'd on p. 14)

Spiritual Exercises

Dorothy Day acknowledged that "it is folly – it seems madness" – to write, as she did in 1938 in *The Catholic Worker:* "We are opposed to the use of force as a means of settling personal, national, or international disputes." How scandalous these words were to her leftist friends, fighting to the death against the fascist regime of Franco in the Spanish Civil War. How difficult to stand firm by her stated conviction: "As long as men trust to the use of force – only a superior, a more savage and brutal force will overcome the enemy."(And how haunting these words, this 75th anniversary year of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.*)

No matter how foolish, how hard, Dorothy Day persisted as a peacemaker even when it meant arrest and ridicule (called "Moscow Mary" among more colorful epithets). And it meant just that for a series of years during the mandatory nuclear air raid drills (1954-61) in New York City. The soul, Dorothy said, needs exercise as well as the body. The drills gave her plenty.

In 1954, the United States Federal Civil Defense Agency instituted an exercise called Operation Alert. It was a civil defense drill that took place on the same day in scores of major cities. Citizens in what were called the "target areas" were required to take cover for fifteen minutes. The following day newspapers routinely published reports of the fictitious attacks naming the number of bombs that were dropped in the mock alerts, the number of cities hit, and the number of casualties.

In 1955, New York State made the failure to take cover during an Operation Alert exercise punishable with a fine of up to $500 and a year in jail. Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker were among the first to refuse to comply – protesting the "normalizing" of nuclear war among the American public and the notion that there could be any defense. Below are excerpts from an unpublished article by Ammon Hennacy, a pacifist, anarchist, and longtime friend of Dorothy's found in the War Resisters League's International archive, documenting their witness over time.

June 15, 1955

We had twenty-eight at the City Hall Park. Among other things our leaflet said, "We do not have faith in God if we depend upon the atom bomb." A bootblack by the name of Rocco Parelli was sitting on a bench near us and seemed to be unaware of all the commotion. He was the first arrested and the indictment read, "Rocco Pirelli and 28 others." The judge…set our bail at $1,500 each. Five of us from the Catholic Worker *and two others plead guilty on the old radical principle of, "we did it once and we will do it again," with no legal quibbling.*

Catholic papers all around the country denounced our disobedience to the law…. But ***The Nation****…the* ***New York Post****, and the* ***Chicago Tribune*** *praised us.* ***Harpers*** *in an editorial said, "Two of the group, Dorothy Day and Ammon Hennacy, of the Catholic Worker movement, have a long and honorable history for getting arrested for doing what ought to be done but no one else cares to do. In meekly running to cover, the rest of us have only compounded the dishonesty of a Civil Defense program that is neither serious or safe." We all received a suspended sentence many months later.*

July 20, 1956

Came the next drill. This time nineteen refused (as most of those in 1955 who refused and pleaded not guilty and had appealed the case, did not desire to prejudice their appeal by disobeying the law again). Jim Peck and Ralph De Gia of the War Resisters' League, and Dorothy and I were the only ones of the 1955 group to disobey again…. We had the same tough judge who told those of us who had plead guilty that he would "give us the works." Coming back to be sentenced, we found another judge…who greeted us kindly… and gave us five days.

July 12, 1957

There were ten of us, five from the Catholic Worker, and five others including Judith Beck and her husband Julian (of the Living Theater). We had a heartless judge who gave us all fifty days.

(Dorothy, prisoner # 58603, would write the New York Catholic Worker house, "I am put in the laundry, ironing…. Judith cried all last night but is better tonight…. We get out of our cells

(Spiritual Exercises, cont'd on next page)

(Spiritual Exercises, cont'd from page 10)

at 6:30. . . . Work from 8-11 and 1-3. Recreation on the roof so we get fresh air. Not much inside. I'll have prison pallor when I come out.")

May 6, 1958

There were nine of us, five of us old timers from the Catholic Worker and four others. A surprise came when a Negro judge set us free with a suspended sentence.

April 17, 1959

Four of us from the Catholic Worker... were arrested and we got ten days in jail. Fourteen others who had never broken the law before were arrested with us but were set free as this was their first offense. The judge...said, "We should render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's." I told him Caesar was getting too much around here and God was not getting enough. . . ."

May 3, 1960

There were a thousand of us opposing the drill. The law only picked out twenty-six youngsters and did not bother us older leaders and repeaters. . . . ***The New York World Telegram*** *had an editorial entitled, "Exercise in Futility." They said that the test could only be called meaningful and successful if a potential enemy's plan was to drop marshmallow puffs on New York City. . . . The success of this demonstration was due somewhat to the very few of us who had broken the law each year. But mostly to Janice Smith, a young married woman who brought scores of women with baby carriages to our protest. Our perseverance had also brought to the public the foolishness of hiding in doorways and cellars, or in the subway. . . .*

Oct. 3, 1960

Mary Lathrop, Jack Baker and I from the Catholic Worker, with others commenced to picket the civil defense office at 6th and Lexington for two hours each day calling on 3,000 to break the law in 1961. We continued until January 1st when Mary traveled south with Dorothy and I went north and west. Jack continued the picketing intermittently during the spring of 1961. Once when there was a heavy snow we shoveled a walk so we could picket.

April 28, 1961

Two thousand of us filled City Hall Park Square in our refusal. None of us older leaders were arrested... but a few youngsters were. We picketed the jails where they were sent, day and night. Our leaflet was headed, "Brave Men Do Not Hide." The next year, 1962, there were no compulsory air raid drills. We had won.

For Dorothy, the "winning" was the remaining faithful – year after year after year – giving us a vividly concrete, utterly indelible portrait of fortitude.

*(We hold in our hearts and prayers members of the Kings Bay Plowshares 7, including Martha Hennessy, Dorothy Day's granddaughter, awaiting sentencing for their non-violent protest of the Trident submarine, harnessing the destructive power of eight Hiroshimas.) D

City Hall Park, June 15, 1955. On bench, from l to r, seated 4th, Ammon Hennacy; at far r. end, Dorothy Day.

PHOTO: DAVID McREYNOLDS

ICONOGRAPHER, PHILIP DAVYDOV

Fear In Our Time

By Dorothy Day

(Strangely prescient, this edited reminicence/reflection by Dorothy appeared in the April 1968 issue of ***The Catholic Worker****, the month Martin Luther King would be assassinated.)*

People probably do not realize with what fear and trembling I speak or write about the Catholic Worker, our ideas and our point of view. It is an extreme point of view, and yet it is tested and proved over and over again; it is almost as if God says to us "Do you really mean what you say?" and then gives us a chance to prove it. We have to live with the positions we take, and at the same time we are bound to be beset with all kinds of human doubts: who are we, who have so seldom been tried and have not suffered as others have in war, to take such a position? I remember having a nightmare during World War II in which, thinking of our pacifist position, I heard a voice saying "Be kind, Cain," as if such words could ward off the blow that was about to fall. I know what human fear is and how often it keeps us from following our conscience. We find so many ways of rationalizing our positions. There are all kinds of fear: fear of losing our bodily goods, fear of poverty, fear of losing our job, our reputation, and not least of all there is the strange business of bodily fear. Gandhi's son once described the humiliation he felt at seeing his father beaten up in a railway station in South Africa. Nothing is worse than that sense of utter humiliation we feel when pain is inflicted on us. We are reduced to an animal status; we are lesser men for having taken a blow or endured pain.

One of the situations when I was most afraid was in my visit some years ago to Koinonia, an interracial community in Americus, Georgia. A very wonderful Baptist minister named Clarence Jordan and a few of his companions from a theological seminary in the South had decided to tackle the problems of poverty, interracial conflict and agriculture by taking over two thousand acres of land and starting a community based on diversified farming. They had cattle and cultivated fruit, nuts, cotton, and all kinds of vegetables. This truly interracial community thrived and prospered until they came to public attention when they endorsed some young Negro men who were trying to get into a white college. This precipitated a real reign of terror.

It is almost as if God says to us, "Do you really mean what you say?" and then gives us a chance to prove it."

The elaborate roadside stand with a refrigeration system that the community used to market its smoked ham, bacon and other meats, was dynamited and completely destroyed in the middle of the night. Community members were shot at, some of the houses were burnt down, marauders cut the wire that fenced in the cattle and threw torches into the hay barn, setting fire to the hay. They were boycotted, couldn't buy oil for their tractors or cars, couldn't buy seed or fertilizer, couldn't get insurance on their cars or houses.

When Clarence Jordan came up to New York City and spoke in Community Church, many people volunteered to go down there and help out. Four of us from the Catholic Worker went down and stayed for two weeks each, during the spring, when they were planting. One day I went out with some of the community members in a truck to try to buy seeds. When we entered a store we were called "nigger-lovers," and I was called a "northern Communist whore." And similar expressions of hate and contempt and venom were flung at us in every store we went into. We drove from town to town trying to buy seed, and were of course unsuccessful. But we did learn something of what mob hatred is like. And I must say that it makes your blood run cold. . . .

The men were so busy with the spring planting that the women volunteered to watch at night. We signed up for two or three hours of watching at a public road that ran between two pieces of Koinonia property. We were supposed to sit in the station wagon and if we saw a car coming down the road, get out with lanterns and walk up and down to let them know people were there. If any injury was offered, we were to try and get the license number of the car.

About two o'clock in the morning, while I was engaged in conversation about voluntary communities with the woman who was sharing the watch with me, a car with no lights on came down the road and suddenly the car we were in was peppered with shots. The car was there and gone before we could realize what had happened. It is strange how the fear always comes afterward, your bones turn to water

and your whole body seems to melt away with fear.

Cotton Country

Another occasion on which I experienced fear was on a visit to a Catholic Worker house of hospitality in Memphis, which had been started by a young Negro woman named Helen Caldwell Riley. She had started the house because several children had been burnt to death after being locked in a garage by their parents who had gone out to the cotton fields to earn enough to pay the rent for that old garage which was their home. So Helen rented a big store on Beale Street, where young women would come in before daylight and deposit their babies and a can of evaporated milk and would not return until after dark.

Helen later married and one day she and her husband drove me down into Mississippi. We visited a town called Mound Bayou, in the Delta region, which is completely inhabited by Negroes. The biggest property in the area is a twenty-five thousand acre plantation owned by a British company. I stayed overnight in Mound Bayou and next day a Negro priest drove me around the Delta section. This priest, a Society of the Divine Word father, had gone to a large seminary for Negroes in the south and had chosen to remain in the South after his ordination. There was a bullet hole in the windshield of his car; he too had been shot at.

Among the towns we visited was a little town called Money, where Emmet Till, a fourteen-year-old boy from Chicago, had been kidnaped in the middle of the night by some white men because he was supposed to have whistled at a white woman. After flogging him, they weighted him down and threw him in the river. The white men were tried in a local court and acquitted. (But I must add that we were told by local people that these white men later became nomads, because they were cold-shouldered and boycotted in every town they moved to).

All that day we were followed by a carload of white men. The feeling is indescribable. You can well understand why Southern whites are afraid to show any sympathy for the Negro, knowing that they may be bombed or dynamited. No matter how many white people down there are trying to do something, to provide funds for people who were arrested and their families, no matter how many are helping, the sense of fear persists....

The Nun's Story

A few years ago I went down to Danville, Virginia, at the invitation of a white nun. There again I had an opportunity to experience this sense of fear, to realize how strong and persistent it is. The nun, Mother Teresa, had taken part in a protest on the steps of City Hall, along with a group of Negroes. Three ministers who had helped organize the demonstration had been herded into an alley, where fire hoses had been turned on them. They were then beaten unmercifully and thrown into prison.

After Mother Teresa spoke on the local radio station about the protest, the priest of her district told her that she would be put under interdict if she continued these activities and that he was going to ask the bishop to see to it that her work was stopped. She was an elderly woman and her work, which she had been building up for the past twenty years, was very dear to her. It is a small Order, the Order of Christ the King, and serves both Negroes and whites. So she telephoned me and asked if I would come down and take her place at a Negro meeting where she had promised to speak. The meeting was held in a large church which was filled with people. They sang hymns, prayed together and listened to speakers who had just been released from prison. I spoke about nonviolence. It is very hard to speak on such occasions and I haven't the slightest idea now what I said.

When you're with a group, when there's a whole night of singing, in the churches, on the streets, in the prisons, the very act of singing produces a tremendous courage and all fear evaporates. You can walk on the picket line and though you are conscious of the terrible hostility around you and there is a wrecked building across the way and a whole vacant lot is filled with bricks, handy for a battle, you have this sense of courage. Why? Because you have prayed for it; and because you are with others. The women on the picket line with me had never been on a picket line or taken part in any kind of demonstration, although one of them was carrying a sign which said, "I forgive the chief of police the beating he gave me." She had been kicked and trampled on and had her face smashed. The same brutality that was inflicted upon the men had been inflicted on the women and children. It is something that can scarcely be understood or described. I think that we should acknowledge this fear and recognize that it is something valid, but also something that we have to fight against....

We have to begin to see what Christianity really is, that "our God is a living fire; though He slay me yet

(Fear In Our Time, cont'd on p. 14)

(On Fear, cont'd from p. 13)

will I trust him." We have to think in terms of the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount and have this readiness to suffer. We have not yet resisted unto blood. We have not yet loved our neighbor with the kind of love that is a precept to the extent of laying down our life for him. And our life very often means our money, money that we have sweated for; it means our bread, our daily living, our rent, our clothes. We haven't shown ourselves ready to lay down our life. This is a new precept, it is a new way, it is the new man we are supposed to become. I always comfort myself by saying that Christianity is only two days old (a thousand years are as one day in the sight of God) and so it is only a couple of days that are past and now it is about time we began to take these things literally, to begin tomorrow morning and say, "now I have begun…."

I always comfort myself by saying that Christianity is only two days old (a thousand years are as one day in the sight of God) and so it is only a couple of days that are past and now it is about time we begin to take these things literally, to begin tomorrow morning and say, "now I have begun."

St. Paul said, "Rejoice in tribulation." I suppose that one of the reasons conscientious objectors and pacifists go to jail is to show that they can take it. It is a hard thing to be a pacifist when men are showing such great courage and have endured so much in the armies. We can't talk about these things in colleges without having some of the kids ask, "Do you think my father is guilty of mortal sin because he was in the army?" Well, a man must follow his conscience, being in the army often demands great courage, and who is to judge?….

It is not worthwhile writing or speaking unless you say what is in your heart and say it as you see things. This is the way. This is what converts expect when they come into the Church and they find it in the lives of the saints who accept the idea of death in whatever form it takes. We say all these things in our prayers and don't mean them. And God takes us at our word, fortunately, and so we are saved in spite of ourselves; we are just dragged in by the hair of the head. But this is the message that we try to give at the Catholic Worker. It is painful to speak of and that is one of the reasons we rejoice in tribulation, we rejoice in suffering and so we can speak in those terms.

We have been called necrophiliacs, we have been accused of taking a morbid delight in the gutter and worshiping ashcans. The fact of the matter is that God transforms it all, so that out of this junkheap comes beauty. We have poetry and painting and sculpture and music and all of these things for the delight of the senses that are given to us right in the midst of filth and degradation and mires so that I often feel we know whereof we speak. God certainly comes to the rescue over and over again and enables us to do what seems utterly impossible.… It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It is not anything that we can take except with the utmost seriousness and yet it is of course the greatest joy in the world. D

At a memorial for Martin Luther King, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City, Dorothy seated with Coretta Scott King and Cesar Chavez.

(Imagining Virtue, cont'd from p. 9)

of her own life – and unusual for the modern age – oriented her toward God and the "good." She shared with Peter Maurin a remarkable imagination as to how they could make the world a better place by living out, as Peter described, a story so old that it looks like new. Their witness and the Catholic Worker's are like so many matches striking our conscience as we struggle to recover virtue and reimagine our future in what can readily be read as an ill, all too Dickensian, "worst of times" time. D

Literature, an early companion – Dorothy around fifteen.

(Good Talk, cont'd from p. 4)

neighbors, those who, living in our midst, reflect God's presence. We might call them 'the middle class of holiness.'" The experience of these patient saints next door, who persevere in the face of difficulty reveals much about the nature of Christian discipleship and the role of fortitude.

Prison dress worn by Dorothy, imprisoned for the last time, supporting Cesar Chavez's farm workers. It was signed by her sister cellmates and well known sympathizers like Joan Baez.

A commonly cited measure of fortitude, as you have pointed out, is endurance. In that light, I suppose we could look at the Catholic Worker movement as one long exercise in fortitude!

Absolutely! As most readers of this will know, the survival of the Catholic Worker movement over all these years is almost like a miracle. The movement has no centralized structure, no endowment, and often has complicated relationships with both the local church and local civic authorities. For this type of social movement to not only survive but continue to provide creative and life-giving witness is amazing and owes much to God's grace.

In my research, I often write about how Catholic social movements, like the Catholic Worker, can embody God's grace in their work. We need to be better about naming the way God works in our communities and sustains them over time, and not just in the one or two founding members. While no human community is perfect, Catholic Worker communities are in many ways structures of grace. God is there in the good work being done and we need to recognize and celebrate this.

As with an individual, for a community to be transformed by grace, however, it must be open and must develop habits of discernment. To do this does not require an elaborate structure of bureaucracy, but it does take some intentionality. The moments of collective discernment, prayer, and listening that take place in Catholic Worker communities open them to grace and help them to endure and adapt on the pilgrim path.

For Dorothy, arguably, fortitude included willingness to confront personal weaknesses and shared sins. In the height of the Vietnam War, she wrote in *The Catholic Worker*, "How can we cease to cry out against injustice and human misery?...And how can we do anything but howl over the sins in which we share? They are our sins. Just as we believe in the communion of saints – that we share in the merits of the saints – so we must believe that we share in the guilt of such cruelty and injustice."

What Dorothy here seems to be pointing to is what Catholic social teaching would later describe as the social or structural dimensions of sin. As social and relational beings we are interwoven in multiple layers of relationships. While some of them reflect God's vision for humanity, others are clearly in opposition to God's plan. And many of our relationships and social structures could be called mixed.

Changing and confronting structures of sin–or in biblical terminology, "hungering and thirsting for justice"–is not easy. Dorothy, like other prophetic voices, realized this every time she spoke out against the war system and pointed to the problems in our economic structures. People who benefit from those systems, knowing or unknowingly, will often either resist or ignore the problem. As a middle-class white American, for example, I benefit from structures of racism and classism that have long been embedded in our society. I also unwillingly benefit from the exploitation of other countries in wars and economic agreements by my government. The easy thing to do is to look the other way, give into what Pope Francis calls the "globalization of indifference," and pretend it's someone else's problem.

All around us today we see calls for a new reality bubbling up. Consider the recent demonstrations for racial and economic justice in the Black Lives Matter movement, or the efforts working for climate justice. In order to overcome structures of sin, we need both personal conversion and collective social action, as the pope has pointed out on several occasions, including in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. All of these efforts demand bold and concerted action. But again, this is not easy. Social visionaries can burn out, social movements can get derailed from their mission, and powerful forces can inhibit positive change. These movements, in other words, need a type of collective fortitude.

And here, I think Dorothy Day's witness can help a lot. Dorothy's fortitude–sustained by a deep spirituality and the practices of discernment and prayer–challenges me and inspires me and countless others not to give up. D

Tom Cornell and T. Christopher Cornell

(The impetus for this intergenerational "Breaking Bread" came from my once mistakenly introducing Deirdre Cornell as a "second-generation Catholic Worker." "Actually, I'm third!" she enthusiastically clarified, setting my head spinning at the thought that Dorothy Day has sat so long at her family's table. This newsletter looking at fortitude seemed the perfect issue to hear just some of the ensuing conversations and their impact – to ask how, over time, Catholic Worker families strive to be faithful. Deirdre edited/mid-wifed this reflection by "the two Tom's," her father and brother respectively, and we owe them all our thanks. ***Ed.****)*

OUR CATHOLIC WORKER FAMILY

By Tom Cornell

My very first trips to the New York Catholic Worker were to attend Friday Night Meetings for the Clarification of Thought. One night, Dorothy sat knitting while listening. I don't remember the topic, or the speaker, but after the presentation, her silence ended: "Security! I don't want to hear about security. There are great things that need to be done, and who will do them but the young? And how will they do them if they're worried about security?" These – the first words I heard Dorothy Day speak – lifted me out of the trajectory I had previously set for myself. Those words, and Dorothy's radical witness, led me to another path, which in turn led me to Monica, and the life we would lead together.

Monica's parents, George Ribar and Carlotta Durkin Ribar, had helped to establish the Catholic Worker in Cleveland, during the late 1930s. Monica's aunt, for whom she was named, Monica Durkin, was a friend of Dorothy Day and a member of Friendship House in Harlem. When Dorothy's classic memoir *The Long Loneliness* was published in 1952, Monica's parents got a copy from the library. Though they read *The Catholic Worker* and sent modest donations to the Worker in New York City, they did not warm to Dorothy's criticism of the social/economic/political system, "this filthy rotten system." Their interest was in the Works of Mercy, and they practiced them, taking in the four children of a relative. Monica's sister, Carlotta, spent a few months at the Catholic Worker in New York City in 1961-62 and she encouraged Monica to give it a try since Monica felt she "wasn't doing anything" at college in Cincinnati.

I had been managing editor of *The Catholic Worker* for a year at the time and had been away at my mother's home in Connecticut the day of Birmingham Sunday (when four little black girls were killed when their church was fire-bombed). When I arrived back at the CW, a dilapidated storefront at 175 Chrystie Street (the ground floor was the soup kitchen, the second floor, a day room, and the third floor, the business and editorial office), I intended to go straight upstairs to my desk when someone grabbed my arm and said, "You have to meet the new girl!" Bless his heart, I did! Monica was doling out soup at the far end of the room. She was tall, and those brown eyes! I learned which Mass she would be attending the next Sunday and made sure to sit beside her. After Mass, we went to the nearby Café Roma for cappuccino and pastry. We were married seven months later and after fifty-six years of marriage have seven descendants.

Nothing in my family background would have oriented me to the Catholic Worker Movement. My father died when I was fourteen – but had he lived, he would have disowned me. I have seventeen first cousins, all on my mother's side. Most of them were scandalized at my doings during the Vietnam War. I was uncomfortably visible, on the front page of *The New York Times* and several other major newspapers,

NEIL HAWORTH

Nov. 6, 1965, Union Square, New York City. First corporate act of resistance to Vietnam War, organized by Tom Cornell (far left) who burned his draft card with five others. Dorothy spoke at the rally.

burning my draft card. While I was doing my time, serving six months in prison, the *New York Times* Magazine commissioned me to write an article on that experience. It was printed to some notice, none of which soothed my relatives.

I asked my mother recently if it would be fair to say that Dorothy influenced everything she ever did after meeting her. "Yes," she said, quickly and emphatically.

The New England Province of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, prepared me to meet and to follow Dorothy Day. I spent eight years at Fairfield Prep and Fairfield University in Connecticut (1948-56). The Jesuits were, and are, very strong on spiritual development, and as a result, I wanted to be as authentic a Christian as I could. As rich as the experience at Fairfield was, I sensed there was something missing, and that was social engagement. In fact, such involvement was considered a danger to spiritual health. When I came upon Dorothy Day's *The Long Loneliness*, I felt that this is what I was looking for. It wasn't long before I was hooked, visited the CW headquarters, and soon became part of the woodwork.

I knew that I wanted to marry and to raise my own family. I earned a Master's degree as a teacher. I could support a family! I could look for a bride! And where else but at the Catholic Worker? How Monica and I practiced the aims and means of the CW as a married couple and then as a family of four, a boy and a girl, is the purpose of this writing.

Before all else, it's hospitality. Our first apartment was three small rooms within a short walk to the CW. The rent was $65 a month, and I could make that with two days substitute teaching. After the regular CW Friday night meetings, about fifteen people jammed into that little apartment for continuing discussion and beer. When our second child was born, we moved to a bigger apartment, again within walking distance of the CW and the office of the Catholic Peace Fellowship (CPF), where I worked. We had an unexpected addition to the family when Monica's mother called to inform us that the mother of the four children she had taken in had died, leaving another, a four-year-old boy. Monica and I raised him as our foster-child until he was eight. So, from early on Tommy and Deirdre shared their living space, their lives.

Next, we moved to a six-room apartment in Brooklyn, the rent $110 a month, a steal even then! A young friend, who also worked for the CPF, moved in with us and lived and ate with us. It worked very well, and he was a great help with the children.

When we later moved to Newburgh, New York, to an aging but beautiful house on the Hudson River, a young neighbor gathered his buddies on our front porch to play cards. When the weather turned cold, we invited them in. One of those boys is living with us on the farm today.

I don't think Tommy or Deirdre ever sat down and pondered the "Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker." I don't think they ever decided to be Catholic Workers. They simply came to the realization that that's what they are. When Monica and I moved the family to Connecticut so I could take a job as a soup-kitchen director, Tommy ran a second soup kitchen under my direction. He knew how to be with people, even hurtful people, who are hard to deal with! We lived in a twenty-three-room former convent, renamed Our Lady of Guadalupe House of Hospitality. After college, Deirdre volunteered for a year in Mexico. There she met Kenney Gould, from the Los Angeles Catholic Worker, and they married. They later went on assignment to Oaxaca, Mexico, as lay missioners with Maryknoll. They left with three children and came back with five. Here in New York State, only a few miles from us, Deirdre and Kenney became deeply involved with Reaping the Harvest, a Catholic accompaniment project for farm workers. They became so enmeshed in the community that they have over thirty godchildren.

Tommy is our chief gardener at the Peter Maurin Farm, and he writes for the paper under the name T. Christopher Cornell. A Catholic Worker family? Q.E.D.!

By T. Christopher Cornell

As an adult, I never "knew" Dorothy Day. But I've spent my lifetime dealing with her indirectly–in the third person. Yes, I met Dorothy many times as a child; our family spent a summer at the Tivoli farm, and we made multiple trips to the Worker in New York City. However, Deirdre and I were "just kids," and there is a famous story that, to "kids," Dorothy was "just an old lady." Dorothy's impact on Deirdre and me would show up later and came mostly from those around Dorothy.

My parents created their own hybrid form of a Catholic Worker family life. They met and married at the Catholic Worker in New York City and by the time I was in second grade, we left New York for a smaller city, and my father had an office job in the peace movement. They used his salary

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to buy a rambling house, a fixer-upper, in an integrating neighborhood. My sister and I received a Catholic education from the parochial school and a full dose of neighborhood life. But we were always different from the other kids. We had hand-me-down clothes and counted out our milk money. The peace movement was a mystery to our neighbors, most of whom had been in the military. Personal nonviolence and civil-rights issues were in genuine concern at our home. We always had a Christ room, for a guest, and we had a constant flow of visitors, whether a political prisoner from Argentine or a student from Barcelona. I really can't remember a time that we didn't have at least one person living with us. All the while, my parents also had an informal salon that included a mixture of my father's rough-and-tumble working-class buddies from the neighborhood and Catholic Worker movement types. That left me with a permanent craving for the intellectual and religious foment typical of the era.

High school years found us in yet another decaying, post-industrial city. During those years, my parents started another hybrid Catholic Worker community. They ran a soup kitchen funded by an ecumenical agency and used the salary to support a house of hospitality, 24/7, for a blended community of family, soup-kitchen guests, and workers. It was there that my sister and I experienced the joys of community life. Though it was short-lived, this experience was defining. Most of all, there was the work: feeding people; seeing Christ in the stranger; the works of mercy, daily, repeated. There is no need to enumerate the love, grief, and the communion that happens with people in such circumstances. The stories are universal.

Tom and Monica Cornell with Dorothy on their wedding day.

More than thirty years later, my sister and I are still being shaped by Dorothy's impact on forming our family. We have inherited a legacy which, over time, reveals Dorothy's lasting influence. My sister is a busy mom and involved in pastoral projects with immigrants and farm workers. My parents and I live in a community of twelve at the Catholic Worker farm in Marlboro, New York.

Although both of my parents worked directly with Dorothy at a time when she was still in her full vigor–mentally and spiritually–they were not her contemporaries. They were a generation removed, and, unlike Dorothy, were not converts. They were members of the postwar immigrant Church when it was still separate from the dominant U.S. culture, but was beginning to assimilate. My mother's formation followed the pipeline of parochial school, Catholic high school, Catholic women's college, and the convent. My father came from eight years of Jesuit education. Even now, both carry something of that intense, Pius XII-era devotional Catholicism. The Catholic Worker gave them a locus for their religious energies in the time of aggiornamento. A quote from my mother may illustrate what I mean. During a panel discussion, my mother was asked how she maintains tolerance for the institutional Church's deeply imbedded hierarchical structure. She shrugged it off by saying "Oh, I don't worry about it, we have the saints." At the time, I was unnerved by the comment, thinking it was a refusal to engage in the much-needed work of faithful dissent that would move the Church forward. Now, I see it instead as an embrace of her identity in the lay apostolate, bringing the strength of the immigrant Church's sensibilities and the *sensus fidelium* to bear on her life's vocation, no matter the condition of the institution around her.

I asked my mother recently if it would be fair to say that Dorothy influenced everything she ever did after meeting her. "Yes," she said, quickly and emphatically. The force of Dorothy's personality and the way it registered with people is attested to very well, yet it is hard to describe the nature of these relationships accurately. They certainly formed my parents, and indirectly, me and my sister.

As an adult, living and working as a Catholic Worker, I have developed my own relationship to Dorothy, through my own experiences in the movement, and importantly, through reading her writing. I find her writing to be uniquely incisive and moving. Conversations and testimonies about her, even now, continue to help me understand better how a person like Dorothy–with such authenticity–left others a permanent conviction to live their own lives differently. Even those who "came to her" after her death have been convinced by it. The power of her witness is strong enough to carry over generations. D

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PETITION

Ask that Dorothy Day be named a Saint

The life of Dorothy Day (1887-1980) embodies the powerful message of Pope Francis's first encyclical, *Lumen Fidei* – "the light of faith is concretely placed at the service of justice…and peace."

We believe she is a saint for our time.

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