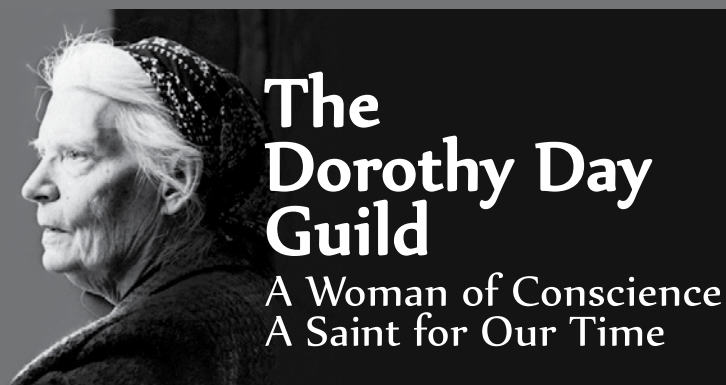


# IN OUR TIME

Newsletter of the Dorothy Day Guild  
Volume 3, Issue 4 Spring/Summer 2018



## The Dorothy Day Guild

A Woman of Conscience  
A Saint for Our Time

Dear Friends,

Greetings from the Guild!

Spring's buds have given way to summer's blossoms. Some Catholic saints actually have flowers associated with them. Lilies often are found in depictions of St. Kateri Tekawitha and St. Dominic; roses grace the images of St. Cecilia and St. Elizabeth of Hungary; St. Sebastian and St. Agnes are frequently pictured with palm fronds. It's not beyond imagining that some such symbol might one day be ascribed to Dorothy Day. But what would embody her spirit? Albeit beautiful, it's hard to conceive of anything even remotely approaching a hothouse plant!

No, for this Catholic saint for our times, this uniquely orthodox/radical woman, only a less traditional symbol will do: the ailanthus tree. The "tree of heaven" as, curiously enough, it's called. Dorothy writes of it outside her window at Maryhouse where she lived and died among homeless women. The tree that still grows in Brooklyn (her birthplace), and almost everywhere else. "No matter where its seed fell," explains the novel that made it famous, "it made a tree which struggled to reach the sky. It grew in boarded-up lots and out of neglected rubbish heaps, and it was the only tree that grew out of cement."

Dorothy loved it because it was an unabashed symbol of hope — reminding us that God's grace can be found anywhere. Even, perhaps especially, among the poor. Her voluminous writings are dedicated to reporting its appearances, its myriad shapes and forms. "Mulberry Street" (please see p. 10), uncovered by our researchers, is her only known poem.

This issue of the newsletter looks at the meaning of Christian hope. Like the other theological virtues of faith and charity, its practice is essential to the Church's naming a saint. We deeply thank Paul Wadell for his insightful "Good Talk" (p. 2) and Louise Zwick for her moving reflection on "hope in action" (coined by Pope Benedict XVI) at the Houston Catholic Worker in "Breaking Bread" (p. 8).

Hope roots our work at the Guild (check "Dispatches!," p. 5). When we gauge all that has been done to date, we feel empowered to take on the more still needed. But when we recognize all that's still to do, we feel humbled by the task (see "Saintly Matters," p. 6).

One thing for certain. We are more inclined to be hopeful, as St. Thomas Aquinas observed, when we have friends to rely on. Faithful friends like you! It is no glib truism: we can't carry on without your support. **Please, if it's time to renew your annual Guild membership dues, do so today (membership form on p. 11).**

And raise your voice! Let your families and friends, people in the pew and out, know that truly, in Dorothy Day, we have a saint for now. Together, let us proclaim our stubbornly held hope: that through her canonization, her Gospel witness will spread far and wide to the unlikeliest of places — branching heavenward, like the ailanthus tree.

*\*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.*

"HOW WONDERFUL IT IS TO BE  
'ENVOYS OF HOPE'.  
"LOOK, THAT'S WHAT A REAL  
CHRISTIAN IS LIKE ... CONVINCED  
BY THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION  
THAT NO EVIL IS INFINITE, NO  
NIGHT IS WITHOUT END, NO PERSON  
IS PERMANENTLY IN ERROR,  
NO HATRED IS STRONGER THAN LOVE."  
POPE FRANCIS

THEY THAT HOPE IN THE LORD  
WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH,  
THEY WILL SOAR ON EAGLES' WINGS;  
THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY,  
WALK AND NOT GROW FAINT.

ISAIAH 40:31

## GOOD TALK

with Paul Wadell

*(One of the virtues that must be evidenced in the life of any proposed candidate for canonization is hope. We are so grateful to have Paul Wadell, professor of theology and religious studies at St. Norbert College in De Pere, WI, reflect with us on its importance and meaning.)*

**You've called hope the "forgotten" virtue. Pope Francis has called it "hidden." Arguably, it's the least understood of the theological virtues. What basically is the Christian notion of hope?**

In general, hope is an orientation to life rooted in the belief that there is something good — something truly blessed and worthwhile — that can be achieved, but not without difficulty. Because hope concerns a future good—something we want but do not yet possess—there is always a “not yet” or unfinished quality to it. Hope stretches us by focusing our lives on something good, and inspiring and empowering us to pursue it.

Christianity dramatically expands the horizons of hope because the “good” for which Christians hope is everlasting life with God and the saints, that unbreakable communion in which all of us together love and glorify God as we love and rejoice in one another. Christian hope is rooted in the steadfast conviction that God not only wants our good, but wants us to share

in the very life, love, goodness, and joy that is God. Thus, Christians yearn for a fulfillment that utterly transcends anything we could ever give ourselves, which is why Christian hope rests in a gift. This is exactly what Paul meant when he wrote in Romans 5:5 that “hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” Paul suggests that the very good we hope for is the divine gift out of which we already live, the unassailable grace that anchors and sustains us through the tribulations of life. It is also why Thomas Aquinas says that, yes, hope is a virtue, but it is specifically a *theolog-*

*ical* virtue that must be infused in us by God. For Christians, God is both the *object* of our hope and the *means* to attaining it.

The greatness of our hope will always be in proportion to the greatness of the good on which we have set our lives. Dorothy Day surely believed this; indeed, her life exemplified why Christian hope is inherently audacious. She knew that the scope of Christian hope is not determined by our own power, resources, or ingenuity—much less the need for everything to go our way—but by God's unceasing love and goodness. Christian hope rests in the knowledge that the best thing we can hope for in our lives is precisely

**In the heart of the Great Depression, *The Catholic Worker*** was distributed on May Day, 1933, to throngs of demonstrators in New York City's Union Square, marking the movement's start. Its first editorial was dedicated to the bringing of hope – a mission, 85 years later, that hasn't changed:

For those who are sitting on park benches in the warm spring sunlight.  
For those who are huddling in shelters trying to escape the rain.  
For those who are walking the streets in the all but futile search for work.

For those who think that there is no hope for the future, no recognition of their plight – this little paper is addressed.

It is printed to call their attention to the fact that the Catholic Church has a social program – to let them know that there are men of God who are working not only for their spiritual but for their material welfare.

what God wants to give us. Aquinas put it best perhaps when he said that we grasp the true nature of hope only when we “hope for nothing less from God” than God’s very self.

**Pope Francis said that “hope is never still, hope is always journeying, and it makes us journey...”**

That’s absolutely correct. We don’t hope by standing still, by being disengaged from life. Hope implies movement, purpose, direction, and action. The nature of hope is to set us on a journey toward what we believe will fulfill us by answering our hearts’ deepest and most persistent longings. In fact, we can say that hope must always unfold into a journey since it calls us out of ourselves in pursuit of something good and lovely and beautiful — something far greater than anything we could have made of ourselves.

And yet, the nature of our hope will always be informed by our understanding of the journey. The theologian David Eliot observes that what hope means for us depends on how we understand both who we are and where we are going. Christian hope is guided by the conviction that we are pilgrims on a journey — not to anywhere, but to God. We are pilgrims making our way to God and helping others to do so as well. We are heading to that great feast Jesus called the reign of God, the heavenly banquet where all are welcome, where all our fed, where at last there are no strangers, no outsiders, and no enemies, but only friends. Hope guides us on the journey by keeping us focused on the feast.

Surely, Dorothy Day was guided by such a vision of hope. That she called her column in *The Catholic Worker* “On Pilgrimage” testifies to the fact that she understood herself to be on a journey. It is why she so wholly devoted her life to caring for those she



*Breadline, New York City, 1932*

encountered along the way, especially the most forgotten, overlooked, and excluded members of society. Her vision and hope for the future totally shaped the way she lived in the present. Her passion for justice, her desire to create communities where all are welcomed and loved, and her belief that we should befriend others as God has befriended us, all can be traced to the fact that she never lost sight of the feast to which God calls every human being. She knew the Christian life was an itinerary of hope.

**Dorothy so feelingly recounts her longing, her searching, in her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*. Can you reflect a little on the relationship between hope and desire?**

It is interesting that we seldom think about hope—or feel the need for it—when things are going well for us. The fact that hope stirs to life precisely at those moments when we are shaken, uncertain, troubled, or discouraged, tells us that human beings have a natural propensity for hope. If, as the Book of Wisdom says, “God fashioned all things that they might have being” (1:14), then despite the temptation to despair and the seduction of cynicism, the truest law of our being is our deep and abiding

inclination to life. Put differently, our desires for fullness and completion, for deep and abiding joy, and for loves that never die and are never betrayed are not foolish fantasies we should abandon, but the very things for which we should always hope and strive.

Despite the hardships and tribulations of life—and despite how bleak and unpromising both the present and the future can sometimes appear—there is in all of us a natural gravitation to life and, therefore, to hope. Anyone who has read Dorothy Day knows that she was no stranger to sorrow, adversity, and great disappointments. Still, she persevered and, even amid suffering, never abandoned the belief that life, even when it is hard and asks more of us than we think we can possibly give, can be lived fully and joyfully.

Dorothy also shows us that genuine hope is quite different from mere optimism. Hope is a virtue, a way of being and acting, whereas optimism is a feeling, one that can disappear as quickly as it arrived, say, if our luck suddenly changes. Hope is about struggle and perseverance. People of hope know there is often no quick fix or easy solution to difficulties. Optimists, on the other hand, can quickly become cynics when faced with difficulties. People of hope accept the responsibilities that come with being adult human beings, called to live with and for others. Dorothy Day was such a person and never a cynic, although she had a writer’s keen sense of irony.

*(Good Talk, cont’d on p. 4)*



New York City dock, 1935

**You've written about hope's antithesis: despair, suggesting its roots lie not in our desiring too much, but too little.**

It's easy to believe today that what most threatens hope is the endless saga of war, violence, cruelty, and crushing injustice that afflicts so many people

in our world. But I've always found it interesting that hope seems most alive and most resilient often in the very people who would seem to have little reason for it. What seems more dangerous to me—and more prevalent—is the soft and subtle despair we settle into when we embrace ways of life that promise so much less than the joy to which God calls us. In many respects today, we've shrunk the horizons of hope; we've lost sight of its transcendent dimension. This is especially true in societies where wealth, material goods, power, and pleasure define the utmost object of one's hope.

Early Christian writers named this turning away from God to lesser

goods "worldliness." They understood it to mean letting our hearts be captured by things whose goodness may be real, but which can never satisfy us like God's love and goodness. Many people today hope for too little. They have lost a sense of themselves as pilgrims on the way to God. In fact, they often don't think of going anywhere at all. We can become so enchanted with the things of the world—those things our consumerist society tells us make for a successful life—that we lose sight of what is truly worth the gift of our lives. By choosing to live with the poor and to be poor herself, Dorothy Day never lowered her sights. She never allowed herself to be lured away from hope's

(Cont'd on p. 10)

Recalling her youth, Dorothy Day wrote, "I did not know in what I believed, though I tried to serve a cause." "I wanted life and I wanted the abundant life. I wanted it for others too."

Writers like Upton Sinclair in *The Jungle* and the muckraking journalist Jack London fueled her incipient social consciousness. "I felt even at fifteen, that God meant man to be happy... and that we did not need to have quite so much destitution and misery as I saw all around."

Literature, like the saints later, nurtured her conviction. A line from a beloved novel, Ignazio Silone's *Bread and Wine* – "What would happen if men remained faithful to the ideals of their youth?" – she never ceased asking. Or trying to answer.

"God is younger than all else," St. Augustine tells us. People often remarked that Dorothy, even in her older age, was youthful.

With the dawn of the 1960's, she became an unlikely grandmother to a new generation of activists, some less inclined to her Catholicism. Though she was pained at what she saw as nihilistic and self-indulgent in some of the "counter-culture," she knew intimately their instinct for the heroic, their idealism, their yearning.

And it pleased her greatly when Abbie Hoffman, the flower-child of Vietnam War resistance, dubbed her



"the first hippie." Perhaps she smiled at the memory of her own bohemian late night wanderings some fifty years earlier in New York's Greenwich Village. "No one ever wanted to go to bed." "No one ever wanted to be alone."

Dorothy stood in solidarity with young men burning their draft cards in opposition to Vietnam, part of her long line of anti-war protest, going back to "the war to end all wars" (pictured above). In her last public demonstration at 75, she joined ranks with Cesar Chavez and the struggling farm workers – the plight of the worker always close to her heart – sporting a portable stool so as not to be deterred by her arthritis.

"We must always aim for the impossible," Dorothy wrote. Possessed of a faith-filled hope, she dared its practice to the end. "What would happen if ...."





## 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 or at [www.dorothydayguild.org](http://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:**

*No one else’s life has ever made me question how I live my own more than Dorothy Day’s.*  
**M.B. Becker, Putnam County, NY**

*I admire her relentless efforts on behalf of the poor and marginalized.*  
**Mary Michele Croghan, S.C.**  
**Florham Park, NJ**

*Her examples of humanity and courage are life affirming.*  
**Diane Eichler, Drexel, PA**

*Dorothy Day’s life has shown strong belief in her God, and she has suffered for it. We need to publicize her life to emphasize justice and peace in these times of unrest.*  
**Marilyn Rog, Nanuet, NY**

*Her letters and diary entries are causing me to question and change my values.*  
**Carolyn Stuhlsatz, St. Charles, MO**

*Keep it up! Awesome!*  
**Sophia Giordono Scott**  
**Nashville, TN**

## DISPATCHES!

As the cause for Dorothy Day’s canonization continues to move forward, the demands increase for time and resources. It’s a happy challenge — one we welcome! — but a challenge nonetheless. We’re hoping to find volunteers and can be utterly flexible in order to accommodate schedules. Let us hear from you! (See the “search box” on p. 11 for more details.)

Two volunteers have already come on board to help with preparing Dorothy’s 1,000+ distinct publications for the Congregation for the Saints, including the typing of every word of Dorothy’s diaries and some of her correspondence. Shannon Raczynski is a Manhattan College Peace Studies major and Gabriella Wilke is a staff member at *Commonweal* magazine. Each handwritten page will be submitted to the Congregation, followed by an unedited, typed transcript. We estimate that ten such typists will be needed!

The scanning of all these documents, made possible by a generous grant from the Archdiocese of New York, is currently underway at the Dorothy Day Archives at Marquette University. This time-intensive task is scheduled for completion this fall. The Dorothy Day Historical Commission, appointed by Timothy Cardinal Dolan, will meet shortly thereafter to review materials and determine which letters are of most import. Fr. Michael Bruno, recently appointed by the Cardinal to serve as the Commission’s Chair, replacing Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni, will oversee this process.

More eyewitness testimonies have been taken, and some witnesses in 2015 and 2016 may be called back to give further testimony.

Our Roman Postulator, Dr. Waldery Hilgeman, continues to address canonical matters, working directly with the Congregation for the Saints.



The Guild continues to receive requests for speakers in a wide range of venues, including parishes, colleges, and high schools. We would like to serve as a hub for speakers — both fielding and fulfilling, as best we can, new requests while sharing information about talks and events already planned. Regarding the latter, many are initiated by Guild Advisory Board members who have worked closely with Dorothy Day and/or written and spoken extensively about her. Please visit [www.dorothydayguild.org](http://www.dorothydayguild.org) for current news and opportunities.



Oops! How could we forget to include Alex Avitabile in last issue’s listing of Advisory Board members? Alex authored in 1971 the first comprehensive bibliography on Peter Maurin, Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker and generously volunteers his research skills for the Historical Commission. Thank you, Alex! 📖

# SAINTLY MATTERS

**I**mplicit in the often long and arduous process to recognize the holiness of someone by officially “canonizing” them is the deeply felt conviction that saints matter. Even today, perhaps more than ever. But why? The importance placed on candidates’ “heroic” practice of virtue suggests, of course, one reason: their practice might inspire our own. Perhaps in the case of Dorothy Day that might be more than enough reason! For what would happen if we, the “faithful,” emulated her witness, her commitment to the poor and to peace, with the same degree and consistency?

But, I suspect, Dorothy would be the first to proffer another, more radical (in the sense of getting down to the roots) understanding. Not that she wasn’t inspired by or grateful for the virtuous example of the many saints she loved. And certainly not that she didn’t try to model their virtue. But because she undoubtedly sensed that the ultimate significance of their lives — why they really matter, as Kenneth Woodward points out in his wonderful study, *Making Saints* — is that they “lure us beyond virtue to virtue’s source.”

Another way to put it is that the saints matter because they are signs of hope. (For more on this “theological” virtue, enjoy “Good Talk” with Paul Wadell, p. 2). This saintly hope — this orientation toward God — is nurtured, according to Catholic theologian Josef Pieper, by two very “natural” virtues: magnanimity and humility. Each can be found in abundance in Dorothy Day’s life and in the steadfast stands of the Catholic Worker movement.

A person is magnanimous, says Pieper, when he/she has the courage to seek what is great and becomes worthy of it. Dorothy constantly reminds herself and us of our dignity as children of God — and the concomitant responsibility that brings. “Once we recognize that we are sons of God, that the seed of divine life has been placed in us at Baptism, we are overcome by the obligation placed on us of growing in love of God.” Rightly sensing her magnanimity from the very start, Peter Maurin held up to Dorothy a fearless exemplar: St. Catherine of Siena, who called on princes of both church and state to be faithful to the command to care for the least of these.

Dorothy, however, particularly in her later years, extolled the virtuous counterpoint to magnanimity: humility. If magnanimity rests on our proximity to God, humility recalls our distance. Perhaps this explains more than anything else her devotion to the Little Flower, St. Therese of Lisieux, and her “little way”: the loving performance of the smallest of tasks. “We are too often trying to be heroic instead of just ordinarily good and kind,” Dorothy observed. Moreover, humility instills patience. “Our work is to sow. Another generation will be reaping the harvest.”

It’s these opposing energies of magnanimity and humility, Pieper suggests, that balance hope. Hope’s practice, like that of the other theological virtues, is requisite to a candidate’s canonization. But its real significance for us — like arguably the stories of the saints themselves — lies in the possibility it poses. The possibility, as Dorothy often observed, “to fall into the hands of the living God.” Saints matter — because God matters.

— CZ

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## At Root...

**An old adage says that a saint is a sinner who just keeps trying — sticking to the path of virtue as the means to reach God. Saints always served as sources of encouragement to Dorothy Day who freely availed herself of their wisdom.**

*Persevere in your virtuous habits. Make it a practice ever and constantly to increase in the performance of good works.*

— **St. Bonaventure**

*I would never want any prayer that would not make the virtues grow within me.*

— **St. Teresa of Avila**

*Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.*

— **St. John XXIII**

*Despair has no foot on which to walk the way that is Christ.*

— **St. Paschasius Radbertus**

*Learn to do thy part and leave the rest to heaven.*

— **Bl. John Henry Newman**

*Only to the humble is given hope.*

— **St. Augustine**

*Bloom where you are planted.*

— **St. Francis de Sales**

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# ON PILGRIMAGE

The Catholic Worker's pacifism led to a dramatic loss of support during the years of World War II. Renaming in 1946 her monthly column in the newspaper to "On Pilgrimage," Dorothy would confide for decades to come her doubts and beliefs, her loves and joys, her sense of accomplishment and failure. Always her humanness shone through, buoying her readers:

*"I walked a bit and made a little garden in a glass dish of mosses and tiny plants. C.S. Lewis in his autobiography, **Surprised by Joy**, describes just such a tiny garden.*

*'Beauty will save the world,' Dostoyevsky wrote. . . . Actually I was trying as I began writing about my little terrarium, to comfort myself, because of the horror of our times, these times of savagery, lies, greed."*



*"Failures. It is these things that overwhelm one.... And just the plain, ordinary poor who can't get along, can't find a place to live, who need clothes, shelter, food, jobs, care, and most of all love, these are our daily encounters."*

*"We knelt in the library to say the rosary this noon... and Shorty and California George sat and their lips moved soundlessly. And I knelt there, and I looked at their feet, at the holes in Shorty's socks, which exposed his bony ankles; and the mismatched socks and shoes on George, too long, too stylish and ripping at the seams. They are the meek.... They do not cry out."*

*"The significance of our smallest acts! The significance of the little things we have left undone! The protests we do not make, the stands we do not take, we who are living in the world!"*

*"On the one hand, there is the sadness of the world — and on the other hand, when I went to church today and the place was flooded with sunshine and it was a clear, cold day outside, suddenly my heart was so flooded with joy and thankfulness.... The immanence of God in all things! In him, 'we live and move and have our being. He is not far from every one of us.'"*



*"No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much work to do."*



Sketch for *Promise Keeping Machine*, Anthony Santella



*Promise Keeping Machine II* (sculpted piece pictured here, sketch shown above) evoked the theme of a multi media arts exhibition, *A NewWorld: Contemporary Art Exploring Dorothy Day's Vision of Social Justice* that enjoyed record-breaking numbers on its opening night last December at the Archdiocese of New York's Sheen Center for Thought & Culture. Curator Anthony Santella invited a wide range of visual artists to create work inspired by excerpts from Day's writing. Julie Lonneman — whose *Woman Kneading Dough* (above) recalled the woodblock prints so prominently featured in the Catholic Worker newspaper — was one of eighteen participating artists. To learn more, see: <http://benedictinstitute.org/2018/02/anthony-santella-curating-dorothy-day/>



*Promise Keeping Machine II*, Anthony Santella



By Louise Zwick

*(Louise is the co-founder with her late husband, Mark, of the Houston Catholic Worker. Together they authored **The Catholic Worker Movement: Intellectual and Spiritual Origins**, a major study on the movement's roots, and **Mercy without Borders: The Catholic Worker and Immigration**. Louise continues to write and reflect on her lived experiences at Casa Juan Diego. We are honored to have her share just some of the lasting impact of Dorothy Day's life and witness on her own.)*

Dorothy Day has been the model for the Houston Catholic Worker, Casa Juan Diego, lived out in response to the needs of refugees and immigrants coming to Houston with nowhere to stay and no resources.

My introduction to Dorothy Day came through my husband, Mark. His visits with Dorothy, his participation in the famous retreat that she sponsored, and his friendship with Fr. John Hugo who gave the retreat sowed the seeds of what would become the Houston Catholic Worker/Casa Juan Diego. This background encouraged him to reject what has been called "minimalist Christianity" and to find ways to live the Gospel, especially as spelled out in the Sermon on the Mount and Matthew 25.

Mark visited Dorothy on several occasions. One visit was in 1956 with his mother Florence to the farm on Staten Island. They spent the better part of a day with Dorothy. Mark remembered sitting at Dorothy's left hand during lunch. As they chatted, she spoke about an alcoholic priest who had nowhere to go, and who was staying at the Worker (not

having been very cooperative with his diocese). She also sent Mark and his mother on an errand to New England. I visited the New York Catholic Worker in the 1960s, but Dorothy was away and I missed meeting her.

Like Dorothy, I was a convert to Catholicism. I had no Catholic background and had not had a faith experience. Mark was a priest at the time who was known for working with the poor. He taught me about the Lord and brought me into the Church during the Second Vatican Council. I joined him and a community of volunteers in his projects working with the poor in Youngstown, Ohio, visiting families. Then together we founded Gilead House, a neighborhood center in the inner city.

Several years later, we became good friends and were married. Mark received a master's degree in social work at the University of Chicago, and we had two children. When we lived in California, he worked in mental health services. We protested the Vietnam war, brought Dan Berrigan to speak, and supported the United Farm Workers. Long before we became full-time Catholic Workers, we visited CW houses in other cities. Sometimes we volunteered or prepared a meal, and we talked with friends about someday starting a Catholic Worker house.

We noticed in visits with Catholic Workers how in conversations the sprinkling of phrases from the Gospel flowed naturally, especially the words of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and the key passage from Matthew 25 about Judgment Day.

"Love your enemy," the Workers said with a smile. Go the extra mile. Turn the other cheek. Lend, expect-

ing nothing back. You cannot serve God and mammon. Give to those who ask of you and if someone takes what is yours, do not demand it back. Remember the lilies of the field. Don't build bigger barns to hold all your worldly goods. Don't judge that you may not be judged. You must lose your life in order to gain it. "Come, you blessed of my Father, to the Kingdom prepared for you from all eternity, for when I was hungry, you gave me to eat, when I was thirsty, you gave me to drink, when I was a stranger, you took me in." And then, of course, "Take up your cross and follow Me."

The everyday efforts in the CW to implement these teachings of Jesus — what Peter Maurin liked to call the "shock





maxims” of the Gospel — reflect a way of life radically different from the reigning ideologies and philosophies of our time. Here, in Dorothy’s example and teaching, one could find the opposite of the prosperity gospel, the all-consuming consumer culture and economics, the pervasive influence of utilitarianism, preparations for war, and the cruel scapegoating of immigrants and refugees. One could find a model for living out the challenges of the Gospel in everyday life.

After living for a time in El Salvador — at the beginning of what became a civil war, when death squads roamed the streets to quash any protests to government oppression — we came with our children to Houston, Texas. We were working at St. Theresa’s parish when refugees started pouring into Houston from the Central American wars. They were staying on the streets or in used-car lots, and they came to the parish to ask for food. As Mark said at the time, “If we had any guts, we would start a Catholic Worker house to receive the refugees.” We knew the time had come. We had to think of our children, of course. I had gotten a master’s degree in library science and with the idea of starting a house, applied for and was hired as a children’s librarian at Houston Public Library. Since we had one salary, Mark was able to locate what he called “the ugliest building in Houston” and to begin the work. In the early years — in addition to organizing the work of receiving immigrant and refugee guests at the house — Mark cooked dinner for our children because I worked late. I would type the copy for our newspaper and help write and edit articles, and from the beginning would play the guitar at our weekly Mass for all our guests with priests from the diocese (now an archdiocese). Later, when our children had grown I was able to leave working for a salary and to join Mark full-time with the Catholic Worker. Many people, young and old, have come to join in the work, whether as full-time, live-in Catholic Workers, or as part-time volunteers.



*Dangerous immigrant crossing: U.S. Highway safety warning sign*

In starting a house, we relied on Dorothy and Peter’s methods of fund raising: pray, and tell people what you are doing — and they will help. Annual letters of appeal and recounting the stories of our guests in our paper helped to keep us going. We gave talks in parishes as part of the Archdiocesan Mission program, and many student groups came to help in the work. All of these groups were signed up to receive the newspaper, in the Catholic Worker tradition.

Like the original Catholic Worker houses, we have the Blessed Sacrament in our house of hospitality and pray the Divine Office together each morning.

From the beginning we shared Dorothy’s ideas and writings in our paper and they helped us in the often difficult challenges in the house of hospitality, which, with time became ten houses. Some of Dorothy’s most famous phrases come from the works of Dostoevsky. “Love in practice is a harsh and dreadful thing compared to love in dreams,” was one line often repeated by Dorothy from *The Brothers Karamazov*. Dorothy applied it to her work. This phrase has helped

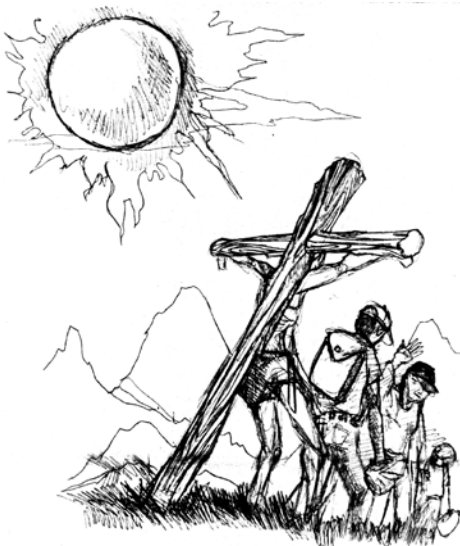
us in many ways in our work in Houston.

When controversies have arisen in the Catholic Worker movement, and when some even declared the movement dead, we decided not to enter into those controversies, but to go deeper: to study what Dorothy had written and to reflect on it in our paper.

As we began this project, we realized anew that Dorothy’s great witness did not come out of nowhere. It stemmed, of course, from the Scriptures and from Peter Maurin who brought

Dorothy the ideas and the vision for the Catholic Worker movement. Peter opened to her the wisdom and knowledge of, as he put it, “the prophets of Israel and the Fathers of the Church,” as well as the papal encyclicals and the lives of

*(Breaking Bread, cont’d on p. 10)*




*Walking with Christ, Angel Valdez*

(*Breaking Bread, cont'd from p. 9*)

many great saints. Dorothy read widely, and in her columns she mentioned these books and recommended them to her readers. We studied Dorothy's writings in the early issues of *The Catholic Worker* newspaper and published articles in our paper about many of the great writers she mentioned in her columns. We researched through

the Marquette University archives and the work of Jim Allaire and others on catholicworker.org, where many of Dorothy's writings are available. We read many books, including by William Miller and by Brigid Merriman. The writers who influenced Dorothy called for the spirit of heroism, identified simultaneously with sanctity and with

a radical return to Gospel living and being a leaven for good – the common good – in the world.

The articles we researched and published eventually evolved into our book, *The Catholic Worker Movement: Intellectual and Spiritual Origins* (Paulist Press, 2005). The movement Dorothy and Peter started is truly a model for Church and world. My hope is to try to remain faithful. 

#### MULBERRY STREET

*A SMALL Italian child  
Sits on the curbing,  
Her little round, brown belly showing  
Through a gap in her torn pink dress.*

*Her brother squatting beside her  
Engrossed in an all-day sucker,  
Turns sympathetically  
Wipes her nose with the end of his  
ragged shirt  
And gives her a lick.*


— Dorothy Day

Mulberry Street ran through the old Italian part of New York City's Lower East Side – home to waves of European immigrants and a succession of Catholic Worker houses of hospitality.



ate. Dorothy Day knew that we supply hope to one another, that hope is a partnership rooted in the hard work of love. In this respect, community is not only the answer to the “long loneliness,” but also to despair.

#### Anything you'd like to add, Paul?

In 1976, I was a student at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. A fellow student had left stacks of books in the hallway with a sign that they were free for the taking. One of the books was *The Long Loneliness*. (It happened to be a book that I could read for a course requirement that semester.) With nothing more in mind than wanting to fulfill my requirement, I started reading the book and, to my surprise, was captivated. Everything Dorothy wrote not only rang true to me, but also deeply attracted me. The book changed my life. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis writes, “All it takes is one good person to restore hope.” Dorothy Day did, and continues to do that, for me. 

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

great promise.

#### **Far from turning our backs on the world, you've stressed that hope gives us work to do.**

We understand the full dimension of hope only when we realize that it is both a *gift* and a *calling*. It is important to stress that it is precisely because we are confident of the hope that God holds out for us, we can attend to the needs of others and work for the world's healing. True hope commissions us to bring God's love, mercy, justice, compassion, joy, and peace to life in the world. Dorothy did this exquisitely in her life in the Catholic Worker movement. Christians are called to be ministers of hope to

others. Dorothy showed that we can do this every day in the most ordinary circumstances of our lives. For the people who came to her, she was a living sacrament of hope.

#### **Can you shed a little light on how community sustains hope?**

Thomas Aquinas observed that there are far more reasons to be hopeful “when we have friends to rely on.” His insight reminds us that hope is not a solitary virtue: we never hope *alone*. Rather, we always hope *together*. Hope requires friendships and healthy communities where people support and encourage one another. That's an apt description of what every Catholic Worker community attempts to cre-

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Might you enjoy helping the  
Guild advance the cause  
of Dorothy Day?

We're looking for people who possess such  
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**computer saviness, attentiveness to detail, creative  
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**We can offer a sense of purposefulness, humor,  
camaraderie – and our eternal thanks!**

Please contact Jeff Korgen,  
[jkorgen@korgenassociates.org](mailto:jkorgen@korgenassociates.org)



*In spite of the odds: no wonder Dorothy loved  
it. Ailanthus tree, New York City, 2017.*

## In Our Time

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Just clip out and mail to the Guild address above. You may also submit online at [www.dorothydayguild.org](http://www.dorothydayguild.org).

☐ I would like to become a new member

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\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Offering (suggested: student \$15; individual \$25; family \$40; organization \$100)

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## Dorothy Day Guild

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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.

Please sign this petition to advance her cause not because she needs it, but because we today need her witness and model of holiness.

#### Mail to:

The Dorothy Day Guild, 1011 First Avenue, Room 787, New York, NY 10022.  
Petitions also available online: [www.dorothydayguild.org](http://www.dorothydayguild.org). Thank you!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Comments (optional):

WHENEVER I FELT THE BEAUTY  
OF THE WORLD IN SONG OR  
STORY, IN THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE  
AROUND ME, OR GLIMPSED IN  
HUMAN LOVE, I WANTED TO CRY OUT  
WITH JOY... I ALWAYS FELT THE  
COMMON UNITY OF OUR HUMANITY,  
THE LONGING OF OUR HUMAN HEART  
IS FOR THIS COMMUNION.

DOROTHY DAY

