

# SAN DIEGO CATHOLIC WORKER



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## Join in the celebration Sponsors become 'godparents' for annual dinner and auction

By Fr. Gil Gentile S.J.  
Fr. Gil is spiritual director  
of the San Diego Catholic Worker.

Last year at about just this time I wrote in these pages of our San Diego Catholic Worker newspaper about the tradition of *padrinazgo* in the Hispanic world—specifically my experience of it in ministering to my Mexican brothers and sisters.

I wrote: "Mexican culture has a wonderful custom called

*El Padrinazgo* of helping families (especially families of *bajos recursos* or 'of slender means') to celebrate important milestones in the lives of its members . . . . According to this custom, different couples or individuals in the extended family, including non-blood related 'family' will become *padrinos* or *madrin*as, that is godparents or sponsors for a person or a couple celebrating a baptism, a wedding, an anniversary, a *quinceanera* or even an ordination or religious profession. These multiple godparents take on different responsibilities that include religious, social, financial and emotional support . . . .

"This custom of *padrinazgo* is truly a beautiful and wonderful custom that expresses the love of the family and the support of the community. And at the same time it is also very practical and helpful."

In last year's article I reflected on the experience of celebrating a wedding in the Tijuana jail a number of years ago and how moving it was to see so many *padrinos* and *madrin*as come forward so that the couple

could have, as one of the *padrinos* said, *una fiesta de primera calidad*—a "first class party."

### Different traditions

Recently I was part of another moving experience of *padrinazgo* when I celebrated the baptism of the child of a Mexican family *de bajos recursos*. Actually, on that Sunday afternoon I celebrated two baptisms. The first was

for the child of an American family, after which the parents and the one (and only) godparent warmly shook my hand and expressed their thanks and left for their party. What followed next was a very different experience of extended family, generosity, wonderfully noisy love and support and *padrinazgo*.

There were of course the usual two godparents who provided the baptism candle, a shell to pour the water, a rosary, and a bible for the child. Then there were the godparents of the "white garment" which in this case was a very stylish white mini-tuxedo complete with cummerbund. Then the *madrina* of the *recuerdos* (favors) who was a young girl of about twelve who made the favors by hand and who insisted that I have one; then the *padrinos* of the fiesta who invited me to their, as they said, "humble home."

As they were leaving, every single one of them had to shake my hand and express their gratitude. The "main" *padrino* (who when the child is grown will stand at his side at his

See *Sponsors*, page 3

**To become a *madrina* or a *padrino*, please call Tina Distefano at (858) 552-0817 and tell her you would like to sponsor a part of the Annual Dinner and Auction.**

## From time to time every organization needs to examine itself and its future

By Denys Horgan  
Horgan is editor of the San Diego Catholic Worker

It's often said that the test of the value of an organization to society is whether or not it survives the death of its founder. On that score alone the Catholic Worker movement sweeps through with flying colors.

From just two people, a house and a newspaper in New York City in the depths of the Great Depression, the Catholic Worker has grown to at least 160 different groups, with only God-knows-how-many volunteers, and umpteen newspapers and newsletters. And, at 75 years of age, it continues to thrive.

It's safe to say that millions of people all around the world have been affected by it and hundreds of thousands get help from it every year. There is no hierarchy or central authority and no bureaucracy to compile statistics, so nobody really knows (or, for that matter, cares) how many there are.

In July more than 500 Catholic Workers and supporters from as far away as Germany and New Zealand gathered in Worcester,

Mass., to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the movement's founding. In typical Catholic Worker fashion, they issued a statement, reminding us that the United States "has become the wealthiest nation on earth at the price of the collective loss of our souls through our acceptance of the sins of war, torture, racism, discrimination, killing, nuclearism and environmental destruction—all in the name of profit," and calling on the bishops to lead the church in doing penance for the war crimes committed in the "so-called War on Terror." The Catholic Worker is alive and well and here to stay.

What is it that some movements have that enables them to survive and flourish, while others go to seed, wither and die?

Some would call it the charisma of the founders that is handed down to their successors from generation to generation. St. Francis, they would say for instance, must have had an exceptional and unique personality that he passed on to his followers and continues to inspire us centuries after his

See *Taking stock*, page 4

## Bishop urges agents to question the morality of raiding migrants

Thomas Tobin, the bishop of Providence, R.I., has called on the Boston Office of the U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) to declare a moratorium on immigration raids in Rhode Island and to treat as conscientious objectors agents who refuse to participate in such raids on moral grounds.

In a letter that was also signed by 15 priests, Bishop Tobin called on ICE to suspend raids until Congress implements a comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration laws. "It is our hope that such reform will make immigration raids obsolete," the bishop wrote. "Until then, we believe that raids on the immigrant community are unjust, unnecessary, and counter-productive."

The letter, addressed to Boston ICE interim director Stephen Farquharson, was written in the wake of a series of raids on six

Rhode Island courthouses to round up illegal immigrants.

In an interview reported by the Associated Press, Bishop Tobin asked rhetorically, "What would Jesus do?" and responded: "I know for sure what Jesus would not do, would be to sweep into a community, gather up large numbers of people, separate them from one another, and deport them to another country. In my own mind, in my own conscience, that's crystal clear: Jesus would not do that."

Having urged ICE officials to question the morality of their participation in immigration raids, the bishop continued: "If their discernment leads them to the conclusion that they cannot participate in such raids in good conscience, we urge them not to do so. If ICE agents refuse to participate in immigration raids in conformity with their faith and conscience, we urge the Federal Government to fully respect the well-founded principles of conscientious objection."

Bishop Tobin and the 15 priests said that as religious leaders they understood the need to arrest people who have committed serious crimes and that the enforcement of just laws is necessary for public safety, however, they added with respect to the raids: "The arrest of serious criminals is not what we have observed."

Bishop Tobin said that the raids have divided the community, instilled fear in the streets, and separated innocent family members from one another. "The confusing and secretive detention of those arrested has further complicated the situation. As religious leaders concerned for our people, we would be negligent of our pastoral duties if we didn't speak out against these unjust government policies and practices."

In response to the bishop's letter, R.I. Gov. Don Carcieri said that the agents were sworn to uphold the law. "That's what you do. You don't want to do that, then don't become a law enforcement officer."

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From the Writings

of  
Dorothy  
Day



**Find  
work**

**that is honorable**

With the May issue of *The Catholic Worker*, we begin now our 22nd year. Peter Maurin, the founder of the Catholic Worker movement, died in 1949, May 15, on the feast of St. John Baptist de La Salle, in whose order of Christian Brothers he had taught for five years as a young man in Paris. He was preeminently a teacher, an agitator he liked to call himself, and he brought to us great books and great ideas, and great men, so that over the years, we have become a school for the service of God here and now. Many have come and gone in this work, finding their vocation in religion or in the world.

#### **Our Temptation**

We started in 1940 a retreat house where all could come and make five days silent retreat to begin again the work of putting off the old man and putting on our Lord Jesus Christ. With Him we could do all things, and without Him we could do nothing. Our farms, Maryfarm and Peter Maurin farm, became once again houses of hospitality on the land as well as places where we could have retreats and days of recollection. People who need hospitality and who are suffering in body, mind and soul, are not the ones to be starting agronomic universities, even though God has always used the mean and lowly, the weak and powerless to do his work.

We will get the work initiated, that we know. As it is now all over the country things are being done that never would have been done if there had been no Peter Maurin back in 1932 broadcasting his ideas through the new medium of the *Catholic Worker*. Before that he had worked as an individual, spreading mimeographed sheets, or even handwritten ones to all who would read, and stopped in the public squares all those who would listen.

#### **No Class War**

In addition to being opposed to international and civil wars Peter was opposed to race wars and class wars. He had taken to himself that new constitution, that new rule of the Sermon on the Mount, and truly loved his enemies and wanted to do good to all men, including those who injured him or tried to enslave him. He literally believed in overcoming evil with good, hatred with love. He loved the rich as well as the poor, and he wanted to make the rich envy the poor who were so close to Christ, and to try to become closer to them by giving of their means to start these schools, farming communes and agronomic universities. Houses of Hospitality are always run by the generosity of the poor who work in them and by the donations of the more comfortably off who send what they can to keep them going.

We have had many with us who could not find their vocation. There have been the wandering monks that St. Benedict talked of. They want religious life and life in the world. They want to have families and to preach, not teach. They wanted so much, not recognizing it was God Himself they wanted, that they could not develop the talents God gave them, and wander year after year wondering what God wants them to do. Peter would tell them, "first of all, earn a living by the sweat of your own brow, not someone else's." Choose a work that can be considered honorable, and can be classed under the heading of a work of mercy, serving your brothers, not exploiting them.

Man's work is as important to him as bread, and by it he gains his bread. And by it he gains love too, because he serves his brother, and love is an exchange of gifts. How often I have seen people begin to love each other, because they worked together. They began to "know" each other through the work they shared.

*Excerpted from The Catholic Worker, May 1955. The writings of Dorothy Day can be read on the Web at <http://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday>*

**Speaking of pain, freely**

**Private diaries reveal human frailty of a woman facing opposition from all quarters with courage**

**THE DUTY OF DELIGHT:  
THE DIARIES OF DOROTHY DAY**

*Edited by Robert Ellsberg  
Marquette University Press, 2008.*

654 pages

**Review by Bill Pease**

Why do I feel that there is something inherently embarrassing about probing someone else's diaries, even though the diarist is a "public person" and an established writer?

Early on, Dorothy Day seems to have been writing for her eyes only. She notes that since it is a private diary she can remark on how a certain denizen of the Catholic Worker house never wants to shower, despite others' discomfort and reminders. Yet at the end, her bequest permitted the release of all her papers 25 years after her death.

Over the years between 1932 and 1980 the writing changes but with no set evolution. Some notes are very fragmentary; other entries go on for several pages. Robert Ellsberg, an editor of the *Catholic Worker* in the 1970s, has undertaken a gargantuan job. He took a thousand single-spaced pages and reduced them by half. Even so, the published book including editorial material is a lengthy one, with smaller than usual type, and expensive for its likely readers. If I have any regrets about the published product, it is the wish that omissions determined by the editor were distinguished somehow from those that are in Dorothy's own manuscripts. I have a personal interest in this as will be seen in a later comment.

#### **Ironic title**

The book's title is derived from a phrase by the English art critic and poet John Ruskin that fascinated Dorothy. She mentions it several times, and yet it is somewhat ironic. There are a few joyous occasions expressed, but because she could not unload too freely on her friends and certainly not on her readers, her private journals were the place where she could speak of so much pain in her work and frequent illnesses. We learn of frailties and frictions among familiar names of writers and the *Catholic Worker* members they wrote about.

She herself in the last half-century of her life kept remarkably consistent focus despite her erratic youth. Occasionally she recalls her young dalliance with several men, ("when I walked the streets of NY with Gene O'Neill and sat out the nights in taverns"). In later years it was painful for her to see the escapades of her young followers, understanding their urges and yet now so opposed to her principles. A few of her supporters lasted loyally for many years. Others, important to the movement at one stage, moved on, to her sorrow. Peter Maurin, honored as co-founder, became speechless in his last years, then died rather early in the story. Unique among the others was the anarchist Ammon Hennacy (whom I met and corresponded with a little). Devoted as he was to Dorothy, Ammon could only abide being in an institutional corral just so long, entered the Church late and then left after a few years of uneasy participation.

Something else brought out in these journals, and not made clear in the *Catholic Worker* paper, was her sustained ties with relatives and some friends of her very different youth. Her closest confidante over the years was probably her sister Della. They shared social radicalism but Della had worked with Margaret Sanger, the founder of the forerunner of Planned Parenthood, on the promotion of birth control and in other regards was out of sympathy with the Catholic Church. Their three brothers were politically active newspapermen.

Even more significant was the relationship to Dorothy's former common-law husband, Forster Batterham, the father of her daughter, Tamar. Despite an ideological divide, never bridged, he and Dorothy restored their friendship in later years and she nursed his second wife, a cancer patient, who

converted to Catholicism as she neared death.

The June/July 2008 (New York) *Catholic Worker* has two major articles memorializing Tamar by her youngest daughter, Kate. To read these in conjunction with the "Duty of Delight" is moving. If Dorothy Day's life was centered on her unusual public mission, her private concern was always centered on her daughter. They were very close. Tamar's upbringing among the *Catholic Worker* folk, her distinctive training not in conventional schools but in arts, crafts and farm skills, her commitment as the mother of nine children—all this is prominent in the diaries.

They were close, yes, but while Dorothy was public and outspoken, Tamar was private and taciturn. Tamar's husband, good around the small farm but unable to earn sufficient income, broke down and the marriage broke apart. In a brief disclosure late in Dorothy's life we learn that Tamar was a believer in the beauty of nature and its Creator, but expressed no interest in religion beyond that.

#### **Personal quest**

When I first skipped through the published diaries I looked first at 1960. On March 4, Dorothy spoke at "Washington University" (i.e. University of Washington) in Seattle. The next entry shown is March 16: "San Francisco. Good meeting. Jerry Brown, governor's son." Yet I knew that Dorothy was in Portland in the time between. I was working then at the Reed College library. I had introduced her to a group there to give a talk, then took her to my home where she had

dinner with me, my wife, Bette, and our two small children. Then I drove her on to the home where she was staying and where she would speak to others. That home was in an African American neighborhood and belonged to friends, a black couple, young social workers, Bill and Gladys McCoy, who later were prominent in Oregon elected offices.

The most valued memory is this: Dorothy had lost her copy of Father Joseph Frey's little psalm book, which Bette and I were also using. So the next morning Bette, children in tow, went to the local

Catholic bookstore and bought a copy and dropped it off at the McCoy's. So it is pleasing to me now to read from Dorothy's diary entry, February 2, 1965: "On train ... Reading the psalms from Matins and Lauds in Fr. Frey's Psalm book. I was comforted." After noting the gap for March 1960 I e-mailed the *Catholic Worker* archivist at Marquette University in Milwaukee to ascertain if there was anything there about Portland. His reply was immediate, short and not what I expected: "Dorothy made several brief entries in her diary during her time in Portland, noting her appointments, including 'To Pease for dinner' on March 8."

#### **Voracious reader**

As a librarian I could not but be impressed with Dorothy's voracious and rapid reading—of course the great Catholic classics but also literary giants elsewhere and along the way some light mysteries. She was also a lover of classical music.

We can be sure that if Dorothy Day's cause for canonization moves forward her journals will be scrutinized. The inquirers will find a very courageous woman, facing opposition from all quarters, even persecution from some of those who claimed her hospitality, then became hostile as she turned out not to be the idealized mother or luminous icon they had come to expect. They will find a woman simple in faith, complex in her relationships and intellectual life. They might even find a "saint" whose second-hand shoes were stained with earth rather than a figure etched into stained glass.

*Pease is a retired college librarian and a volunteer in earlier years with the Catholic Worker in New York and San Diego.*

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## 75th Birthday Party

# Catholic Workers call for penance and fasting to end war in Iraq and Afghanistan

Last July, over 500 Catholic Workers, from as far away as Australia and Germany, gathered to celebrate the Catholic Worker Movement's 75th Anniversary.

In the midst of workshops, parties, and planning sessions, they issued the following statement to U.S. Catholic Bishops

We are Catholic Workers from communities throughout the U.S. and Europe who have come to Worcester, Massachusetts to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Catholic Worker. At this critical point in history, as we face unending war, including U.S. plans to attack Iran, ecological destruction and economic collapse, we call on our church and nation to join us in repenting our affronts to God.

The United States has become the wealthiest nation on earth at the price of the collective loss of our souls through our acceptance of the sins of war, torture, racism, discrimination, killing, nuclearism and environmental destruction—all in the name of profit. We live a lifestyle that demands war and distracts from our true calling of loving and caring for one another.

We urge our church to heed the nonviolent example of Dorothy Day and the critique of modern war by Vatican II.

Taking God's command "Thou shalt not kill" and the Sermon on the Mount as our Christian manifesto, we commit ourselves to upholding the sacredness of all life wherever it is threatened. We

re-commit ourselves to the Catholic Worker vision of creating a new society in the shell of the old.

Saint Paul tells us that when one member of our community is suffering, the health of the whole body is affected. In our various communities we have daily contact with the victims of our society, including homeless veterans and our undocumented sisters and brothers. Many of us have been arrested and jailed for nonviolent acts of resistance to state-sanctioned injustice and killing. We strive to do the works of mercy and to follow Jesus' command to be nonviolent witnesses for peace and justice.

We once again implore the leadership of the Catholic Church in the United States, now and without evasion, to break its silence and to wield the authority provided by the nonviolent gospel of Jesus Christ, by calling the entire nation to repent for the war crimes we have committed in the so-called War on Terror.

We yearn to be part of a church that prays and works for peace, loves our neighbors and enemies alike, and embraces the redemptive power of forgiveness. We cry out for a church that speaks without fear of consequences, including loss of revenue. We implore our church leadership to follow the example of Jesus and unequivocally renounce the sins of our empire's war-making, the possession and use of weapons of mass destruction, oppression, scapegoating and aspirations of global domination.

When our body issued its last national plea in 2006,

the response was profoundly disappointing and no less than tragic. Rather than a clear pronouncement condemning the illegal and immoral nature of our current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the evil wrought by torture and other crimes against humanity, the U.S. Catholic Bishops merely stated that "our nation's military forces should remain in Iraq only as long as their presence contributes to a responsible transition."

The insufficiency of this response has been demonstrated, not only by the continuation of these wars in the face of a clear public desire to end the war in Iraq, but also by the reality of US covert actions aimed at destabilizing Iran and the apparently imminent military attack on that nation.

Out of our shared and abiding love, we remind the Bishops that we continue to wait for their clear call to our nation to end these threats and provocations that carry no other outcome than an ever-widening sea of agony and death. In this prayer we invoke the spirit and witness of Blessed Franz Jagerstatter who exemplified Christ's instruction to peacemakers that, as children

of God, we may be required to give up our lives rather than participate in evil.

In the name of God, who calls us to love and not to kill, we appeal to the church and all people of good will to:

- Call for prayer, fasting, vigils and nonviolent civil resistance to immediately end the U.S. military occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Advise all soldiers to refuse to participate in these wars.
- Denounce and actively resist U.S. plans to attack Iran.
- Embrace the nonviolent witness of Blessed Franz Jagerstatter and actively support and encourage all conscientious objectors.
- Urge Congress and the military to offer appropriate care and support to returning soldiers.
- Call for an immediate end to the use of torture.
- Call for the closing of Guantanamo and other secret U.S. military prisons.
- Call for the redirection of our resources from warmaking and exploitation to meeting human needs and preserving life on Earth.
- Call for an equitable redistribution of resources and simplification of our materialistic lifestyle.
- Call for disarmament and the abolition of all weapons of mass destruction. We call on our church to be a prophetic voice, a sanctuary, and a source of encouragement to those who want to work in community toward peace, justice and reconciliation.



## Sponsors continued from page 1.

wedding) waited for everyone to leave and then he handed me two envelopes. One he told me was for the church: it contained five, ten-dollar bills. The other was for me and it contained ten, five-dollar bills. And this from a man who could probably ill afford even ten dollars. I told him that the donation to the church was more than sufficient and that he should not give so much, but he would not hear of it.

Then I tried to give back the envelope with the ten, five dollar bills. He adamantly refused to take it. I told him that he was too generous. He said that it was "mi deber como padrino"—his duty as a godfather. After a bit more of back and forth I finally resigned myself to accepting it (a good lesson in humility) but said that I would accept it only on the condition that he allow me to donate it in his name and in the name of his new godson to the sisters at the Casa de los Pobres in

Tijuana to feed the poor. He agreed and then he gave me *un abrazo*, a "hug," and he went on his way—a man who took the responsibility of being a godparent very seriously.

### Opportunities suggested

As I wrote last year, "The *recursos* or resources that the San Diego Catholic Worker receives and distributes to the poor in our small piece of God's earth come from you, our supporters—our extended Catholic Worker family. This year in order to help us to be able to distribute more *recursos* we are asking you to become *padrinos* and *madrinas* of the different elements of our annual fundraising dinner. In other words, is there someone who would like to become the *padrino* of the beverages or the *madrina* of the meatballs; the *padrino* of the music or the *madrina* of the desserts? This

## Day by Day

A selection of thoughts that readers bring to the attention of the editor from time to time. To submit a thought of your own, please e-mail [dhorgan230@earthlink.net](mailto:dhorgan230@earthlink.net)

I have a hunch that when historians look back on this period of the Catholic community's history of America, they won't be celebrating those who manipulate the essential teaching so that we could feel free to participate unquestioningly in our nation's militarism.

Instead, I think we will remember, as we do Dorothy Day today, such groups as the Catholic Worker and Pax Christi and the Catholic Peace Fellowship, among others, as those who helped preserve the heart of the Gospel when most were trying to find a way around it.

—Tom Roberts, National Catholic Reporter, July 25, 2008.

Why not be a beggar?

People who are in need, and are not afraid to beg, give to people not in need the occasion to do good for goodness' sake.

Modern society calls the beggar, bum and panhandler and gives him the bum's rush.

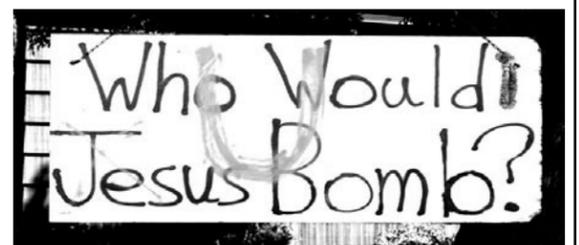
The Greeks used to say that people in need are the ambassadors of the gods.

We read in the Gospel: "As long as you did it to one of the least of My brothers, you did it to me."

While modern society calls the beggars bums and panhandlers, they are in fact the ambassadors of God.

To be God's ambassador is something to be proud of.

—Peter Maurin, Easy Essays, January 1948.



### Good Question

Defaced sign in front of a house in La Mesa

would mean that you would make a donation to help to cover the cost of these or other expenses for our annual Catholic Worker Fiesta, Oct. 11.

We believe that this custom of *padrinazgo* is very much an expression of our Catholic Worker way of proceeding; and so it is our hope that the members of our Catholic Worker extended family will respond in their typically generous fashion by becoming *padrinos* and *madrinas* of our Catholic Worker Fiesta. This is another special opportunity to be both practical and helpful and thus express the love and the support of the Catholic Worker community for our sisters and brothers *de bajos recursos*, and another opportunity to take seriously our responsibility to be our sisters' and our brothers' keepers.

demise. Likewise, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin were endowed with exceptional gifts—nothing spectacular mind you, no miracles that we know of, and certainly no access to the high and mighty of their day. Their weakness was their strength.

Another factor to consider would be how well the organization responds to a real need. If the situation to which the organization is geared to respond is deep-seated or chronic, then the organization has a much better chance of surviving the founder. Dorothy and Peter first founded a newspaper to promote social justice and then a House of Hospitality for destitute street people. It would be hard to imagine two conditions, injustice and poverty, that are more indigenous to the human race. As long as there are sinful human beings on earth there will be greed that leads to injustice and war that makes peace impossible ... and the poor will be always with us.

**Not going anywhere**

On both counts, therefore, we can be confident that the Catholic Worker is not going away anytime soon, just so long as its members keep the memory of its founders alive and it remains true to its mission: to promote peace and social justice and perform the corporal works of mercy.

In practice, how should the Catholic Worker live up to its mission? That's a difficult question to answer because the movement has no constitution and no book of rules. There are as many different forms of Catholic Worker groups as there are groups themselves. Indeed, in the June 27 issue of the National Catholic Reporter, the church historian Jay Dolan is quoted as having remarked "trying to define the Catholic Worker is like trying to bottle a morning fog." Hang out with any group of Catholic Workers and you will see anarchy in action: Robert's Rules of Order do not apply. Some traits would, however, seem to be basic.

For starters, the Catholic Worker is pacifist in the strict sense that it rejects war and every form of violent action as a means of resolving disputes. They don't accept that there is such thing as a "just war." According to Robert Ellsberg, the editor of the recently published (see review on page 2) "The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day," the only time ever that Dorothy used her authority to issue any kind of an ultimatum to the movement was with respect to pacifism. Writing in The Catholic Worker in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor in 1941, she boldly declared that the paper would continue its Christian pacifist stand.

"We will bring the words of Christ who is with us always, even to the end of the world," she wrote. "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you, so that you may be children of your father in Heaven." When some of the 30 Houses of Hospitality in existence at the time refused to distribute the paper with her pacifist views on the war, she told them not to consider themselves Catholic Worker houses any longer.

And because there can be no peace without justice, every Catholic Worker group is committed to promoting social

**List of current SDCW projects**

**By Mike Flaningam**

*Flaningam is a San Diego Catholic Worker*

How are doing?

That's a good question for all of us to ask, but perhaps many of you don't even know what we are doing.

We are still cooking and distributing food to homeless and needy people, but maybe not as much as we did in the past.

We pick up food donated by local grocery stores and cook a noon meal for approximately 65 homeless and needy people every Friday at Christ Lutheran Church on Cass St. in Pacific Beach. Any food that is left over we donate to the Western Service Workers who distribute it to families in need.

Every Thursday we deliver sufficient food for an evening meal for approximately 50 women who are lucky enough to find overnight shelter in the downtown Rachel's Women Center.

We also provide food for the First Lutheran Church downtown for their Third Avenue Charitable Organization (TACO) program that, among other things, provides meals every Monday and Friday for homeless people.

We provide substantial amounts of fresh produce and other food weekly to the Food Resource Center at Catholic Charities downtown on Cedar St..

We distribute a huge amount of clothing on the third Thursday of every month at the Neal Good Center, which has been recently taken over by Fr. Joe Carroll's St. Vincent de Paul Villages.

We work with the local National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) to support programs that address the needs of homeless people who are mentally ill.

We provide financial support to the *Casa de Los Pobres* (House of the Poor) in Tijuana, which in the month of July alone served 17,000 hot meals to people of all ages, provided 2,050 medical consultations, distributed 2,510 bags of groceries, and gave clothing and household supplies to 1,220 families.

We provide financial support to the Mexican-American Neighborhood Organization which for years has provided medical and other needed supplies to the poor in the Tijuana area.

Three times a year we organize Catholic Worker traditional Friday Evening Soupers in Our Lady of Refuge Parish Hall in Pacific Beach, where we prepare a free soup, bread and water supper, and discuss social justice and peace issues.

Also three times a year, we publish the San Diego Catholic Worker newspaper—another Catholic Worker tradition—in which we attempt to highlight the efforts that many diverse groups of people are making to promote justice and peace.

To help maintain our focus, sanity, and dedication, we have at least one retreat each year.

Our biggest event of the year is our Annual Dinner and Auction. This has become our major fundraiser of the year to support all these ministries. As you should know, this year's will be on Oct. 11th. We really don't just see this as merely a fundraiser, but as a great opportunity for everyone to get together and catch up on what we are doing.

justice. They support unions in their struggles with employers: they support the idea of a living wage; they support an equal and fair distribution of wealth; they support equal pay for equal work; and they support safety and humane conditions in the workplace and the outlawing of unsafe and unhealthy practices.

And thirdly, because we live in a world where many people are homeless, poor, starving, and unemployed, and where some people exploit the labor of others, most Catholic Worker groups, with Christ in mind, provide food, clothing, and shelter to people in need.

The result is that many—if not most, or nearly all—Catholic Worker groups have Houses of Hospitality where a core group lives in community and, with the help of volunteers, welcomes homeless and hungry people to their tables. Some publish newspapers that promote social justice, and others print newsletters to keep in touch with their supporters; and many protest war and militarism, practicing civil disobedience that, even though it be non-violent, nevertheless frequently lands them in jail.

**Questions worth asking**

It is probably a healthy thing for every group or organization to take time off every now and again to examine itself and ask itself what it is doing and where it is going. The kinds of questions it might ask itself could be: How well are we living up to our mission and our ideals? Could we be doing a better job? Are we missing something? Is there something we should be doing that we are not? Sometimes

circumstances force those kinds of questions on an organization, and sometimes it seems that the time just happens to be ripe for the questions to be addressed.

We in the San Diego Catholic Worker feel that we ought to be asking ourselves these questions if not right now, then fairly soon. For a group as small as we are, we do a respectable amount of good work. We feed some hungry people and we distribute food and clothing to others, we publish a newspaper, and we support financially a diverse range of well-deserving charities. However, conscious of our responsibilities as the *de facto* guardians of the legacy of Dorothy and Peter in San Diego, we need to be looking towards the future. (For a more or less complete list of our activities, see box, left.)

In our latest fiscal year, which ended Aug. 30, we raised \$37,600 and spend \$45,600 for a net loss of \$8,000, which we covered with savings we have from the sale of our house in the late eighties and a generous donation from the Cardijn Center when it folded. With a reserve of approximately \$50,000 we realize that we cannot continue forever funding everything we do in the same way.

**Time to plan ahead**

So for this reason alone—but not only for this reason—we think it is time to be planning ahead. Besides addressing the questions suggested above, there may be others that are specifically pertinent to our circumstance: Should we have a House of Hospitality, and if so

how should we go about acquiring one? Should we be trying to produce a better paper, more often and with a greater circulation? Should we be spending more energy on promoting social justice? As a border town, should we be addressing more directly the plight of immigrants? Should we be protesting the war(s) that have been inflicted on us? What can we do to attract young (or even younger-than-most-of-us-are) people? Are we trying to do too much without focusing on the essentials?

We ourselves can brainstorm and think about the questions, but we would much rather have you do it with us. We would like to have your ideas if even just to help us decide what questions we should be asking ourselves and how to address them. There are probably other questions that you think we should be asking. Within a few months we should be ready to convene some sort of a general meeting to which all will be invited. Your support in this effort will be much appreciated.

*If you have some suggestions to make, please e-mail me at [dhorgan230@earthlink.net](mailto:dhorgan230@earthlink.net), or go to our Web page at [catholicworkersd.org](http://catholicworkersd.org) and e-mail us from there.*

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**President**

Michael Jennings

**Vice President**

Tina DiStefano

**Treasurer**

Jackie Smith

**Secretary**

Nancy Green

**Editor**

Denys Horgan

**Proofing**

Nancy Green

**Mailing**

Tina DiStefano and Volunteers

*The San Diego Catholic Worker welcomes everybody and provides services to all, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, handicap, sex, or sexual orientation.*

**San Diego Catholic Worker**

P.O. Box 127244

San Diego, CA 92112

Tel. (619) 298-3755

*You may also contact the editor at [dhorgan230@earthlink.net](mailto:dhorgan230@earthlink.net)*

*Please note new Web Site: [www.catholicworkersd.org](http://www.catholicworkersd.org)*

**Mission Statement**

The San Diego Catholic Worker is committed to the following actions that imitate Christ: a call to service, a belief in the human dignity of all, and an interrelationship with a compassionate God and one another.

As Catholic Workers, we struggle to carry out our double mandate: to minister to the needs of society's forgotten people, and to challenge and offer alternatives to the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and perpetuate suffering and violence.

Following Christ's example, we also believe it is our duty to spread the word of our work and provide others with the opportunity to serve.

The San Diego Catholic Worker will achieve its goals by the grace of God and by working together to bring about a world of peace and justice as envisioned by our founders, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin.

**Auction items still accepted**

**We are still accepting items for the very popular Silent Auction that accompanies our Annual Gourmet Meatball and Spaghetti Dinner. Food tokens for restaurants around town are much appreciated, as are cabins or vacation homes that can be rented for a week or so, and jewelry. If you have anything that you think might sell, please contact Tina Distefano at (858) 552-0817.**

**Books also wanted**

**If you have books that you think somebody else might be interested in buying, please bring them along to St. Mary Magdalene's Parish Hall, 1945 Iliion St., on Saturday morning, Oct. 11, the day of the Annual Dinner, and give them to Jane Hatheway. Many thanks.**