



Lest we forget ...

Please remember that our **Annual Gourmet Spaghetti and Meatballs Dinner and Silent Auction** will be held on Saturday, Oct. 27 at the usual time, 6-10 p.m., in the same place, St. Mary Magdalene Church Hall, 1945 Illion St. See the advertisement below for more information.

All donations of items or services for the **Silent Auction** will be gratefully received. With *Casa Milagro* up and running, we have expenses that we did not have in the past, so donations of items to be auctioned, or cash will be welcomed. Please contact Tina DiStefano at (858) 552-0817 if you have something to offer.

We have a thriving clothes distribution service twice a month in downtown San Diego. **Sharon Everett** welcomes donations of clothes, new or used, but she needs help sorting and distributing the clothes. If you want to help, please contact Sharon by calling (619) 284-2308, or by e-mail at sheverett10@yahoo.com.

If you would like us to keep in touch with you more often, please go to www.catholicworkersd.org and sign up on the home page

***Casa Milagro* up and running with a core community and many guests**

Casa Milagro opened its doors to guests in February, 2012. At the beginning of January Denis Murphy, a DeLaSalle Christian Brother had arrived from the Chicago Catholic Worker community to join Ned McMahon who had been living in the house by himself until Denis arrived. Ned, a Catholic Worker Board member, had been making repairs in the house getting it ready for opening.

A third member, Mike Anderson, who had been helping out with the Pacific Beach Friday lunch for a year or so, joined the two as they spent the end of January figuring out how they would go about welcoming homeless men as guests in their community.

After discussions with Marion Keller and George Orozco case workers at Catholic Charities, the core community agreed to welcome men sent by Catholic Charities. It was agreed that Catholic Charities would send homeless men who had completed one of their programs, and were now ready to move on to the next stage of their lives. They would be following a program that involved searching for work and preparing to become financially independent and able to live on their own, which could take as long as two

or three months.

Our first guest from Catholic Charities was an African American who was in poor health but had a job. Because we had another bed available, we also took in a young man known to Mike who was in a 12-step program but was living on the street.

We had begun slowly at first, but as we became better known, we needed to increase our capacity so we set up bunk beds which enabled us to house four guests at a time. By the time March arrived we began to take in other 12-step people who needed to stay a short time until they got into longer treatment programs. So our guests' days were spent either going to work or attending 12-step meetings.

We all share meals together in the evening. Each man is assigned a house-cleaning job and on Wednesday evenings after supper everyone in the house participates in a peace circle where the men share their lives and community concerns in a quiet and caring atmosphere. In June we were contacted by another Catholic Charities unit that serves refugees who had recently received political asylum but needed a place to stay until they could find work and get their lives in order. In just over an eight-week period, *Casa Milagro* has offered hospitality to five men from the following countries: Cuba, Nigeria, Iran, the Congo, and Eritrea, some of whom have already moved on to more permanent situations.

In addition to helping out in the Pacific Beach Friday soup kitchen the community has extended its hospitality to the many homeless in the neighborhood. Two nights a week, the Workers and a few of the guests take hot chicken soup and hard-boiled eggs to folks living on the street. We have found that the homeless look forward to seeing our van pull up with hot soup on chilly, and even not so chilly, nights. And both the homeless people and several dogs owned by the homeless folks love our hard boiled eggs.

In just over 6 months, *Casa Milagro* has been blessed with 17 guests. They eat and pray together every day,

Discussion sessions begin while traditional feeding and clothing the homeless continues

Although it has taken a good deal of time and effort to get *Casa Milagro* up and running with a fairly permanent core community and a constant stream of guests—most of whom would be otherwise homeless—the San Diego Catholic Workers have not only managed to maintain the services they have been providing for years now, they have even taken on a few more.

We continue to feed about 100 people in Pacific Beach every Friday, and our clothing distribution is going better than ever. We now have a space where we can store and sort clothes that are distributed twice a month to homeless people downtown, which is practically on our doorstep. There seems to be no end to the amount of clothes we can distribute and we are always open to receiving more.

Suppers of soup and eggs

Two evenings a week, the people living in the house make soup and distribute it along with hard-boiled eggs to people living on the streets. They have come to know personally many of the people they serve and, more importantly, they have discovered ways of finding where they have gone to after the police have moved them on.

During May and June we joined with Lee Van Hamm, the founder of Jubilee Economics Ministries, and organized a series of four pilot sessions discussing topics that would interest Catholic Workers and their supporters. The purpose of these meetings — a long-standing tradition of the Catholic Worker movement — is to reach a better understanding of the issues facing society today and recruit people willing to engage them in peaceful and non-violent ways.

The first meeting was held May 7, when David de Witt spoke about the City of Refuge, which he founded and which—among other things—feeds about 8,000 people every month, and for many years has provided a community and given shelter to countless homeless people in downtown San Diego.

Keeping peace at the border

The second session, held on May 21, was titled “Pursuing Alternatives to Militarization of the U.S. Mexican Border,” and was presented by Dan Watman of *Border Encuentro* and the Friends of Friendship Park.

On June 4, Nancy Green and Denys Horgan of the San Diego Catholic Worker spoke about their experiences at a recent gathering in Assisi where 250 people from 55 different countries met to talk about worldwide religious understanding, respect and harmony.

The final session was held June 18 when Barry Ladendorf, president of Veterans for Peace in San Diego, spoke about the movement's efforts to publicize the cost of war, seek justice for veterans and the victims of war, and to abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

The meetings were held in *Casa Milagro* and each one attracted between 20 and 30 people. We feel the program was a success and we will soon be planning another series for November and December, after the Dinner and Silent Auction, Oct. 27.

**San Diego Catholic Worker
ANNUAL DINNER AND AUCTION**

6-10 p.m., Saturday, October 27

**St. Mary Magdalene Church Hall
1945 Illion St. San Diego**

**Many Valuable Items
Will be Auctioned to the Highest Bidder**

**Gourmet Italian Spaghetti and Homemade Meatballs Dinner
Cooked by Fr. Gil Gentile S.J. and Friends**

Live Music and Dancing

Donation: \$20

To reserve your place, please return the form below to
Tina Di Stefano
Catholic Worker Dinner
7844 Camino Huerta
San Diego, CA 92122

with a check for \$20 for each person you wish to invite.

Tickets will be mailed or held at the door in the name of the person listed below.

San Diego Catholic Worker Annual Dinner

Yes! I wish to attend. Please reserve _____ tickets at \$20 each
Enclosed is my check for \$_____

No, I regret I cannot attend, but I will help you provide meals, clothing, and other services to poor and homeless men, women and children in our community.
Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please make check payable to San Diego Catholic Worker

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From the Collected Writings of Dorothy Day



We are still pacifists because of the Sermon on the Mount

The following thoughts are excerpts from the diaries of Dorothy Day (1878–1980).

February 1942

We are supposed to be afraid of the suffering, of the hardships of war.

But let those who talk of softness, of sentimentality, come to live with us in cold, unheated houses in the slums. Let them come to live with the criminal, the unbalanced, the drunken, the degraded, the pervert. (It is not decent poor, it is not the decent sinner who was the recipient of Christ's love.) Let them live with rats, with vermin, bedbugs, roaches, lice (I could describe the several kinds of body lice).

Let their flesh be mortified by cold, by dirt, by vermin; let their eyes be mortified by the sight of bodily excretions, diseased limbs, eyes, noses, mouths.

Let their noses be mortified by the smells of sewage, decay and rotten flesh. Yes, and the smell of the sweat, blood and tears spoken of so blithely by Mr. Churchill, and so widely and bravely quoted by comfortable people.

Let their ears be mortified by harsh and screaming voices, by the constant coming and going of people living herded together with no privacy. (There is no privacy in tenements just as there is none in concentration camps.)

Let their taste be mortified by the constant eating of insufficient food cooked in huge quantities for hundreds of people, the coarser foods, the cheaper foods, so that there will be enough to go around; and the smell of such cooking is often foul.

Then when they have lived with these comrades, with these sights and sounds, let our critics talk of sentimentality.

"Love in practice is a harsh and dreadful thing compared to love in dreams.

June 1940

Instead of gearing ourselves in this country for a gigantic production of death-dealing bombers and men trained to kill, we should be producing food, medical supplies, ambulances, doctors and nurses for the works of mercy, to heal and rebuild a shattered world.

April 1950

We are still pacifists. Our manifesto is the Sermon on the Mount, which means that we will try to be peace-makers. Speaking for many of our conscientious objectors, we will not participate in armed warfare or in making munitions or by buying government bonds to prosecute the war, or in urging others to these efforts.

April 1950

We have the greatest weapons in the world, greater than any hydrogen or atom bomb, and they are the weapons of poverty and prayer, fasting and alms, the reckless spending of ourselves in God's service and for His poor. Without poverty we will not have learned love, and love, at the end, is the measure by which we shall be judged.

May 1950

I do not know how to love God except by loving the poor. I do not know how to serve God except by serving the poor. Poor people are those people who are standing out in the rain now, today, May 29, standing there with the rain soaking through their thin clothes, running down their faces like tears. They are standing there because they are hungry, and because in our fifteen foot by fifty foot dining room and kitchen there is warmth, and there is Everet Trebtske and his staff, serving soup, a good heavy pea soup, with bread.

These diary entries come from The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day, edited by Robert Ellsberg (Marquette University Press).

Election 2012: What's it all about?

Churches have an opportunity to work with all seeking compassion and helping others

By Gerard Mannion

Mannion is a theologian and director of the Center for Catholic Thought and Culture at the University of San Diego.

As thoughts turn to the presidential election and points of view are being forced to extremes by the media, thanks to spin doctors, vested interests, Wall Street and other lobbyists—including the US Catholic Bishops—perhaps now is the time for people who are concerned most of all with the gospel's inherent preoccupation with building the kingdom of social justice to stand back and calmly reflect upon the issues that really matter most today.

As with sin, so, also, does salvation have social as well as individual manifestations. For Christians that's a call to action. The New York Jesuit, Roger Haight has written about how the church necessarily reacts differently to different societies and regimes, but yet is always called to resist and actively confront dehumanising structures wherever they are manifested. As a leaven in society, the church must "announce the values and promises of the kingdom of God." In other words, not only must Christian Samaritans today bind the victims' wounds, they must also, in partnership with others beyond the church, "participate in making the road to Jericho safe."

Bridges not walls

The Catholic Church was called by Vatican II to be an affirming member of the wider human family—engaging in open dialogue and collaborating with other members of that family and developing common constructive, moral and social ends. In contrast to those who would seek to build walls between the church and the wider society and culture today, the church and individual Christians should be playing a full role in what the late Presbyterian theologian Lewis Mudge, from the Berkeley Graduate Theological Union, called a coalition of "Traditioned Cosmopolitans," people who, affirming multiple-belonging in their daily lives, collectively seek to respond to the moral and social challenges of our times.

So the churches, along with various other influential "players" in public life today, can all form part of a wider "community of moral discourse," a community that listens to all voices and which privileges no particular interest group except the vulnerable. None of this is really news to Catholic Worker activists—they embody such a vision.

But as the election draws near, and recalling the energy that the Occupy Wall Street movement generated, and the voices of the "99 percenters," a renewed commitment to forming such a coalition would encourage those who reject any deterministic and even fatalistic attitude towards the untrammelled march of global capitalism and hence globaliza-

tion, the default position (or at least feigned position) of so many involved in governmental and economic policy-making until the most recent times.

The churches already have so many of the resources necessary to confront and defeat the dehumanising forces of global capitalism. The church's social traditions in thought and practice are as old as the church itself. Many components of that tradition stand out as continuing to offer transformative visions for societies across time and space including but not limited to the Christian socialist tradition, the Catholic Worker's own rich tradition, and the marvels of liberation theology—powerful dynamics that are sometimes mistakenly perceived to be long *passé*.

Catholic means open to all

In fact I believe their time has yet to come in its fullness and perhaps the twenty-first century is the age when the churches will come to the forefront and bear fruition in the fashion their founding theorists and practitioners envisaged. If the churches can collectively, in a catholic (with a small "c") fashion, engage more earnestly and fervently in attending to such tasks, without being distracted by the trappings of global capitalism and power itself, or by debates of lesser concern, or by retreating into a "purifying" mentality, then the voices of Christians in the forthcoming election might be able to help change government policy on the real issues—rather than the peripheral ones—for the better, for good. Catholicity, in the final analysis, is as much an ethical task as an ecclesiological concept: to be catholic is to be open to, supportive of and in communion with the other. The issues that matter most demand compassion for and commitment to the other: to making the road to Jericho safe.

As the Indian Anglican theologian, Christopher Duraingh says, the gospel, itself, "is always an imperative for a permanent openness to the other, the stranger, the alien. Hospitality to strangers and mutuality of recognition of 'the other' is intrinsic to the Christian story of God's love in Christ ... The central purpose of the Church in the economy of God in an increasingly diversified world is 'to cooperate with God in making the *oikumene* an *oikos*, a home, a family of men and women of varied gifts, cultures, possibilities, where openness, trust, love and justice reign'."

Religious freedom is not in jeopardy

Religious freedom is alive and well in the United States, but there is a terrible erosion of freedom on many other fronts: Liberty has been trampled down in terms of freedom of speech, the rights to work (and rights of workers), to health care, decent food and education, the right to oppose injustice, war, grotesque inequality and oppression, and to be free from discrimination.

Racism and xenophobia are alive and flourishing. Poverty increases its grip on communities by the day. The environment suffers daily from human negligence. Genuine economic reform driven by justice remains elusive. Global peace and mutuality, working towards a sharing of the resources the planet holds in common are challenges that persist. These are just some of the issues that must demand the attention of the coalition of traditional cosmopolitans and their faith community's leaders in the coming months and way beyond. These are the issues where energies and resources must be focused.

California's Death Penalty: a broken system.

A presentation on Prop. 34

Sister Helen Prejean has been instrumental in sparking national dialogue on the death penalty through her book, "Dead Man Walking," an autobiographical account of her relationship with an inmate on death row. The book served as the basis for a feature film, an opera, and a play.

Come and listen to Sister Prejean's story, and learn more about how we can end the death penalty in California this year. This free event is happening on Tuesday, October 2nd at 7:00 p.m. The location is Linder Hall at First United Methodist Church of San Diego (2111 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego, 92108). For more information contact Norma Chavez-Peterson at norma@safecalifornia.org or 619-320-5659.

ANNUAL MADRE ANTONIA'S FIESTA

The 12th Annual Madre's Fiesta & Silent Auction will be held September 7, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. in the Sheraton Carlsbad Resort & Spa. The event is held in support of Madre Antonia and the Eudist Servants of the 11th Hour in their mission to help those in most need of compassion.

Ah, Mr. Sousa, where's your Purple Heart?

*Music that filled the screen, that filled the hall,
Strings' full cry, woodwinds that sang, and
Of course the brass, the bellicose brass—
Trumpets, trombones, tubas, horns,
Clarinets, cornets, bugles ablaze.*

*These were the sounds of courage on fire,
Under fire, of bravery, of braggadocio,
In all war movies of his early years.
And the Navy bands, the Marine bands,
The marching bands in parades, with
Flags aloft toward the bandstand.*

*At 12 Jim's gifted trumpet as brilliant as "Bravo!"
The lessons, recitals, the ROTC show.
What pride! What hope! What triumph ahead!
Eyes closed he saw—no heard—fighting forward,
Admiring comrades around and behind.*

*At 18 the boot camp, parade ground, more parades,
More music, music of valor, of heroism.
Forward to see the world, sought camaraderie,
Found ambiguity, foreign tongues, from minarets
Strange music, strange prayers, unwelcoming eyes.*

*The shrapnel in his ear brought him home, otherwise
"intact."
Why the nightmares? Why the terror at Albertsons?
His parents close/distant, his lover sympathetic/pathetic.
Inside its dark case Jim's trumpet, covert, uncovered.
There was no music! Where was the music?--
When the heroes stumbled forward into the bomb?
Untrumpeted.*

— Bill Pease

Expressing thanks

Getting by with the help of many friends

On behalf of the many homeless people we are privileged to be able to help, the San Diego Catholic Worker would like to thank the very many people who make this service possible:

Led by Tina DiStefano, our president, there is the amazing group of people who turn up Friday after Friday at the kitchen of Christ Lutheran Church on Cass Street to prepare and serve a hearty lunch to homeless people in Pacific Beach. Every meal includes a salad, a main course of beef, pork, chicken, turkey, fresh salmon or tuna, along with vegetables and rice or pasta, and a dessert. On most Fridays we have hard-boiled eggs and fruit for the people to take with them.

Trader Joe's and Sprouts

None of this would be possible without the exceedingly generous donations of meats, vegetables, fruits and cakes that we get from Trader Joe's in Pacific Beach and the large amount of bread that we get from Sprouts. We get enough to serve about 100 men and women every week, and make large pots of soup that we share with people living on the streets in downtown San Diego twice a week; whatever we have left over we contribute to the Western Service Workers who assist people living on bare-bones salaries in the vicinity of Imperial Avenue. And from time to time we also receive toiletries, always in demand, from the children attending Kate Sessions Elementary School in Pacific Beach. At Christmas time, some of the children and their parents help prepare and serve the meal.

During the year, two supporters of the Catholic Worker, Peggy North and Pat Markel, went on multiple-day fishing trips and returned with enough yellowtail and tuna to feed five or six Friday lunches. The skipper of one of the boats has shown an interest in collecting fish that his fishermen are willing to donate to us on a regular basis.

Clothes distribution

Under the direction of Sharon Everett, we distribute large amounts of clothing to downtown homeless people twice a month. The clothes, some new and some used, are donated

sometimes from individuals, sometimes from churches, and sometimes from schools or businesses.

The children of St. Michael Academy in Paradise Hills held sox drives at which literally hundreds of new sox were collected and donated to us. And through the good graces of Rosanna Mirkovich, an employee of Old Navy in Mission Viejo in Orange County, we have received large amounts of quantities of new clothing, sometimes free and sometimes at unbelievable rock-bottom prices. The St. Michael Academy children also prepared turkey dinners for Thanksgiving, and baked a truck-load of fresh bread, all of which was distributed to people in need.

We are also particularly grateful to Donna Marshall's son, Adam, an expert plumber, for keeping our pipes in working order and Jim Thomas, a licensed electrician, for keeping our dodgy power supply responding to our demand.

Margaret Cauchon, and her family, deserve a special thank you for renting their house to us at a charge way below the going rate. Without their support there would be no *Casa Milagro*.

Many anonymous donors

And of course we are forever grateful to the many supporters who wish to remain anonymous, but who send us money every now and again, some on a monthly basis. Their support sustains us and enables us to pay our bills.

The University of San Diego's Center for Catholic Thought and Culture deserves a special thanks for donating, two years in a row, the proceeds of a door collection taken up at its Annual Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols to the San Diego Catholic Worker House of Hospitality, *Casa Milagro*. This year the festival will be held Sunday, Dec. 2 at 2 p.m., and Friday, Dec. 7 at 7:30 p.m.

Our Annual Gourmet Meatball and Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction, which will be held Oct. 27 this year, raises a huge chunk of our operating expenses every year, and for this we are grateful to the 300 or so people who attend every year and the companies and individual people who donate items

List of people who made the auction such a success

Once again our Annual Gourmet Meatball and Spaghetti and Silent Auction was a resounding success. Of course nothing would have been possible without the support of the many intrepid volunteers who came early to prepare the food, stayed to serve it, and did not go home until everything was cleaned up. We are especially grateful for the abundance of beautiful and expensive gifts we received for the auction. The poor whom we serve will also be eternally thankful for their generosity. We are already planning for this year's event, which will be held Oct. 27 at the usual location, St. Mary Magdalene Parish Church Hall, on Ilion St., beginning at 6 p.m. Here is a list of the donors who contributed so much to the auction's success last year and the previous year. We apologize if we have mistakenly left anybody out.

Fred Acomb
Anthony's Restaurants
Mark Ardagno
Ann Bethel
Barbara Cameron
Center for Spirituality
Clairemont Surf Shop
Jan and Michael Conroy
Don Coulon
Del Mar Race Track
Anne and Walter Desmond
Disneyland
Tina DiStefano
Judy ("Trudy) Dunham
European Cake Gallery
Gem & Bead Mall
Good News Cooking School
H&M Landing Fishing Trip
In-N-Out Burgers
Ipanema Watch & Jewelry
Jack and Gulio's Old Town Restaurant
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kammpp
Karen Kammpp
Karen's Consignment Gallery
Mr. and Mrs. Webster Kinnaird
Olga Kolba
A.J. and Peter Kopkowski
Diane Langworthy
Esther and Robert LaPorta
Legoland
Mr. and Mrs. John L'Estrange
Lillian and Al Macy

Ned McMahon
Mingei International Museum
William Munz
Rosie Murray
Matt Ohlin
Old Trieste Restaurant
Osinski's Jewelry
Our Lady of the Rosary Gift Shop
Pizza Nova
Poseidon Restaurant, Del Mar
Prince of Peace Abbey
Renzulli's Jewelry World
Chris Roberts
Patricia Robinson
Rubio's Mexican Restaurant
Route 44 Skateboards
San Diego Farmers Open Golf Tournament
San Diego Museum of Art
San Diego Natural History Museum
San Diego Zoo
Sardinia's Restaurant
Seaworld
Maryanne and Richard Sipe
Spiritual Ministry Center, Ocean Beach
Squidco Fishing Shop
Sycuan Golf Resort
Tio Carlo's Point Loma
Tommy's Burgers
Kathy Waller
Terry Whitcomb
World Famous Restaurant

The scriptures are a sustained testimony to the disturbing and even shocking truth that God is not neutral but is on the side of the poor. God's limitless compassion certainly extends to all people and does so unconditionally with regard to where any of them may be at a given moment in their personal life-journey, but the justice that this compassion demands, is nevertheless partisan in favour of the poor. God calls us to wholeness and fullness of life by calling us into communion with others and with Himself (Herself), but calls us into community from the perspective of slaves, the disinherited, exiles, the brokenhearted, the vulnerable the persecuted, the crucified.

—John O'Brien C.S.Sp. in a talk given at USD earlier this year.

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 denyshorgan@gmail.com

Only some need go to jail

Not everyone who occupies or protests need risk arrest. And not everyone who risks arrest need go to jail. However, some of us do need to take our Occupy Wall Street movement into our jails and prisons.

Why? Because some of us need to embrace going to jail willingly to show we are not deterred by the state's threat of imprisonment. Because some of us need to stand in solidarity with the 2 million Americans caught up in our criminal justice system, the vast majority of whom are poor and people of color. Because some of us need to resist the criminal justice system that not only locks people up but also makes them pay for it too! The jail fee here at Polk County jail is \$60 a day!

—Des Moines Catholic Worker Frank Cordaro writing from Polk County Jail, Iowa, Feb. 2, 2012.

Paul Ryan's immoral budget

Simply put, this budget is morally indefensible and betrays Catholic principles of solidarity, just taxation and a commitment to the common good. A budget that turns its back on the hungry, the elderly and the sick while giving more tax breaks to the wealthiest few can't be justified in Christian terms.

—a group of 59 Catholic theologians responding to the budget proposed by Republican Representative Paul Ryan and passed by the House of Representatives. And citing the U.S. bishops, the same group asked Ryan to "refrain from distorting church teaching to give moral cover to a budget that fails to live up to our nation's best values and highest ideals."

Finding God in everyday mess

One of the lessons of the first Christmas is that God is present in the ordinary, frightening, messy, beautiful everyday moments of our lives. But that doesn't mean that God is satisfied with the status quo. God invites us to be partners in the transformation of the world—to shine a light in a land of gloom, to bear one another's burdens, to work for justice, to be peacemakers.

—Emily Reimer-Barry, professor of theology at the University of San Diego, reflecting on the message of Advent at a Lessons and Carols service Dec. 2, 2011.

Nuns were victims of revenge

The Vatican's statement, issued last month, seemed to be the revenge of conservative bishops against the many nuns who broke with the hierarchy and supported health care reform in 2010. The nuns insisted, correctly, that the health-care law did not fund abortion. This didn't sit well with men unaccustomed to being contradicted, and the Vatican took the LCWR to task for statements that "disagree with or challenge positions taken by the bishops."

—Columnist E.J. Dionne Jr., writing in Commonweal, May 14, 2012.

Listen to the poor on the fringe

Go from this place, seek, find and encounter marginalized and muted people within and on the fringes. Listen carefully to them, repent and think and act differently.

—Fr. Anthony Gittens, Spiritan and professor of mission and culture at Catholic Theological Union, speaking at a Religious Formation Conference in Kansas City, last November.

Saint Dorothy Day? Holy Hero? Yes

By Fr. Gil Gentile S.J.

Father Gil is the spiritual director of the San Diego Catholic Worker.

On July 18 I flew to NY to celebrate the funeral of my last surviving aunt, Theresa Gentile, at St. Barnabas Church in the Bronx. My family has had a long history with St. Barnabas. My uncle Mike Gentile has been an usher there for about 60 years and my parents moved into the parish and attended Mass there after I left for the Jesuit novitiate in 1969. We have had a number of family baptisms, weddings and funerals in the old church and it has long felt like a spiritual home for me. As I was preparing for Aunt Terry's funeral Mass, I found on the vesting case in the sacristy a large stack of holy cards with a beautiful image of Dorothy Day on one side and the following prayer on the other:

**Prayer for the Canonization
of Servant of God Dorothy Day**
Merciful God, you called your servant
Dorothy Day to show us the face of
Jesus in the poor and forsaken.
By constant practice
of the works of mercy,
she embraced poverty and witnessed
steadfastly to justice and peace.
Count her among your saints
and lead us all to become friends of
the poor ones of the earth,
and to recognize you in them.
We ask this through your Son
Jesus Christ, bringer of good news
to the poor. Amen

I later found more stacks of these holy cards at all of the entrances to the church. On the one hand I was very pleased that people in my "home town" not only knew about Dorothy Day, (the co-founder with Peter Maurin of the Catholic Worker Movement during the Great Depression) but were apparently inspired and edified by her holiness. On the other hand I was slightly amused as I recalled Dorothy's words, "Don't call me a saint. I don't want to be dismissed so easily."

Many of us who call ourselves Catholic Workers have experienced this dilemma as we hear about the moving forward of the cause for Dorothy Day's canonization. It feels a little like not honoring a loved one's wishes to be buried in a certain place or have a favorite song played at the funeral Mass. I have been torn between wanting to somehow help the cause because of the great admiration I have for Dorothy and criticizing the cause for spending so much energy and money that could be spent rather on helping those in need through the daily practice of the Works of Mercy and taking seriously the "personal obligation of looking after the needs of our brother (& sister)" as Peter Maurin wrote.

If Dorothy's canonization means the "Pedestalization" (my word) of this holy woman, which is putting her up on a pedestal and therefore "out of the way", then I'm against it. I am against it because Dorothy was a person who was often "in the way" clearly showing her commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ through her many courageous acts of peace.

However I am also of the opinion that going public with the truth that holy people like Dorothy can truly inspire others "...to become friends of the poor ones of the earth and to recognize (God) in them", as well as to know Jesus as the "bringer of good news to the poor", as the holy card prayer says is a gift to our world. And it is holy people and prophets like Dorothy Day who can inspire all of us to stand up for Gospel values

In the Roman Missal on the feast of various saints, the prayers honoring these holy men and women often use words such as, "constancy" and "steadfastness" and "models of virtue" and "good stewards" & "outstandingly faithful in service". All of these words—and more—can be said of Dorothy Day, Servant of God

In the Collect or Opening Prayer for the feast of St. Ignatius Loyola we pray, "O God, grant that by his help we may imitate him in fighting the good fight on earth." Dorothy "fought the good fight" and so we can surely pray with great conviction and sincerity, "O God, may we imitate Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin!) in fighting the good fight on earth".

Certainly we can imitate Dorothy without her being called, officially, a saint of the Catholic Church and without ceremonies of beatification and canonization in St. Peter's square in the Vatican. However, declaring a person a saint in a formal ceremony can certainly have some benefits one of which is the public and universal proclamation that the person is a holy hero and deserves to be honored—but even more, to be imitated.

In Latin, the word for saint and the word for holy is the same – "sanctus". So, in essence, calling someone "sanctus" or "sancta" means that beneath all of the trappings of sainthood are qualities which make these human beings reflections and living and breathing personifications of the holiness and goodness of God the Creator, Jesus the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier. Is that something to be celebrated and proclaimed from the rooftops of Vatican City and from the rooftops and highways and byways of every other city and village in the world? Certainly!

Dorothy Day was not perfect. She was a sinner like the rest of us. But she was also a great woman, a great Catholic Christian, a great beacon of faith, hope and love and a great image of the incarnate God. We would do well to hold her up for all generations as truly a "model of heroic virtue".

However, we come back again to the question: in order for Dorothy to be held up as a "model of heroic virtue" must she be declared a saint by ecclesiastical authorities? Certainly not. If she is declared a saint by the Church, would there be a wider audience that would be touched and inspired by the story of her life? Undoubtedly.

I was recently at a gathering of Catholic Workers at the Catholic Worker house in

San Diego, Casa Milagro, and we got talking about this issue of the cause for Dorothy's canonization. One woman said with great conviction, "I don't think that Dorothy wants to be a saint and she wouldn't approve of this whole process." Another woman responded gently, "Dorothy doesn't need to be declared a saint. We need it."

My dilemma stands because both of these points of view are true. I can't solve the dilemma, so I think that I will just commit myself to quietly spreading the word of the cause for Dorothy Day's canonization and I will pray the "Prayer for the Canonization of Servant of God, Dorothy Day" regularly, and trust that somehow God will sort all of this out. After all, as the prophet Jeremiah says to God and also reminds us, it is God who is in charge. "Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you" Jer. 32:17.

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend our sister Dorothy Day with the sure and certain hope that she is with you, that she is holy as you are holy and that she "shows us the face of Jesus in the poor and forsaken".

*On the other hand I
was slightly amused
as I recalled
Dorothy's words,
"Don't call me a
saint. I don't want
to be dismissed so
easily."*

Timely Lectures

The following events are sponsored by the Center for Catholic Thought and Culture at the University of San Diego. They are free and open to the public.

"The God (particle) of Small Things: Higgs boson and the intelligibility of the universe"

Neil Ormerod, PhD

Thursday, September 13, 2012 at 6:00pm

Mother Rosalie Hill Hall (SOLES) Executive Classroom. With a reception to follow

The Second Annual Switgall Lecture

"Visions of Paradise: Women, Sin and Redemption in Christian Art" — Tina Beattie, PhD

Thursday, November 8, 2012 at 6:00pm

Mother Rosalie Hill Hall (SOLES) Warren Auditorium
With a reception to follow

Lessons and Carols

A Festival in Word and Song to Prepare for Christmas

Sunday, December 2, 2012 at 2:00pm

Friday, December 7, 2012 at 7:30pm

Founders Chapel

Explorations in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

"The Catholic Church and Human Rights: Debates, Dialogues and Conflicts." —Tina Beattie, PhD

Thursday, November 29, 2012 from 12:15-1:45pm

Hahn University Center – Forum A

Women in Catholic Education Since Vatican II

Facilitated by Ursula King and Tina Beattie

Monday, November 12, 2012 at 5:30pm

Institute for Peace & Justice, Conference Room A

Catholic Worker Meetings

For the foreseeable future, the San Diego Catholic Worker will continue to hold its regular monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month. Our meetings will begin with a Eucharist at 6 p.m. in the House of Hospitality, *Casa Milagro*, 2428 L Street. Everybody is invited to the Mass and to the meeting. The next meetings will be held September 10, October 8, November 12 and December 10.

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.

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

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"Never Again, War!"