



THE VISITATION

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Don't Call Me a Saint and Other Misnomers

by Venus Wozniak

It was a brisk Roman morning on Thanksgiving day. This year I was to be on pilgrimage away from the American family feast. I found myself in St. Peter's Square in front of a nondescript towering doorway with the papal coat of arms encrusted above it. As I waited here in the early morning hours watching souvenir shop owners set out their wares, I pondered this place. I had been here many times before. I had walked past this particular entryway maybe a dozen times before and thought nothing of it. It was merely a backdrop inconspicuously setting the scene for this sacred piazza. Soon I would pass through the doorway and enter the building of the Vatican Dicastery for the Causes of Saints. I would soon walk down the long hallway of doors that was the Hallway of Relators. This hallway was peculiar in the way that the hallways of J.K. Rowling's Ministry of Magic are curiously mysterious.

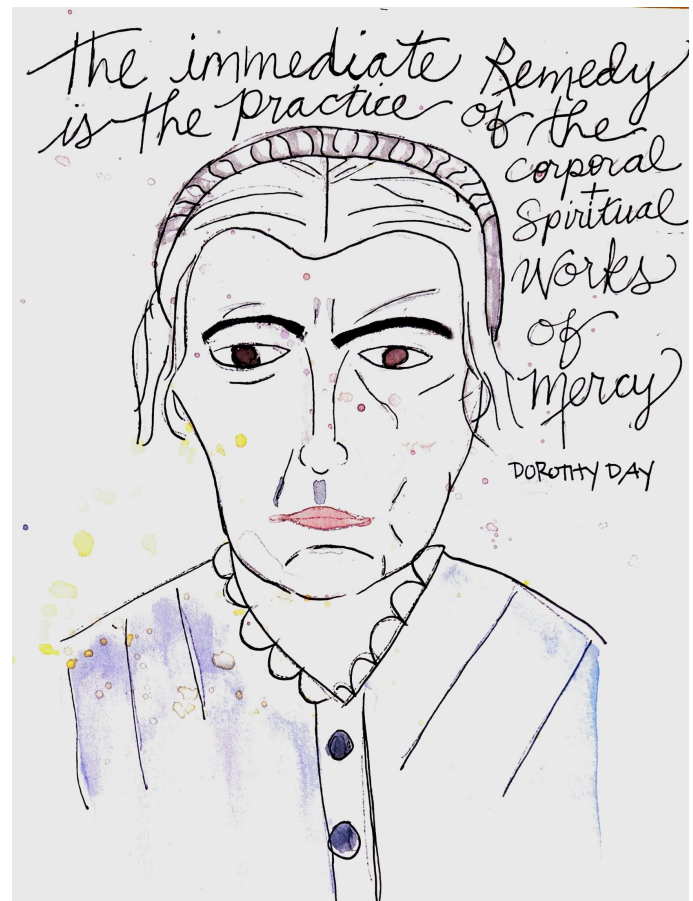
How was it that I found myself here on this sunny Roman Thursday, when my family back home was preparing our homegrown pumpkins for pie?

There are stand out moments in our lives where we feel that all of the struggles, choices, and hard work have converged. This week-long pilgrimage to Rome was one of those moments. Ironically, I found that this seminal moment was less about me and more about God's grandiose plan for all of Creation.

God's Plan for Creation is one of restoration. Since the dawning of time humanity has struggled with being made *imago dei* and the distortion brought about by original sin. Original Sin brings about an identity crisis that we are continually fighting against: from *Beloved of God - made to be like God* to the warped *All Powerful God-like - made to be in control*.

The direct result of humanity's foible is laid out in Genesis 3:14-16. We find the result of the original offence against our true identity; Adam and Eve brought about a curse that wrecks of everything broken. Man and woman will struggle in their desire to be *bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh*. Man will forever distort the dominion given by God and lord it over women and all of creation, for that matter. Adam will now be at odds with the Earth. Manual labor, despite its great dignified worth, will be a reminder of the mortal death brought about by that first faintness of heart. Adam and Eve went down this path together, suffered the consequences together and the whole human race will be on the hamster wheel running toward communion until Parousia is realized. Original sin broke every relationship: humanity's relationship with God, humanity's relationship with creation, and humanity's relationship with itself.

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Dorothy Day: Beautiful Peace

by Annemarie Coman

Servant of God Dorothy Day was a pivotal player in her time, and within the Catholic Church. Her influence continues to inspire and guide through the Catholic Worker movement, truly making her a saint for our time. According to Wikipedia, "Dorothy Day (November 8, 1897 – November 29, 1980) was an American journalist, social activist and anarchist who, after a bohemian youth, became a Catholic without abandoning her social activism" (Dorothy Day, 2026). From my research, this is a pretty good summary, but I think we can get a better picture of who she is by her own writings, specifically in her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*.

Dorothy talks about many things in her book, but what strikes me most are her descriptions of beautiful things. For Dorothy, it seems that the appreciation of beauty and social activism go hand in hand.

In answering the question "What makes for peace?", she has this to say: "Of course He [God] is everywhere, but under the trees and looking over the wide expanse of lake, He communicates Himself to me and fills me with a deep quiet peace." (Dorothy Day, 1952, p. 33). In this passage, Dorothy finds a deep internal peace through her appreciation of nature's beauty

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Letter from the Directors

Dear Friends of Nativity House,

He is Risen Indeed! I write from the end of the Easter Season. This year has been buzzing past us in a hurry. Spring is always an exciting season around Nativity House, pregnant with much hope.

Over the winter Krista, John, and Kristle spent much time visiting the area pregnancy support centers with care packages, information for potential guest moms, application packets, and more. This has been great in getting our name out to new agencies that have been serving moms in need. There are so many more since we started this work 12 years ago. We have had a few guest mom inquiries over the last few months. We eagerly await a guest mom to move in.

With recent changes to the way that families in need qualify for food and financial support, we are doing a mother baby drive over Memorial Day weekend. It is much harder for moms to obtain simple food assistance, including formula, baby food, diapers and more. We will be distributing the proceeds of this mother baby drive to area pregnancy support centers. For more information please see the flyer in this issue. Please pray for all moms that are struggling.

Our CSA (community supported agriculture) growing season is well underway. We had our informational garden meeting at the end of February and started plowing and planting a few short weeks later. We are happy to have a handful of new garden memberships and some old friends that have been on hiatus for the last few seasons join up again! We are at 9 CSA member families this season. Praise God for a plentiful season!

This Spring, Augusta has rejoined our part time intern staff and hopes to be a residential summer intern. Joseph has also formally applied to be a summer intern as well. We look forward to having a staff of 4 this summer. There is great hope in many summer projects to complete.

One such project is a refresh of our guest mom and intern space. After 10 years of hospitality the guest rooms, bathroom, and upstairs laundry room are needing some sprucing up. We will be adding shelving to the laundry room, replacing old worn carpeting in one of the bedrooms, replacing window treatments, and repairing/replacing furniture.

Another summer project that we are looking forward to is to add an outdoor processing kitchen for the garden members to process our produce with added ease. We are also excited to finally finish the second bridge over the stream and pond area. Watch out for opportunities for summer work days to build out these fun projects.

We are looking forward to the Farm to Table Celebration on Sunday, September 6. The date is back to the traditional Labor Day Weekend. We are putting together some new committees to help with the event this year: Outreach (will assist with building new relationships for music, farm, & food relations) and Fundraising (will assist with finding sponsorships for front end fundraising as well as silent auction opportunities).

As always, we are grateful for your partnership in the work of caring for the most vulnerable of our community: moms and their babies. We could not do

this work without your prayerful support. We offer our prayers daily for your intentions.

Peace and prayers,

Justin & Venus Wozniak

Items Needed:

2 twin mattresses
2 twin bed frames with drawers underneath
1 dresser
Outdoor bread oven kit
Outdoor sink & hook up
New 4-5 burner grill with burner for large pot/canning

Electrician help

About The Visitation

This newspaper, The Visitation, is a publication on topics of social justice, spirituality, and theology. It is published four times a year by Nativity House. Submissions are accepted from readers everywhere.

To contact us, email us at:

newspaper@nativity-house.org

Past issues are online at:

<http://www.nativity-house.org>

About Nativity House

Nativity House serves as a house of hospitality for first-time mothers in need of residence in the southwest Chicago suburbs. Nativity House operates an on-site community supported farm (CSA) that provides nourishment for the Nativity House and the greater community. Overall, we envision a healing environment focused on the dignity of each person, the dignity of work, and stewardship of the earth.

Nativity House is administered by a board of directors and an advisory committee of individuals with a broad range of experience. Nativity House has formed positive relationships with relevant local organizations that are extremely helpful in carrying out the mission of the house. Nativity House was recognized as a public charity in August, 2011.

To connect with us, please email Venus Wozniak at:

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17141 W. 143rd St.
Lockport, IL 60441

Donations may be made at [paypal.me/nativityhouse](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?url=https://www.nativity-house.org)

We extend the sincerest thanks to all.

Don't Call Me a Saint

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We see this curse playing out in our human history again and again. Today it is palpable in the continuous wars raging across the globe, Palestinian genocide, rampant sex-trafficking as demonstrated by the rich and powerful, ravaging the Earth for consumer glut, and a complete reliance on technology to the detriment of community and human relationship.

The more I spend time studying and praying with scripture the more I realize that God's plan from the beginning has been full restoration of these broken relationships. The Works of Mercy are clearly laid out over and over again all throughout the Old Testament. God's prescription of the Ten Commandments when the Israelites were wandering around the desert was a remedy for the back biting and loathsome

behavior of his Chosen People. Parting the Red Sea wasn't enough of an encouragement for his children to behave in a manner worthy of perfect the communion God had in mind. It seemed like they just couldn't do it despite the miracles and urgings and clear consequences. God's entreaty:

Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord... The Lord your God executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. (Deut. 10: 12-22)

I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may life, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice, and clinging to him; for that means life to you and length of days... (Deut. 30:19-20)

The Old Testament reads like a sordid soap opera style saga: stories that depict a pattern lived and relived. Humans cry out for rescue, God responds with miraculous acts of love and care, the covenant is made new, the relationship is re-kindled, there is a lovely honeymoon period. Slowly but surely humans get more and more bold, stepping out with slightly more salacious acts each time until the infidelity smacks of power-hungry, greed-

seeking acts. God says: *I have set before you life and death. But in the human heart the distortion freely flows: Beloved of God -made to be like God to the warped All Powerful God-like -made to be in control. Then the pattern starts over again. The prophets repeat admonitions over and over again that utter many exhortations of caring for oppressed, the sojourner, the prisoner.*

Enter Jesus.

Jesus came and preached the Gospel. His charisma was electric. Not only did he teach and make the scriptures accessible. He supported his teachings with action. His miracles, healings, and interactions were largely acts that left domination behind and exemplified perfect communion: the healing of the man born blind,

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SAVE THE DATE SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

live music - farm fare - mingling on the farm -
silent auction - cocktails - craft beer - games -
good friends - good times

FOR EVENT INFORMATION JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST
bit.ly/NHEmailList

SEEKING SPONSORS & VOLUNTERS

for more information contact
venus@nativity-house.org

National Catholic Worker Farm Gathering

by Augusta Harris-Patel

For the weekend of February 13, Nativity House staff members drove out to Luck, Wisconsin, to join in the National Catholic Worker Farm Gathering. The gathering was hosted by Anathoth Catholic Worker Farm at West Denmark Church. Catholic workers and other interested individuals came together from all over the country to take respite, build community, and learn from one another. Hospitality for the weekend was offered at West Denmark Church. Many visiting groups brought food and beverages to add to what Anathoth provided. Visitors also had the opportunity to volunteer in food prep, clean-up, and child care to help the weekend run smoothly.

To kick off the weekend, Friday evening began with group prayer and dinner. Soon after, Brenna Cussen Anglada gave a presentation,

Resistance in a Time of Genocide”, reviewing her experiences standing in solidarity with Palestinians. Her insights were personal, informative, and thought-provoking. Following the presentation, there was time set-aside for socializing to conclude the night.

Saturday opened with an early breakfast and went straight into a large group discussion, which reflected on select readings from the hosts. Then the floor was opened for each participant to share who they are and any news they carry for their current or upcoming Catholic Worker. Many participants additionally made clear the support they needed to keep going, giving opportunity for the various farms to support each other and further build community amongst each other.

Into the afternoon, after breaking for lunch, there was a panel

discussion addressing the following subjects: Hospitality on a Catholic Worker Farm, How to Respond to Attacks on the Most Vulnerable, Joy Amidst the Darkness, and Sacramental Agriculture. Panelists included Sara Freid, Terra Lumley, Hikari Nikane, Mike Miles, and a representative from Little Platte Farm.

As a break from the panel, Barbara McAfee and Lia Falls led us in a song circle. We sang songs of resistance as a community to strengthen our resolve, connections, and nourish our spirits before beginning roundtable discussions in breakout groups. Some of the topics of discussion to choose from included abortion, the duty of delight, and other topics that came up during the panel discussion. The rest of the night was spent enjoying the company of the community through a

happy hour, dinner, and square dancing.

Although the Nativity House staff members were not able to attend the rest of the weekend’s activities, Sunday consisted of cleaning up and a tour of Anathoth Farm. The retreat carried on into Monday, when those who were able to stay visited the George Floyd, Renee Good, and Alex Pretti Memorials.

Overall, the National Catholic Worker Farm Gathering was informative, community-building, and joyful.



Augusta Harris-Patel is an intern at Nativity House and student at Lewis University.



The Nativity House staff at the National Catholic Worker Farm Gathering.



Peter Maurin

by John Klisiewicz

The most famous face associated with the Catholic Worker movement is undoubtedly Dorothy Day. Even those who have never heard of the movement may have heard her name before. A lesser known figure, yet one still integral to the movement, is Peter Maurin.

Maurin was a Frenchman born in the late 1800's who lived a life of both intellectuality and of hard manual labor. He grew up in a relatively isolated region in France during a difficult time for the Church. For a short time, he joined the Christian Brothers, but left after France kicked the order out of the country. He served some time working with a social movement in France, but left that after it became too political. He then moves to the Americas where he works hard jobs, teaches, and gets involved with Dorothy Day and her work with workers. Maurin lived and worked in this environment until his death in 1949.

From the outside, Maurin's life does not seem like one of great achievement. He did not lead a massive political movement that shakes the nations to their core, nor did he enter a religious order and preach to the four corners of the world. He worked with individuals on a small scale and tried his best to guide people back to the land and back to community.

Community, hospitality, and agriculture. These were his focuses. His humble life serves as an inspiration because his life can be imitated. You do not need to be a genius to be like Peter Maurin, though he was clearly very intelligent. You do not need to be

a great leader or a great politician or a great organizer. What you need is great love and great hope in the ability of men to live in unity with the help of God's grace.

In Maurin's Easy Essays, he compares his own hopes for the Catholic Worker movement with the achievements of the Irish monks in the early Middle Ages who, by means of farming, education, and hospitality, reconquered Europe for Christ. This conquest was not through blood and battle, but through peace and charity. Like those monks of old, Maurin wished to change society from the bottom up. If we dedicate ourselves to a similar program, perhaps we could see the same success as they did. Perhaps we could see Christ placed at the center of society and each man's arms linked with his neighbors'.

Maurin believed that the world has not yet ended. Although problems exist in the social order, he believed we can change. He believed there is hope. The road might be long and difficult to travel, but others have walked it before. If they could do it by the grace of God, then maybe we can too.



John Klisiewicz is an intern at Nativity House and student at Holy Apostles College and Seminary.

Easy Essays

by Peter Maurin
1877-1949



The Law of Holiness

*"No man can serve two masters,
God and Mammon."*

*"Be perfect
as your Heavenly Father
is perfect."*

*"If you want
to be perfect
sell all you have,
give it to the poor
and follow Me."*

-New Testament.

*"These are hard words,"
says Robert Louis Stevenson.
"but the hard words
of a book
were the only reason
why the book was written."*

*In his encyclical
on St. Francis of Sales
the Holy Father says:*

*"We cannot accept the belief
that this command of Christ
concerns only
a select and privileged group.
and that all others
may consider themselves
pleasing to Him
if they have attained
a lesser degree
of holiness."*

*Quite the contrary is true,
as appears from the generality
of His words.*

*The law of holiness
embraces all men
and admits
of no exception."*

*There is a rub
between the rich
who like
to get richer
and the poor
who don't like
to get poorer.
The rich,
who like
to get richer,
turn to the Church
to save them
from the poor
who don't like
to get poorer.
But the Church
can only tell
the rich
who like
to get richer,
"Woe to you rich,
who like
to get richer,
if you don't help
the poor
who don't like
to get poorer."*

from
Catholic Action
Social Reconstruction

We are asked
by the Holy Father
to reconstruct
the social order.

Catholic bourgeois
made the mistake
of trying to keep up
with non-Catholic
bourgeois.

Reconstructing the
social order
means the creation
of a Catholic society
within the shell
of a non-Catholic
society
with the philosophy
of a Catholic
society.

Catholic reconstructors
must create
a Catholic technique
in harmony
with Catholic
thought.

Social reconstruction
by Catholic laymen
and women
is what we can call
Catholic Action No. 3.

Don't Call Me a Saint

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the Samaritan woman at the well (St. Photina), the healing of the paralyzed man by the Pool of Bethesda, the intervention of the woman caught in adultery. When people tested him or questioned him about eternal life in the heavenly kingdom it always came down to one word: love. That pesky little word that is at the root of every relationship.

When Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes and all of his ingenious parables, he was dusting off old ideologies declared by His Father on Mt Sinai and repeated by the prophets. Jesus framed these teachings in a new package in a certain time in history when they rocked the ethos of the universe because they were punctuated by His Death and Resurrection. The plan of restoration and salvation was no longer for just a select few. The plan was for *all*: *And I have other sheep, that are not of*

this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd (John 10:16). This unfolding of God's Plan was too wild for many, especially those who held places of power and prestige; many remained stagnant in their pretentious rootedness despite many urgings and warnings.

Yet, many woke out of the millenia old slumber and latched on to this wild unfolding of the plan for restored communion, restored relationships. The early Christians were given a gift of Holy Impetus. What started as a lowly vagabond troupe of itinerant preachers has grown to 1.7 billion Catholics (2.4 billion Christians), with all of the Christians of the world totalling 33% of the world's population. The vision of God's Plan for the complete restoration of all of Creation seems to be something

of a pandemic.

The early Christian communities were defined by how all among them had what they needed. All surplus was shared. Private property remained private, but was used for the common good (Acts 4:32). It was noted that these early communities looked very different from the rest of society. There was room for all at their tables. Jesus had been clear that his Father's *kingdom is among you* (Luke 17:21). Jesus' directive of sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and welcoming the stranger was not a mere act of good will for our neighbors. It was an act of restoring a relationship with *Him*. Wiping the face of someone on their sick bed is actually wiping the face of Jesus. Not only do we create communion and honor the kingdom that is here and now; we

are participating in God's Plan for full restoration of all of Creation.

In November of 2025, I found myself in Rome. I had been called there. There was to be a Symposium on the Legacy of Dorothy Day co-sponsored by the University of Notre Dame, The Pontifical Gregorian University, Manhattan University and the Dorothy Day Guild. My name was thrown in the hat for practitioners that should be involved in the panel discussions. I dragged my feet at accepting the invitation to participate. It seemed rather silly. I am one of many Catholic Workers in the world. After all there are over 200 Catholic Worker Houses worldwide. Despite my doubts, Donna Orsuto, Director of the Department of Moral Theology

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Easy Essay

by Peter Maurin
1877-1949

On American Traits

...
The American spirit is characterized by the love of freedom, the spirit of initiative and the will to co-operate.

The American does not like to be pushed about and to be sent where he does not want to go. Even the business man likes to talk about the spirit of initiative, which he calls free enterprise.

...
Freedom is a duty more than a right.

Man has a duty to be intelligent. Man has a duty to choose intelligently between two alternatives.

Man has a duty to act intelligently, using pure means to reach pure aims. To use impure means to reach pure aims is to take the wrong road. You cannot go

where you want to go by taking a road which does not lead you there. Having pure aims and using pure means is making the right use of freedom.

The spirit of initiative is what business men call free enterprise. A private enterprise must be carried out for the common good.

If a private enterprise is not carried out for the Common Good it turns out to be a public nuisance. A public nuisance produces grievances.

Personal grievances against public nuisances produces demagogues who promise to wipe out public nuisances.

The spirit of initiative of social-minded people brings into existence social institutions that make for the welfare of the common people.

When someone has something considered by the common man to be beneficial to the Common Good he is admired by the common man.

The admiration of unselfish men who are not afraid to take the initiative creates a desire among the admirers to climb on the bandwagon of men of initiative.

They want to be part of an unselfish movement. They are willing to make sacrifices for the common cause. So the will to co-operate is the result of the daring of unselfish men who are not afraid to take the initiative.



Dorothy Day: Beautiful Peace

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which serves as a conduit for God's love. Dorothy finds solace in beauty from the darkness in the world around her. She expresses this darkness when she describes the poverty she encounters on the Lower East Side of New York City, "Disabled men, without arms and legs, blind men, consumptive men, exhausted men with all the manhood drained from them by industrialism; farmers gaunt and harried with debt; mothers weighed down with children at their skirts, in their arms, in their wombs, children ailing and rickety—all this long procession of desperate people called to me. Where were the saints to try to change the social order, not just to minister to the slaves, but to do away with slavery?" (Dorothy Day, 1952, p. 45).

In stark contrast, Dorothy sees beauty as a conduit for heavenly things when she says, "My idea of heaven became one of fields and meadows, sweet with flowers and songs and melodies unutterable, in which even the laughing gull and the waves on the shore would play their part" (Dorothy Day, 1952, p. 29). This lovely visual displays how beauty ignites the imagination of Dorothy as she conceptualizes a vision for heaven based on the beauty of the earth.

In another description of beauty, Dorothy recounts, "I collected odor in my memory, the one beauty in those drab streets. The odor of geranium leaves, tomato plants, marigolds; the smell of lumbar, of tar, of roasting coffee; the smell of good bread and rolls and coffee cake coming from the small German bakeries. Here was

enough beauty to satisfy me" (Dorothy Day, 1952, p. 37). Dorothy is able to find satisfaction and fulfillment in the beauty of the smells around her, even if the visuals are bleak. Here Dorothy offers us a remarkable teaching, perhaps there is beauty to be found everywhere.

This beauty leads Dorothy to seek something else that makes for peace, union. "All beauty, all joy, all music filled my heart and my flesh, so that they cried out for fulfillment, for union" (Dorothy Day, 1952, p. 35). She seeks fulfillment and in her experience of beauty, she realizes that it cannot stay within herself, but leads to a union, a communion with God and others. "I wanted life and I wanted the abundant life. I wanted it for others too" (Dorothy Day, 1952, p. 39).

Something about the beauty that Dorothy has experienced is now drawing her towards sharing it with others. She seeks union, recognizing that beauty has the ability to bring peace and communion with others. Being fueled by beauty, Dorothy Day was able to do all the good work that she did both in being one with the poor and as a witness for peace. In this way, beauty can bring about the Kingdom of God.

Dorothy states this directly when she quotes Dostoevsky in a favorite line of hers, "The world will be saved by beauty." Truly, the Kingdom of God will both be brought about by and epitomized by beauty.

The Kingdom of God is described in Scripture as a place where

peace reigns, "The wolf will lie with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them" (New International Version, 1978, Isaiah 11:6).

In many ways, our world could not look more different. Division seems to reign and peace oftentimes seems unattainable. During these turbulent times that we live in, both nationally and abroad, I think we can look to Dorothy Day for a ray of light, a shred of advice on how to keep our internal peace, and in doing so, spreading this peace out to the world.

For Dorothy, and for all of us, peace and beauty go hand in hand.

So how can we live this out in our own lives?

Seek out beauty. Follow what Dorothy Day calls the "duty of delight." The duty of delight involves diligently seeking out beautiful things and enjoying them for the glory of God, giving thanks for all He has given. It is a "duty" because it takes self-control, but it is one that results in joy.

Do we see the beauty all around us, or are we blind? Do we see the exquisite details of trees, grass and flowers, as Dorothy did? Can we read in them the love letter of the Creator? Are we moved by a sunset? In all these things we can give glory to God.

Once we experience the beauty of God's love, it is only natural that in our joy we will want to share

this beauty with others. It is like the woman at the well, who after meeting Christ, quickly runs out to tell everyone about him, in her haste even leaving her water jug behind!

Beauty goes even further than a fuel for social action, it is a good in and of itself, drawing everyone toward communion with God and each other, ultimately bringing the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven, the most beautiful peace imaginable.



Annemarie Coman encountered Nativity House as a live-in intern back in 2017. She's worked in various ministry positions since and is now going back to school to study Sacred Art.

Fellowship and Farming: Winter Roundtable

by Justin Wozniak

Nativity House hosted our most recent winter fireside roundtable in the middle of February. This is the time of year that we usually do planning meetings for our family-supported Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project here behind the house. This year, instead of counting seeds and sketching plans, we decided to discuss the meaning of farming. We brought in two experts on small agriculture and the environment to discuss what farming means, how it connects to the human experience, how it is a response to modern life, and how it is a response to the gospel.

Is farming an act of resistance? Farming is typically thought of as isolationist and apolitical. The typical childhood image of a farmer is a man in a plaid shirt working alone with a variety of animals. Real farming, of course, is social, economic, and deeply political. Actual farms, whether family-run or corporatized, are objects of large political, social, and ideological forces that cut to the core of land ownership, food

security, and the stewardship of all creation. Most people are totally disconnected from food production, and when farms are visited they are treated like petting zoos or historical museums. As a result, food production is totally separated from the prevailing human experience, up until a few dollars are exchanged for food in the mouth. Other concepts are disregarded.

The goal of this roundtable was to consider farming more deeply and address the question of why a small group like Nativity House should continue to do it. So, first, the presenters answered the question of “to exactly what” is farming a form of resistance. Our first speaker, Erik Olson, an agricultural educator in the public school system, spoke to the need to resist desacralizing our relationship with nature. Losing that relationship disconnects us with both our spiritual and physical selves. Farming is a plainly physical act, and it exercises our physical relationship to the world.

Erik’s bigger point was that farming connects us to the world and each other through culture, which is a word with a root meaning of turning and tilling the soil for cultivation. I asked Erik how he dealt with deeper meanings of farming in a public school, and he responded that connecting students back to old family recipes and other ethnic traditions was helpful. Students can easily catch an interest in a herb or other ingredient that is essential to a beloved meal. These familial and emotional connections can be more fully developed in an understanding of why a certain plant, in a certain part of the world, is part of one’s story.

Farming and stewarding the soil are thus world-wide concepts. Kayla Jacobs focused on these aspects in her part of the presentation, which covered her wide experience at small, intentional farms across the U.S. Her object of resistance, however, was the oppression that is all too often associated with farming and agriculture. Historically, farm work was largely done by people that were enslaved in some form or another, were ethnic minorities, or were migrants. During the Great Depression, this kind of oppression was even applied to ethnic majority farm workers from disliked states. Hired farm work today in the U.S. is a legal and ethical disaster, as these workers were excluded from the rules from the New Deal that many of us take for granted. Thus, they face ongoing crises in immigration status, housing, safety, and basic workplace protections.

Working cooperatively in a community garden project, or even simply supporting an ethical food source, is thus a small form of resistance to this tragic history. There are bigger issues involved here too. I asked Kayla what other topics she is focused on in her full-time work as an environmental advocate with the Catholic Climate Covenant. She brought up the recent Trump-led rescission of the greenhouse gas endangerment finding and the new Trump-led approach that will no longer consider the costs of health impacts due to air pollution. These reflect a failure to protect the fundamental resources critical to human life: air, water, and soil, which are presented to us through food and farming.

Both speakers and the discussion that followed made it clear that farming was anything but isolated from the larger spiritual, charitable, and conceptual issues in our world today. I plan to spend the growing season turning these over.



Justin Wozniak is co-founder of Nativity House.



In Pope Leo's new Dilexi Te ...

*He isn't inviting us to meditate on the teachings in the head space but to move our heart, feet, and hands **now to action** because **that** is what it means to love Christ... the church's great history of caring for the poor is integral to being in relationship with Christ. There is great interest in understanding how this tradition applies today and how to realize that all are our neighbor, anywhere and everywhere.*

- Carrie Roberts at Nativity House Roundtable on Dilexi Te

Don't Call Me a Saint

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and Spiritual Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, asserted in her email of invitation that my help was needed in introducing Rome to Dorothy Day.

Just one day before our delegation arrived in Rome, Pope Leo XIV lifted up Dorothy Day at his Saturday, November 22, 2025 audience:

She united mind, heart, and hands. In this way, to hope is to take a stand. Dorothy Day involved thousands of people. They opened houses in many cities, in many neighborhoods. Not large service centers, but houses of hospitality—places of charity and justice where people could call each other by name, get to know each other one by one, and transform indignation into communion and action.

Pope Leo lifted up the legacy of Dorothy Day; the Catholic Worker Movement is a movement that seeks to live out God's Plan for all

of Creation - restoring relationships. This put a fire in our belly as we lined up early on the morning of the Wednesday Audience. Members of the Dorothy Day Guild had sent word to the Vatican that the Guild Delegation were to be at the audience with Kate and Martha Hennessy, Dorothy Day's granddaughters, bearing gifts for the Pope: Dorothy Day's breviary. We had special tickets that gave us a front row to Pope Leo's canopy. Pope Leo had many special visitors that day. A guard came and received the gift of Dorothy's breviary. Despite not getting to shake the Holy Father's hand our spirits were high.

That evening we gathered at the Pontifical Gregorian University for a panel discussion on *A Pilgrim of Hope: An Academic Symposium on the Legacy of Dorothy Day*. Each panel member lifted up the various aspects of Dorothy's life and legacy, all agreeing that she was one of the most important figures of the American Catholic Church of the 21st century. Robert Ellsberg, editor in chief of Oribis Books,

spoke of Dorothy's life as informed by the saints, particularly St. Therese of Lisieux. Dorothy Day worked to apply Therese's little way to social action. He discussed how he discovered the theme of the *duty of delight* woven throughout Dorothy's life as a community member and practitioner of peaceful civil disobedience as he edited her diaries and letters. Margie Pfiel, a moral theologian from Notre Dame and lifelong Catholic Worker, spoke on the aspect of Dorothy's life rooted in the sacramentality of the beauty of the natural world. Margie lifted up how Dorothy prayed with open eyes to the gratuitous gifts of Creation. How could there be no God with all of this beauty? Margie asserted that this lens in which Dorothy viewed creation led to a deep spiritual interiority that was incarnational.

I was tasked with asking the first question of these two life long students of Dorothy. *How has the work of the Catholic Worker and study of Dorothy Day formed your interior life?* Robert Ellsberg piped up first. He talked about

how Dorothy Day exemplified moral and spiritual greatness and was quick to remind those around her of the universal call to holiness. She was both a contemplative and an activist who looked to the saints for guidance. It was because of Dorothy's influence that he spent his life as an editor, writing, reading, and learning from the saints:

My belief is that my most significant calling has been to elevate her and to understand the call, how this call to holiness has social implications for the world. In all the most important ways I fail every day, but she implanted in me a vocation to make her holiness and that of others like her better known.

Margie at first, referred back to Dorothy's conversion to faith through motherhood and the connection of pain and joy. Because of this Margie seeks prayer through the same sacramentality of Creation,

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Don't Call Me a Saint

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through communion with her housemates and those that are served at Our Lady of the Road in South Bend, Indiana:

At Our Lady of the Road we have a chapel on the second floor that overlooks the county jail. It is here that I grasp the sacramentality of creation that Dorothy was trying to convey. The energy of God's love is connecting us. She [Dorothy] anticipated Laudato Si decades before Pope Francis wrote about the interconnectedness of all of God's Creation that is animated and stoked by God's love, but without leaving anyone out. Even the people in the county jail are in communion with us... That is the heart of it for me, it's both the beauty and the pain of it. It's the connection of contemplation and action that is at the heart of the Worker.

There were many other panelists with equally rich discussion. But the highlight of the evening was the final comments from Martha and Kate Hennessy. Martha asserted the rarity that comes with having relatives of one who is being considered for sainthood present. She was so moved to share what life was like growing up with Dorothy Day as *Granny*. Martha's earliest memories of Dorothy were of sitting on her lap, resting her head on Dorothy's chest. She said that even as a young girl, there was a sense that the vibrations from the resonance of her voice was imbued with the presence of God. Martha talked about her time serving at Mary

House in New York City:

I can't help but to think of St Paul: faith without works is meaningless... Houses of Hospitality and the Works of Mercy are very concrete, very direct. That is very practical. We have to comfort the afflicted. We have to pay attention to the suffering of others... Dorothy Day taught me to resist the bomb...I did participate in an action. I am a convicted felon. That was the most powerful component of my faith journey. What does my baptism mean? ...the coldness of our U.S. federal courts and the warmth of the inmates that I shared life with in Danbury made it clear to me that I was very much in the right place, doing the right thing.

Kate Hennessy closed out the evening. She started with her old adage: *Dorothy is still making us nervous. She is challenging us to open our hearts and live with loving kindness. She is keeping many of us busy and engaged long after her death. 45 years later she is still making us nervous and challenging us.... Dorothy challenges us personally to trust Christ when he says "love one another."* Kate went on to tell of a profound example of Dorothy's understanding of the Mystical Body of Christ. When the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Dorothy wrote that perhaps we would breathe in the dust from those lost in bombing, that maybe we would feel them in the rain and the fog of New York City. Kate continued:

What an extraordinary way to understand what it means to be part of the Mystical Body of Christ. No matter where we are in the world we are breathing in the physical sufferings,... How blessed I am to have witnessed and still be witnessing the wonder that is the life of Dorothy Day...Dorothy still speaks to us of what we long for. She speaks to our basic human desires for peace, justice, and community. Led by the call of Christ to do the Works of Mercy. Not only believing in a world where it is easier to be good but acting as if that world already exists in the here and now... I believe that she insists we make a simple choice, do we open our hearts? Or do we close them?

What does it take to have this revelation of the heart that Dorothy spoke of?... To do the work however we are called to do it. And to live with loving kindness, generosity, hospitality, and a deep awareness of beauty. And above all to let love guide us ... Love, that most mysterious force of all, that power that we all hold within us and that is the one true connection with God. ...We will all feel grief in our love as we open our hearts, for we will now know what we have and what we are in danger of losing. What a gift. What a task we all have before us.

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The Dorothy Day Guild Delegation just before heading into the meeting at the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.

Don't Call Me a Saint

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It was the next morning that I found myself waiting outside the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints. We were given the privilege of meeting with the relator for the cause for sainthood of Dorothy Day, Monsignor Maurizio Tagliaferri, the head postulator, Wlavery Hilgeman and canon lawyer, Emmanuele Spedicato. Our delegation was escorted down the long hallway of relators to a conference room. When we all sat down, it was explained that Monsignor Bogusław Stanisław Turek, CSMA wanted to see us when we got there. Msgr. Turek is the undersecretary of the entire dicastery. He had taken Dorothy Day's cause quite personally. He was eager to see it progress, so he took on the writing of her biography for the positio.

Msgr. Turek came rushing in with a warm, broad smile on his face. He explained, through Emmanuele and Wlavery translating, that he had just a few minutes before his next meeting. He wanted us to know that those who work on the causes for saints are always very happy to see the faces of those at home advocating for the cause: *please feel at home in this place because the saints and the martyrs of the church are here. The treasures of the church are here. You - Please feel at home here.* His face beamed. He felt quite sure that this is the time for the message of Dorothy Day to assist the Church as the world sorts out vast disparity. *This is her time.* Msgr. Turek stayed with us a bit longer while we talked of the progress of Dorothy Day's process. The relator, Msgr. Tagliaferri, began to discuss with us the next steps. Everyone was quite sure of Dorothy's holiness and her legacy. They reiterated that us being there was evidence

of the fruit of her legacy. The positio, the summary of 151 volumes of her works and writings, would be published and distributed to the dicastery's theologians. They were all quite confident that the theologians would rule in favor of her life of heroic virtue. However, there is still the question of two verified miracles. The way to attain this? Continue to spread the word and legacy of Dorothy Day and The Catholic Worker. We left the dicastery with an urgency about us. The doubt that clouded my mind the month leading up to this pilgrimage had completely dissolved. It was replaced with resolve.

It's true. Dorothy Day never wanted to be a saint. I think this notion has something to do with the fear of Restoration Work being passed off as work for a mere few. There is far too much work to do to leave it for the privileged halo-bearing few. Dorothy knew that. She wanted her work and life to rouse us to action and contemplation. God's Plan depends on it.

I was introduced to the Catholic Worker multiple times before I was hooked. Over the last twenty-six years that Justin and I have been committed to this way of life, we have introduced many new friends to her. Many pick up the pitchfork and baby diapers and join in the work. Some have even moved on to start their own Catholic Worker communities. There are always a few naysayers. *I am not so sure about her; it all sounds too communist to me!* Or *I can totally see why the FBI was watching her; she was a radical extremist!* Or one of my favorites,



Monsignor Turek holding up the completed Positio of Dorothy Day; with Wlavery Hilgemann.

I am pretty sure Christianity and Anarchy cannot go together.

When I am stuck in a quandary over challenges of grumpy community members, the merciless slaughter of our chickens by a stoat, fears of our neighbors being unwelcome to us as representatives for our guest moms or any of the tedium that comes with this work, I fall back on the writings of Dorothy Day and hours of prayer before the Eucharist in Adoration. Being invited to participate in the Pilgrimage to Rome on the occasion of the 45 anniversary of Dorothy Day's death was a curious miracle. Dorothy Day was present in the panel discussions,

in the long walks through relator hallways, in the discussions over glasses of wine at dinner, in the solitary walks through the Roman streets. What she is proposing is that we become community despite our differences and do the work of loving those actively suffering in the here and now. Since the dawning of time it has always been about relationships: perfect communion. This is the work of God's Plan. The work is for all of us. The work of action and contemplation. The work of leaving no one out. The work of savoring the joy and the pain, the grief, the mystery, the wonder. The work of taking care of one

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Don't Call Me a Saint

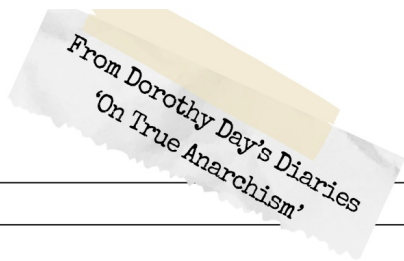
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another. We need leaders to guide and inspire us in the work. We need the saints. We need Dorothy Day's voice right here and right now to be a clear beacon for these dire times.

I leave you with words from Dorothy's diaries. Maybe for those who need clarity in the work of Christian Anarchy:



Venus Wozniak and her husband, Justin, are the founders of Nativity House. She also serves as the Associate Director of Mission & Ministry at Lewis University. She can be reached at venusad@nativity-house.org



Monday, August 13, 1951

...The true anarchist. Anarchism based on love, not hate. Self-government rather than an imposed government. Recognizing dignity and glory of our sonship and what it entails, what abilities it confers. Our capacities to work, physically, mentally, spiritually. To expect everything of ourselves, with God's grace, and not to judge others. Measure ourselves as to what God wants of us, what talents he has given us to use and not to compare ourselves or judge ourselves by others, whether better or worse. In that way to stand alone, in self-reliance.

On the other hand, to be so far from dominating others or wanting to influence others as to (1) not judge (this seems to be folly, but it is the folly of the cross, it is sowing one's judgement); (2) to serve all men, to obey all men, to wash the feet of all men, in love, recognizing our common humanity - we are all one flesh, as is said of husbands and wives. And what love surpasses that love? To love our brothers because Christ is our brother. Because we are all children of Mary, Mother of God. To love our brother because Jesus, son of God, gave us a picture of that love in the story of the prodigal son. That is the kind of Father we have. No judgement there. Only the madness of love, deep, profound, as profligate in its way as the son's tawdry loves had been profligate.

The true anarchist asks nothing for himself, he is self-disciplined, self-denying, accepting the Cross, without asking sympathy, without complaint.

The true anarchist loves his brother, according to the new law, ready to die rather than compel his brother to go his totalitarian way, no matter how convinced he may be that his way is the only way.



DOROTHY DAY GUILD

A Woman of Conscience, a Saint for Our Time

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1. Join the Dorothy Day Guild.
2. Sign the petition asking for Dorothy Day to be a saint.
3. Pray intercessory prayers to Dorothy Day and let the guild know.
4. Spread the work about Dorothy's cause



THAT DOROTHY DAY BE NAMED A SAINT

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT VENUS WOZNIAK
VENUS@NATIVITY-HOUSE.ORG

Sacred Tent Catholic Worker

by Kate Myroup

Built upon a verse from sacred scripture, Psalm 27:5, Sacred Tent is a Catholic Worker House of Hospitality. This psalm says: “For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock”. Founded in 2018 by Nick and Toni Baier, Sacred Tent provides services including shelter, food, and any support required for the most vulnerable in society, as instructed by Christ and reiterated through Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement. It is guided by the cornerstones of prayer, service, community, and simplicity. We are based out of Downers Grove, IL. Nick and Toni have six children and are raising them as the next generation of Catholic Workers.

This house of hospitality is a non-profit organization that serves individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the suburban area of Chicago. Our community is made up of a group of families who host individuals and families in their homes. We also rent a home that is run by two Sacred Tent staff members that hosts single mothers and their children. We partner with an international organization called Safe Families for Children (SFFC), which works to keep children out of the foster care system and reunify them with their families. Safe Families connects Sacred Tent with mothers and children who are in need of assistance, and with the support of SFFC social workers we are able to help these mothers find work and permanent living situations, while providing them with a loving and safe home during their most vulnerable times.

Each guest is welcomed into a caring community, living alongside dedicated members who offer guidance, prayer, and friendship. Remarkably, every former guest has successfully broken the cycle of homelessness, thanks to the unwavering support of those who believe in Sacred Tent—through prayers, friendships, and donations—combined with our commitment to structure and accountability. Our guests actively participate and find dignity in daily chores, shared meals, maintaining full-time work or education, and meeting regularly with our volunteer caseworkers.

No matter where they’ve been or what struggles they’ve faced, we open our doors to the ill, the lonely, the refugee, the Christian, and the non-Christian alike. With faith as our foundation, Sacred

Tent values our deep relationship with God, trusting that He will guide our every word and action when we ask. Our community participates in prayerful solidarity nights - simple meals of rice and beans, which is a staple for many impoverished communities throughout the world. We also gather together to pray the holy rosary, attend adoration and mass.

Other ways that Sacred Tent is involved in our community is through a Backpack Ministry, where we provide basic necessities to those in need, through backpacks filled with toiletries, simple clothing and food staples. We go out in groups and spend time connecting with those who receive the backpacks, providing prayer, encouragement and connection. We believe in supporting the whole person, not simply providing assistance

through supplies, but by extending friendship and feeding the need to be loved and connected to others. Our other involvement is with Nativity House, as we join them in caring for the garden at St. Procopius Abbey, in Lisle, IL. We have several beekeepers in the Sacred Tent community and we are able to care for hives at the Abbey. We try to be good stewards of the Earth as another way to take care of the poor.

As I write this article, I have been on staff with Sacred Tent for just under a year, serving as one of two staff members living at our house of hospitality. Toni and I grew up in Wheaton, IL, just a few blocks from one another, and we met when we were 15 and 16 years old. Looking back over our

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Sacred Tent Catholic Worker Community

Sacred Tent

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20 years of friendship I am in awe of how God placed Toni in my life. Her faith and friendship had a large impact on my conversion from Protestantism to Catholicism four years ago. Since I have known her, Toni has been passionate about the poor and homeless among us, and it has been inspiring to see Nick join her in this mission, starting when they were first dating, to marriage and six kids later. There are other members of the Sacred Tent community who we have known since our teen years, and it is amazing to see how God was shaping the Sacred Tent community back then, even when we didn't know it.

dull the ache of loneliness and brought joy in times of change. I have found that what Dorothy Day wrote is true, that: "We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes with community."



Kate Myroup is a staff member at Sacred Tent Catholic Worker in Downers Grove, IL.

Over the last year of being a Catholic Worker and hosting a mother and child, I have been stretched and grown in ways that I otherwise wouldn't have. This work is holy, but it is hard. I have learned to have a deep reliance on God, finding peace in the sacrifice of the Mass, comfort and forgiveness in confession, and strength from his body and blood when receiving the Eucharist. The biggest realization that I have had thus far has been this – that as much as our guests need myself and our community, I need them just as badly. Before joining Sacred Tent I may not have been experiencing poverty in the same way our guests have, but I experienced poverty in the lack of community, poverty in times of disconnection with God and his Church, and poverty when I was lacking a clear way to serve others. The seemingly mundane things in life – cleaning the house, cooking meals, and doing dishes – have been the most sanctifying things in my life over this year. Living in community has helped

St. Therese of Lisieux

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reading of scripture and openness to God's voice gave her the clarity she needed. Therese took this to heart with great joy and saw it as confirmation that she should continue as a cloistered Carmelite nun.

St. Therese died while she was still in her 20s and had a painful, drawn out illness. During this time, many described how she remained joyful and faithful and full of confidence in God's goodness. Therese even told her sisters to keep her nail clippings because she trusted that she was going to be a saint! Her trust in God was complete, even through the turbulence in her life.

We can look to St. Therese as an

inspiration, because she, like all of us, had her flaws, but through her confidence and faith and by the grace of God, she became a great saint. Therese has been named a Doctor of the Church because of her inspired writing in her autobiography, "Story of a Soul." If you want to learn more, consider reading this short but very inspirational story!

St. Therese, little flower, pray for us!



Annemarie Coman encountered Nativity House as a live-in intern back in 2017. She's worked in various ministry positions since and is now going back to school to study Sacred Art.

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In this issue:

- Don't Call Me a Saint and Other Misnomers
- Dorothy Day: Beautiful Peace
- National Catholic Worker Farm Gathering
- Peter Maurin
- Fellowship and Farming
- Sacred Tent Catholic Worker
- St. Therese of Lisieux

Nativity House
17141 W. 143rd St.
Lockport, IL 60441



St. Therese of Lisieux: A Little Flower

Feast Day: October 1st

Patron of Missionaries, Florists/Gardens, Pilots, Priests,
Those Suffering From Illness, France

by Annemarie Coman

St. Therese of Lisieux is a favorite saint among so many today, including myself. She is known by her nickname (which she actually used for herself) which is the little flower. This nickname says a lot about St. Therese, but it might also be deceiving because she was definitely a powerhouse of spiritual vigor and confidence. St. Therese is popular for what she called the little way. She saw herself as very weak and small, but able to do small things with great love. By her inspiration, St. Mother Teresa also took this to be her motto along with St. Therese's name.

St. Therese lived in France with her parents and several sisters. She had a happy childhood until her mother suddenly died while she was still a small child. Losing her mother put St. Therese in a very precarious mental state and some thought she would not recover. She was described as an extremely sensitive child. St. Therese may have struggled with mental illness, such as anxiety or depression. As St. Therese herself

describes, it was the smile of the Virgin Mary that saved her from her illness. She remembers seeing a statue of Mary in her bedroom that seemed to smile at her, giving her hope for the future. One could say that in losing one mother, she found another.

There is another beautiful story I like about St. Therese, which shows the strength of her character and faith in a small but important matter. In her family, they had a Christmas tradition of opening one present in the evening on Christmas Eve which was supposed to be from St. Nicholas. Therese overheard her father saying that she was getting a little old for this tradition which was meant to be for children. She was very hurt by this and could have easily fallen into a sullen and angry mood which was a temptation for her as she had naturally a bit of a turbulent emotional state. But Therese found the faith and strength to pretend like she didn't hear what her father said, and to run joyfully down the stairs to open

her present. St. Therese describes this as a defining moment in her spiritual life in which she learned to do small things joyfully with great love.

After losing her mother, St. Therese faced another loss in her adolescent years, her older sister entering a cloistered Carmelite convent. Her sister had become a mother figure for St. Therese as she grew up, so this loss was keenly felt. But Therese continued on, relying on her faith to sustain her. She also had a tender and close relationship to her father. Side note- Therese's parents, Louis and Zelig Martin, were the first saint couple to be canonized together!

Eventually, Therese felt a pulling on her heart to also join the Carmelite order. Unfortunately, she was too young to enter, so they denied her. Therese, plucky as always, decided that she would go straight to the top and petition the Pope to enter the convent early. Therese had an opportunity to go to Rome with her father on a pilgrimage, and sought this chance to seek an audience with the Holy Father. By the grace of God, Therese was able to meet with the him, and she impressed him enough to convince him to allow her to enter.



This is such a classic St. Therese moment, her bravery and courageous missionary spirit shining through. As a young girl, St. Therese dreamed of traveling abroad to do missionary work, and she loved St. Joan of Arc. There is even a cool picture that you can find online of her dressed up as her favorite saint! Armor and all! It is for this reason that St. Therese is the patron saint of missionaries, even though she never did any international mission work.

Instead, Therese's mission lay in the heart of the church. When questioning the Lord as to what was to be the purpose of her life, she clearly heard the words "You are to be love in the heart of the church." Your mission is love. Her

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