

Clothes

Dorothy Day

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Summary: Describes how a needy person, a veteran, became the recipient of clothing that was donated that very same day and comments on the way "cards and papers" are becoming necessary to establish one's identity. (DDLW #421).

Here is the way things work around St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. In the morning we get a letter from Los Angeles, saying: "I have sent you some clothes—overcoat, pants, shirt, socks, muffler. In the name of St. Anthony, may someone find a little comfort out of them. Good health

and peace be with you." Two hours afterward I noticed a pale and distraught young man walking up and down the street and looking in the window. Finally he came in and asked if we had some clothes. He was in tatters, cotton pants, torn shirt, light jacket and no socks. We gave him the clothes which had just come in. He was a veteran of this war, and his hand was shaking when he showed me his discharge papers. I hate it when people try to show me papers. It is an awful thing that we Americans now have to go around with cards and papers in our pockets. And it is still worse when people feel that they have lost their identity when they do not have those same papers.