

Notes By The Way - September 1945

The Catholic Worker, September 1945, 1, 8.

Summary: Describes the celebrations taking place in New York City following the announcement of the end of the Second World War. Writes about pilgrimages and their pilgrimage in thanksgiving for peace as well as in penance for having used the atomic bomb—a ten mile walk in the city at night accompanied by song and prayer. Gives accolades for the cooks, the volunteers at the farm, and those in the city. (DDLW #414).

The last line of the last Notes By The Way announced that we were going to make a pilgrimage for peace. And now peace is here, thank God, and our pilgrimage will be in thanksgiving as well as in penance for having used the atomic bomb.

We heard the whistles blow when we were on the farm, and all the group gathered together to sing the Te Deum.

In New York, on Mott Street, the joyful festivities continued for several weeks. We thought at first there would be an octave of rejoicing, as the noise, the confetti, the street dancing went on and on. It began on the feast of the Assumption, continued during the feast of San Rocco, and block after block had dancing and parties. There was no drinking, no disorders. Grandmothers

and two year-olds danced, and the juke boxes were pulled out into the streets, and firecrackers were set off from housetops, and bands played, and the atmosphere was one of joy.

The flags are still flying in the streets right now because within a week another feast, that of San Gennaro, not celebrated during the war, will begin and continue for five days. Then the Chinese down the block will have some more victory parades, as they did during the first rejoicings, and it is hard to see how the feastings and the parading can be any more elaborate. By the end of September we will begin to settle down hereabouts for the fall and winter, digging ourselves in, one might say, to face coal shortages, more unemployment and the illness and hardship that comes with poverty and breadlines. The poor know how to rejoice, we are glad to say, just as profoundly as they know how to suffer.

It is September 14th, and quarter of 9 in the evening. All afternoon it has rained cats and dogs, pitchforks and hammer handles. Our work went on as usual—men filled the hall and our neighbors had a hard time getting up and down stairs while the bread line went on between 4:30 and 5:30. Gerry (yes he is back for good now) and Dave Mason and Charlie O'Rourke were working in the backoffice and Jim and Joe in the front. Jane was baking bread upstairs and I went out to visit the sick. And all the while we were worried about the

rain and the pilgrimage which is going to take place tonight, beginning at twelve midnight. We are going to walk from Hester and Mott street, up to Mother Cabrini's shrine at 190th street and Cabrini avenue. Quite a few have been calling up to find out if we are going to have the pilgrimage just the same, and we

Have said yes. Now as I write, the rain has stopped. Every now and then there is a cool breeze but it is generally muggy. It is the time, after all, of equinoctial storm. Last year at this time there was a hurricane which tore up trees all over Manhattan and just skirted the farm at Easton, where the first retreat of this year of retreats was taking place.

We need to make pilgrimages. Catherine de Hueck Doherty's article on pilgrimages in a recent CATHOLIC WORKER, aroused widespread interest, and many wrote in telling us how much they enjoyed it. Then we wrote of the pilgrimages of the Italian women in the neighborhood—good sturdy pilgrimages of 116 blocks, and barefoot at that. Every year they make such a pilgrimage to our Lady of Mt. Carmel's shrine. Friendship House had a pilgrimage which Julia writes about for this issue, and we announced in our last issue this pilgrimage of tonight.

We need to make pilgrimages, and this one, starting on a feast of the Holy Cross and ending at Holy Mass on the feast of our Lady of Sorrows, is in penance for our use of the atomic bomb, for our sins and omissions in this war, in thanksgiving for the ending of the war. We are starting at midnight, and when we stop to rest on the way up, we will sing as the chimes sing at Lourdes—"Parce Domine, Parce populo tuo, ne in aeternum irascaris nobis."

At the Drop of a Hat When I called up this evening to find out how Maryfarm was getting on (it costs forty-five cents for five minutes), I found that another retreat was going on that I knew nothing about. An

army sergeant had arrived, desirous of a retreat, also Mrs. Ellis and a friend from Cleveland, also Mary Jennifer from Wilmington, Delaware, and John Daly from Georgia, not to forget Jack English, who had just finished Fr. Ehman's retreat and was quite ready to make another. Fr. Pacifique Roy, our chaplain at Maryfarm, had just come back from a visit to Montreal and as he is always ready to give a retreat at the drop of a hat, he started giving another retreat after a short rest, and it was still going on when I telephoned tonight. At midnight they were going to have a holy hour and promised to remember us on our pilgrimage.

The next retreat that I know of at this writing will begin the Monday night before Thanksgiving and last for the week.

Cooking Down at the farm, praise God, we have wonderful help for the summer, with a Pittsburgh contingent helping us—Mildred Petty, Cecelia Hugo, and quite a few other girls, not to speak of Hans Tunneson, Duncan Chisolm and Joe who came down to recover from some broken ribs,

made a retreat and stayed to help, and others besides.

In town, on the other hand, we have been very short-handed in the kitchen. I'm hoping later to get some steady help for Chu and Shorty. When one or the other take a day off, Bill Duffy and

Rumanian John help. And Dave Mason also is pretty regular in cooking for the house at night. There was one week there when Dave was making a retreat that I had to enter in on the KP job and I learned a lot. How to make a stew for one hundred and fifty, for instance. Fifteen pounds of

kidneys, ten pounds of macaroni, five pounds of onions and a bushel basket of broccoli makes a wonderful meal. And what a job the bread slicing is when it is for one hundred and fifty twice a day! A bread slicing machine may be the "extension of the hand of man" in this case.

I can never say enough in praise of Chu and Shorty. They always move with such alacrity to help any latecomer, to pass the salt, to get extra silver. They never whisk the plates away as though they wished to get through. They not only cook, they clean up afterward, and sweep out the coffee room and polish the pots. And they always stand to eat their own meals and no one can persuade them to sit down to the table.

Later...

Yes, we made the pilgrimage, and there were nine of us, four men and five women. We started out at one a.m. and what with a few rest stops, there was just time to get to the shrine in time for the six-thirty Mass, Saturday morning. In fact, Dave Mason and I had humbly to admit defeat at 168th street, and make the last mile on the subway in order to be there on time. The others, with younger legs, were able to speed up their pace and arrive just as we reached the door of the chapel. It was a long walk, we all agreed, probably over ten miles, but it was a good night for walking, so warm that we did not need wraps. We stopped in Union Square, in Columbus Circle, at 100th street, 125th and 150th, and at each place there were convenient benches to rest.

We said the fifteen decades of the rosary, and the beads also for the seven sorrows of our Lady.

Also we sang—The Ave Maria, the Pater Noster, the Salve Regina, besides the other seasonal hymns to our Lady. Also the Parce, Domine, and the Attende, Domine.

It was a happy pilgrimage, though painful, too—but that is the way penance is—difficult but most satisfying.

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Day After Day - November 1941

The Catholic Worker, November 1941, 1, 4.

Summary: Renews opposition to peacetime conscription and urges readers to write the government, talk about it at meetings, and pray and do penance—"This program is open to us all." Enrolls her daughter in a "domestic science" school in Montreal. Includes a canticle of thanksgiving about little beauties in the city. (DDLW #376).

October 16 is the first anniversary of peacetime conscription and you will notice the several letters on the page devoted to the Association of Catholic Conscientious Objectors telling of the way different C.O. camps celebrated it. We continue to protest our country's supine acceptance of peacetime compulsory military training and urge our readers to protest, and to urge the repeal of this law. We are set in opposition to the policies of the administration (and it will be remembered that Lincoln said that one could oppose the administration without being opposed to our form of government) and we must continue to voice our opposition to the undeclared war we are waging and the imminence of the declared war the President warns us of in his Armistice Day speech.

We are crushed under the burden of our guilt in starving our brothers in Europe. There are 300,000,000 people on rations in Europe. God only knows what will be the outcome of hunger there this winter. When will the pestilence strike that goes with famine?

Do What You Can You can write and write again, protesting our President's policy of accepting the British blockade. Talk to others about it. Take up this matter at trade union meetings, solidarity meetings, club meetings. Write to 420 Lexington Ave., National Committee on Food for Europe, and find out what you can do to help. Work and pray, or rather pray that God will show you what to do these dreadful days. These are days when people are flocking to the churches, to the Communion rail. This midweek morning there were several rails of communicants and it is so every morning at the six, seven and eight o'clock Masses.

To pray, to work for peace in whatever way you can, to sacrifice and do penance for our sins as a nation, this program is open to us all.

We may not see results, we may in no way stem the tide right now.

"Our daily bread," Zundel writes, in *The Splendor of the Liturgy* "tastes more bitter. The soul must become acquainted, by living them in her measure, with

all the states of the Only Son. For God cannot identify us with His Christ unless He conforms us to His Passion.”

Travelogue This month I spoke in Providence, Rhode Island; in Brockton and Cambridge, Mass.; Stoddard, New Hampshire; Forest Hills, Long Island; Pittsfield, Mass.; Chicago, Ill.; and Boston, Mass., and then back to New York to speak again.

In addition to the speaking before various groups, Teresa and I made a quick trip to Montreal so that she could be entered at St. Martine’s in a little school recommended by Monsignor Ligutti, where the Sisters of the Holy Name teach spinning, weaving, dyeing, sewing and knitting, in addition to cooking, and other household arts. They speak only French, and during her free hours Teresa will read history. She has a busy winter before her, but next year, when she is sixteen, she can settle on the farm, and help Eva with the household and garden work, and teach the others how to spin and weave on the loom in Grace Branham’s house.

No matter what is going on in the world, women know that meals must be cooked, and men know that fields must be planted and harvested.

It was hard leaving Teresa in Canada. Montreal seemed a gloomy place on a dull, grey day, with all the young men in uniform. One felt indeed in a country at war. The school is an hour out, by a bus which runs twice a day. I kept comforting myself that she was not so very far away. After all, the round trip to New York is only fifteen dollars by bus and it is an overnight trip. The tuition at the school is eighteen dollars a month. There are about twenty of these domestic science schools in Quebec to revive the household arts that the French were in danger of losing.

And in spite of war and the griefs of parting, there was time and impulse for a poem or a canticle, whatever one chooses to call it. I wrote it on the subway, and it is for Teresa:

Thank God for turtles in backyards,
For smell of horses and the wagon load of celery,
For scrubbed sweet potatoes
Baking in a push cart oven,
For the smell of charcoal on a dull fall day.
For chestnuts, too, and the dry leaves of Bayard St.
For the little bird in the church yard,
Bright with the yellow breast.
For the pert grasshopper on Katie’s vegetable stand,
For babies, for kittens, for little humble things.
Teresa calls dungeons, the dark dark tenements,
But thank God for poverty which drives us from ugliness
To walk in parks, over bridges, or just among the people.
The sky is ours, the wind, the rain.

There is sun on bare branches, and sun on the housetops.
We cannot be home bound, we must look for God's things,
So to the streets, to the parks, to the bridge, to the rivers, to the markets, to
the bay,
Everywhere, even here,
Even in the dungeons
In the ugly cities,
There we thank Thee,
Loved One, God!

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Thanksgiving Dinner and Other Things

The Catholic Worker, December 1939, 4.

Summary: Describes their Thanksgiving feast. Despite the fact that donations were sparse, all enjoy a filling, yet sober, celebration. Notes the beginning of Advent and thoughts of feasting turn to fasting. Describes her speaking tour of New England, meditates on the virtues of manual labor, and reminds her readers that the truckmen of Burlington are suffering real privation during their strike. (DDLW #351).

Today the yard looks like a junk shop. We just cleaned out one of the cellars to store three tons of coal that Frank O'Donnell trucked in from Tamaqua, Pennsylvania. We have burned one ton so far this winter already.

We had to move the furniture we had stored in the cellar out in the yard and for the day we have looked like an evicted family. One old man sat in the rocking chair, sewing canvas together, trying to make himself a pair of shoes for his decrepit feet. Three other men waited for a chance at the shoemaker's bench to sole and heel their shoes. A few other men were chopping up boxes for firewood and others waited to see if any clothes had come in.

First Day This year we had a delightful Thanksgiving in spite of the fact that all our friends seemed to have forgotten us and no one sent in any food except Schuyler Warren who brought in two magnificent pumpkin pies. We had enough money, however, to buy some chickens which we cut up and potroasted so that they would go further. With those and cranberry sauce (Sharkey put too much water in and then added gelatin to stiffen it so that it finally looked like red cabbage rather than cranberries), creamed onions and mashed potatoes,—it

was a feast indeed. For once on a holiday, not one of the family circle over-indulged. Usually our Italian neighbors are so neighborly that they offer our weaker brethren hospitality in the way of wine and groppa and the result is maudlin sentimentality if not pugnacity on their part and wrath on mine. But this day was indeed a day of cheer. Every one cooperated even to the five cooks in the kitchen. To be exact I should say four, because Shorty is all-around assistant. But Roddy, John Cannon, Sharkey, Katherine Travers, all worked to make the feast a pleasant one. There were white tablecloths, second helpings for those who wished, and enough to feed all our own gang and about fifteen others who came in. About sixty meals were served and it was a leisurely and homelike meal.

Less Eatings And now Advent is upon us and we must begin to fast. We read (in a Hearst paper!) picked up from a subway seat, that the Holy Father is beginning a week's vigil for peace, spending the time in prayer and fasting. Rabbis and ministers, of New York City, according to the story, are joining with him in prayer. It gives one a sense of great loyalty and devotion to our Holy Father when we hear of his storming Heaven with his supplications. We want to join him, to add our prayers and sacrifices to his. Last Lent our priest in the Precious Blood Church around on Baxter Street was enjoining us all to fast. "Too much eatings, and too much drinkings!" he told us sternly. And too little prayer.

Mohammedan Friend Last month we visited the Burlington group for the first time and met the landlord of the House of Hospitality there. He is a Mohammedan and announces proudly that he prays five times daily. There is no mosque in Burlington, though there is one in Brooklyn and one in Canada, so he makes a temple of his own heart. And when he fasts, he fasts from four in the morning to five in the evening.

We are weak creatures and cannot go so long without food, but we can eat the soup that is put before us at noon instead of too much eatings and drinkings of coffee and bread, we can organize our lives in more disciplined fashion. . . . We can be more recollected and lift up our hearts more often in prayer.

Travelings The trip up through New England a few weeks ago was very pleasant. I spoke in Providence at the home of one of our readers and many of the students from Providence College came. In Boston the next day I spoke at Old Town Meeting House on the subject of peace and even the New England leader of the Christian Front said he was in agreement with what I had to say. Like the philosopher who has just been applauded, I wondered what I had said wrong.

At the farm at Upton I had a long talk with Arthur Sheehan on manual labor, and I realized that we have not been writing much about it for the paper. We

talked about voluntary poverty and the Works of Mercy as being the basis of our work. Of course manual labor is involved in many of these works of mercy, but we have not gone into detail about it. Ade Bethune has dealt with it in her pamphlet "Work," so has Eric Gill, and Etienne Borne. Gregg, who wrote "The Power of Non-Violence" a splendid book for our times, deals with the philosophy of labor in a pamphlet for conscientious objectors.

Last Sunday the boys all went to the park at the end of Mulberry Street to play football, and we all go in for walks for exercise. But manual labor carries with it a satisfaction and sense of accomplishment in itself. When I came back from one trip last month, I scrubbed up the office floor as a cure for backache and brain fatigue, and felt most beautifully limbered up. The only trouble was that though it was early in the morning, right after Mass, half a dozen tried to gang up on me and deprive me of my labor. Which shows they have not been sufficiently indoctrinated. The boys get plenty of it scrubbing and cleaning, but another tendency about work is that when one takes a job around the place he does not want to share it. He wants to work alone, or do it all. Sometimes it becomes even more than a friendly competition for jobs.

Worcester Spoke in Worcester at the Ancient Order of Hibernian's Hall and someone in the building who preferred to remain anonymous defrayed the expenses of the hall. The CIO organizers of textiles and steel who have offices in the building, came to the meeting and we had a good conversation afterward on the condition of labor and the opposition to organizing. It's an uphill job and it takes the courage and patience of a saint to keep at it. Stayed at the home of the Brady's this time who, with the McGinn's, are the mainstay of the house in Worcester.

Truck Strike Next up to Burlington where Norman and Donald Langlois run the House of Hospitality down on Battery Street which is just across from the lake front. The truckmen are on strike in Burlington and the boys had turned over half of the headquarters for the men to meet in. They use it as a hangout, day and night, and the night I arrived we had a meeting to discuss the rights and duties of labor from the standpoint of the encyclicals. They were a fine bunch of men, newly organized, and struggling hard for the elementals, a decent wage to maintain a family. They are mostly employed on long hauls and get very small wages. Some of them are forced to live in company houses and the rent is deducted from their pay. When the strike began, the company raised the rent. They have no funds to keep themselves going so it means sacrifice of the most real kind to strike.

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Day After Day - November 1936

The Catholic Worker, November 1936, 1, 6.

Summary: Reflections on our being children of one Father, thanksgiving, the worth of spreading the "Christian revolution" by distributing the Catholic Worker paper, distributing clothes, and other stories of life on Mott Street. (DDLW #307).**

There is a notebook in my purse in which during the course of the month I jot down quotations from books I am reading, prayers for special occasions, reminders of things to be done, and ruminations in general. Father Grady said that it was a good idea to write down one's meditations, so though mine sometimes are begun on a crowded street corner and continued in the subway, I jot some of them down afterwards as I have time.

On the Waterfront As I waited for the traffic light to change on my way to the Seamen's Defense Committee headquarters, I was idly saying my rosary, which was handy in my pocket. The recitation was more or less automatic, when suddenly like a bright light, like a joyful thought, the words *Our Father* pierced my heart. To all those who were about me, to all the passerby, to the longshoremen idling about the corner, black and white, to the striking seamen I was going to see, I was akin, for we were all children of a common Father, all creatures of One Creator, and Catholic or Protestant, Jew or Christian, Communist or non-Communist, were bound together by this tie. We can not escape the recognition of the fact that we are all brothers. Whether or not a man *believes* in Jesus Christ, His Incarnation, His Life here with us, His crucifixion and resurrection; whether or not a man believes in God, the *fact* remains that we are all children of one Father.

Meditation of this fact makes hatred and strife between brothers the more to be opposed. The work we must do is strive for peace and concordance rather than hatred and strife.

On the Farm The trees are getting bare, but still it stays warm. Coming down at night from the city, the warm, sweet smell of the good earth enwraps one like a garment. There is the smell of rotting apples; of alfalfa in the barn; burning leaves; of wood fires in the house; of pickled green tomatoes and baked beans than which there is no better smell, not even apple pies.

There is a warm feeling of contentment about the farm these days, the first summer is over, many people have been cared for here already, and we started out with capital of a thousand dollars and nothing else at all. From day to day we did not know during the course of the summer where the next money to pay

bills was coming from, but trusting to our co-operators, our readers throughout the country, we went on with the work. In spite of our collective faith, there could not help but be a feeling of strain at times when there was so much to be done and no money for tools or equipment, not even enough to pay for food. But now all our bills are paid, and there is a renewed feeling of courage on the part of all those who are doing the work, a sense of confidence that the work is progressing.

This month of thanksgiving will indeed be one of gratitude to God. For health, for work to do, for the opportunities He has given us of service; we are deeply grateful, and it is a feeling that makes the heart swell with joy.

During the summer when things were going especially hard in more ways than one I grimly modified grace before meals. We give Thee thanks O Lord, for these Thy gifts, and for all our tribulations, from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord, Amen. One could know of certain knowledge that tribulations were matters of thanksgiving; that we were indeed privileged to share in the sufferings of our Lord. So in this month of thanksgiving, we can be thankful for the trials of the past, the blessings of the present, and be heartily ready at the same time to embrace with joy any troubles the future may bring us.

Mott Street One of the girls has written an account of the doings at Mott street this past month. One thing she did not mention is the fact that our house reeks of the wine keg. The back yard between the front house where we have two apartments and the store, and the rear house which is St. Joseph's House proper, has been filled with huge barrels and from early morning until late at night there has been what should be a rustic job going on. Barrels are washed out, grapes come in by the truckload, the cellars are open to the warm, fall air, the work of making wine for the whole neighborhood is underway. Some of the Italians in the front house are making barrels for this family or that in the neighborhood. And this is not a matter of scandal or extravagance. The Italians with their spaghetti and wine dine frugally and healthily, and there are few real drinkers amongst them. Some day we will bring Teresa's camera, which she won at a school raffle, into town and take pictures of pushcart-lined Mott street, St. Joseph's house, and the wine keg-lined yard between the houses and publish them in the paper. Until we can afford a picture page, however, our readers must be content with these word pictures.

At a Communist Meeting Tonight ten of us went up to Madison Square Garden to distribute a few thousand papers before and after one of the Communist meetings which are held there every week. The Garden holds twenty thousand and is always packed to the doors. There is always a crowd who cannot get in.

"What's the idea of distributing literature to that gang of reds," one of our friends wanted to know. And we reply, that if one person of all those twenty thousand who throng the Garden is to the slightest degree moved by anything he finds in

THE CATHOLIC WORKER, we will have considered it a good night's work. We heard of one man who was brought back to the faith last month through THE CATHOLIC WORKER and that one bit of news was enough to make us intensify our efforts.

It is a little recognized fact that revolutions are started by just such seemingly insignificant acts as distributing literature. The first time Leon Trotsky was sent to jail it was because of printed leaflets urging the workers in Odessa to organize. In the history of the working class movement men have gone to jail, been put to death, have been sent into exile for running a newspaper and printing literature which the government considered subversive.

We Must Distribute If the forces of the enemy set such store by the distribution of literature to acquaint the working masses with their theory of revolution (and Lenin said that there could be no revolution without a theory of revolution) then most assuredly we are doing the right thing by distributing THE CATHOLIC WORKER on every possible occasion.

There are forty thousand members of the Communist party in the United States. There are twenty thousand people in the Garden at these Communist meetings. Not by any means are a majority of them Communists. Many are sympathizers. Many are good trade unionists. Certainly the great mass of workers, convinced though they may be that better conditions can only come about through violence, do not want class war. Surely the great majority if faced with the choice between good and evil, God or the devil, would not choose evil. It is on this assumption that we are working. It is for this reason that we go out into the highways and byways, out on the street corner and the picket line with our paper.

Many of our readers throughout the country are also distributing the paper. We ask you all to help in this, the Christian revolution. Send for extra copies and give them to your friends.

In the Clothes Room At Mott street we have an entire room devoted to clothes. Many a day forty people come in for garments and many of them have to be turned away. The other day we gave fifteen women warm coats, but there was an equal number of men who had to be turned away. The best we could do for many of them was give them warm wool scarves. We need sweaters, no matter how old or holey. We need suit coats, even if there are no pants. We need overcoats, underwear. Many of the men went away wearing women's stockings in want of men's. Do you know what it is like to walk the streets with bare and blistered feet in your shoes? Please help us by sending in your old clothes. We have a family of children also who need to be outfitted, as well as men and women.

One of the fathers of the church said, "the coat which hangs in your closet belongs to the poor."

In a Courtroom This is being written down at the County Court where I am waiting for the commitment clerk to come down from the Bellevue psychopathic ward. The paper must go to press today, but there is a work of mercy to be done. One of our women has fallen into the hands of the State (and the State is becoming an inexorable guardian) and they have decided she is psychopathic and needs to be committed to the Manhattan Hospital. It is to rescue her that I am here, to plead to the judge to release her in our care. She had been with us six months and we had known her and helped her for some two years before that. What peculiarities she has we can cope with, but aside from any mental disorder, perhaps the result of cruel hardship and loneliness and insecurity, we are convinced that a most grave injustice is being done which we must prevent. Right now I should be down at the. . . [Missing paragraphs will be added here.]

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