

Fall Appeal - 1973

By Dorothy Day

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Summary: An appeal to readers to sustain the Catholic Worker in a time of need. Also a message of thanks for the assistance and love given in the past. (DDLW #535).

Dear Friends: (That is a beautiful word, when you come to think of it.)

I have written so many of these appeal letters to you, confiding in you, with confidence in you, with faith in you, because you always answer! I am writing this early in the morning because I woke at five thinking of my three friends who have just died. Auden, Jenny Moore, and my sister's husband. I was thinking "How short this life is," how little time to show our love for each other. When I wake and reach out for my prayer book, usually a verse strikes me, like this morning – "Acquire a fresh spiritual way of thinking. You must put on the new man." Eph. 4, which meant to me to keep starting afresh, to show my love for those around me.

Among us at St. Joseph's House, as with every family, there are those easy to love, and others hard to love. And "we love God as much as the one we love least!" as Fr. Hugo once said, thinking no doubt of Christ's words – "Whatever you do to the least, you do to Me." And oh, what a school for love the Catholic Worker families are!

It makes us happy to love. We want to love. In a way this is a love letter to you, our readers who keep us going, keep supporting our ever increasing family, our bulging household. "Health, education and welfare" is being cut down, jobs and apartments are few and far between, more and more money goes out for armaments, to assist in ever-increasing outbreaks of war; and so we must try more and more to build up what Eric Gill called "cells of good living."

It makes us happy to report that "friends," Trappist monks, have "sold what they have and given to the poor," which is us, and we are going to have another house for our shopping bag women who sleep in doorways, or empty buildings, because like Christ they "have no place to lay their heads." They are other-Christis in His most hidden guise and "knowing them in the breaking of bread," we have come to love them and they are our friends.

The Lord will take care of the upkeep of the new house, which we can't take possession of until next year. None of us worry about that. New members are always coming to our extended and ever-extending family. We consider you, our readers, very close to us too, and our prayers and our love go out to you for your help. It is a grace to be grateful, and theologically, grace is participation in the divine life. So your generosity is generating the new man Paul speaks of in his letter to the Ephesians. All this attention to words and to the Word made flesh, is because I am writing in my sister's home and her husband who just died, a

most dear friend, with whom I had many a happy discussion, used to send me to the dictionary often.

Love is an exchange of gifts St. Ignatius said – maybe he was writing an appeal when he said it. So it is with love I thank you for all your help over years. (You pay God a compliment, St. Teresa of Avila says, by asking great things of Him.) And God is good. Even without our asking.

Meanwhile, speaking of these larger ventures, we are down to rock bottom as to funds. In the city the breadman lets us run up the bill \$800. But it is incredible the number of other expenses, regardless of there being no payroll to meet, and many of our young Staff Workers working part-time to pay their own expenses. We have a good group. It is their daily Communion and Vesper prayers which give us the strength to keep working “for a society where it is easier to be good,” as Peter Maurin always said.

As St. Teresa of Avila, an activist, said, “Teresa and three ducats can do nothing, but God and Teresa and three ducats can do everything.” And God returns to the giver a hundredfold.

In Jesus’ Love,

Dorothy Day