

Life And Death

Dorothy Day

The Catholic Worker, June 1968, p. 1

Summary: Reports on hearing Senator Robert Kennedy was shot but still alive. Recalls the assassinations of Martin Luther King and President Kennedy. Prays the Jesus prayer. (DDLW #886).

As this June issue goes to press (we have had to omit the May issue), this very morning news comes to us of the attempted assassination of Senator Robert Kennedy. We do not know yet whether he will live or die. For many hours he was operated upon at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles where he and his followers were celebrating victory in the California primary in the Ballroom of the Ambassador Hotel. The meeting was ended at two a.m. and as he left the hall, he was shot twice, in the skull and shoulder. Four others were wounded, one of them seriously. We received the news here on the East Coast at five, and it was repeated over and over on radio, and the scenes in the ballroom and corridor of the hotel were rerun over and over again on television. Now while we work at the printer, bringing out the Catholic Worker, it may still be going on, these words, these cries, these wailings and shoutings while newsreel men grind on, adding to the horror inflicted upon us, forcing us to live and relieve the moment of tragedy.

Medgar Evers' brother Charles who was working with Robert Kennedy in his campaign was there and spoke briefly of his brother's assassination. Martin Luther King's cousin, a doctor, was there. In the last issue of the CATHOLIC WORKER we were recording Martin Luther King's death. And of course everyone thought of the assassination of Robert Kennedy's brother John, President of the United States. The whites of this country are not used to this sudden doom, which has been inflicted upon the blacks over and over, year after year, and most often the deaths have been unhonored and unsung, and often unreported.

Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God, have mercy on us!

Last report: the hours of operating are over. Robert Kennedy still lives, but is in critical condition. Radio states there is no brain damage. A miracle if true.