

Catholic Worker Program

By Dorothy Day

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Summary: Recalls her prayer at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception that God show her a way to use her talents to help labor, Peter Maurin's appearance and inspiration, and the notion of personal responsibility—"Every one can help." Thanks all who have supported the work. (DDLW #277).

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

A WORKERS' SCHOOL.

HOUSES OF HOSPITALITY.

AGRONOMIC UNIVERSITIES

Progress

It was just one year ago, December 8, that I spent the morning at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. I had been sent down to Washington to cover the Hunger March of the Communist Unemployed Councils and the Farmers' National Convention, for *America* and *Commonweal*.

There was social justice in the demands made by the Communists—they were the poor, the unemployed, the homeless. They were among the ones Christ was thinking of when he said, "Feed my Sheep." And the Church had food for them, that I knew. And I knew, too, that amongst these men there were fallen-away Catholics who did not know the teachings of their Church on social justice—that there was a need that this message be brought to them. So I offered up my prayers that morning that some way be shown me to do the work that I wanted to do for labor.

When I returned from Washington, I found that Peter Maurin had been to my home to present his program of action. He had read the proposal that we start THE CATHOLIC WORKER. It took some months for the project to get underway, but with his faith and inspiration, the paper was started, and it has been by the grace of God that it has continued and has grown so that now it reaches over the United States and Canada from coast to coast.

We do not know how we get along. But we know that we are making progress. We keep simple books. What money comes in is listed on one side of the book and what goes out on the other. And we don't often compare them. We only know that the printing bill is getting paid, and so, too, the expenses of running the office and feeding our friends who drop in to see us and remain to help us.

Our files are filling up with letters from workers and scholars, priests and laity all over the country who are commending and collaborating in the work.

And we are not just getting out a paper. We are carrying out as far as we can the program of Catholic Action proposed by Peter Maurin, which calls, first of all, for individual responsibility. Every one can help.

We need, of course, funds to carry on the work. We are not making a drive. We do not set a goal of a few thousand, of forty thousand as the *Daily Worker* does. We proceed on a simpler way. We ask—and trust that we will receive. We ask our friends to continue to support the work which we are doing, and to interest their friends in supporting it.

If you cannot help with money, you can help in building the circulation. Last month in answer to our appeal a widow sent her mite of a quarter, several new subscribers, and two sheets for our first House of Hospitality. We appeal to others to follow her example, to give what help they can give. There is none too poor, and let us hope there is not one too disconsolate about the existing order, to help us with our program.

And for the help we have received, for the ardent support and the prayers which have gone up for us all over the country, we express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude. The hearty cooperation has made the burden of our work lighter, and we are deeply grateful.