

Fall Appeal - October 1963

Dorothy Day

The Catholic Worker, October 1963, 2.

Summary: Reminds readers we are all responsible for each other—" Hold on to each other. We are each one responsible, one for another. We are all brothers." (DDLW #807).

Dear fellow workers in Christ,

"Joy is a sign of God's presence in the soul."—I keep coming across this sentence of one of the saints, and the word **joy** and the word **God** do something to you. It is pretty easy for me to be joyful this Fall afternoon, sitting at my typewriter after a good day of reading and housecleaning. I woke up to read Boyer's NEWMAN for an hour. I stopped on page 71 with the phrase, "The analogy between this world and the next, and a sound system of probability leading to religious faith—"

Down at the beach house the view is one of quiet beauty. There is an offshore wind and the little waves are only murmuring on the shore. The bay is deep blue and a playful wind makes skirmishes here and there on the water so that the color is always changing and it is as though there were truly paths on the sea.

It is a joy to feel grateful for this beach house which has sheltered so many mothers and children this summer. Eight families have had the joy of the sea, the sand and the sun. Through the fall and winter the beauty is here for others. "The heavens show forth the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

It is so easy to love God in the beauty of nature, the beauty of little children, the beauty of the grandmother and great grandmother who came down to take care of one batch of children, for instance. Easy to find joy here. But St. Francis tells too of another kind of joy, "perfect joy" he calls it, when one is beaten and buffeted and ill-used, denied and scorned even by one's own. "This then is perfect joy," he says in one of the tales told in "The Little Flowers of St. Frances." It surely is "walking by faith and not by sight," on these occasions. "When a person is old, or drunken or crazy, the family throws them out," one of our CW family said sadly the other day.

On my way to a communion breakfast not long ago, we passed a great mental hospital and the man driving me commented on the guards within the grounds. "Not to keep the patients in," he said, "but to keep people from dumping their senile relatives who don't remember name or address. Quite a few cases last year." The man was a city official so I must take his word for it.

Another man, a member of our community who has been with us the past two years, was found wandering in the woods of Staten Island, dirty, starving and covered with vermin. The police took him to a local hospital and Holy Mother the city cleaned him up and cared for him. Another old man, sick and incontinent was found homeless, in a doorway on the Bowery. He told us he had worked on Long Island potato farms when he left the orphanage where he was reared. Waifs and strays, a lot of our people are. We are most of us pretty much the “offscouring” St. Paul spoke of.

When I read Baldwin’s **Another Country** about a kid ready to sell himself for a meal, I thought thank God we have saved a few from that. Just feeding people accomplishes something.

We are begging now, not only for the money we need to pay our bills to keep us going another six months. But we beg you to not abandon each other. Hold on to each other. We are each one responsible, one for another. We are all brothers. We are all members or potential members of the body of Christ and so are holy. We must not rend our own flesh, made holy by Christ’s incarnation. Let us love one another, without measure, even to folly. “My little children, let us love one another,” the beloved apostle St. John kept repeating at the end of his life when they asked him for direction. “Bear ye one another’s burdens,” St. Paul said. So if you can help us out of your abundance, to supply our want, we will love you all the more, in our gratitude.

St. Teresa said she had so grateful a heart, it could be bought with a sardine. In the name of Francis who knew how to love and rejoice and of Jesus who taught him, we thank you.