

Thank You!

Dorothy Day

The Catholic Worker, May 1934, p. 4

Summary: Thanks the readers for gifts to pay the printing bill, and discusses their choice of holy poverty and identification with the workers. Reports the Communist Party's recruitment of African-Americans, and predicts that they will be first to be hurt in any strikes. Describes the joy of the month of May, with the opening up of houses and the fresh sounds and smells of the city. (DDLW #938).

Thank You!

The editors wish to thank all the good friends who responded so immediately to the letter of appeal sent out a few weeks ago. God is with us, the saints protect us. Each time we have asked for aid, the money was immediately forthcoming to pay each and every bill. True, this leaves nothing for the next printing bill, which will be due as you read this paper. But God seems to intend us to depend solely on Him. We must live this lesson of dependence on Him that we preach in these pages. Economic security, something every reader and we ourselves would like to have, is not for us. We must live by faith, from day to day, knowing that we have good friends in St. Joseph, St. Teresa, St. John Bosco, who lived through these same struggles themselves.

What security did the Blessed Virgin herself have as she fled in the night with the Baby in her arms to go into a strange country? She probably wondered whether St. Joseph would be able to obtain work in a foreign land, how they would get along, and anticipated the loneliness of being without her friends, her cousin St. Elizabeth, her other kinfolk.

We accept by faith the mystery of the Trinity. We accept by faith the Holy Eucharist. When Christ says, "This is My Body," we as Catholics believe. We believe many a hard saying, so why not believe these words—

"Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and His justice and all these things shall be added unto you . . . Your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things . . . What man is there among you, of whom if his son ask bread, will reach him a stone? . . . If you, then, being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father, who is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask Him?"

It is hard, we realize, to quote the gospel to men with empty stomachs. It is hard to preach holy poverty to those who suffer perforce from poverty not only for themselves but for their loved ones. But we wish to assure our readers that most of the people who are writing for, and putting out this paper, have known poverty,—hunger and heat and cold; some have slept in city lodging houses, in doorways, in public parks, have been in the wards of city hospitals; have walked the city with their feet upon the ground searching for work, or just walking because they had no shelter to go to. THE CATHOLIC WORKER is edited and written by workers, for workers.

And we thank the many workers, priests and laymen who sent in their contributions this last month to keep us going, and we pray God to bless them all.

The Catholic Worker and the Negro

Though the Catholic Workers' School has closed for this year, we are going to continue to have meetings, Wednesday nights and Sunday afternoons, at the office of THE CATHOLIC WORKER, 436 E. 15th St. We are also planning to open a branch office in Harlem if we can find some store which is cheap enough, say fifteen or twenty dollars a month. Peter Maurin and some of his friends who are at present sleeping in THE CATHOLIC WORKER office can take up quarters there and conduct discussions and distribute literature to all who happen in.

The Communists have various clubs and organizations in Harlem and are making a play for the Negro. They realize his strength as one-tenth of the population of the United States, and an oppressed tenth at that. The Trotsky adherents who call themselves the Communist League of America and are working for a Fourth International published an article in one of their papers not long ago and predicted that the Negro masses would form the vanguard of the revolutionary movement here in America and that such an end was to be worked for. But God forbid that the Negroes of this country should be educated to class warfare. The Communists know, and the Negroes also know through bitter experience, that with them in the foreground in any strike movement, it is the Negro who suffers,—it is the Negro who is struck down. It is the desire of THE CATHOLIC WORKER to show to the Negro what the church has to offer, and what the church stands for in the realm of social justice.

The Month of May

It is Mary's month and there is joy in the air. The windows are open and in with the sun come the wild shouts of children released from the bonds of winter coats, and the cries of hucksters, (potatoes, flowers, hot dogs, pots and pans). Dust and soot comes in, too, but the noise is not nervewracking nor the dust an irritant these days of spring. . . . Occasionally as one walks along the street there is a lull in the traffic, and little noises come, a man's singing, a child's laughter, the screech of the shoemaker's caged birds, the clop-clop of horses' hoofs. . . . The open doors of long-closed houses let out cold smells, tenement house smells, dankness, mustiness and decay. And suddenly a man passing by selling pink carnations, the pungent smell of the flowers vanquishes the smell of houses and beds and kitchen stoves and hallways for a few moments. We have one flower in our back yard, a purple hyacinth, and since it did not come up in a pot, but really and truly out of the ground, Teresa and Freddy, and Sammy and Sara look at it with awe. The dirt is vibrant with life and they smell of it lovingly.