

The Final Word Is Love

By Dorothy Day

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Summary:

Poetically expresses the essential charism of the Catholic Worker Movement—poverty, community, and love found in eucharistic companionship. [Note: this text became the Postscript of her autobiography *The Long Loneliness*.]

(DDLW #867).

We were just sitting there talking when Peter Maurin came in.

We were just sitting there talking when lines of people began to form, saying, “We need bread.” We could not say, “Go, be thou filled.” If there were six small loaves and a few fishes, we had to divide them. There was always bread.

We were just sitting there talking and people moved in on us. Let those who can take it, take it. Some moved out and that made room for more. And somehow the walls expanded.

We were just sitting there talking and someone said, “Let’s all go live on a farm.”

It was as casual as all that, I often think. It just came about. It just happened.

I found myself, a barren woman, the joyful mother of children. It is not always easy to be joyful, to keep in mind the duty of delight.

The most significant thing about The Catholic Worker is poverty, some say.

The most significant thing is community, others say. We are not alone anymore.

But the final word is love. At times it has been, in the words of Father Zossima, a harsh and dreadful thing, and our very faith in love has been tried through fire.

We cannot love God unless we love each other, and to love we must know each other. We know him in the breaking of bread, and we are not alone any more. Heaven is a banquet and life is a banquet, too, even with a crust, where there is companionship.

We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes with community.

It all happened while we sat there talking, and it is still going on.

—DOROTHY DAY

The Long Loneliness