

% Dorothy Day

1938, Introduction, pp. ix-x.

*Summary: Explains she is writing the book to answer her Communist brother and friend's question: "How could you become a Catholic?" (DDLW #200).*

THIS is not an autobiography. Neither is it the complete story of the author's life. The clock has been turned back twenty years or more while the author writes of those incidents and people who helped her along the path to God. There is nothing in this book concerning the movement in which she finds herself embroiled today. In fact these few pages stop at the threshold of that movement which is known and talked about in many places on this earth. There is nothing herein of controversy though no doubt many passages will provoke criticism. It is a human document which cost much effort to write. Why then does she write it?

Many of her relatives and friends, who are Communists, keep asking with dismay: "How could you become a Catholic?" After all, she did believe with them that "religion is the opium of the people." The circumstances that led to her conversion are strange—so strange that even now after many years in the Church there are those who do not believe that she is a Catholic, but rather an enemy boring from within.

This story she addresses to all those people, in the person of her brother. Some of the chapters have already appeared in *The Preservation of the Faith* magazine, and in response to the requests of many readers it appears in book form. Parts of it have appeared in *America* and *The Sign* and to these publications we are grateful for the permission to reprint.

Much more could be written by way of introduction, but it seems best to leave this as it is. This point, however, must be borne in mind when reading this book! It is addressed to her brother, to a Communist. It is "dipping back into the past" to the time when she herself believed what many Communists profess to believe today. She cannot always explain herself; it is not always pleasant. As has been said, the narrative ends with her conversion, when her real work began. Whether you are in agreement with that work or not, you are sure to be impressed with the struggle towards God that immediately preceded it.