

## Collection One: 1933-1935

Dorothy Day

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# Chapter 1

## To Our Readers

*The Catholic Worker*, May 1933, 4 (First Issue)

*Summary: States that the purpose of the paper is to articulate the Church's social program and to popularize the Popes' social encyclicals. (DDLW #12).*

For those who are sitting on park benches in the warm spring sunlight.

For those who are huddling in shelters trying to escape the rain.

For those who are walking the streets in the all but futile search for work.

For those who think that there is no hope for the future, no recognition of their plight - this little paper is addressed.

It is printed to call their attention to the fact that the Catholic Church has a social program - to let them know that there are men of God who are working not only for their spiritual, but for their material welfare.

### **FILLING A NEED**

It's time there was a Catholic paper printed for the unemployed.

The fundamental aim of most radical sheets is the conversion of its readers to radicalism and atheism.

Is it not possible to be radical and not atheist?

Is it not possible to protest, to expose, to complain, to point out abuses and demand reforms without desiring the overthrow of religion?

In an attempt to popularize and make known the encyclicals of the Popes in regard to social justice and the program put forth by the Church for the "reconstruction of the social order," this news sheet, *The Catholic Worker*, is started.

It is not as yet known whether it will be a monthly, a fortnightly or a weekly. It all depends on the funds collected for the printing and distribution. Those who can subscribe, and those who can donate, are asked to do so.

This first number of *The Catholic Worker* was planned, written and edited in the kitchen of a tenement on Fifteenth Street, on subway platforms, on the “L,” the ferry. There is no editorial office, no overhead in the way of telephone or electricity, no salaries paid.

The money for the printing of the first issue was raised by begging small contributions from friends. A colored priest in Newark sent us ten dollars and the prayers of his congregation. A colored sister in New Jersey, garbed also in holy poverty, sent us a dollar. Another kindly and generous friend sent twenty-five. The rest of it the editors squeezed out of their own earnings, and at that they were using money necessary to pay milk bills, gas bills, electric light bills.

By accepting delay the utilities did not know that they were furthering the cause of social justice. They were, for the time being, unwitting cooperators.

Next month someone may donate us an office. Who knows?

It is cheering to remember that Jesus Christ wandered this earth with no place to lay His head. *The foxes have holes and the birds of the air their nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head.* And when we consider our fly-by-night existence, our uncertainty, we remember (with pride at sharing the honor), that the disciples supped by the seashore and wandered through corn fields picking the ears from the stalks wherewith to make their frugal meals.

# Chapter 2

## The Listener - May 1933

*The Catholic Worker*, May 1933, pp. 1, 5

*Summary: A collection of vignettes about the unemployed, union efforts, working conditions, wages, education, companies—"The depression goes on." (DDLW #934).*

### BEER

Today everybody is hilariously drinking beer and on the roads from the farms the dairy farmers are dumping milk.

### THIRTY HOUR WEEK

The thirty-hour week bill passed by the Senate exempts farm workers, domestic help, officers, executives, superintendents and their personal and immediate clerical assistants. Also there is an amendment to exempt canneries and establishments engaged in preparing fish, fruits and vegetables of a perishable nature. The Secretary of Labor is given power to grant further exemptions.

Senator Hugo Black (D), of Alabama, author of the bill, declared that as a result of the bill 6,000,000 unemployed would be put back to work. And then there are about eleven million left, not to speak of those who are on part time.

### SCHOOL PUPILS STRIKE

In Chicago 12,000 pupils are showing unusual consideration for their teachers. They went on strike to protest unpaid salaries. Some of the teachers blandly said that the walkout was due to spring fever, and other teachers not in favor of being struck for, claim that "reds" are agitating, as they doubtless are. Whether or not the strike is due to Communist agitation,

teachers should receive their pay, and there should be no reduction in the budget of the board of education just at this time when so many young boys and girls who would work if they could get jobs are going back to school to try to fit themselves for jobs when jobs are available. Schools have never been so crowded, and all over the country schools are closing, not paying their teachers, and cutting their budgets.

## WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

Talked to Pauline Newman of the International Ladies' Garment Workers today. She said, "There's only two ways of bettering the condition of women in labor. One is organization and the other is legislation. Women in industry are only ten per cent organized. So it stands to reason that legislation is the best remedy. We have legislation which promotes sanitary working conditions and better hours. Minimum wage legislation was never passed in this state up to this time. Its only opponent was the National Woman's Party. And what do they know about it? Do they know anything about hours of work or wages? They don't. I told some women at a meeting how we struck once to get an extra penny for twenty dozen sleeves. That seems like a petty thing to fight for.

"One penny more for twenty dozen sleeves!

"But girls have to consider carfare, lunch money. The Women's Party is always harking back to the old days when women were classed legally with children and idiots—in need of protection. Now they think if there is any legislation to keep women from night work they are being discriminated against. They are being protected! They don't want to be protected, they say. They have the vote now and they don't need protection. They must take their place with men in the world!

"Schooling nowadays is a farce. It certainly doesn't prepare young people for life or work. What are they taught in the way of trades? What are they taught about social conditions? Nothing. They are utterly unprepared to face conditions, and facing them to do anything about them."

## "NOT A BAD OUTFIT"

Heard somebody talking about the Bell Telephone Company today. They're not so bad, they were saying. When they are laying off their men, and they've been laying them off pretty steady, they give them notice, and if a man has been with the firm fifteen years he gets fifteen weeks salary. And they always paid their men pretty good. So a man can sit down and figure out how he can live for the next decade or so during the present decay of the social order and during its ultimate reconstruction.

He can study and apply to himself some of the budgets prepared by the charities' organizations, telling how a working class family can feed itself on five dollars a week . . . Of course the Telephone Company goes on paying dividends—nine per cent. If they had cut the dividends



they would have been able to keep their men on. But up to now they haven't cut their dividends. Them as has-gits.

There was rumors, however, that this quarter the dividends were going to be cut, and men were going to be kept on and paid engineers' wages even though the only work for them to do was ditch digging.

### OLD-FASHIONED FAIR

The depression goes on.

Fourteenth Street, Twenty-third Street, Forty-second Street, Broadway and especially lower Broadway, have taken on the aspect of the old-fashioned fair. There are hawkers to sell toys, flowers, razor blades, shoe laces, corn cures, jig saw puzzles, neckties and self-threading needles. The toy sellers buy fruit and candy, the fruit and candy men buy razor blades, and the razor blade men buy ice cream, and the ice cream men buy neckties, and the necktie men buy toys, and so on and so on. They keep each other going. Ill-fed men walk with signs advertising restaurants and unkempt men who need a shave advertise barber shops.

All the men who are out of work picket the places from which they have been fired. Patiently all day long, month after month, they walk up and down before their former places of business, moving picture houses, garages and restaurants.

Unionism! What has become of it?

The unions have thrown up their hands in despair. They can do nothing more about wages. People will take what they can get.

## TOWARD WHAT END?

Some things are getting done. As we walked down the street this afternoon we noticed that windows had been washed for the springtime. People who still had quarters were buying potted plants from a street vendor to put in their front windows.

Union Square has been refurbished during the winter, shrubs have been planted and trees set out so that the unemployed may sit in comfort in the shade instead of in the glaring sun of last summer.

The Washington Centennial building is being torn down in Bryant Park and there will be more room there for peripatetic philosophers and their listeners.

The state legislature has passed a minimum wage law for women, but not unemployment insurance, only an unemployment reserve fund.

## PRESSURE ON HIS TIME

Alfred E. Smith, one of our most prominent Catholics, refused to be interviewed for this, the first number of our paper. We wrote and asked him to allow us to interview him so that we

might have a few quotable remarks on Russia, unemployment, housing, the sales tax, income tax, armaments and such matters, and his secretary replied:

“The Governor regrets that he is unable to comply with your request for an appointment. The pressure on his time is so great . . . Very truly yours.”

So we must content ourselves this issue with contributions from a more humble Catholic whose address, when he is not employed outside of the city in manual labor, is Uncle Sam’s Hotel, the Bowery.

In our next issue we will endeavor to get a contribution from Mayor O’Brien. (We would go to Washington and try President Roosevelt except that we need the fare to put towards the publishing bill.) And failing to reach Mayor O’Brien, we will try the door man at the city hall, or one of the unemployed sitting on a City Hall Park bench.

## THE MOST BRUTAL TRADE

In the garment trade, the most “brutal” of all the trades in which women are employed, as one worker put it, Klein-on-the-Square, the famous Fourteenth Street clothier, is called the “undertaker” because he keeps his eyes open for dying concerns and buys them out.

“But he’s no worse, perhaps not so bad as some of the big department stores,” one young fashion editor was heard saying. “There they take a model and have it copied and they give the job to sweat shops in other states, such as New Jersey and Connecticut, where there is no law on working conditions and hours.

“And what about the wages paid by the big stores? In Stern’s girls get ten dollars a week and they have to dress decently, buy shoes, stockings, presentable clothes, lunches and carfares out of that. What have they left for board and room?

“Macy boasts of taking only college girls and society girls working for ‘experience’ or ‘pin money’ and pays them ten and twelve a week. What good is a college education if it fits you for such wages?”

## FOLTIS-FISCHER STRIKE

In another column of this issue we print letters from waitresses who are being done out of their salaries and forced to subsist solely on tips. For generally bad working conditions, Foltis-Fischer is one of the worst restaurants in New York. You will notice that men are picketing up and down in front of their chain of restaurants throughout the city, and the strike of employees there has been a bitter one. If the public coöperated with the workers and refused to go into a restaurant where men were picketing in front, there might be more chance for strikers to win their fight for justice.

## DRIVE ON SWEAT SHOPS

And speaking of the coöperation of the public, a drive against sweat shops has been started. The campaign was decided upon April 11 at a conference called by the Women's Trade Union League, and the aim is a label on women's garments as part of an appeal to all women buyers to shun garments made in sweat shops. The Committee for the Abolition of Sweat Shops is made up of representatives of the garment employers' associations, the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, and national women's organizations representing the public and consumers.

Decent hours and wages are to be fought for now. Fifteen years or so ago a campaign was started by unions and women's organizations to abolish unsanitary working conditions and by means of a label the public was kept informed. Employers of women were forced to provide healthful surroundings for their employees to work in, and the old, evil-smelling and badly lighted sweat shop was done away with. Now, though the plants are better equipped, the hours and the wages are worse than they have been for decades. **D. D.**

# Chapter 3

## Maurin's Program

*The Catholic Worker*, June-July 1933, 4.

*Summary: Outlines Peter Maurin's three step program of social reconstruction (round table discussions, houses of hospitality, farm colonies) led by the laity working out the principles in the Popes' encyclicals on social justice. (DDLW #266).*

### MAURIN'S PROGRAM

FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary of Labor, says that she is grateful for every plan which is sent in suggesting a method of reconstruction. Like the government, THE CATHOLIC WORKER is interested in hearing what the Catholic layman has to say. It offers itself as a mouthpiece and it pledges its cooperation in the working out of the principles in the Popes' encyclicals on social justice.

We believe that there are many groups of Catholic men and women throughout the country who are organizing in study groups and who would like some way to communicate with one another. There are many platforms and programs and it is not the intention of the paper to embrace any one of these but to give space to all.

Peter Maurin (whose name we misspelled in the last issue) has his program which is embodied in his contributions this month. Because his program is specific and definite he thinks it better to withdraw his name from the editorial board and continue his contact with the paper as a contributor. "As an editor," he says, "it will be assumed that I sponsor or advocate any reform suggested in the pages of THE CATHOLIC WORKER. I would rather definitely sign my own work, letting it be understood what I stand for.

"My program stands for three things. Round Table Discussions, and I hope to hold the first at the Manhattan Lyceum the last Sunday of June. Why the Manhattan Lyceum? Yes, I know that it is the place usually chosen by the Communists and radicals for their meetings. But it is cheap. We can have a hall holding 150 people for eight hours for ten dollars. I have paid a deposit of three. I have no more money now but I hope to beg the rest. I hope

everybody will come to this meeting. I want Communists, radicals, priests and laity. I want everyone to set forth his views. I want the clarification of thought.

“The next step in the program is houses of hospitality. In the Middle Ages it was an obligation of the bishops to provide houses of hospitality or hospices for the wayfarer. They are especially necessary now, and necessary to my program as half-way houses. I am hoping that some one will donate a house, rent free, for six months so that a start may be made. A priest will be at the head of it and men gathered through our round table discussions will be recruited to work in the houses cooperatively and eventually be sent out to farm colonies or agronomic universities. Which comes to the third step in my program. People will have to go back to the land. The machine has displaced labor, the cities are overcrowded. The land will have to take care of them.

“I am not saying that my program is for everyone, it is for those who choose to embrace it. I am not opposed to private property with responsibility. But those who own private property should never forget that it is a trust.”

# Chapter 4

## The Listener

*The Catholic Worker*, June-July 1933, 1, 5.

*Summary: Commentary on social conditions of the wealthy J.P. Morgan, of working men and women, and the increasing evictions. Describes the reactions of Communists and others to the initial issue of The Catholic Worker\* on May 1st. (DDLW #267).\**

The Listener

News

A READING of the one day's newspapers on this, the last day before going to press, gives a general indication of the events of the month

It is not a cheerful survey.

J. P. Morgan holds the public eye all over the nation with his nonchalant though forced disclosures of how he did not pay his income tax for the last three years, how his partners paid no taxes for the last two, and of how perfectly legal it all is, how they gave favored persons the opportunity to make profits without risk, how Mr. John J. Raskob hoped he could reciprocate some day, how J. P. has a grip on the railroads, and on public utilities which serve 55,272,000 people (and overcharge them), etc., etc., etc.

Mr. Morgan in a written statement to the committee said that he did not think private bankers ought to be regulated by National or State authorities; that private bankers in the years since the Middle Ages had developed a code of ethics which seemed to be more effective in protecting their customers than banking laws.

The *World Telegram* shows some very amusing cartoons of Mr. Morgan sailing along in his limousine, Mr. Morgan eating a luscious meal and Mr. Morgan sitting in a deck chair on his yacht, philosophically taking his losses, capital losses which enabled him legally to evade payment of income tax.

For some reason or other, largely personal it seems, Senator Carter Glass of Virginia is waging such a fight with Ferdinand Pecora for the Senate Investigation Council that the interest of the nation is divided between Morgan's testimony and Senator Glass's squabbles with Pecora.

There is a lot more talk of driving money changers out of the temple, Woodin, Senator McAdoo, John J. Raskob, Norman H. Davis and former Secretary of the Navy Charles Francis Adams being amongst them.

It happened this month that a friend of the editors, who is Chief Engineer on a freighter, had just come in from India and was docked over in Brooklyn right next to Mr. Morgan's yacht which cost I don't know how many millions to build and which costs a quarter of a million a year to run. Or some such figures. When it comes to dealing in millions and billions, one becomes vague.

One of the editors of the CATHOLIC WORKER enjoyed the privilege of surveying the yacht at close quarters. It was in dry dock and its bottom was being scraped by some score of men and all about them red rust filtered down through the May sunlight, and the handles of their long brushes and scrapers moved rhythmically and steadily up and down the sleek sides of the bottom of the vessel. It was a sight which reminded one of a stage setting of a modern play. The boat was a thing of such beauty that it lifted one's heart to see it. All about little boats bobbed at the docks. There was Vincent Astor's yacht, and a strange black boat which belonged to another millionaire. There was a funny old boat being fitted up to go treasure hunting.

\* \* \*

The Corsair, which is Mr. Morgan's boat, was empty and barren and beautiful within. But it was unused. There it was standing useless, and poor Mr. Morgan, haled down to Washington by the Senate Committee, was forced to sit, day by day, and be interrogated. There is some consolation in the thought.

And we thought, too, in respect to Morgan's utility holdings, of poor Mrs. Cutler who lived next door to us a year ago down on Twelfth Street, and how she had her electricity and her gas shut off, and how her husband, a house painter, was and had been out of work for two years. And how that afternoon when we dropped in to see her little girl who was sick, we found that there was nothing to eat in the house, neither cereal nor milk for the child, nor an orange to quench her thirst. . . .

\* \* \*

To go back to the daily paper, we have to report that evictions in New York have increased from 9,500 to 12,000 for the month of April, and with talk of increased evictions during the month of May. And how many apartments in the city are standing empty!

At Public Service Commission hearings during the month, statements of large dividends paid by the nine electric light companies of the metropolitan division show that there should be no difficulty made over reducing rates temporarily, Corporation Council Arthur J. W. Hilly said. Mr. Hilly promised to demand reduction by July 1. That is a note of cheer. We don't like the word temporarily, however.

To the surprise of everyone, the manufacturer's sales tax as a method of raising Federal revenue was rejected by the House of Representatives.

By a vote of 324 to 76 the House passed the Industrial Recovery Bill, which provides for Federal regulation of industry, hours of work and wages, and provides for \$3,000,000,000 in public works and \$220,000,000 in new taxes to amortize the work project.

\* \* \*

## GAS COMPANY

LAST week I talked to a boy who had been working with the Brooklyn Union Gas Company for the last winter. One of the gas house gang. Now he was looking for work on a ship – any kind of work.

“After cleaning clinkers out of generators—red hot ones— and chipping paint, and cleaning and trimming scows, I’ve got the muscle to work,” he said. “I’m over age for the reforestation camps, and beside that you’ve got to get in through the Home Relief Bureau, and we haven’t had to apply for that yet. I’m strong on the shovel, so I ought to be able to do work on a ship. The hardest job connected with work in the gas house gang was cleaning the purifying boxes. The vats are full of iron oxide and sticky with a tar-like deposit, and you have to get in there and shovel and clean out. You work with the smell of gas in your nose and throat all day. You feel continually sick from it. There is a putrid smell, like a bunch of rotting carcasses all around you. Several of the new guys who had come in on the job fainted dead away and had to be hauled out. I stuck with the old guys and did what they did and kept away from the pipes where the smell was strongest. One way to combat the taste in your mouth and the smell in your nose is to drink milk with raw onions chopped up in it and eat a lot of onions for lunch.

“The company is all right, and the pay—twenty-three a week wasn’t bad,” he continued. “It was an eight-hour day and a five-day week, and if it was pouring rain they didn’t make you go out in it. But what is really the trouble is laying off guys all the time. Machines continually replacing the old fellows. In the new boiler room at Greenpoint there are five boilers with one man to take care of them. There is one man to four generators. At the time I got fired a few weeks ago there was an old Pole working with me and he was fired too after being with the company fifteen years. He kept saying that he couldn’t go home. ‘The wife keeps crying all the time,’ he says. ‘Then I cry too. All the time she cries in the house so last night I didn’t go home, but slept at a pool room on one of the tables. I don’t want to go home tonight either.’ ”

The boy who was talking to me (he has Communist leanings) had not yet got to the point of hating and execrating the bosses. He said, “The pay was all right.” But he ignored the fact



that the men were not being paid according to responsibilities. For instance, the old Pole had a wife and family and was working for a comparatively lower wage than the boy, who had no ties and no one to look after but himself. The old Pole was performing a duty to the State by raising a family and he was even more entitled to a living wage than the boy.

"The girl I am going with is an Italian," the boy went on. "She works in a factory making seamless hat linings at fifteen cents a hundred. The seamless hat linings are intended for twenty-five and thirty-five dollar hats. She has a hard time getting along. Nobody dares to organize and nobody dares to strike because they need what money they can get."

\* \* \*

## RACK TENDING

PEOPLE are reading pamphlets on social doctrine now," the girl who is the rack tender at a large church uptown said. "I ordered a bunch of pamphlets from the N. C. W. C. down in Washington and they have gone very well. People ask for *The Rights and Duties of Citizenship*, *the Civics Catechism*, and this last month or so they've called for *The Ethics of War* I\*\*have to order more of those. I have the two encyclicals on labor, by Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI too. There is one man comes in and gets the encyclical *On the Reconstruction of the Social Order*, by the dozen, every week or so."

The rack tender at this church is a guide and adviser to all the strangers who drop into the church during the afternoon. She is there from four to six, checking up the pamphlets, of which she sells thousands, and answering the queries of the people going in and out of the church. The other afternoon when I saw her she was busily engaged in looking through a newspaper to find out what was a good play or movie for a visitor to New York to see. One woman who said she did not know what to do with her time and that she was on a verge of a nervous breakdown, and that she was very lonely and miserable, etc., was referred to a priest, given a list of things she might do to occupy her time in visiting the city to which she was a stranger, supplied with some helpful pamphlets and sent on her way much cheered.

## IS WORK A PRIVILEGE OR A RIGHT?

DOWN on lower Broadway there is the restaurant called Stanley's. From the outside it appears to be a small restaurant, but when you go in you find that it stretches out over a whole floor. There is an upstairs restaurant too.

Some one had told me, "Don't eat in there, they don't pay their waitresses anything." And I wanted to find out more about it so I went in, and after the bright and clean young girl had served me I told her what I had heard.

"Yes, it's perfectly true," she said. "I've been working here quite some time. At first I worked for six a week, then they lowered it last year to three. And now for the last eight months we

have been working for nothing. They mark it on their income tax, too, the fact that they hire forty-eight employees and that the employees serve gratis. And the Government doesn't do anything about it so probably there is nothing to be done.

"But of course the income tax department has nothing to do with the Labor Department. That's true. But if you complained to the State Department of Labor you'd have to give your name, and the other girls would have to make statements, and you'd be getting yourself and them into trouble. You'd just end up by losing your job.

"We go to work at ten thirty in the morning and we work until eight thirty, a good many of us, though some are laid off earlier. Of course we try to work as long as we can so that we'll get more tips. When we work from ten-thirty to eight-thirty, we take two hours off in the afternoon, but what can you do with those two hours? You can't go home. You can only walk around."

\*\*\*\*

First issue of *Catholic Worker* Distributed May Day in Union Square

The crowds in Union Square stopped to gaze on May 1, not only at the massed parades, blary bands, and various red banners, but also at the caption, The CATHOLIC WORKER, being displayed and distributed everywhere. Communists who make soap-box speeches were frankly shocked at its appearance, refuting as it did their claim that the Church is interested only in squeezing money from the people to send to Rome. Even more surprising to them was the revelation that Catholicism has a definite social program to aid the worker.

One old Italian, turned Communist because of unemployment and near starvation, remarked after reading a copy of our paper, "Ya know, da Church, she wanta help us after all. I t'ink I drop da red flag an' take up da ross again."

Some comments, of course, were not favorable. A young fellow, unshaven, his hair almost to his shoulder, and wearing a variety of red ribbons on his coat, reminded the writer of a scotch terrier that had won a half dozen second prizes at some kennel show. Glancing at our title, he muttered, "Aw, ya can't fool us . . . you're just tryin' to put the comrades we've liberated under the yoke of capitalism again."

If only he had taken the trouble to look over our program he would have realized that that is exactly what we are not trying to do. We are entirely in sympathy with demands for better labor conditions, decent wages, and unprejudiced justice. We who edit and contribute to this sheet are unemployed ourselves, barely eking out an existence. Yet because of our desire for better conditions we see no reason for renouncing Christianity-the religion that has helped and elevated mankind for nearly 2,000 years.

Although the Communists may not as yet be aware of it, they witnessed in Union Square on May Day the inception of a new struggle for social justice. A germ of more than mere passive interest was planted in the minds of many who either read The CATHOLIC WORKER or saw its headlines displayed.

As soon as the worker realizes that the Church Militant is interested in man's welfare as well as his soul, he will stop to consider before embracing Communism and its atheistic ideas. The Scriptures, history, tradition and common sense will tell him that without God there is neither happiness, security or prosperity, either in men or in nations.

# Chapter 5

## The Listener

*The Catholic Worker*, July-August 1933, pp. 1,8

*Summary: Notes labor unrest and growing awareness of inequalities in the social system. Lauds doing what one can, quoting saints. (DDLW #884).*

### ECONOMY

“We are making every possible economy in all directions, which include adjustment in salaries and rotation of employment. We have no bonus plan or special compensation given in addition to the salaries of either officers or employees,” says H.S. Wilkinson, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Crucible Steel Company of America at the annual meeting of the stockholders in May.

“Reports we get by telephone indicate steel operations this week showed a marked increase all along the line,” he added.

Meanwhile the Communists are busily doing their best to organize the steel industry. Low salaries and unemployment, the “every possible economy in all directions” Mr. Wilkinson talked about, are making such organization possible.

About sixty per cent of the steel workers are unemployed and less than two per cent are organized, according to charges made by a new steel union, organized by Communists, which now has a membership of 3,500 members. There are 577,000 steel workers. Of those working, many are working on the stagger plan, many as little as one day every two weeks. Wages have been cut; relief is almost non-existent. The average is one dollar a week for a family of five or six, and this is rarely in cash. Unmarried steel workers receive no relief. Organization of any kind, even by the old union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Tin and Steel Workers, is fought by the steel industry. No stranger is permitted to remain in company towns without investigation. Meetings and organization are forbidden and organizers of every kind must function under cover.

## DOING THEIR BIT

People are becoming conscious of the inequalities of the social system and are awakening to their responsibility toward their neighbor. Down in Staten Island a young manager of one of the Roulston's stores was fired with no explanation. He was the only one in the family working and his father was a cripple. The neighbors and all the people who traded at Roulston's organized a protest, and keeping the petition at an adjacent butcher shop they got signatures from everyone who came in, to send to the management of the store, asking for his reinstatement. A year or so ago they would not have been so alive to the need for social action.

## BEST OR NOTHING?

"The best is the enemy of the good," Father Joseph P. McSorley quoted to us in talking over the first number of THE CATHOLIC WORKER. He was translating from the Italian and the little saying was by way of pointing out that it was pleasing in the sight of God to do the good one could and not to neglect doing that because of ambitious desire to do the "best."

Don Bosco felt that way about it too. In his biography we read about a friend of the great Italian who always wished to do the very best, and how Don Bosco always went ahead on the other hand and did what he could, piling up achievement after achievement with his very small and humble beginnings. To make a start, that was the thing. Not to wait until it was possible to make the perfect thing.

And just a few Sundays ago we heard a little talk from a parish priest down in Staten Island. He was talking to the children about their posture in kneeling and the necessity for a vehement Amen to the final prayers said by the priest at the foot of the altar.

"Snap to it!" he had shouted, right in the midst of those final prayers. It was the children's Mass and he kept them afterwards for a talk, telling them that if they didn't do a thing right instead of half-heartedly, they might as well stay outside the door.

And I thought sadly, if we waited to pray until we had the fervor of a saint, we'd wait a long time.

The great St. Teresa wrote in her autobiography of the thoughts which were like "little gnats which buzz about by night here and there," and troubled her at her prayers. "Against this evil I know no remedy," she said. "The sole remedy which I met with, after having wearied myself for many years is. . . to consider the memory no better than a madman, and to leave it alone with its folly, for God alone can check out its extravagances."

*St. Thomas Aquinas declared that, for the practice of virtue, a certain amount of good was indispensable. . . . Cardinal Manning said that God's commandments could not be preached to men without empty stomachs. – Abbe Lugan.*

# Chapter 6

## The Listener

*The Catholic Worker*, Sept 1933, 1, 8.

*Summary: Daily chronicle of efforts to organize workers by communists and neighborhood councils. Tells of visitors stopping by to get copies of The Catholic Worker. (DDLW #269).*

July 12 –

Saw Francis Gorman of the Textile Union this afternoon. They were having an emergency meeting up at the union headquarters. The men all looked very tired. He was holding his head in his hands, wondering how the Industrial Recovery Administration was going to enforce the code. . . . The situation in the mills is bad. The manufacturers speeding up production right now. The stretchout system working everybody overtime. The situation in Paterson very bad. They are much in need of organizers, with every labor body trying to organize the workers now that organization has been admitted as legal.

July 13 –

A hotel employee called at the office of *The Catholic Worker* to put in a complaint as to how the Hotel Men's Association was ill-treating its help, twelve hour shifts, seven day week, no food and very small wages being the general rule. The man who came in was a Frenchman who had worked all his life in hotels and knew whereof he spoke. He was enthusiastic about our recommendation, in the July-August issue, to organizations to investigate conditions at hotels before using their facilities for Communion Breakfasts.

July 15 –

As we sat in the office (a Saturday evening) a Communist meeting started just a few doors down the street under the lamp post. There are always street noises, – the children playing ball, the taxis and cars tooting for them to get out of the way, mothers calling to their children, the constant screaming of brakes, radios, the roar of the “L” a block away, but for a long while as I sat at my typewriter I had been conscious of a new and louder sound. It was a bellowing, a shouting that resounded up and down the street. I had not noticed it for a time because when a prize fight is being broadcast every radio down the street multiplies the sound of the one voice until the voice seems to fill the air to the exclusion of everything else. That was the way it was this evening, and I had not been paying any attention to it.

I looked out of the window finally and saw a white painted kitchen chair, an American flag tied on one side, and a group of perhaps twenty-five standing around listening to the speaker. The buildings before him acted as a perfect sounding board. The acoustics were excellent for his purpose, and he could be heard up and down the length of the block. People indoors could hear every word, and people sitting on their stoops and hanging out of their windows seeking a cool breath of air, were listeners willy-nilly.

They were, we gathered, members of an Unemployed Council in the neighborhood. They were distributing their organ, the *Hunger Fighter*, and they were announcing a dance, the admission to which was ten cents. They talked too about the lying press – about politics – about their fellow workers. Fellow worker, fellow worker, fellow worker, the voice went on relentlessly. Usually it is “comrades and fellow workers.” This speaker must have formerly been a wobbly, in other words an I.W.W., from the West.

The speaking went on and on. A policeman went up and down the block, circled around like an uneasy watch dog, and finally took up his station in the middle of the street in back of them.

Two little boys passed under my window. “Those guys never shut up talking,” one of them was saying.

“Oh shut up, fellow worker,” little Ethel who lives upstairs protested. Her bed was at the window and she too was an unwilling audience.

A half-mad woman passing by went up to the chair and shook her fist in the speaker’s face. Then she went and sat down on her stoop. As one speaker got down from the chair, another got up. The visible audience was sparse, but they had the whole street listening. It was a hot night and there was nothing else to do.

When finally they went away, with their chair and their American flag, I counted them and there were twelve, half the number who were grouped around them.

There are not many Communists speaking in the squares now. Their new policy is to go around to the residential streets and talk to small groups and distribute their literature. Active work is being done by the Unemployed Councils, and it is along these same lines that Catholics should work. See story on Neighborhood Councils, page 2.

July 18 –

It was just after writing the above that Miss Kathryn Dalton came into the office to find out about our work. She had found a copy of the paper in her parish church and she wanted to know how she could help. She had not come to tell us about her work. It was very modestly and diffidently that she spoke of it, finally, after discussion of many other things.

“I am doing the same thing the Unemployed Councils are,” she said. “Not having a job and wanting to keep busy, I started to take up some cases which had applied to the Home Relief Bureau without getting any relief. I took the cases into the offices and got attention for the people. I saw the way the Communists were going about it, and I did the same thing. Only without the noise. I’ve seen them going up to a man waiting in line with a dispossess notice in his hand and grab him. Two weeks later this man is a member of the Unemployed Council

and demonstrating with the rest of them. ‘But they got help for me,’ he tells me. ‘They forced the office to listen to my trouble. I couldn’t have gotten the relief without them.’

“I decided right then and there that what Catholic women who want to work for the cause ought to do was to become members of Catholic Neighborhood Councils. To take up cases in their neighborhoods and work for them.

‘I’ve had my hands full ever since I started some months ago. If I find children sick in the families, I arrange hospital or clinic care for them. I go to see landlords. I go into court with people when they get a dispossession notice, and talk to the judge for them to get a delay so that there will be time for the Relief Office to take care of them.

“There is all sorts of abuse of power in the Home Relief offices, of course. But one can only do what one can.”

July 19 –

Mr. Geiss and Mr. Burke called. Geiss is speaking now at Long Island Depot in Brooklyn, and Mr. Burke is distributing copies of *The Catholic Worker*. Michael Gunn is also helping as a propagandist.

July 20 –

Called on a Catholic lawyer who professed to believe in the frame-up system and the third degree methods of the police. They were necessary, he insisted. This is the sort of Catholic who is held up by the Communists as an example of Church teaching. One such Catholic may do much harm to the Church in the eyes of the man in the street.

July 22 –

An informal gathering of Italians on the front steps discussing the Unemployed Councils and their work. Distributed *The Catholic Worker*.

July 24 –

A Redemptorist Father, born and raised in this neighborhood, dropped into the office to order three hundred copies of *The Catholic Worker* monthly for his parish. He said he wished it was weekly as his was a working class parish and needed the paper.

July 28 –

J Lehane, of Long Island City, a member of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks and a most energetic member of his union, called to get copies of the paper for distribution at local meetings. He said that there were 250 members of the local and only about 25 were regular attendants at the meetings. More activity needed. He told, too, of a friend of his who had worked at the Hotel Montclair, seven days a week, supposedly for seven hours a day, but her hours usually stretched out to ten. When she had to stay home on account of illness she was laid off.

In regard to this question of the seven day week, Pope Leo XIII wrote in his encyclical:

“To consent to any treatment which is calculated to defeat the end and purpose of his being is beyond his (the worker’s) right; he cannot give up his soul to servitude; for it is not man’s own rights which are here in question, but the rights of God, most sacred and inviolable.



“From this follows the obligation of the cessation of work and labor on Sundays and certain festivals.”

Patrick Clare, an Irish Labor Party man, came to the office with copies of the Labor Party paper and talked of a United Front. “Catholics,” he said, “ought not to be afraid of fighting for social justice just because Communists are doing it.”

July 31 –

A call from the mailman. He spoke of the substitutes’ demands for work and the parade they had made on City Hall.

There had been no replacements in the post office service, he said, only the doubling up of work. On his route he covered an atheist book shop where they are very zealous about handing out literature. When they discussed atheism with him he said, “A man is not a man if he does not believe in God.” He himself was a Jew, but he was a believer in the Creator. “Who could make a blade of grass?” he asked the atheist, who replied, “Oh, you’re too smart for me,” and gave up arguing with him.

The next visitor was a chauffeur from the Edison Company who is active in parish work. But as for distributing copies to his fellow employees, “We don’t dare talk about such things. No matter how long you may have worked there, you don’t know where you stand. You never know when you are going to lose your job!”

Oh, the lack of security, the uncertainty as to the future is a sad thing for a grown man with a family, hurtful to his pride and his manhood!

August 9 –

A member of the Workingmens’ Ex-Service League was a caller. His League is a Communist affiliate. Why don’t the Catholics get out and demonstrate against war and against evictions, he wanted to know.

A priest came in while he was talking and he left, but the priest continued the conversation by saying that Catholic laymen should be far more active in studying these questions and expressing themselves on them.

# Chapter 7

## Neighborhood Council In Action

*The Catholic Worker*, Sept 1933, 2.

*Summary: The depression era story of helping a poor woman find and move into a new apartment after being evicted by a heartless landlord for failure to pay rent. (DDLW #268).*

Early in the morning of August 10, Dorothy Weston, Begonia Jimenez and I went over to Mrs. N.'s house to see about her moving. The Marshal was due to come at ten and put her on the street and she didn't want her belongings exposed to the neighborhood. The Unemployed Council (Communist) is interested in making demonstrations and shows up only when the furniture is on the street, so we were trying to be the first on the scene.

With the assistance of Fred Schilling and Raymond Vallely of East 15th Street, we were ready to move her, and the janitor of the house where she was living recommended a house further down the street where the agent was not, she said, so brutal.

The jainitress in the new house had lived there twenty-one years and while she wrote out a receipt for us, we admired the rubber tree which grew in a pot in her front room and reached all the way to the ceiling.

Mrs. N. makes her living by collecting rags and iron from ash cans and selling them. She used to be a jainitress and received an apartment in return for cleaning and taking care of two houses further down on the east side. But she lost her job, and she is now sixty-two years old and there is no chance of her finding anything else. She is all alone save for a huge cat called Rags who is so old that he is toothless. When she opened the door to our knock, he was lying on one of the pantry shelves, looking down sedately and indifferently at the bustle of moving going on around him. For her meals and his, Mrs. N. collects scraps from the First Avenue market, picking up stale vegetables and scraps of meat and fish heads. She does not like to ply her trade of collecting rags during the day, so she sets out at night, continuing her work often until early in the morning. Just the night before, the jainitress said, she had brought in an iron bed and spring at twelve o'clock, making several trips with them. She had had no bed before, sleeping on a bundle of rags on the floor.

Her possessions consisted of trunks and a couple of large baskets of her belongings, a table and chairs, a kitchen range and some kerosene lamps.

She had, used, of course, neither gas nor electricity, not being able to afford these “public” utilities.

“But then most of the people don’t use gas or electricity around here and never have,” the jainitress told us. “I always use a coal stove in the summer and burn wood in it to cook with. I get wood from the Edison people down by the river. They’re always giving away free wood. They’re awfully good.”

A Home Relief investigator stopped by the stoop for a chat. she heard us talking about gas and electricity. “Yes, most of the people never used gas and electric until the city was paying for it,” she said resentfully. She was stopping to leave a ticket for another woman who had nine dogs. “And how I hate to leave a ticket for a woman with nine dogs,” she lamented. “When so many children need milk! But, goodness! what can you do?”

“She’s not so bad as most,” our friend the jainitress commented as the Home Relief worker went on down the street. “She’s real good-hearted. Now the last one they had was a mean thing in spectacles. She wouldn’t sit down in your house. ‘I don’t like bugs,’ she’d say, and ‘won’t you please dust off that chair and put it in the hall?’ ”

As we waited for the moving job to be done, the agent passed us by blackly. Over the phone the day before he had said:

“I don’t care if she has gone to the Home Relief. I wouldn’t take their vouchers anyway. They’re no good, you can’t cash them. Now we’ve got to dispossess the people all over again and it’s putting us to a lot of expense.”

We pointed out that it might be better to let them stay temporarily than go to this expense. But the only reply was, “We carried them—let some one else do it for a while.” They had only carried them a month and a half, we pointed out, but a grunt was the only answer.

“He’s a mean one,” the janitor whispered as he passed. “Know what he’s just gone and done? Cut down all the clothes lines on the roof this morning! How are we going to hang our clothes out now?”

By this time the two boys had all but finished the moving job. Mrs. N. had been transferred from one apartment to another with decency and dispatch. For another month at least she can live without a harsh agent forever at the door, bulldozing and threatening her with the streets.

# Chapter 8

## Are Newmann Clubs Enough?

*The Catholic Worker*, Oct 1933, 1, 10.

*Summary: Interview with a Jesuit regarding catechesis for Catholic students in public high schools. Quotes a Newman Club worker who complains that the students won't come unless there is a dance. (DDLW #270).*

"I first became interested in Newman Clubs," said Father John Corbett, S.J., in a recent interview, "when I was stationed at Fordham, across the street from Theodore Roosevelt High School, and discovered the shocking number of Catholic children there who were receiving no sort of religious instruction.

"There was a Newman Club, of course, but when I inquired into its work, I found that it was purely social. 'You can't get the kids here if you're going to preach to them,' the teacher in charge of it told me. 'You have to give dances for them.'

"So you have a situation where either the Newman Clubs are distinctly religious in character – and then only those children come who would not neglect their religious training anyway; or else you have Newman Clubs which are organizations for giving dances and having a Communion Breakfast once a year."

Father Corbett spoke of one zealous Catholic teacher in George Washington High School who knows every Catholic in her school personally and sees that they get to Confession at least once a month, who gives her time to interesting their parents and pastors in their duty of providing real religious training for them, and who arranges lectures for her Newman Club by priests at least once a month on subjects connected with liturgy or dogma. Another teacher in Bryant High School brings her club once a month to the Cenacle convent, where they have a religious instruction, go to Confession, and finish with Benediction a day spent in truly religious surroundings.

"There are other teachers in other schools, too," he said, "Who give generously of their time and energy in their efforts to counteract the purely secular training of the public schools. But that is not the true answer to the problem. The answer lies with the pastors of parishes. It is they who have the facilities for providing religious instruction. And it is they, not the teachers in the public schools, who have the responsibility before God.

“There should be one priest appointed for the diocese whose sole work would be the religious education of public school children. It would be up to him to delegate a priest in each parish to register the children there attending public schools. He would aid in the organization of weekly classes for them, receive reports from the parishes on the work being done, and guard the religious welfare of the children in the public schools themselves by his authority and knowledge of the situation.”

It is not an answer to say, as many priests do, continued Father Corbett, that all Catholic children should be in Catholic schools. Obviously, the Catholic schools could not begin to accommodate them all. But we have weekly instruction classes for children in the public elementary schools, and there is no reason, he contends, why the work of the parishes should stop there; religious instruction should be related with the other subjects taught the children, to offset the evil effects of non-religious or anti-religious teaching given them, especially in such subjects as biology, history, and economics.

“I would insist,” he said, “that each child in the upper classes of the public high schools get a copy of the four great Papal Encyclicals – the one on marriage, that on education, and the two on labor and social justice, each of which may be obtained for ten cents from the Paulist Press – and be instructed in the meaning and implications of them. And Catholic children should be supplied with examination outlines, especially in history, which show the Church in its true light in relation to civilization, in place of the decidedly Protestant outlines now used by most of the children with the tacit consent of their teachers.”

I asked Father Corbett if any parishes provided such religious training for public high school children.

“Well,” he replied, “when Bishop Kearney was pastor up at St. Francis Xavier’s Church here in the Bronx he was an active and effective worker in this cause. And Father Strugnell at St. Thomas Aquinas’ Church has a list of all the children in his parish attending public schools and sees that they receive regular instruction. There is a Father Edward J. Donovan, too, of St. Aloysius Church, out in Great Neck, Long Island, who has worked out these suggestions with great success. As for the others – I don’t want to make any sweeping statements, but there was a letter in the Brooklyn *Tablet* not so long ago asking about parish study clubs or instruction classes for public school children. And there wasn’t a single answer.”

# Chapter 9

## The Listener - October 1933

*The Catholic Worker*, Oct 1933, 7.

*Summary: Miscellaneous musings about child labor, study clubs, mimeographed newspapers issued by altar boys. (DDLW #274).*

Although we have seen many copies of mimeographed papers put out by zealous Communist young people, the first one we have seen done by Catholics was brought in to us by Edwin F. Britton. It is called *The Magnet*, and is “a monthly published by the altar boys of Our Lady of Guadalupe Council of the Knights of the Divine Child, to inspire Catholic Action.” Its editor is Mr. Britton, who does the hard work of mimeographing it every month, devoting his evenings to the work, for he is employed during the day in a jewelry store. The motto of the paper is, “We want a Daily Press.” It is an eight-page paper with a bright rose cover, attractively made up and containing stories, editorials, jokes and poems. The copy he showed us was Volume 3, No. 24. This is a splendid piece of neighborhood action and we earnestly advise other young Catholics in schools and parishes to follow Mr. Britton’s example. He said if anyone wanted to find out how it can be done to call on him or write to him at 256 West 15th Street.

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We refer study clubs and schools who want literature on international peace to the Catholic Association for International Peace, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. Miss Sweeney there will advise as to pamphlets and leaflets and study club outlines for classes.

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Miss Kelley, a high school teacher and a member of the Teacher’s Union, dropped into our office last month and was telling us about the activities of the Communists in the Union, and their tactics of prolonging meetings until everyone is so exhausted that they have control

of the situation and can carry things their way. She was urging that every Catholic teacher join the Union in order to fight Communist teachers in the public schools.

Another Catholic teacher says that there are several teachers' organizations and that it is hard to belong to all of them and to pay dues to all of them.

Miss Kelley also told about working some years ago in a summer school, having the afternoon sessions, and about a little boy who always came to school so tired that he fell asleep at his desk. She investigated and found that he was working in a laundry as a sorter from seven to eleven so that he arrived at school in a state of exhaustion. She informed the proper authorities of the case and the little boy was able to give up his grueling work.

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We have found a good and enthusiastic friend in Mollie Callanan, of Buffalo, New York, who heard about the paper up at the Cenacle of St. Regis and came down to see us. She immediately volunteered to help us and took papers down to Wall Street to distribute after the talks there. Another day she arrived at the office to get copies to distribute in Union Square. She had heard of Dorothy Weston's experience in the Square when she went to distribute papers in preparation for the meeting of the unemployed. Dorothy had been set upon and argued with (and to argue with her the Communists found it necessary to grab her by both arms, so she was almost torn limb from limb) and when she extricated herself from the milling mob, most of whom wanted copies of the paper and some half dozen of whom wanted to prevent the others from taking it, she found her chic nose veil ripped from its moorings and askew over one eye. Mollie declared herself ready for anything, but on the day set for her appearance in Union Square it poured rain and she had to forego her apostolate to the Communists, for this visit to New York at least.

We got an invigorating letter from her on her return to Buffalo in which she tells us of a Sister Fabian, "a live-wire nun who is moving mountains in a quiet way." We enjoyed the mixed metaphors.

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Our friend J. Lehane of Long Island City came in during the month with another union man, both of them offering to serve in eviction cases, help to move furniture, or assist The Catholic Worker in any way they could. We talked of the railroad – he belongs to the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks – and Mr. Lehane pointed out that if more men had been employed on the railroads, the Erie wreck, where so many were killed last month, would not have occurred.

# Chapter 10

## All In a Day

*The Catholic Worker*, Oct 1933, 5, 6.

*Summary: Commentary on a parade for labor organizing, labor leaders, strikes around the country, and advertising to increase consumption. Recommends voluntary sacrifices and gifts to the poor. Suggests study clubs use the Gospels, a newspaper, and Papal encyclicals for their material. (DDLW #272).*

There is column after column in the news about the NRA parade, which lasted from one-thirty in the afternoon until almost midnight. We should have been in it, but there was too little time to organize our forces. With two people doing everything in the office of *The Catholic Worker*, days are crowded enough. Our hours are from nine in the morning to eleven at night often, and we regret we are unable to sign a code as to hours or wages.

I took the time, however, to go up to Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street at four o'clock in the afternoon to see the crowds. Forty-second Street from Times Square over to the avenue was jammed with spectators, many of them walking in the middle of the street. Bryant Park, which is beginning to be built up again after having been taken away from the people (there is a story of city graft here) looks like a large vacant lot. Slabs of stone along the sidelines look like fallen tombstones. Women and children were sitting picknicking in the park though it was closed off, and the police were so busy on the Avenue that they let them be. The grass was high in some places and ragged boys played as if they were out on the quiet prairies.

Poor Mayor O'Brien got a lot of booing from the stock exchange on account of his tax program, and due to confusion in the parade-traffic the booers were able to keep it up for eighteen minutes. Why should one man be made the goat?

Every now and then some woman fainted in the melee and a motorcycle policeman put her in his little basket on the side and sped away with her dropping over the side and looking to be in imminent danger of a broken neck.

It may be indelicate to mention it, but we are afraid the people who were unwinding rolls of toilet paper from office windows at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street were showing just as hostile a spirit as the booers of Mayor O'Brien. In fact, we are inclined to believe that they might have been motivated by a bolshevik spirit. Page the D.A.R. and Hamilton Fish.



\* \* \*

At the same time my daily paper tells me that R. P. Lamont is resigning from the Steel and Iron Institute and Charlie Schwab, that notorious enemy of labor, is going to take his place. Ham Fish might get after Schwab as being one of the causes of Communism in this country. Schwab has been fighting labor unions for many, many years now, and making generous gifts to the church at the same time. Wouldn't it be swell if these gifts were rejected with thanks? I'd rather worship in such a store as Father Cornelius Ahern officiates in when he says Mass for his Negro congregations over in Newark than in the finest church in the world, built with the money sweated from miners and miners' children and wives. I admit that many such gifts of ill-gotten money are accepted by priests and sisters who know nothing of the labor situation in this country and who have never been told. And I admit that the institutions built with such money, for instance the splendid property and building down on Staten Island which Schwab donated as an orphanage, are productive of much good in that they have taken care of countless thousands of poor children. But how sad and how terrible a thing it is that some children are sweated and starved and that it is from their ragged pockets that the money is filched to house the others. Not to feed them. The good sisters always see to that themselves.

[As we go to press the papers state that Schwab will not succeed Lamont, but the above comment may still be pertinent.—Ed.]

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"Germans to pare one meal a month to feed jobless," is another headline. Yesterday, while I wandered around town to view the parade, I was disheartened at the sight of so many women in the tea shops and luncheon places, spending so much money on so little, and eating so many unnecessary things when so many are going hungry. It wouldn't hurt any of them to practice *agere contrawhen* they are tempted to indulge in an orgy of sweets. The Germans are going to pare one meal a month off their diet. Why can't we go them one better, or four better, and pare off one meal a week and give that money to charity? Or not even one meal, but one afternoon tea, which usually comes to fifty or sixty cents.

\* \* \*

General Johnson says (I am still reading the day's news), "As for the American Federation of Labor. . . we realize that they represent only a small proportion of all the workers whose rights it is our duty to conserve. They represent workers only to the extent that workers choose them for that function."

Much as I deplore the dual-union idea which the A.F. of L. has been fighting for years, I hope that this remark of Johnson's indicates that the Progressive Miners of Illinois, who have been

fighting the United Miners for years on the grounds of corrupt leadership, will be recognized by the Administration.

\* \* \*

I am still on the front page of the *Times*, and it is giving me great opportunity for editorial comment. Also by this column I am indicating what I consider to be the best way to work in a study club. Just take the Gospels, a newspaper, the Papal encyclicals, and get to work.

On the next column there is discussion of retail codes, a section of which bars “inaccurate advertising.” This leads to another training of thought, as to how advertising is responsible for much misery today. Our Holy Father advocates thrift, but is it thrifty to be taken in by advertisements? Isn’t there an element of greed in the desire to have, for instance, new linoleums, electric refrigerators, new radios, new cars? The poorest of the poor are taught to spend their money on these things when their actual subsistence is so insecure that they never know when they buy a thing on the instalment plan whether they are going to have a job six months hence so that they can continue paying for it. Why not a little more of the Franciscan ideal of holy poverty? Who not a little more disdain of the unnecessaries of life? Food, clothing and shelter – these are necessities. And if we have these we can see our way clear to studying for a better social order by which we may obtain those other, we admit, delightful unnecessaries.

When we talk of speculation, it isn’t only the bankers on Wall Street who fall into that category. It is also every man who speculates in the future of his children by an avid desire to have what the other fellow has.

Of course, in this we are going against the N R A, which calls for faith and more buying. Why not faith and more charity – that is, giving to the poor to enable them to buy?

There is a great advertising campaign on now. Buy now because prices are going up. Owen D. Young, on page four of the *Times* says: “Capital which over-reaches for profits, labor which over-reaches for wages, or a public which over-reaches for bargains will all destroy each other. . . There should be earnings enough to pay not only a living wage but a cultural wage. . . Often behind an apparent bargain lurks a threat to somebody’s savings, or somebody’s labor, or to the buyer himself in a skimmed product.”

\* \* \*

Johnson says Ford is observing the code and as long as he does no steps will be taken. So the precedent has been set of one person holding out for rugged individualism. Not so good. But then I heard the other day of a bank president who told a friend of ours that he flew the blue eagle for business purposes and that anyone can get around the agreements who wanted to. That bank president is not only a rugged individualist but a hypocrite.

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Thirty-five thousand miners are striking again in Pennsylvania. They call it a holiday now (sixteen were shot later in the day). The strike of the miners in Utah and New Mexico has been put in the news at last. It has been going on for weeks, with thousands out, wholesale arrests of hundreds, but the capitalist press has ignored it.

A white goods strike of 35,000 going on in and around New York. There is a silk strike of 60,000 workers in Paterson and Passaic, where the radical union, the National Textile Workers, is in command of the situation. Anne Burlak, the leader of the National Textile Workers' Union, refuses to sit down to arbitrate with Thomas McMahon, of the United Textile Workers, accusing him of selling out the workers. It is true that McMahon has sat with bankers and Chamber of Commerce officials more than he has sat with workers in recent years. It is true he is a member of the National Civic Federation, which the United Mine Workers (A.F. of L.) Holds is an enemy of labor. The U.M.W. in its constitution forbids any member of its organization to be a member of the Federation. So how does McMahon, also A.F. of L., get that way?

Anne Burlak is apt to have the workers with her, because she is a fine, strapping young girl, blond-haired, rosy cheeked, looking like a Valkyrie as she marches at the head of her strikers. She led the Hunger Marchers down to Washington last year and wherever there is a strike she rushes to the fore. What she's really out for is a good time, otherwise she'd work with the established union and do some of the much-needed organizing work among the southern textile mills, for instance. But she prefers the obstructionist tactics of the Communist Party.

# Chapter 11

## Is Picketing a Crime?

*The Catholic Worker*, Oct 1933, 5.

*Summary: Unjust injunctions persecute striking workers in New Jersey. (DDLW #271).*

An immediate example of the evils of company unionism is shown in the strike of the uniform workers in Red Bank, N.J. Two injunctions were issued by a judge in Red Bank, one to the Sigmund Eisner Company (and the head of the company is a volunteer worker for the NRA in his city) and the other to the company union. The strikers under the injunction are not allowed to talk to any worker who may be willing to become employed by the firm, not allowed to address any employee either on the streets, at their homes or in any public place. The strikers are not permitted to tell anyone there is a strike on, nor allowed to display signs, nor to picket.

“Peculiar is this judicial logic,” says the Amalgamated Clothing Workers’ monthly paper. “While these workers were satisfied to work for \$2, \$3 and \$4 per week in this sweat shop, no judge interested himself in their welfare. They could even work sixty to seventy hours a week in an attempt to make seven or eight dollars a week, and labor and factory laws of the state could be ignored and violated daily. But no judge became interested in upholding the majesty of the law. But the moment those sweated workers struck and started to put up a fight under the banner of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers for decent wages and working conditions, the judge suddenly became interested in seeing to it that the letter of every law on the books was lived up to.”

The strikers are continuing their picketing and awaiting a decision from the National Labor Board.

# Chapter 12

## Day After Day

*The Catholic Worker*, November 1933, 1,2.

*Summary: Contrasts society's concern for animals and sill "high society" games with the plight of those being evicted. Urges readers to petition against evictions. (DDLW #197).*

A deer gets trapped on a hillside and every effort is brought to bear to rescue him from his predicament. The newspapers carry daily features.

Mrs. A. with her four children and unemployed husband living on \$1.50 a week, is trapped by economic circumstances and everyone is so indifferent that it took three or four afternoons of Mike Gunn's time to see to it that the Home Relief came to the rescue. Though Mike has enough to do with his Labor Guild over in Brooklyn, he was doing his bit as part of the Fifteenth Street Neighborhood Council.

Three little pigs are crowded into a too-small cage, the case is brought into court, the judge's findings in the case being that pigs should not be crowded the way subway riders are. And a family of eight children, mother and father, are crowded in three rooms and the consensus of opinion is that they're lucky to have that and why don't they practice birth control anyway.

One of the Home Relief workers came in the other day and was voicing just such sentiments. She was absolutely unacquainted with Catholic teaching on birth control and abortion, and we forced her to listen to a lecture on the subject which, though it may not have convinced her, at least served the purpose of toning down her propaganda among unemployed families, we hope.

A scavenger hunt is the latest game of "Society." An hilarious pastime, the New York *Times* society reporter calls it, and describes in two and one half columns the asinine procedure of several hundred society and literary figures, guests at a party at the Waldorf-Astoria, surging forth on a chase through the highways and byways of Manhattan Island. "The scavenger hunt of last night brought an enthusiastic response even from persons whose appetites for diversion are ordinarily jaded." The hunt was a search through the city streets for a "ridiculously heterogeneous list of articles."

Any morning before and after Mass and straight on through the day there is a "scavenger hunt" going on up and down Fifteenth Street outside the windows of THE CATHOLIC

WORKER and through all the streets of the city. People going through garbage and ash cans to see what they can find in the way of a heterogeneous list of articles. The *Times* does not state what these things were, but probably the list was made up of something delightfully and quaintly absurd such as old shoes, bits of string, cardboard packing boxes, wire, old furniture, clothing and food.

If the several hundred guests at the Waldorf had to scavenge night after night and morning after morning, the hunt would not have such an enthusiastic response.

Teresa, aged seven, member of the Fifteenth Street Neighborhood Council, took part in her first eviction the other day. She had a cold and was staying home from school in order to keep out in the air, it being a balmy day, so she had her chance to help.

The Friday before, a Home Relief worker from 22<sup>nd</sup> Street came to the office to get aid for a woman and child who were being evicted from a decrepit flat in one of the tenements of William Horn (31 Union Square). There were five stalwart friends of The Catholic Worker in the office at the time, Harry Crimmins, Frank O'Donnell, Tom Coddington, William Walsh, and a Mr. Powers from Atlantic City who came to inquire about the work of the paper and stayed to help.

Understanding that the eviction was at three in the afternoon, we sallied forth, but when we got there, the landlord's agent had called off his men, expecting us to do the job of putting the woman out, and thus saving him eighteen dollars.

We refused to move the woman's furniture until it had been brought down by the marshal. We explained to the agent that often a landlord who was unwilling to accept a Home Relief voucher offered to move the family himself, paying five dollars to a neighborhood truckman rather than eighteen to the marshal. This agent, standing sneering and scoffing by the door, refused to do anything.

"You have no sympathy for landlords, have you?" he wanted to know.

We assured him that our sympathy was rather with the weaker party. Alright then, he would call the marshal! The eviction would be the following Monday then, at three o'clock.

It was hard to understand his unwillingness to have the poor woman moved. It was as though he delighted in the idea of heaping humiliation on her.

Monday came, and the relief worker hastened around to the office, to tell us that the marshal was about to arrive, though it was only one, not three in the afternoon. Only Harry Crimmins, Teresa, Dorothy Weston and I were in the office, so leaving Dorothy to mind the office, the three of us sallied out.

Several police and huskies were standing at the door of the tenement to greet what they thought was going to be a delegation of Communists, only to meet instead seven-year-old Teresa, Harry Crimmins and me. They dissolved into thin air. (It is a wonder they wouldn't stay and help us.)

Teresa carried toys, pieces of the baby's crib, and Harry Crimmins and I managed the rest. The Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart, a community of nuns who run a day nursery and do visiting work in the neighborhood promised to keep an eye on our evicted friend—she is a

Protestant—taking charge of her two-year-old child while she works as a dishwasher for seven a week.

This is only one of the dozen eviction cases we have had in the last month. We have moved Jews, Protestants, and Catholics. A German livery stable man loaned us his horse and wagon to move a Jewish neighbor. Jews, Protestants and Catholics have helped us by contributing clothes, furniture and their services.

We call our readers' attention to the petition published in this issue against evictions which we urge you to clip out, attach to a sheet of paper and send back filled with the signatures of men, women and children who protest against this injustice.

# Chapter 13

## Nation-wide Strikes Advance. . .

*The Catholic Worker*, Nov 1933, 1, 6.

*Summary: Accounts of various strikes around the country, the difficulties of labor organizing, and violence against strikers. (DDLW #275).*

### Brutal Injuries and Teargas Are Police Answer to Defenceless Women and Child Pickets

#### JURY OUT OF DATE

12,000 School Children Are Forced to Scab In Cotton Strike, While California Schools Close

A few highlights in the news of strikes:

The strike of 5,000 employees in the Ford Edgewater, N. J. and Chester, Pa. plants drags on. In a telegram to the NRA, Ford declares that his company has never discriminated “against any applicant for employment on the ground of his affiliation with labor unions or otherwise.” (According to Administrator Johnson on October 27, “Edsel Ford told me they would never accept collective bargaining of any kind.”) In Detroit, the strike of 7,000 die and tool makers threatens to stop the entire auto industry. It will be remembered that a similar strike there last winter actually succeeded, for the first time in the history of American labor, in halting all work in a major industry. The previous strike was led by Communists, and fed by police brutality. An interesting comment on the present labor troubles is that more than 6,000 anti-Ford votes were cast in a recent election in Dearborn, at which the United Front Party, led by the Communist Party, succeeded in nominating its mayoralty candidate and four others in the non-partisan primaries. As we go to press, it is reported that Ford has announced he will be obliged to lay off 9,000 workers a week to conform to the 35-hour week provision of the auto code. Administrator Johnson offered to except the Ford plants from this provision, but Ford failed to reply.



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**Three striking cotton pickers in California were killed and a score injured, many seriously, by armed growers,** apparently abetted by police. The evidence is unanimous that the strikers employed only peaceful picketing along the highways. A score of strikers have been jailed on charges of criminal syndicalism, inciting to riot, etc., in an effort to break the strike. The Federated Press reports that, **12,000 school children in the strike area were forced to act as scabs and pick the crop, the schools closing for two days.** The cotton growers complained to Secretary Wallace that "the bountiful use of federal funds for welfare relief is making it more pleasant and desirable for labor to accept charity than to work," and it is now reported that all federal relief to strikers has been withdrawn.

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"There is no place in this town for Russian anarchists, cutthroats, Reds and murderers. In some places they take men like these out and hang them. \*\*Don't be too sure they won't do it yet, right here.\*\*" These were the law-abiding phrases uttered from the bench by Judge J. H. Solkmore of Lodi, Cal., at a hearing of six organizers arrested during the grape pickers' strike there. When the defendants asked for a jury trial the judge replied, "The jury system is a relic of mediaeval times, the recourse of guilty men who want to escape justice."

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**One man was killed and at least 16 pickets and bystanders seriously wounded, including a small boy struck in the head,** when over 200 deputies using guns, clubs and tear- gas swept down the main street of Ambridge, Pa., in an attempt to break the steel strike there. An unusual Pathe newsreel depicting deputies firing into the picket lines resulted in editorials denouncing the action of Ambridge officials even in the conservative New York *Herald Tribune* and *Times*. Said the *Herald Tribune*: "the whole initiative, in this photographic record, comes from the side of the 'law.' It is not a pleasant picture, and strongly suggests one reason why Pennsylvania has found it so difficult to maintain industrial order."

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After two weeks of attacks by teargas and clubs of police, used indiscriminately on men, women and children in the picket lines and among onlookers, the strike of the workers of the National Steel Company at Weirton, W. Va., has been broken, and the bosses' fight for open shops in the steel industry strengthened. E. T. Weir, president of the company, won for

himself the pleasant nickname of “Shoot-A-Few” Weir by his remark, “We may have to shoot a few these men to end this strike.”

Nine silk strikers in Patterson, N. J., were shot, three of them seriously, when uniformed police and company thugs fired into the picket line. This is the third month of the silk strike, which now includes over 70,000 workers and has tied up the industry in New Jersey, New York City, Pennsylvania and parts of New England. At a recent hearing before Deputy Administrator Whiteside of the NRA, Ann Burlak, organizer for the National Textile Workers’ Union (Communist), warned that the strike could not be compromised: “We will write the settlement terms on the picket line.”

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The coal sections of the country continue restless, as the operators continue opposition to collective bargaining. A general strike of all miners in the northern Pennsylvania hard-coal field was barely prevented by the pleas of President Thomas Maloney of the United Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania and Rev. J. J. Curran, a Catholic priest of Wilkes-Barre, before a convention of the U. A. M. P. Father Curran openly expressed his sympathy with the miners and with their union. **One delegate showed an unopened pay envelope containing the pay of 1 cent for two weeks work**, due to deductions of \$98.99 for powder, tools, etc. from his “earnings” of \$99. Another delegate told the story of several miners and their request for a mule to drag out rails from an old working place. The boss refused the mule, saying: “You’ll have to do it yourselves, it’s a little dangerous to risk a mule up there . . .” **In the Colorado coal field, the first company union in America, that of John D. Rockefeller in the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, has been doomed** by a vote of 877 to 273 in favor of the United Mine Workers of America. The company had refused to permit the taking of a vote in 1917, and refused to recognize the U. M. W. A. in the strikes of 1919 and 1922, although the men followed the lead of the trade union against the company union.

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The Berkshire Mills at Reading, Pa., citadel of open shop interests in the hosiery industry, has been forced to yield to the demands of its workers for collective bargaining after strikes of thousands of organized and unorganized workers.

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More than 4,500 silk dress workers walked out in Los Angeles after a strike call was issued by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. More than 40% of the 6,000 workers, it is charged, are receiving less than \$5 a week. This brings the number of California strikers to

more than 25,000 including 12,000 cotton pickers, 1,800 sardine fishermen, 2,300 lettuce and tomato field workers and several hundred stevedores.

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Martial "law" still reigns at Gallup, N. M., where miners are joining the Communist National Miners Union and deserting the United Mine Workers, the John L. Lewis organization. In the eleventh week of the strike, organizers are being sentenced by court-martial and held in jail under appalling conditions, picketing is forbidden, armed strikebreakers are being deputized to attack strikers.

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In the beet fields of Colorado, **where child labor in its worst forms is still the general rule**, the workers are striking in desperation against wages of as little as four cents an hour for a back-breaking day that extends from sunrise to sunset. (For an analysis of the situation in the beet-sugar industry, see the article by Father Gleason in the November 4th issue of *America*.)

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**The cotton mill strike of 2,100 in New Orleans is broken after police shoot down and arrest scores of strikers . . .** In Ashboro, N. C., the striking workers of the Bossong Hosiery Mills win a remarkable victory after a two-week struggle, winning full union recognition and a 25% wage increase . . . The workers of the Willimantic Silk Co. of Willimantic, Conn., win a wage increase in excess of their demands after a nine-week struggle.

# Chapter 14

## No Continuing City

*The Catholic Worker*, Nov 1933, p. 5

*Summary: In a fiction-like style, tells a story of Mary Blount, a wife and working-class mother who goes to the city hospital clinic for a prenatal checkup. She begins the day joyfully, but ends experiencing indignity and cruelty from the nurses who fail to listen to her and understand her need for modesty. (DDLW #936).*

Down in a dim basement apartment underneath that of Monica's, Mary and Joe Blount lived.

Gerry was nestling up to her mother. Mary was putting her to bed, and Joe Blount, her husband, a small man with an engaging face, stood in his work clothes and watched them.

Gerry was six years old and very vivacious around bedtime. She liked to sniff at her mother's arms, her neck. "You smell like a little baby cow. You smell like a loaf of bread." Gerry playfully bit at her mother.

Joe did not much care for this love-making between Gerry and his wife. He wanted a little attention himself. He clutched his wife as she passed him.

"Give us a kiss, Mary."

"Can't you see I'm busy?"

"You're always busy. You pay too much attention to the kid. I want you."

"You always want me." But she smiled at him.

"I'm glad another's coming."

"Gee, a woman likes to hear her man say that—"

"You'll belong more to me then."

"How do you get that way? I'll be busier than ever with two kids and the janitor work besides."

"Well, you won't be giving it all to Gerry. With two it's just kids. Not the kid. You'll think more of me then."

"Joe, I couldn't think more of you."

Mary was a big comfortable woman and she liked to be compared to a little baby cow. She thought it sweet of Gerry. Her hair was reddish gold and her skin was milky white. She was deep-chested and placid and worked hard with her husband. The two of them earned forty dollars a week, and that of course was a lot of money, but then they had to pay rent besides.

Mary intended to have her baby in the public ward of the hospital just as she had had Peter. It would cost her only thirty dollars and she would put up with the inconvenience of going to the clinic and being in the ward with thirty other women. Her friend, Jenny, who kept a rooming house next door, always paid out one hundred and fifty dollars for each of her children. What with births and deaths that family was always in debt.

A few months before the baby was due, Mary set off one afternoon, leaving Gerry to play with Monica. It was a windy cold afternoon in October, with the smell of rain in the air. Mary bowed her head before the wind and clutched her coat closely about her against the unaccustomed cold. The dust and cold brought tears to her eyes. But it was good after the long hot summer and the torrid days of September.

It was good, too, to be having a holiday from the house at such an unwonted time. To be free and walking the streets when she was usually washing out tiled halls and collecting trash.

She would be having these little holidays now every other week until the child was born, and then a good long holiday of ten days in which to rejoice in a leisurely fashion over her blessings.

Suddenly Mary felt hungry. She was always a small eater in spite of her size, and lately the warm, close house and the smell of food in the halls and garbage in the airshafts took away her appetite. She thought that it would add to the holiday spirit to drop into a bakery lunch room and have a bowl of soup.

It would be a reckless expenditure of money, but now that Mary realized it, she was very hungry indeed. She would never be able to sit through several long hours at the clinic without a bite to eat.

So she stopped in a Jewish bakery lunch room and ordered herself a bowl of beet borscht. It was hot and sweet and there was a flaky potato in the center of the dish. She did not order the rolls and pat of sweet butter, because that would cost an extra ten cents. The soup was fifteen.

The clinic was not far away now, and when she went on she did not feel the cold so much. She was only a little late, and after she had been given her ticket of admission to the clinic, she found herself tenth in line and the doctors already there. Usually they were an hour or so late.

She settled herself down on a bench, comfortably preparing herself to listen and join in the talk of the other mothers. She had had these nice times before when she had had Peter. Good, sociable times once a week, as good as a sewing circle, better, because the women were unanimous in their interests.

"I swore the next time I had one I'd have it at home," one woman was saying. "But here I am again. In some ways it's more comfortable at home and in some ways it ain't. It's the food and sleep mostly. I used to get so hungry in the hospital. Corned beef and cabbage

handed me an hour after the kid was born. A rotten egg every morning and lukewarm coffee! Gee, what wouldn't I have given for something piping hot?"

"Don't I know it!" another chimed in. "It was a good thing they let ye have visitors every day, otherwise ye'd starve."

"Yeah, I had my last at home, too," a young girl was saying. She was a little thing and pretty in a fragile way. "It was the sleepin' and eatin' I was thinkin' of. But they was twins—and a devil a lot of sleepin' I did at home. I'd thought that my husband could help me, poor lamb. 'This is your work, ain't it?' I said to him. 'You put 'em there, didn't you? Well, you can stick around then and help!' They was born ten minutes apart, one of 'em yelling, and the other blue. The doctor wrapped them both in cotton—they were too little to put any clothes on—and put them in front of the oven. One of 'em always seemed to have the worst of it. They was fighting inside like they been fighting ever since."

"I'll bet you'll be glad to get away since."

"I'll bet you'll be glad to get away from them for a while, having another," Mary said.

"Yes, it'll be a little rest. I've got two besides the twins and I had 'em both here. Do you remember how they used to wake you up at four o'clock to give you a basin to wash your face?"

"Wonder if Miss Springer, that jolly nurse, is here yet. She was a nice one. Hey, Aggie, do you remember how when you and me was here last time she mixed our babies up just for fun? She was a jolly soul. But I was mad like hell. The fright she gave me."

"We're months apart this time."

The talk went on, and in groups of four, the women were called into the clinic. Within an hour Mary's turn had come.

The doctors did a lot of laughing and talking as they worked about. Nurses went in and out among the screened cubicles.

Mary was given a sheet and told to undress.

She was proceeding briskly, glad that her turn had come, when she discovered that the sheet which had been given her was far too small for her large body. She was a modest soul, and very shy, so it was with difficulty that she could bring herself to put her head out between the curtains and ask one of the nurses passing by for another sheet.

The nurse was busy and tossed her head as she passed.

Mary hated to stand there with her head poking out between the screens. She felt grotesque, laughable, and since she was a dignified woman the situation was humiliating.

She put her head out again, and catching at another nurse as she passed, she asked again for a larger sheet.

"Do with what you've got," the nurse said testily.

"But it doesn't cover me," Mary said miserably.

The nurse paid no further attention and Mary sat down on the little stool inside the cubicle and tried to control her trembling. She was not angry. She scarcely knew what it was to be angry, but she was shaking with shame and humiliation.

She suddenly thought of the black-faced men she had seen at an amusement park, sticking their heads out from holes in canvases for people to throw balls at. She felt similarly exposed to blows as she once more put her head out. She felt grotesque not only in the scant child's sheet which she clutched about her breast, but in having to put her head out and try to get attention.

"Please," she kept saying, her face red and contorted with shame. "Please, miss—please, nurse!"

The spirit of perversity among the nurses was contagious. The first two had refused to heed her and the other three did likewise. It seemed as though Mary would have to go out into the examination room with two other women with no other covering but the tiny child's sheet which by some miserable chance had been given her.

"Please, nurse. Please, doctor. I can't come out like this," she begged, her eyes full of tears. She was in an agony of nervousness. Her hands were cold and clammy. She could feel perspiration running between her shoulder blades.

"What's wrong with her, anyway?" one nurse complained.

"What's that woman in there beefing about?"

"It's another sheet she must have. She doesn't like the fit of that one."

"Tell her to shop over on Fifth Avenue. Probably she'll get a better fit over there."

"But it won't cover me," Mary sobbed.

The nurses only laughed.

Mary sat on the little stool in the cubicle while the long minutes passed. She was forced to submit to their cruelty. But she felt that happiness had gone out of life. All the pleasure she had felt in the new life that was in her had fled. The pride in her increasing girth seemed ridiculous now. She thought of her calm happiness of an hour ago, her pathetic pleasure in the holiday, her greedy delight in the bowl of soup, in the conversation of the women outside, and she thought what a blind fool she had been to find the world such a good place.

She felt tiny and debased, and from her small suffering she realized the magnitude of the world's sorrow. It was not a good place, this world; it was full of jeering laughter. She sat on the stool and wept.

# Chapter 15

## Thanksgiving

*The Catholic Worker*, Nov 1933, p. 4

*Summary: Expresses gratitude for many contributions as the circulation of the paper has grown to 20,000. There is a melancholy mood with the coming of Winter. Reflects on the price of grapes and how that will affect the Italian wine-makers in the neighborhood. Raises the question of whether Fascism endangers religion. (DDLW #935).*

## Thanksgiving

The first week of November was an exciting week, what with a petition going out on All Souls' Day (it was an inspiration received at Holy Mass that very morning) and enough replies within forty-eight hours to pay off last month's printing bill.

Other contributions came in the form of food, including honey, coffee, and a succulent apple pie, daffodil bulbs for the back garden, cookies and cakes for our tea which was held during the course of the month, baskets of fruit and a coal stove, and enough furniture for the office and half a dozen unemployed families.

Last but not least, friendly editors, such as Father Harold Purcell, editor of *The Sign*, who collected the first eleven dollars towards THE CATHOLIC WORKER, have given the paper space in their columns: *The Rosary* published an article about it in the November issue; and *The Prairie Messenger*, published by the Benedictine Fathers in Saskatchewan, Canada, ran entire a letter we sent out to all schools and academies.

The circulation this month in the new format is 20,000 copies, and we would not have achieved this growth if it had not been for the help of our unemployed friends who have given us of their time, strength and prayers most unstintingly.

It is impossible to list the favors and help we have received. We can only pray in turn that God will bless our friends and well-wishers.



## And Now a Note of Melancholy

Late fall is here. A haze hangs over the city. Fogs rise from the river, and the melancholy note of the river boats is heard at night. The leaves are dropping from the fig tree in the back yard. There is the smell of chestnuts in the air, and if you buy the chestnuts, most of them are wormy. It is better to make popcorn over the fire at night. For we have fires now. The kettle sings on the range in the kitchen (the range cost eight dollars second-hand and doesn't burn much coal), and visitors to THE CATHOLIC WORKER office are drinking much tea and coffee. The stove in the front office has burst in its exuberance and has to be mended with stove clay and a piece of tin.

And there is also the smell of grapes in the air—rich, luscious Concord grapes. If this editorial has a melancholy note, it is not because chestnuts are wormy or because the stove has cracked, but because all our Italian neighbors are too poor this year to buy grapes and make wine. Grapes that used to be one dollar a box are now one dollar fifty. And the Italian fathers who love their wine and have it in lieu of fresh vegetables and fruits all during the long winter, are still out of jobs or on four-day-a-month work relief; and this year there is no pleasant smell of fermenting grapes, no disorderly heaps of mash dumped in the gutters.

And Mr. Rubino and Mr. Scaratino and Mr. Liguori will not rent a wine press together this year, and the children will not hang over them with breathless interest in the mysterious basement while they manipulate the press rented for the house.

And, what is worse, Mr. Rubino will not be dropping into the office of THE CATHOLIC WORKER, when he sees our light late at night, to console us for our long hours by the gift of a milk bottle of wine.

For the long hard winter is before us. Evictions are increasing, people come in to ask us to collect winter clothes and to help them find apartments where relief checks will be accepted.

We must work, and we must pray, and we meditate as we write this that it would be so much easier for all our Italian friends to work and pray, to have courage to fight and also to be patient, if they could make as usual their fragrant and cheering grape wine.

## From the “Commonweal”

“It is this growth of militant atheism—of a contagious spirit of the repudiation of all forms of belief in God—which is more dangerous to the nations of the western world, our own among them, than the Red Army of Soviet Russia. Apparently opposing all that may be termed communistic is that other spirit which is vaguely termed Fascism—militant nationalisms of various types—which even although it may retain some sympathy with the religious tradition, if not a vital religious faith, is almost as dangerous to religion as Communism itself. This is so because it deifies a race, or a nation, or a materialistic cause of some sort or other, and seduces the souls of young people with glamorous idolatries. And still another, and the greatest enemy of religion, coming not from Russia, or from any exterior source, is the failure of Christians to live up to their own principles. Surely it is for this reason that the Pope

has called the Christian world to reparation, in this Holy Year commemorating the nineteen hundredth anniversary of the Redemption.”

## Catholic Labor Papers

Although we have called ourselves the only Catholic labor paper, and have been so greeted by friends of labor throughout the country, we wish to call attention to the fact that we are simply the only Catholic paper which proclaims itself for the worker, through its masthead. There are most certainly many other Catholic papers which are exponents of the rights of labor, and are devoting themselves more and more in their columns to conditions of workers in this country. An outstanding example is the Buffalo paper, *The Echo*, which in addition to publishing diocesan news, covers all phases of the labor situation most thoroughly. Someone has been kind enough to send us a subscription to this splendid weekly, and we appreciate it.

## Chapter 16

# Co-operative Apartment for Unemployed Women Has Its Start in Parish

*The Catholic Worker*, Dec 1933, 1, 5.

*Summary: Heralds the opening of a co-operative apartment for ten homeless women and pleads with readers for donations of beds, blankets and sheets. (DDLW #276).*

Although it cannot be dignified by the name of House of Hospitality, what is virtually a center of hospitality is opening today, December 11, in the parish of the Immaculate Conception Church.

It is called the Teresa Joseph Co-operative, and it is an apartment which will house ten homeless women who have been staying at shelters provided by the city, the Salvation Army, and other organizations.

It is named after the older St. Teresa because she was forced to find shelter for her nuns when she was setting up her new foundations. St. Teresa herself said that one of the reasons for the disintegration of the Carmelites was that the convents had become so poor that the nuns, though enclosed, received callers constantly in order that they might get food from outside. One of her first thoughts always was for the material well-being of her nuns as a foundation for spiritual life.

And it was St. Joseph upon whom she always depended to look after her houses. He had had to provide both house and food for the blessed Virgin and Child. And he is the one we, too, must appeal to for aid in this venture for Catholic unemployed.

With the co-operation of the priests of the parish, donations were collected from young working women and married women of the neighborhood to provide for the shelter of their less fortunate sisters. Thirty-five dollars was brought in by Father Stephen Seccor and by Father John Nicholas which they had collected from interested young women who pledged themselves to continue their aid monthly in order that the rent, gas, electricity and laundry of the house might be taken care of. THE CATHOLIC WORKER received fifteen dollars more,

ten dollars from a priest to be used “in any charitable work,” and the other from a sorrowing husband who from the bedside of his dying wife sent this donation as one he knew she would be glad to make for the opening up of a home for single unemployed Catholic women.

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To those who are discouraged at the vastness of the work to be done, and the slightness of the work accomplished, we wish to call attention to the fact that if fifty parishes or schools or organizations would enter on a similar work, five hundred women would be taken care of before the winter is out! And it can all be done with the fifty-cent regularly-made donations of working girls and married women themselves.

It is not really a “house” that we are opening up, but an apartment in this central neighborhood, steam heated and with a good big bath, six large rooms, five of which can be used as bedrooms, one of them a dormitory holding four beds. The rent is fifty dollars a month.

The kitchen is large enough to be used as a small sitting room.

Peter Maurin started the work with his constant propaganda for more hospitality among Catholics. The unemployed single women who came into the office to tell of their need for a Catholic place of shelter provided the immediate cause. And Father Nicholas and Father Seccor with their ready co-operation and courage completed the work which could not have gotten under way without the co-operation of the priests.

So far three beds are all that have been obtained, although ten are needed. We also have four blankets, two of them donated by a woman whose family are unemployed save for one son who is working for ten dollars a week. She washed the blankets herself and sent them down to the office with prayers for the success of the new venture.

Another woman, unable to afford to buy things herself, canvassed among her friends until she found one who voluntarily bought ten sheets, towels and pillow slips.

We have mentioned in another place in this issue how another friend sent in the first contribution in the way of two sheets. Another woman sent drapes, a blanket and sheets, and she is the mother of a large family who could well use them herself.

There is no one no matter how poor who cannot do something for us, so we do not hesitate to ask our New York and Brooklyn readers to call the office if they are able to donate sheets, blankets, towels, pillows, or if they wish to make a donation of money to buy any of those things.

Today we are taking CATHOLIC WORKER money to buy more beds from a rooming house which is being disbanded. We spent some time looking around for some without success, for people don't keep such cumbersome things if they are not in use.

The winter is on us and we can wait no longer and beds we must have. We will borrow blankets for the time being and use those of the editors. They can roll themselves in coats and newspapers, which are said to be warm, though we are sure they are very noisy.

*CHAPTER 16. CO-OPERATIVE APARTMENT FOR UNEMPLOYED WOMEN HAS ITS START IN PA*

However, we hug to ourselves the assurance that “all these things” such as blankets “will be added unto us,” so we are not dismayed. Come to think of it, there are two rugs on THE CATHOLIC WORKER floor, which, if energetically beaten out, will serve as covers.

Christ’s first bed was of straw.

# Chapter 17

## Technique of Agitation

*The Catholic Worker*, December 1933, 2.

*Summary: Distinguishes* The Catholic Worker\* from other news publications: “The purpose of a paper is to influence the thought of its readers. We are quite frankly propagandists for Catholic Action.” (DDLW #198).\*

Father Gratry says that reading newspapers is a waste of time. One loses sight of the eternal. (But we hope you won’t take this to mean that reading THE CATHOLIC WORKER is a waste of time.)

After reading the *New York Times*, the *Daily Worker*, the *Federated Press*, the N.A.A.C.P. new service, the N.C.W.C. news service, *America*, the *Commonweal*, the *Sign*, the *Nation*, *The New Republic*, etc., etc., we bring out a December issue which only glancingly touches on such news as the recent lynchings, codes, sweat shops, housing problems and other news which demands critical comment.

Father Corbett came in to see us a couple of times last month. One day he came in to converse, and another day to criticize, and he left his ear phones off the second day, lest, I suppose, “we justify ourselves in our sins.”

“People say that you do too much criticizing,” he said, “and don’t point out all that is being done.”

We agree that much is being done—but so much more remains. “Never rest, never rest, there’s no peace on earth,” we say cheerfully with our patron saint of Teresa of Avila.

Hence we give much space this issue to detail plans and discuss Houses of Hospitality, our recent Round Table Discussion, ideas for a Catholic Workers’ School.

We are not giving you news such as you get in your daily paper. We are giving you ideas as to Catholic Action. We touch lightly on the hotel worker’s code, because hotel employees have come into the office and told us of the conditions under which they work.

We describe conditions of factory work for girls, because it shows the inefficacy of depending on codes (regulation) as compared to working for a renewal of the Christian spirit. Our date-packing story also shows the need of Houses of Hospitality for women workers at such wages.

The purpose of a paper is to influence the thought of its readers. We are quite frankly propagandists for Catholic Action.

“You may think you are newspaper editors,” Father Parsons, the editor of “America,” said a few months ago in friendly comment. “But agitators is what you really are.”

# Chapter 18

## Catholic Worker Program

*The Catholic Worker*, Dec 1933, 4.

*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.

# Chapter 19

## Another Miracle, Please, St. Joseph!

*The Catholic Worker*, Feb 1934, p. 4

*Summary: After cataloging the “little miracles” of gifts that arrive just in time—blankets, food, clothes, offer of a moose—she asks for bill money. She rejects business approaches to fund raising and says their method comes from the gospel and the “importunity” suggested. They trust they will receive. (DDLW #937).*

### **Another Miracle, Please, St. Joseph**

Our lives are made up of little miracles day by day. That splendid globe of sun, one street wide, framed at the foot of East Fourteenth street in early morning mists that greeted me this morning in my way out to mass was a miracle that lifted up my heart. I was reminded of a little song of Teresa's, composed and sung at the age of two.

“I'll sing a song,” (she warbled)  
Of sunshine on a little house.  
And the sunshine is a present for the little house.”

Sunshine in the middle of January is indeed a present.

We get presents, lots of them, around THE CATHOLIC WORKER office. During the holidays a turkey, a ham, baskets of groceries, five pounds of butter at one fell swoop, plum puddings, flannel nightgowns and doll babies, sheets, wash rags and blankets descended on us. There was even the offer of a quarter of a moose from Canada, but we didn't know where we could put it, so we refused it.

We appealed in our last issue for beds, and eight beds came. Our cooperative apartment for unemployed women is furnished now, and the surplus that comes in we will give to unemployed people in the neighborhood.

As I write, a blanket comes in from Houghton and Dutton, Boston, Massachusetts, sender unknown, but one of our Boston subscribers, no doubt. We threatened in the last number to sleep between newspapers and under rugs, but we didn't have a chance. When it was three

below we had denuded the house of blankets to the extent of having to use donated overcoats which has just come in, but even this minor mortification was soon denied us.

During this last cold snap one of the girls from the Teresa-Joseph Co-op came in to tell us that they could use four more blankets, and that very afternoon a car drove up to the office and four blankets, beautifully heavy ones, walked in.

And so it goes. Books, food, (two bottles of wine and a box of cigars! and who sent them we wonder) clothes and bedding!

And now we ask St. Joseph for another little miracle. Our cash box is empty. We just collected the last pennies for a ball of twine and stamps and we shall take a twenty-five cent subscription which just come in to buy a stew for supper. But the printing bill, the one hundred and sixty-five dollars of it which remains unpaid, confronts us and tries to intimidate us.

But what is \$165 to St. Joseph or to St. Teresa of Avila either. We refuse to be affrighted. (Though of course the printer may be, oh he of little faith!)

Don Bosco tells lots of stories about needing this sum or that sum to pay rent and other bills with and the money arriving miraculously on time. And he too was always in need, always asking, and always receiving.

A great many of our friends urge us to put our business on a business like basis. But this isn't a business, it's a movement. And we don't know anything about business around here anyway. Well-meaning friends say, –“But people get tired of appeals.” We don't believe it. Probably most of our friends live as we do, from day to day and from hand to mouth, and as they get, they are willing to give. So we shall continue to appeal and we know that the paper will go on.

It's a choice of technique after all. People call up offering us the services of their organizations to raise money. They have lists, they send out telephone and mailed appeals. They are business-like and most coldly impersonal. Though they may be successful in raising funds for Jewish, Catholic and Protestant organizations and offer us several thousand a week, minus their commission, we can't warm up to these tactics. We learn ours from the Gospels and what's good enough for Sts. Peter and Paul is good enough for us. Their technique of revolution was the technique of Christ, and it's the one to go back to.

And as for getting tired of our appeals, Jesus advocated importunity, thus:

“Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and shall say to him, friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine is come off his journey to me, and I have not what to set before him. And he from within should answer and say, trouble me not, the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed and I cannot rise and give thee. Yet if he shall continue knocking, I say to you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend; yet because of his *importunity* he will arise and give him as many as he needeth.”

So our friends may expect us to importune and to continue to ask, trusting that we shall receive.

# Chapter 20

## Day by Day - March 1934

*The Catholic Worker*, March 1934, 5.

*Summary: Writes of efforts to improve race relations and that the “paper is not a paper for black or white, but for the Catholic Worker.” Describes examples of hospitality, suffering from cold, and the food they eat. (DDLW #311).*

Tonight the editors of the CATHOLIC WORKER were invited to Greenwich House by Mrs. Simcovitch to tell the household there about the aims and purposes of the paper. The CATHOLIC WORKER had been brought to the attention of Mrs. Simcovitch by the minister of St. Luke’s Chapel. She had also spoken of it to Father Moore, who assured her, she said, that it was “all right.” We discussed the difference between welfare work as a palliative and as social reconstruction and her ideas of working through neighborhoods were much the same as ours of working through parishes. Mrs. Simcovitch spoke, too, rather wistfully of the effectiveness of new, enthusiastic ventures, before they become too business-like and efficient. While we surveyed wistfully her large domain, the halls, meeting rooms, theater, living quarters, dining room and kitchen and speculated on the possibilities of anyone offering us a community house for our activities.

\* \* \*

Later in the evening we went up to the meeting at the Hotel Pennsylvania, where Father J. Elliot Ross, Rabbi Lazon and a minister finished up a good-will tour and told of their experiences. They traveled by plane from city to city and covered vast stretches of territory. The fault we had to find with the meeting was that it reached just those people who did not need to be reached, who were already free from religious prejudice. Whenever they mentioned the Ku Klux Klan I thought of race prejudice instead of religious prejudice and wished they had a negro on the platform with them. . . As for traveling by plane on a well-planned tour, it seemed to me that a long leisurely auto trip over the country reaching outlying districts where most prejudice exists, small towns and areas where things travel by word of mouth even more than through the press, would have been a feat indeed. . . One of the things which rather spoiled our enjoyment of the evening was the fact that on that very morning we had

received a long, three-page, single-spaced letter from a mid-westerner, which was full of carefully-reasoned religious prejudice, which made us feel rather pessimistic about attitudes of Gentile to Jew.

A long day full of difficulties. A priest called up and said he was sending over a young woman who had threatened to kill herself. She had already made one attempt, he said she told him, and she was without work and without shelter, having been put out of her room early that morning. We talked to her, gave her breakfast, some clothes and sent her up to the House of Hospitality. . . . Then a poor neighbor came in with a letter about her nephew who was being released from a school of correction and a request for clothes for him. The school, which was shipping him home wrote and informed her of what clothes he needed and asked her to pay his fare. But the poor soul is on Home Relief, and had no money for these things. Nor had we, so we told her to write a letter explaining her position. She also needed a bed, bedding and blankets for the boy who had been away for several years. We offered sheets and a blanket, if she could supply the bed. The another telephone call came from a friend down on Eleventh street, who was ill and needed a doctor, so we called Dr. Koiransky of Willard Parker, who has volunteered his services for the poor of the neighborhood, and he assured us of his immediate attention. We went down there ourselves and the job from then on was one of feeding the baby, changing him (and he squirmed like an eel), shopping, cooking, washing diapers and such like duties until 5 o'clock came, when someone else could take a turn at caring for the sick girl, who could not move from her bed, but was not sick enough to go to the hospital. Two editors demonstrated their willingness to be both workers and scholars at this job, but it took almost more dexterity than they possessed to change the kid. If Peter Maurin had been in town we would have turned over to him the job of putting the kid to sleep with his little poems.

\* \* \*

This morning I had an appointment with Mr. Hunton, of the Cardinal Gibbons Institute, to go and see Mr. Carter, the editor of Opportunity, a magazine for the negro. Mr. Carter spoke a good deal about his ideas of housing in Harlem, and the necessity for getting the slum out of the negro as well as the negro out of the slum. Also the desirability of having the negro architect, mechanic, plumber, electrician, in on all these plans for a newer and better city for himself. For Harlem is a city in itself, having 250,000 in population. He also spoke of the many difficulties in the way of achieving better housing conditions in Harlem and of the constant struggle to combat these influences.

We told him of our work (Mr. Carter is not a Catholic and the paper has just been brought to his attention this last month) and our desire to have THE CATHOLIC WORKER not only for the white but for the negro. To have negro writers growing up with the magazine, writing not only on race problems but on social justice in general. . . We pointed out the little child's sketch on the back page of the February CATHOLIC WORKER and called to his attention the fact that the child, though she was drawing a picture of negro convicts in Florida, had not made them black, but white. That she did not see the color, but only the stripes. That it was the prisoner she was looking at, not the color of the men. And this is the general

attitude of children before race prejudice is instilled into them by others. Our idea, we told him, was to have negro artists and writers helping us to get out the paper so that by the time we have reached two hundred thousand circulation and are well established, the fact will be well established in the minds of Catholic America that the paper is not a paper for black or white, but for the Catholic Worker.

\* \* \*

Going through an old book dated 1926, I come across this item: "Saw Eugene O'Neill's version of *The Ancient Mariner* last night. O'Neill has made an intense religious thing of the play, save for the concluding lines and the silver masks of the cherubic figures. Rather another *En Retour* in mood, and very moving."

So "Days, Without End" is not the only piece of religious writing that O'Neill has done.

\* \* \*

Mr. John Erit, who spoke at the third meeting of the Workers' School came in this evening at supper time and showed us how to make Italian spaghetti. There are many kinds of spaghetti but this was the simplest kind, called Castle of San Angelo, because when the soldiers were being besieged there they lived for weeks on it.

Our guest chef worked under disabilities. The pots were not big enough, the fire was slow, but as usual around THE CATHOLIC WORKER office, a little miracle was performed in that twelve people were fed with neatness and dispatch.

\* \* \*

On fast days, the Catholic Worker staff is fed on Jewish cooking. Mrs. Gottlieb around the corner makes up a pile of potato pancakes or fish and her co-operation saves the editors a great deal of time and effort.

A Spanish friend threatens to bring in some stewed octopus with ink sauce, but the diners are not very enthusiastic about the prospect.

\* \* \*

And speaking of food, Peter Maurin arrived in from the country after an absence of four weeks. Discussing economics, he displayed his grocery and newspaper bills for the month, \$9.

Peter is in favor of a big pot on the stove and a continual supply of vegetable soup, constantly renewed from day to day. And an idea shared by both Don Bosco and the I.W.W.'s.

After supper we went out to the pushcart market and bought a large pot for 79 cents, a ten-quart one, and while the workers' school is in session, we shall dine on soup.

A rather monotonous diet, but at the writing, Mr. John Brnini of the Commonweal staff offers to come down soon and cook up a meal.

The CATHOLIC WORKER office en masse journeyed over to Labor Guild headquarters, 80 A Smith street, to be the guest of Mike Gunn for the evening.

Some of the members of the CATHOLIC WORKER staff had been there before, but I had not, and the place was indicative of the boundless energy and cheerful hopefulness in the face of difficulties that is characteristic of Mr. Gunn.

It was a bitter cold night, and like the CATHOLIC WORKER headquarters, coal stoves have to be used to heat it. Mike had been without coal for a few days because funds were low, but now coal was in and he was building up ones of the fires as we arrived.

The place is large, rambling and hard to heat, and it was not until after supper that we really thawed out. I thought as I sat at the long supper table with my feet frozen to the knees, that few people realize the constant hardship and self-sacrifice such leaders as Mike Gunn have to put up with. Running what is practically a House of Hospitality at the Labor Guild, up late every night at Round Table Discussions, up early for mass, he is never heard to complain about the hardships of his life or lack of response met with.

Indeed, he is always both thankful and serene. I am reminded again of my favorite St. Theresa of Avila who said, "I am so simple that I am grateful even for a sardine."

This is the spirit, to recognize the significance of every small advance, and to be grateful for it. To be satisfied to work from the ground up. That is literally what Mike is doing. For the floor being of cement and the winter cold, Mike and his friends had to cover it with layer after layer of newspapers, old linoleum, old carpets, boards, anything, in fact, that would mitigate the cold.

The supper served us was a splendid one. For a friend of Mike's, Mrs. Thompson, who lives in the neighborhood and in her zeal reminds me of those early Christian women who helped spread Christianity, came in and made up a feast of chili con carne, hot with peppers, and just what we needed to warm our innards, hot biscuits, and large pots of coffee.

# Chapter 21

## Days With an End

*The Catholic Worker*, April 1934, 3-4.

*Summary: Repeats P. Maurin's fear that increased state regulation leads to fascism and undermines personal responsibility. However, agrees with Pius XI in his encyclical "Forty Years After", that the state may intervene when a particular group is threatened and no other means are available to them. (DDLW #13).*

To paraphrase on the title of Eugene O'Neill's play, our days are with an end – very much so. And it is to explain this our end in view that I am writing this editorial.

People come to the workers' school and talk and hear much talk about the encyclical, Forty Years After – about the NRA and how far it goes to approach the Pope's idea, about international peace and international associations of working men and industrialists.

And then when they have heard all this from the lips of priest, professor and laymen, Peter Maurin rises up with the voice of one crying in the wilderness and says,

"The great danger of the present day is Fascism and the tendency of all organization is to lead to fascism."

"What about the Pope and Quadregesimo Anno?" our listeners proclaim. And Peter continues his warning,

"Fascism! Beware of state regulation because it leads to Fascism."

Whether it is the state regulation of the NRA or the state regulation of the socialists, or the state regulation recommended by Pope Pius XI, his warning is the same,

"Beware of Fascism."

Peter's hour at the school is from seven to eight; the speakers take the floor at eight, and the listeners enter into discussion with the speaker from nine to ten or ten-thirty or eleven. (Often it is hard to get them home.)

But for the benefit of those who linger over their suppers, I am rehashing Peter's preachings thus:



In view of the general disorder and chaotic condition of affairs, Pope Pius issued his great encyclical on Saint Francis of Assisi. It was a clarion call to action, Catholic action. It was vital – of tremendous importance for the righting of the world's ills. It was the message of Christ's vicar on earth – the message that Christ himself gave in the Sermon On the Mount.

Time passed and the condition continued. In fact matters go from bad to worst so that a world wide catastrophe threatens.

The result was the encyclical Forty Years After, recalling Pope Leo XIII's encyclical on the Condition of Labor which was also disregarded for forty years.

Peter's message is that Forty Years After does not hold up *the ideal* of personal responsibility voiced by the encyclical on St. Francis of Assisi. It is as though a sad and weary father said to his children who warred continually on one another:

“Very well – you will not follow the ideal for the sake of Christ. I will present to you then still another program of action – organization – the organization of some so that others may be coerced thereby. You will not voluntarily reform, so pressure must be brought to bear.”

But - the organization held up as best by Pope Pius XI, is not the organization of the labor union as we know it here in America. It is the organization of *Catholic* workingmen, to work for Catholic and non-Catholic alike. Complete and widespread organization. Michael Gunn's ideal of the Labor Guild approaches more nearly to this than the NRA. But Mike Gunn is also a voice of one crying in the wilderness.

One of the professors who lectured us was pointing out how Utopias would never work. But always it is the ideal of a Utopia held up that has influenced the masses.

There is always a great need of idealists who hold up the ideal rather than the practical. Without them men would not strive so high. Little by little, it can be found that the ideal works and is practical and then people are surprised.

The perfect state – it is a thing to fight for.

Christ said, “Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.” “Go ye therefore and sell what you have and give to the poor.” “If you have two coats take one and give it to your brother, and if your brother ask you for your coat, give him your cloak too.”

People do not scoff at these words because they are the words of Christ. A great many regard them hopelessly and falling back on their poor humanity they admit their inability to live up to these words. But nevertheless these words (hard words) go down through the ages, and through them many have followed the precept as well as the counsel. And have influenced humanity greatly thereby. (As for those who don't – God knows that we are but dust and he is a kind and tender father.)

The Catholic Worker stands opposed to Communism, Socialism, and Fascism. *The Catholic Worker* regards the existing system of labor unions as a poor and faulty one, far below that of organization described by Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical, Forty Years After. *The Catholic Worker* fears the NRA inasmuch as it may lead to more state regulation and bring nearer the danger of Fascism. *The Catholic Worker* is not “standing for” the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Canada for that very reason. More state regulation, to an even greater degree than that of the NRA.

We admit the danger of these palliatives to the existing disorder but we see their danger from a different standpoint than do many others who oppose them as being the offshoots of Moscow thought.

We believe with the Pope that whenever the general interest of any particular class suffers and is threatened with evils *which can in no other way be met*, the public authority, the state, must step in to meet them. . . . “If within the walls of a household there occur grave disturbances of mutual rights, the public power must interfere.” But not the italics - “which can in no other way be met.”

Peter Maurin believes that the Pope is opposed to political action, that he welcomed the dissolution of the Catholic party in Italy and the Centrist party in Germany. “Organizations of Catholic Workingmen” is another thing entirely.

So – though we say that Michael Gunn more nearly approaches in his idea the teachings of the Pope than does the NRA – we continue to cling to the *ideal* as held up in the gospel and in the encyclical on St. Francis of Assisi.

We shall not reach it we know. But that does not mean that there is no use trying.

# Chapter 22

## Thank You!

*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.

## Chapter 23

# Why Write About Strife and Violence?

*The Catholic Worker*, June 1934, 1, 2.

*Summary: Calls attention to the social crisis, class warfare, and numerous strikes. Notes how Communists practice the corporal works of mercy while lukewarm, comfortable, and indifferent Catholics turn their backs on strikers and their families. (DDLW #279).*

If our stories this month regarding the Weirton decision, the strike and riot wave, and the threats of approaching general strikes are ominous in tone; and if our friends would wish that we concentrated more on the joy of the love of God and less on the class strife which prevails in industry we remind them of the purpose of this paper *The Catholic Worker*.

It is addressed to the worker, and what is of interest to them is the condition of labor, and the attitude of the church in regard to it.

If we attempt with undue optimism to minimize the crisis, if we do not recognize the crisis, if we do not recognize their plight, we are forcing them to turn to sheets such as the *Daily Worker* which does take cognizance of their condition. At the scene of every strike the *Daily Worker* is sold, and the workers read it because it deals with their problems. We, too, must deal with the problems which confront them, and show the attitude and the recognition of the church of those problems.

## Help the Workers

Those comfortable people too, who do not realize the unfairness of this existing order, need to be told of existing conditions. They are too apt to see things from the side of the employer, since the radio, the newspapers, and public interest is usually on the side of wealth and influence. If they cooperated with the worker instead of arranging themselves on the side of the employer, justice would prevail.

We wish to arouse, too, those indifferent Catholics to the crying need of the day – the need of a return to the spirit of Franciscan poverty and charity.

## Father Cuthbert

of England in a pamphlet entitled *St. Francis and you*, published in 1905, wrote: St. Francis laid the foundation of a new social order of things within the church. This was his special work, and the work of his order – to induce Christian society to live by Christian principles; to be Christians in very deed as well as by profession. . . St. Francis. . . by laying upon his Tertiaries the precept never to bear arms except in defense of the Church, struck a fatal blow at the entire (feudal) system. Today then, Catholics have need to be strong and perfect Christians, willing to sacrifice themselves – their ease and their personal interests, their prejudices and smaller ideals – to the larger interest of winning the modern world to Christ and His Church; men who will not shrink from battle, nor fear hardship and toil. This is a time when the Church needs apostles to convert the new world of thought and action that has sprung up in these days; and she calls upon her children to do their part, each according to his ability and opportunity, in the work that lies before her.

These words are as true now as they were in 1905. We call upon the comfortable people to recognize and to fight the industrial evils that are dragging the people down and making them in their blind and perverse human hopelessness to turn from their Mother the Church.

## No Help from Red Cross

We recall to our comfortable readers, to whom these tales of strike and riot are something outside their ken, that the Red Cross has in many cases refused to give help to starving women and children when a strike was on. That it was the Communists who collected food and clothes for the families of miners waging their industrial battles down in Kentucky, for the families of the textile strikers in North Carolina.

Again major strikes threaten, steel strikes, cotton textile strikes, longshoremen strikes, truck drivers strikes, and many of these strikes are taking place now.

Is it to be left to the Communists to succor the oppressed, to fight for the unemployed, to collect funds for hungry women and children? It is true that in a big city like New York relief is given to many who do not need it and that graft is rampant. But that does not mean that in industrial sections the people are being properly cared for, and fed. Statistics show that the children of miners in unorganized sections never knew what it was to drink milk, never saw an orange. We know of a Communist child who collected money from among her school friends to add to the relief fund for these children.

## To Win the Worker

To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the shelterless – these corporal works of mercy are too often being done by the opposition, and to what purpose? To win to the banners of communism the workers and their children.

These workers do not realize those words of St. Paul, "If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned and have not charity (the love of God) it profiteth me nothing."

Most Catholics speak of Communists with the bated breath of horror. And yet those poor unfortunate ones who have not the faith to guide them are apt to stand more chance in the eyes of God than those indifferent Catholics who stand by and do nothing for "the least of them" of whom Christ spoke.



# Chapter 24

## Day by Day - June 1934

*The Catholic Worker*, June 1934, 7

*Summary: Tales of young women struggling to find shelter and work in the midst of economic depression. (DDLW #278).*

May 2. Although the Communists and socialists had their hundreds of thousands out in the streets yesterday, we feel that the CATHOLIC WORKER made its presence felt, too. Fifteen or more high school and college students, from Manhattan, Fordham, St. John's College, Cathedral College and from City College, distributed papers and leaflets in the streets all afternoon and in the evening up around Columbus Circle and Madison Square Garden.

The man who was selling the I.W.W. paper in Madison Square came up to get a copy from me and said, "I was a Catholic myself once – I'd like to see your paper," and people of all nationalities were anxious to get it.

One young woman came in this morning who said she had seen a copy in the square and wanted to find out about the House of Hospitality. She had been living down on the Bowery, paying 25 cents a night for a bed and, now her money was all gone and she had no place to go. She was telling me about her friend, who was also down and out, who went to take a room, or a bed up in Harlem, was seduced by a young Spanish American, and threw herself under a subway train a week later.

Her lips were trembling as she talked (it was only eight-thirty in the morning), so I invited her out to have a cup of coffee.

\* \* \*

Last week a colored woman who has been staying up at the Municipal Lodging House came in for a bite to eat. She looked in need of a shelter where she could stay in bed and rest for a few days instead of having to walk the streets from morning to night as the guests of the lodging house have to do.

So that evening I went up to talk to the girls at the Teresa Joseph co-operative to see if it would be all right with them to invite Mary to stay up there. After all, I did not want to run the risk of submitting her to insult on account of her skin – nor did I expect too much of

the girls in the way of freedom from race prejudice, since I know very well that Catholics of means and better education are not free themselves from it.

I talked to the girls, reminding them how our Lord washed the feet of his disciples the night before he suffered and died for us, and told them how we all should serve each other, whether we are white, black or yellow. The girls were perfectly happy to welcome the new guest, and it was like a special birthday present for the paper to find this continuing of the co-operative spirit among them.

Mary took the paper up to Harlem to distribute for us yesterday, and all the other girls up at the house went to Mass or Communion to offer it up for our special May Day work. Margaret, despite her condition, for she is expecting a baby in six weeks, went on the subways yesterday, passing out papers from Times Square to Astoria and from Manhattan to Brooklyn. I was much touched and grateful at the help they all gave us.

An old Irishman of 73 came in this morning for his copies of the paper. He lives down In the Bowery and has a thirty dollar a month pension, from which he insisted on giving us a dollar. He also takes twenty-five copies of the paper to send out to his friends, and every morning at Mass, he says, he prays for us.

\* \* \*

A few weeks ago I went over to St. Zita's to see a sister there and the woman who answered the door took it for granted that I came to beg for shelter. The same morning I dropped into the armory on Fourteenth street, where lunches are being served to unemployed women, and there they again motioned me into the waiting room, thinking that I had come for food. These incidents are significant. After all my heels are not run down – my clothes were neat – I am sure I looked averagely comfortable and well cared for – and yet it was taken for granted that because I dropped into these places I needed help. It just shows how many girls, and women, who to the average eye, look as though they came from comfortable surroundings are really homeless and destitute.

You see them in the waiting rooms of all the department stores. To all appearances they are waiting to meet their friends, to go on a shopping tour – to a matinee, or to a nicely served lunch in the store restaurant. But in reality they are looking for work (you can see the worn newspapers they leave behind with the help wanted page well thumbed), and they have no place to go, no place to rest but in these public places – and no good hot lunch to look forward to. The stores are thronged with women buying dainty underwear which they could easily do without – compacts for a dollar, when the cosmetics in the five-and-ten are just as good – and mingling with these protected women and often indistinguishable from them, are these sad ones, these desolate ones, with no homes, no jobs, and never enough food in their stomachs.

"I often wonder what God **thinks of the scribes** and orators who thunder terrors at poor women for their desperate attempts **at** contraception and never *have* a word to say to the **Bank of England and the Treasury which have so obviously chosen birth-restriction as the solution for unemployment and are enforcing this policy on the poor by every means** in their power. . . . Indeed, our domination by money lenders is nowhere so disastrous, as **in the sphere of** marriage and family life. **The right to marry is a human**

right like the right to breathe and eat – equally the right to bring up a family. The family is the basic social unit, ordained as such by God Himself. Economic systems must be arranged to suit the family, and not *the family to economic conditions*. When Leo XIII demanded the living wage it was the family wage he meant. All this is ordinary Catholic teaching. For bringing up a family the first requisite is evidently an income. Under the savage economics of the past two years the children of the unemployed have been allowed two shillings per week.”

(Fr. Drinkwater in the *Sower*, a journal of Catholic education.)

## Chapter 25

### Day After Day - July-August 1934

*The Catholic Worker*, July-August 1934, 4.

*Summary: Describes the church and community life of a nearby parish in the midst of a heat wave. Reports on her first meeting with the Interracial Committee and describes the hard realities of Peter Maurin's work in the new office in Harlem. (DDLW #280).*

A heavy heat continues to hang over the city. When I hurry out at seven o'clock there is a haze over the river a few blocks down, sparkling in the sun, but no sign of the thundershowers that have been promised for the last five days.

It is pleasant before Mass to sit and meditate in the little Italian church down on Twelfth street early in the morning. On the left-hand side the open windows look out on fire escapes and roofs, green-edged with plants. Close to the church window there is corn growing in a tub, tomato plants, basilica, and other pots of herbs which are fragrant if you crush them between your fingers. People are leaning out of their windows already, trying to get a breath of air.

Inside the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, the two Italian girls sing the Mass with joyous natural voices, trilling through the Kyrie Eileison. The priest, weighed down with his heavy robes, moves with intent stillness through the sacrifice of the Mass.

I love this church of the Salesian fathers. It is indeed what a church should be, the center of the community. Every morning at the seven and eight o'clock masses which are sung there is a goodly gathering of people, not just devout old ladies and men, but many young ones, too.

Before and after mass there is always a priest hearing confessions.

Every evening from five o'clock on to past nine, people are dropping in, before supper, on their way home from market, from work, from play on the streets—everyone is living on the streets these hot days. There is a crowd at the recitation of the rosary and Benediction. The whole congregation sings the hymns and litanies. And even those priests who are not on duty are there, somewhere in evidence. The church is their dearest home, and they evidently love to be contemplating the humanity of Christ, present there in the tabernacle.

Every afternoon the pastor has arranged that a shower be rigged up to the fire hydrant out in front of the church from three to six, so that the kids of the neighborhood can bathe these

hot summer days. When I dropped in to Benediction the other night the shower was still going, and a little baby of two was wandering up and down the gutter which had miraculously become a speeding brook, wetting her shoes and socks, and occasionally all the rest of her as she sat now and again.

Action of this kind taken in the neighborhood makes the pastor beloved. He's a zealous man, and yesterday at the ten o'clock mass he was passing out mass books for the young men and women—those not-too-devout ones who think that religion is something out-of-date and un-American.

In addition to a parish school, the church co-operates with the Keating Day Nursery across the street, where the various associations have their communion breakfasts and many meetings. There is a regular settlement there and activities are always going on, winter and summer. There is also a camp, where the children are sent for a few weeks in the summer.

There is the right feeling about this parish, with everyone working together for the Lord.

Last week I attended a meeting of the Interracial Committee, to which I had been appointed at the mass meeting held last month at Town Hall. There were a dozen there, and everyone seemed to be in the humor for hard work and definite action. I've never served on a committee before, but I am glad I am on this one. We are going to do a good deal of investigating of complaints as to churches, schools and institutions where there is said to be discrimination against the Negro and take up specific examples and try to rectify them.

Father La Farge was at the meeting as its spiritual adviser, and he told me he had paid a call on Peter Maurin at the new branch headquarters up in Harlem. There had been no money to turn on the electricity, nor yet money for candles, so Peter receives callers who come in the evening in the dark, or, rather, with just the light of the street outside. Father La Farge said that all he could see in the encircling gloom was Peter's forefinger, motioning in the air as he was making points.

The work in Harlem continues apace. There are street meetings three times a week on different corners up and down Lenox avenue, which go on until well into the night and small hours of the morning.

Mr. Hergenhen is the commissar, and he and Peter live on soup a good deal of the time. They have to beg for their food, or for money to buy it. I picked up Peter's prayer book the other day, a little red pamphlet printed at the Monastery of the Precious Blood out in Brooklyn, and on one of the fly leaves was listed some of his needs. "Food, stencils, paper, pamphlets, etc." He didn't need to jot them down to remember them. Maybe it was a little reminder for our Lord.

Vegetable soup—that's Peter's old standby. So yesterday, Sunday, when he came down to spend the day at the office on Fifteenth street we made a huge kettle of a soup the like of which he had never seen before. It was a cold beet borscht (can it be that we are being influenced by Moscow, or is it just the East Side?), made from a can of beets, a chopped-up cucumber, green-topped onions, hard-boiled egg, potatoes and sour cream. All mixed together, a little dill chopped up on top, and made good and cold in the icebox (no cooking at all needed)—it was a delicious feed for a hot day. We had enough to have it for breakfast, dinner and supper.

## Chapter 26

### Day After Day - September 1934

*The Catholic Worker*, September 1934, 3, 7.

*Summary: A review of summer activities including a children's party held in honor of the Feast of the Assumption, passing out literature, answering inquiries, and the various summer centers hosting lectures. Describes a feisty infant whose antics inspired Peter Maurin to recite the principles of Catholic Action to this "potential recruit." Defends The Catholic Worker's\* reaction to Rockefeller's recent donations to Catholic Charities in light of violence in Ludlow, Colorado. (DDLW #281).\**

"Be sure and put it in the paper that we had a party again this year," the kids of the house said on the Feast of the Assumption. And a swell party it was, even better than last year because there were four extra kids from the Guido family, who moved in next door during the year. There was Sara and Sammie, and Johnnie and little Mary, who calls herself Meddy; and there was Freddy Rubino, who drew such a lovely picture of a little boy praying (he was quite uplifted), which we published a few months ago; and there was Sonny and Ethel, and this year Ethel was too big to wear a veil; and there was Teresa, who has grown almost a foot and is so brown she looks like Freddy's sister.

The statue of the Blessed Virgin which came from Rome and is said to have been blessed by the Holy Father was set out in the midst of the geraniums, petunias and spider plants, and vigil lights and bouquets surrounded her and she looked most happy beaming over the fiesta. It was a gala day and the party continued until untold sparklers and candles had been burned and everybody stayed up until ten-thirty in true fiesta spirit.

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The Catholic Worker Propaganda Committee of young people from Cathedral College, Columbia, City College, Long Island College and any number of other places gathered to distribute literature—6,000 copies of *The Catholic Worker* and 4,000 leaflets throughout the city, and the office was crowded all day with visitors and workers.

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It has been a lively and pleasant summer, and although we skipped an issue because we didn't have enough money to print, the work continued apace, and more and more inquiries came in by mail and in person. When we weren't answering letters we were answering questions from people who flock to the office.

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One of the editors visited Stamford to speak on "The Quest for Social Justice" and the work being done there at that summer center is inspiring. A tremendous amount of research and outlining has been done for study club work, and there were meetings up there every afternoon of groups to study different phases of Catholic Action and to learn how to lead groups in their home parishes. Father Dasey and Dr. Blanche M. Kelly were ably assisted by the Baroness de Hueck of Toronto, who came there to study the formation of study clubs and worked at one-week, two-week, and six-week outlines of courses to be followed.

The significance of the work being done at Stamford can be appreciated when one realizes how dear to the heart of the Holy Father is this work. The Apostolic Delegate, too, stresses it as one of the great needs of the day.

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Another visit was made to Rhode Island to another Catholic summer community where a talk was given to a group of Catholics interested in social justice. Bishop Hafey of North Carolina was present at the meeting and gave the group his blessing. He promises to drop in to The Catholic Worker office when he is in New York to meet the group of Fifteenth Street workers.

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One of the girls of the House of Hospitality had a baby this summer up at Bellevue Hospital, and at this moment baby Barbara is out in the back yard sunning herself in her carriage—all dressed up in a bonnet with ruffles like a halo. Margaret, her mother, is preparing supper and the baby's bottle is warming on the stove. She eats like a little pig, her tiny jaws working busily. And as she eats she glares at you with her blue eyes which are turning brown, as though to say, "Just you try to take my bottle away from me." For seven weeks old she is very smart and has already discovered her fists and looks at them in a most cock-eyed way. She doubles them up as though she were preparing for class war, so we get Peter to recite an essay to her now and then about Catholic Action and Bolshevik action, just to start inculcating the true spirit while she's young.

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Several people have condemned us for our article on Rockefeller and his donation to Catholic Charities, and one opponent wrote an article about how the cowardly workers, holding their women and children in front of them, were invading property owned and operated by Mr. Rockefeller to burn and destroy what they could reach. Our opponent says that the “article in *The Catholic Worker* cannot be too severely condemned.” We went up to the public library, and looking into the files, found there complete stories of the Ludlow murders in forty magazines and in all the newspapers; and the attack occurred on the property of the miners themselves, rented by the union to house the workers in tents since they could no longer live on company property. *The Literary Digest* had pictures of Ludlow and the men, women and children, and a complete account of the atrocity. It is too bad our antagonists do not inform themselves on the subject before they take the lying statements of enemies of God and His poor as truth.



## Chapter 27

### Day After Day - October 1934

*The Catholic Worker*, October 1934, 5.

*Summary: Notes the poor women hired as “walking billboards” whose miserable appearance belies the glamour of the products which they advertise. Compares the physical abuse of Catholic Worker pamphleteers to that suffered by Jesus during His Passion. Observes that such treatment deepens our appreciation of Christ’s suffering. Summarizes Father Lord’s lecture on the differences between Nationalism and Patriotism. (DDLW #282).*

Very damp and drear. Walking across Fourteenth street a steamed looking girl goes in costume advertising the Gypsy tearoom. She wears garish dress and a sandwich sign. She has been on her job all summer. There is another woman with bleached marcelled hair who advertises a beauty parlor, a poor wretch haggard with want and in herself a bitter satire directed against the comfortable women who preen and luxuriate in facials, manicures, unguents and ointments, powders and perfumes, while their poorer sisters tramp the streets, ill fed and weary. Another satire, a middle-aged woman trundling a baby carriage bedecked with signs advertising buggies and high-chairs, bicycles and toys and other joyous things. She walks the street up and down across the town, no joy in her tired eyes and sad enduring mouth.

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The Catholic Worker Propaganda Committee, whose patron is Edmund Campion, worked valiantly all month. September first was International Youth Day, and a crowd of young men and women, all college students and some seminarians, spent the afternoon passing out pamphlets in Tompkins Square, where an anti-war Communist meeting was being held.

One of the committee and a friend of the paper since its beginning objects to this procedure of giving out leaflets to the Communists, on the ground that it antagonizes and gives rise to violence.

It is true that that day one of the seminarians was struck several times by irate members of the Young Communist League, who are notoriously the most violent of the Communist

group, and others had the leaflets torn from them and destroyed.

But when the Communist party is propagating lies about the Church and war, can we stand by and be silent and dignified? We enter our propaganda as a protest to them, and also to enlighten the thousands of bystanders, who are not Communists, who attend these affairs or who are gathered by the crowds and bands and cheering.

Of course it is undignified to receive a blow in the face. But it is a good thing to be so struck sometimes. It makes it a bit easier to meditate on the Passion of our Lord. One can feel more keenly the blows and jeers He received from the mocking soldiers. Our indifference is jarred a bit with this upsetting of our dignity.

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Here are a few things Father Lord said at the recent School of Catholic Action. (I print them for the benefit of those who question our attitude on Nationalism.): "A patriot is one who loves his country; a Nationalist is one who hates every other country. Patriotism is Catholic; Nationalism is non-Catholic and often anti-Catholic. On the one hand there is the division of races and on the other, the division of classes, making for war. But we are members, one of another. The concept of Internationalism towards which the Communists are rightly striving, is part of the concept of the Mystical Body of Christ."

## Chapter 28

### Day After Day - November 1934

*The Catholic Worker*, November 1934, 6.

*Summary: Observations about the hardships of Mother Seton, the gift of thirty dozen eggs, the oppression of a steelworker, and an accident befalling three poor boys. Recommends nursery schools so mothers can work and not be separated from their children by the city. A book review of Calverton's The Passing of the Gods which is dismissed as "the shallowest book of the month." (DDLW #283).*

During Sunday I read the Life of Mother Seton. The first years of her work in founding the Sisters of Charity in America held much hardship for her little community. The sisters subsisted on carrot-coffee, salt pork and buttermilk during one winter. For Christmas they had smoked sardines. Their first community was housed in a four-room shack in the country, in Maryland, and it was so cold a winter that they had to sweep the snow out of their rooms which had drifted through crevasses by the barrel full. They went outside to get their water from the pump.

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The most extraordinary donation received during the course of the month was a crate of eggs, thirty dozen, shipped from Indiana by a Pullman conductor as a donation to the cause. God bless you, Mr. Greenen! The eggs we had been eating were all right scrambled, but would not bear eating soft-boiled. They were rather sulphurous. Our friend, Mr. Minas, made them palatable by sprinkling red pepper over them plentifully, but we have not his oriental tastes. Fresh eggs! What a panegyric we could write on the subject! Soft-boiled for breakfast, with the morning paper and a symphony on the radio, preferably the first Brahms!

The Teresa-Joseph Co-operative enjoyed them and some unemployed friends enjoyed the unexpected luxury. A christening feast which took place in The Catholic Worker office was positively an egg orgy to be alliterative. Dozens were consumed, with gusto, the guests coming from Brooklyn, the Bronx and Manhattan, New Jersey and Long Island City, representing eight nationalities. Indeed if there had not been eggs there would have been no feast.

Again, thank you, Mr. Greenen!

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To pass from the jovial to the tragic. George Issoski, Aliquippa steel worker, a union man, was arrested for distributing union literature and was sent to a lunatic asylum by a lunacy commission appointed by the sheriff of Beaver county. Investigation by the state labor department into the terrorism in Aliquippa, resulted in the worker's release. Jones & Laughlin are the bitter anti-union steel employers in this Pittsburgh district.

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Here's another horror story. Three boys were killed as they dug stray lumps of coal in a colliery near Wilkes-Barre and an avalanche of 1,000 tons of debris buried them alive. The boys were 12, 14 and 16. Two other boys, 10 and 15 were taken to the hospital with possible skull fractures. They were trying to help out their impoverished families.

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Shallowest book of the month: V. F. Calverton's *The Passing of the Gods*. There is much talk of the "unverifiable promises of religion." At least he realizes that it is Protestantism that is allied with Capitalism. "Today, with capitalism visibly tottering, religion may be expected to perish with it," he says. Ernest Sutherland Bates reviews it very approvingly. "The postponement of the religious triumph to the future life . . . turned out in the long run to be of inestimable service to religion by insuring its dogma against any possible disproof through experience."

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The *Daily News* in its correspondence column had a threatening letter in regard to radical agitation, signed "Castor Oil." The *Tribune* the same day carried a first page little feature about how they are enforcing discipline in a little Pennsylvania town which makes the curfew effective for youngsters by punishing stayouts with castor oil.

These stories are like straws showing which way the wind blows. Lawlessness to be curbed by fascist tactics learned from Mussolini. First we train our children to be free and untrammelled and set them an example of lawlessness; then we try to check them by more lawlessness, by technique opposed to the true spirit of liberty.

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There is great need of a nursery school for children under one year of age. We heard a sad story from a social service worker last month about a young girl whose twins were taken from her and put in an institution, because she had no money and no husband. She is supported by Home Relief and the necessity to care for her own children, whom she wished to keep with her, would have done much for her rehabilitation. A young woman with twin babies to care for is not going to have much time for men or parties, and on the other hand, no man is going to go out of his way to try to lead her astray. If there were a nursery where the young mother could leave her children days while she looked for work, the nuns with whom she came in contact, and her own feelings of responsibility would help her. In this case the girl is mourning the loss of her children.

And it will be hard for her to get those children back. They will be boarded out and she will be allowed to visit them once a month for one hour; she will not be allowed to bring them candy or toys, nor will she ever be able to take them home with her until she can prove she has a home for them.

It seems to me that some attempt should be made to keep a mother and child together and only after she had proved herself utterly incapable, should they be separated. There is too much readiness to separate mother and child for the sake of slight material benefit.

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Will the Sister Mary Helena who offered us back numbers of the *Commonweal* and *The Catholic World* please send them to us? We will be very glad to have them, but lost her address and could not write.

Summary:

DOC #283

Although Day could find inspiration in reading of Mother Seton's hardships, she could also express joy and gratitude over a donation of thirty dozen eggs. On a personal note, Day describes her ideal breakfast: soft-boiled eggs, the morning paper, and Brahms First Symphony! Unfortunately, the world's injustices intrude—Day notes that a Pittsburgh steelworker, George Issoski, was temporarily confined in a lunatic asylum for his union activities and three young boys from Wilkes-Barre were buried in a slagheap avalanche while scavenging for coal. In addition, many American communities were adopting fascist-inspired solutions to deal with social problems. Day was disturbed by the tendency of courts to separate mothers from their young families because they could not provide a prescribed level of material comfort for their children. Day recommended the establishment of nursery schools to care for these children, thus enabling the natural mother to seek and retain a job. A book review, Day dismisses as “the shallowest book of the month.”

# Chapter 29

## Christmas

*The Catholic Worker*, December 1934, 4.

*Summary: Three reflections: a child's view of Christmas, trusting in God to guide one's work, and picketing as passive resistance to injustice. (DDLW #199).*

Christmas is coming and Teresa and Freddy are drawing pictures of the Nativity. Freddy tells the story, as they work industriously at the kitchen table, of the big boss Herod and how he heard about the little Christ baby being born, and how scared he was that his temporal power was tottering. Freddy's father, a Sicilian, is one of those people against whom the Protestant accusation is leveled that Catholics never read the Bible. Freddy's father doesn't, it is true, but he listens attentively to the Gospels and Epistles and he comes home and tells them at meal times to his little family. He tells them with reverent love, feeling intensely that the Good God sent His Son here to be with us. When Freddy's father hears Christ's words in the church he lays them to his heart and ponders over them as Joseph did. Probably Joseph didn't do much reading either, but listened a lot.

When I hear Freddy and Teresa tell the story to each other, each filling in the gaps, it comes fresh and clear to my mind.

"And the cow breathed on the little baby Jesus and kept it warm," Teresa says delightedly. "Cows are very warm animals, I know. Father McKenna's place down in Staten Island has cows and I leaned against them while the brother was milking them. They didn't mind at all. I was a very little girl then. I'm sure the little baby Jesus didn't mind being in the stable at all. Probably there were chickens, too. And maybe the shepherds brought their littlest lambs to show them to Him."

Christ came to live with the poor and the homeless and the dispossessed of this world, I pointed out to them, and he loved them so much that he showed himself to the workers—the poor shepherds—first of all. It wasn't till afterward that he received the Kings of this earth. So let us keep poor—poor as possible—"In a stable with cows and chickens," Teresa finished joyfully. "And then it will be easier for me to have God in my heart."

## Revolution

We have all probably noted those sudden moments of quiet—those strange and almost miraculous moments in the life of a big city when there is a cessation of traffic noises—just an instant when there is only the sound of footsteps which serves to emphasize a sudden peace. During those seconds it is possible to notice the sunlight, to notice our fellow humans, to take breath.

After hours of excitement and action and many human contacts, when even in one's sleep and at moments of waking there is a sense of the imminence of things to be done and of conflict ahead, it is good to seek those moments of perfect stillness and refreshment during early Mass.

Then indeed it seems that God touches the heart and the mind. There are moments of recollection, of realization when the path seems straighter, the course to be followed perfectly plain, though not easy. It is as though the great Physician to whom we go for healing had put straight that which was dislocated, and prescribed a course of action so definite that we breathe relief at having matters taken out of our hands.

Such a moment came this morning with the thought—the revolution we are engaged in is a lonely revolution, fought out in our own hearts, a struggle between Nature and Grace.

It is the most important work of all in which we are engaged.

If we concentrate our energies primarily on that; then we can trust those impulses of the Holy Spirit and follow them simply, without question. We can trust and believe that all things will work together for good to them that love God, and that He will guide and direct us in our work. We will accomplish just what he wishes us to accomplish and no more, regardless of our striving. Since we have good will, one need no longer worry as though the work depended just on ourselves.

## Picketing

When the Campion Propaganda Committee went to picket before the office of the Mexican consul for the first time—and it was the first time Catholics in this country had ever picketed as Catholics—we asked those who were engaged in the work to recall Christ's way of the cross as they walked for Him. Once again Christ in His Mystical Body is being tortured and put to death, and we as Catholics were showing our silent grief and horror. When we go again in a body on December 12, the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe whose heart is once again being pierced with the sword—we can hold in mind also the death of the three men and the child (and more of the sixteen injured may be dead by now) who died for picketing the church in the state of Chiapas to prevent the army officers from going in and defiling the sacred place.

It is only by passive resistance that we can oppose our enemies. Picketing is a form of passive resistance to injustice.

In the United States there are the beginnings of what we are opposing in Mexico. We must protest now, while we have the opportunity. There is no use waiting until socialization of children is under way in the United States. The other day Mrs. Katherine Burton, who has a monthly page in *The Sign*, was visiting the office and she told us of educational trends in the public schools in Bronxville, New York. The courses in biology include detailed discussion of sex and birth control and this for ten-year-old children—and the course is described as “from the amoeba to man”. It sounds like Mexico!



# Chapter 30

## Mid-Winter

*The Catholic Worker*, January 1935, 4

*Summary: An editorial reaffirming the Mystical Body where suffering or glory for one is shared by all. Notes suffering in Mexico, Spain, and Russia. Says the Catholic Manifesto is the Sermon on the Mount and the remedy is the practice of the physical and spiritual works of mercy. Change begins in our hearts. (DDLW #925).*

It is a cold night and we are writing in the kitchen where there are no draughts. Barbara, our co-operative apartment baby, sits on her mother's lap by the table and she, too, is writing an editorial though she is only five months old. In her zeal she tries first to eat the pencil her fond mother has given her, and then the paper.

On the wall there are three pictures which attract her attention. She calls out to them, trying to crow. There is a Polish Madonna, a Negro Madonna and a picture of a Madonna and a worker by Ade Bethune. She likes that best of all.

Teresa is drawing pictures, too, and when she shows them to the baby, Barbara laughs and makes bubbles. The black cat lies in restful abandon in front of the stove.

It is one of those rare evenings when there are no visitors, when the work of the day seems to be over, though it is only seven-thirty. It is a good time to sit and write editorials. An editorial, for instance, on charity. St. Saviour's High School and Cathedral High School sent down so many baskets of food, including hams and canned goods, potatoes and all the trimmings for Christmas dinners, that the office was piled high for at least three hours until they were all distributed.

It is true it did not take long to distribute them, there is such need around here.

There were toys, too, dolls for the girls, and other toys for the boys, all beautifully wrapped and be-ribboned.

Bundles of clothes came in, including many overcoats, and they went out as fast as they came in. They came in response to the story of the man who had to accept a woman's woolen sweater in lieu of underwear or overcoat. I hope they keep coming in.

I'd like to have everyone see the poor worn feet, clad in shoes that are falling apart, which find their way to THE CATHOLIC WORKER office. A man came in this rainy morning

and when he took off one dilapidated rag of footwear, his sock had huge holes in the heel and was soaking wet at that. We made him put on a dry sock before trying on the pair of shoes we found for him, and he changed diffidently, there under the eye of the Blessed Virgin on the bookcase, looking down from her shrine of Christmas greens. But his poor, red feet were clean. Most of the men and women who come in from the lodging houses and from the streets manage cleanliness, what with the public baths. I heard of one man who washed his underwear in the public baths, and sat there as long as he could in that steam-laden, enervating atmosphere until it was not quite too wet to put on. For the rest, it could dry on his skin. Not a pleasant thought in bitter weather.

Our prayer for the new year is that “the members might be mutually careful one for another. And if one member suffers anything, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it.”

It would seem, however, that the glory comes only through suffering this present day when we look upon the Mystical Body reviled and assaulted in Mexico, Spain, Russia, not to speak of the physical suffering of the poor all over the world.

WE REPEAT—

The only immediate remedy is the practice of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. When asked what is the program of THE CATHOLIC WORKER by those who are interested in political action, legislation, lobbying, class war, we reply—It is the program set forth by Christ in the Gospels. The Catholic Manifesto is The Sermon on the Mount. And when we bring THE CATHOLIC WORKER into the streets and public squares, and when we picket the Mexican consulate, it is to practice the spiritual works of mercy—to instruct the ignorant and to comfort the afflicted.

Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. There is no use looking for a revival in business, a return of prosperity, until the hearts and minds of men be changed. If we wish for a program, let us look into our own hearts. The beginning is there.

# Chapter 31

## Day by Day - January 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, January 1935, 3, 6.

*Summary: An account of their work: visitors, helping neighbors, selling copies of the paper. Is grateful for the donations that seem to appear at the most needed times, both money and services. Says they were smote by a flea infestation. (DDLW #284).*

Teresa was home for the holidays, perched like a little sparrow right at my elbow as I typed on stories for this issue of the paper. She got a microscope set for Christmas and the best place to be engaging in scientific pursuits was usually right at the typewriter table by my side.

“Perhaps,” she would murmur to herself, “There’ll be bugs in the ice-box water . . . Here is a slide with some of Tom’s blood on it . . . It’s not much good . . . Don’t you want to look at a butterfly scale? And don’t forget to write in the paper that I went picketing with you on December 31 . . . That’s a hot one! Why don’t you want me to say ‘That’s a hot one.’ I like to say it . . . You won’t let me say ‘Come over and see me some time.’ So I’m going to say ‘that’s a hot one.’”

\* \* \*

Going on the ferry over to Staten Island to take Teresa back to St. Patrick’s where she is going to school, the gulls stood out white against the grey sky. They swept and glided, swooping down into the water now and then after a fish. Their cries and the sound of the water as the boat churned through it were the only sounds in the winter stillness. Then there was the walk with Teresa up the country road, past a thicket of birches with the blue green twilight sky behind them. To one side of the ground was a field of yellow grass, bent by a soft wind. Across one of the fields alongside a path through the cold-baked fields, there was a little brook gurgling cheerfully beneath the ice that caked it. There are still green things showing under the stubble of the fields, bits of wild carrot, the green of vines, even some wild geranium. And as the earth lost its color and darkened, there was still the radiance of a sunset flushing the sky.

\* \* \*

The work continues back in the office until late in the evening. Visitors from Chicago, from Maryland, from New Hampshire, from Buffalo. A worker from one of the chain stores who tells us about his long day—he gets up at five-thirty to assist at early mass, and he is never through with his work until seven-thirty in the evening. He wants to help us by distributing the paper on Sundays . . . A man comes in from East Eleventh Street to tell us how the paper has reinforced his faith, and to bring us some clothes for those that are poorer than he, and he is poor enough . . . All day there are the unemployed, starting at eight-thirty. They want underwear, shoes, coats, information about home relief . . . Or they just want to talk to us. There are the unemployed all day, and in the evening there are those who work and have no other time to come. So if the paper is rather disjointed and unfinished in its writing, it is because there is so much to do for twelve hours, and only a few of the left over hours to write about the work and the thought behind the work.

\* \* \*

As for our immediate assistants and co-workers—they continue faithfully in their voluntary cooperation. Two or three are always picketing, running errands, addressing envelopes, going to the post office, paying calls in the neighborhood, taking care of the needs of those that come in. The girls from the House of Hospitality helped us picket on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and when they came in that morning to go with us to the high mass which started the day's work, they told us how four of them said the rosary aloud together the night before for our persecuted fellow-workers in Mexico City.

During the month there was a call of distress from a man whose wife had just gone to the hospital to have her sixth child. His mother was to have taken care of the other five children, but the very next day she fell off a chair and broke her arm, so the little ones were left to the care of the nine-year-old girl. The father found it impossible to get any help so an appeal was made to the Catholic Worker. One of the girls co-operating with us volunteered for the job and took charge of the little household. It meant ten days of good hard work, what with one of the little ones, two years old, being sick. There was washing and ironing and cleaning to do, besides the marketing and cooking. A few of the afternoons some of the boys from the office went up to take care of the kids while she did the shopping. One of those who volunteered for this work was a seminarian on his vacation. He will make a good Franciscan, that boy. The girl had gone out on the job as an errand of mercy, not expecting any pay, but both the man and his wife insisted that she be paid and paid generously. She had been jobless for some time, so it came in handy. He had been out of work for quite a time, too, and money was hard-earned in that big family, but it is the poor who are the most generous and the most appreciative. "I had not been able to find anyone to help us for love nor money," he told us.

\* \* \*

The young man who is studying to be a Franciscan came in almost every day to get papers to sell in Union Square and he disposed of about a hundred and fifty a day. Other volunteers who help in the office also sold papers every day during the Christmas rush, and one of them got rid of as many as four hundred an afternoon and evening.

Let us say here that any unemployed men or girls, either, for that matter (for one of the girls from the co-operative apartment sold a good many), who wish to sell the Catholic Worker may call at the office for copies.

\* \* \*

In case any of those kind friends who were good Samaritans and sent in clothes were not thanked this month, lay it to the fact that the need was so great that the packages were opened, the contents distributed and the wrappings disposed of by zealous workers before the editors had a chance to grab the return address in order to write letters of thanksgiving. We are very sorry, indeed, at our seeming negligence, but believe us that we are not ungrateful, and from the bottom of our hearts we beg God to bless those kind and thoughtful ones who are helping us so much.

\* \* \*

Someone wrote to us that they were always interested in hearing how the printing bill got paid—how we made out during the month. Well, it was a good month and we look back to last Christmas when we were so poor that we had to skip our January edition, and we praise the Lord and all His saints for the abundance this year. Christmas cards came to us enclosing money and little by little the bills were paid. The telephone was almost shut off, but wasn't, the electric man came around to deprive us of light, but didn't (there had been an offering through the mail), there were a few meals of beans, and then a basket of food came in; and we were preparing to put off the January edition until late in the month when a generous check came in from a priest whom we would name except that we are afraid he would get sore, and so that bill was paid off and there was still twenty-five dollars in the bank.

This morning our dentist who has been taking care of everybody for nothing the last year called up and said that the marshal was on his door step, and miraculously enough there was twenty dollars for him. He had pulled a dozen teeth and filled another dozen and still he said his bill was only fifteen. We gave him what we had, however, and we are sure that somehow or other there will be enough money to pay for the mailing of the paper. It's true that only seventy-five cents came in today, but we have absolute faith in God's bounty. He scatters his gifts so lavishly that He will supply our wants, we know.

We're so sure of it in fact that this is not even being written in the form of an appeal, but just by way of comment as to how we're making out. If we were behind hand, and we felt we

had to be importunate (as our Lord bids us to be when there is need), we would put this in ten point type and run it at the top of the editorial page. As it is, this is only a modest accounting, and a thanksgiving.

Having been given a bottle of perfume for Christmas and thus indulged one of our senses, which is accustomed to being mortified, we predicted that we would be tormented in other fashions, the devil being busy around these parts in many little ways. Not because there are any idle hands but because the Lord's work goes on so busily.

Sure enough, an epidemic of fleas smote us (we hasten to assure our visitors that they are gone now) and mortification abounded.

A Spanish friend who delights in St. Teresa brought us, for our solace, a poem written by the great saint for her sisters to sing in such afflictions. We hope it helped them as much as it helped us. Please excuse the rough translation.

Daughters who take up the cross

Have valor,

And of Jesus, who is your light,

Ask for help.

He will be your defender in such a pass.

*Refrain:*

Free from the evil tribe

This robe.

These bad cattle disquiet

In prayer,

The soul badly grounded

In devotion,

But keep your heart set

On God.

*Refrain:*

Free from the evil tribe

This robe.

As you are born to die

Do not dismay,

And for such uncivil ones

Have no fear.

A help in God you will find

In so great an evil.

*Refrain:*

Free from this evil tribe

This robe.

Since you gave us a new gown,

Celestial King,

Free from the evil tribe

This robe.

## Chapter 32

### Day After Day - February 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, February 1935, 3, 5.

*Summary: Notes the many visitors to the Catholic Worker—a Socialist, a bishop, priests, others—small miracles and conversations. (DDLW #214).*

This morning a young Socialist to breakfast [sic]. (Usually as I come from mass there is somebody waiting at the door to get in.) He had formerly been a Communist, and now he is a Socialist. He was lamenting the lack of zeal in the Socialist group. “It seems,” he said, “that the Catholic Workers and the Communists have it all.”

We spoke of the arguments as to the existence of God, notably the argument from conscience. The Communists have absolute standards of right or wrong, regardless of what he may say. Their practice of self-criticism prove this. From whom do those standards come? They would say, from Karl Marx or Lenin, I suppose.

In the evening I attended a meeting where there was a young Catholic lawyer who had just returned from a visit to Mexico. He was enthusiastic about the public improvements in the State of Sonora, the playgrounds (there was one place just as good as Jones Beach!) and the roads, and I don’t know what-all – and the fact that the peons were earning two pesos a day on some of the plantations and could wear silk stockings! Rodolpho Calles must have some good points, he said. This in spite of the fact that not a church is open in the state and not a priest allowed! When I contemplate civilization which offers us silk stockings and playgrounds and electric ice boxes in return for the love of God, I begin to long for a good class war, with the civilizers and the advertising men for those same civilizers, lined up to be liquidated.

\* \* \*

Bishop Busch of St. Cloud, Minnesota, came in for a call this morning and gave us his blessing. When we saw his book on “The Art of Living with God,” which deals with the “ordinary workings of the Holy Spirit in the human soul,” we took it away from him, with his consent. He had read *The Catholic Worker* in Rome and made up his mind there, he said, to pay us a



visit on his way back to his diocese. We were immensely pleased and honored at his visit. He contributed to our work, too, and it was an answer to prayer, because the paper had just come out and we needed money for the mailing. Bless him, dear Lord.

In the afternoon, Father Ehman, from Rochester, came in and we had a good visit, and before he left he blessed Barbara, who is being bothered with her gums, poor baby, and lo! not long afterward the first tooth sprouted, a real miracle, Margaret, her mother, says.

Did I ever mention that other miracle that Margaret boasts of, perpetrated by St. Anthony? An Armenian friend who is a poet had lost a large manuscript on which he had been working for some years. When he came in one evening and told us about it, Margaret started praying immediately to St. Anthony and the very next morning a young lad came in bearing the manuscript. It had been in a large envelope bearing the Catholic Worker address, fortunately. The boy refused to be rewarded and left, taking with him a copy of the Catholic Worker, though he said he was an Episcopalian worker. Nevertheless, Margaret still insists it was St. Anthony in disguise who brought back the epic.

\* \* \*

Franciscan spirit grows hereabouts. Last night Mr. Minas, who is devoted to our black cat, was discovered washing her chest with my washrag and drying her with my towel and then anointing her with a warming unguent for a bad cough! It is good I discovered him in the act. Then big Dan, our chief-of-staff on the streets of New York (who sells the paper, either on Fourteenth Street or in front of Macy's, every day) took one of my blankets to shelter the old horse who helps us deliver our Manhattan bundles of papers every month.

\* \* \*

Father Nicholas, of the Immaculate Conception Church, preaches very good sermons on prayer. This morning he was talking of the gifts of the Magi, frankincense being not only prayer, but union with God. And he pointed out that even the busy housewife, with a raft of young ones about her heels, could be united to God as she went about her daily work. Another Sunday morning, this month, he spoke on ejaculatory prayer—the necessity of making short aspirations of love during the day.

\* \* \*

Went to the Cenacle at three this afternoon, going up on the bus through the heavy fog. The trees on the Drive were beautiful standing out so alone—the only things of beauty in a grey dark world. I love such days, so much is hidden, and only single things like a tree or bush stand out. These are good days to walk in, not too cold, and if you go down by the docks at the foot of 23rd or Fourteenth or Tenth. the world seems to come to an end right there.

There is a rare stillness only broken by the sound of the water washing against the piers. And when, as along Riverside Drive you have the trees as well as the sense of the water (if you do not have the sight of it) there is a poignant midwinter beauty, a very restful interlude in a crowded life.

\* \* \*

A Franciscan missionary priest from China came in this evening with Mr. Walsh, who is a pressman down at the American. Mr. Walsh has been one of our supporters for the last year and it is to due to his efforts that many missionary priests in China have received copies of *The Catholic Worker*. He has lived there some time himself and has a keen interest in the affairs over there.

There was good conversation for some hours and before Father Burtschy left he said that he would see to it that some of the writings of Peter Maurin were translated into the Chinese for one of the two Catholic dailies. It was great to contemplate seeing Peter's *Easy Essays* in Chinese, but it was astounding to contemplate the fact that there two Chinese Catholic dailies.

\* \* \*

Other interesting visitors during the month were: A Maltese Catholic who spoke glowingly of the devotion to St. Paul, which still exists at the present time on the island of Malta; and a formerly I.W.W. Marine transport worker who was converted to the church some five or six years ago who is interested in *The Catholic Worker* movement.

\* \* \*

An interesting work which has been undertaken by Robert Cutler and his associates down in Parkersburg, West Virginia, where there are only 2,500 Catholics out of a population of 50,000, is the getting of information about the Church into the secular press and the distribution of Catholic literature.

In the last four months they have distributed 2,500 pieces of literature. There are only four young people undertaking this work, one of them an invalid girl. What they are doing in their community could be done in many others all over the country. Mr. Cutler came up to New York to gather together Catholic literature and pamphlets and found a very generous response wherever he asked for cooperation.

## Chapter 33

# A Long Editorial But It Could Be Longer

*The Catholic Worker*, February 1935, 7.

*Summary: Traces the program difficulties of Catholic Action to the belief that there is no need for it. Encourages both Communists and Catholics to study the capitalistic system and to compare the similarities and differences in order to raise questions. Sees the need for liturgy and sociology to be linked. Encourages individual responsibility for doing the works of mercy. (DDLW #15).*

We heard one woman say at a meeting last month, “I am getting fed up with Catholic Action!”

If C.A. means just study clubs, reading and talk, as those who are sincerely going in for it seem to think; or bridge games, and a little catechetical work on the side—then we don’t blame people for being fed up with it.

We’ve heard people groaning over the idea of study clubs for a long time. They probably would not be so bored with the idea if they were fighting for their lives as well as their principles as they are doing down in Mexico. The trouble is that most people do not yet see any necessity for C.A. They have liberty, freedom of worship, they can send their children to Catholic schools—they are pretty comfortable as yet. For those who are out of work, for the hungry, it is hard for them to see any point in perfecting their knowledge of the theory, the technique of Catholic Action. What they shout for is “real action,” “political action” and in some cases, “violent action.”

The usual rather futile comment of the comfortable is—“We know something has to be done—but what can we do about it”—and they are uncomfortable in their comfort and if they are blessed with a conscience, they suffer without knowing what to do about it.

Catholic Action provides a program for all, of actual work as well as a study of technique and theory. That is—the work is there provided people would be content to do the little thing—the immediate thing, the thing that comes to hand. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it.” It does not matter what it is, or whether you can figure out its place in the huge pattern of reconstruction.

Why are study clubs essential? For the knowledge of fundamentals. For the knowledge of Catholic philosophy. Without a philosophy to direct your actions they are indeed futile and misdirected.

Is it hard to study abstract principles? Well, here is a plan by which you can study with some definite end in view.

Take the Daily Worker, the Communist newspaper—you can get it at any newsstand in New York (and we don't care if we are boosting the circulation of the paper by this advice either. As a matter of fact, one issue of the paper should last you a long time). Study the Communist criticism of the present system. What is the Catholic criticism? What remedies do the Communists offer? What is the Catholic solution?

To illustrate: I have before me a copy of The Daily Worker for January 23. On the front page there is a story of the shirt-makers' strike, a steel strike, the National Biscuit Company strike, a strike of 25,000 oil workers in Mexico, the discussion of a wool workers' strike. These stories lead to study of what the church thinks of organization of workers. This is taken up in the first part of the encyclical "Forty year after." Are our present unions illustrative of what the Pope wanted? If they are not, how to make them so? If there is no other existing union, is it permissible to join a union which is dominated by Communists? What action did Matt Talbot, the Irish workingman-saint, take in the general strike in Ireland? What about picketing? The necessity of emphasizing the idea of non-violent activities. What about the action of the consumer or outsider in the strike?

We could go on indefinitely but let's pass to other front-page stories in the Daily Worker. A discussion of Fascism and Nazism. What is the Church's stand? Is the Church universal or is it National? The dangers of Nationalism. The dangers of dictatorship. The Church's attitude in regard to the dignity of the individual—individual responsibility, the individual and the family unit to begin with.

There is another story about the President's social security program. What about state regulation, state capitalism, state socialism, fascism (progressive steps). How far should the state be allowed to "regulate" human activities: Jefferson's ideas as to the "less government there is the better it is." Self-regulation as opposed to state regulation.

(And here is a light note: On the bottom of the page, a large two-column box, WANTED: RED BUILDERS! In other words, people to sell the Daily Worker on the streets. The call is for a hundred, probably to compete with our gang who are selling THE CATHOLIC WORKER on Fourteenth street, 34th street and 42nd street. Competition is the life of trade, Peter Maurin!)

If you study Communist theory and practice, and Catholic theory and practice, and then uphold the latter, you will be doing a constructive piece of work in combating the materialist philosophy of the present day. You cannot uphold the Catholic program without influencing others. You cannot talk of Catholic principles without putting them into practice.

Of what use is it to teach catechism and tell the children of the love that is necessary they have for their neighbor, without having them go out and act on that love. If you love your neighbor you wish to serve him.

You cannot receive the Blessed Sacrament without becoming sensitive to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit and these inspirations are to be put into practice.

Do you know your neighbor in the first place? Or do you live in a neighborhood where nobody speaks to anyone else? If you want to reach him, employ Communist technique to do it. You could canvass your apartment house, for instance, to get subscriptions to some Catholic paper (*THE CATHOLIC WORKER* is cheap!), and by doing this you are coming into contact with Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Perhaps some of them are Communists. You can acknowledge to them that their criticism of the present order is just and this may lead to further discussion which will clarify your mind and theirs. You can petition your Catholic neighbors for clothes to aid the needy, or food to feed the hungry. Your St. Vincent de Paul society would be glad of the clothes if you can't dispose of them. Perhaps in your peregrinations you will come across neighbors who are in need and whom you can help. This advice is for those middle class ones who are anxious to do something but who do not know what to do. The poor find enough to do all right. And they are the most generous in sharing what they have. Their insecurity has made them god-like in their recklessness of the morrow. If they have two coats they do as Christ bade them. What food or coals they have they very often are called upon to share.

Oh, we can fill our lives up with Catholic Action all right, if we just look around us. We can link up liturgy and sociology, in other words. And as for collaboration with the clergy, if you are in earnest you can find some priest only too willing to co-operate, if not in your own parish, then in another. And if this is not possible, collaborate with your confessor and go in for individual C.A.

And above all, be generous—and lavish. Christ is lavish with His gift to us—why should we fear to be extravagant in return? Do not say to yourself, “where will it all end, if I start this?”

I have heard people say, in coming in contact with need: “If I supply them with groceries this week, they will be expecting me to keep it up.” But I do not think it works out this way. It has not with us, here at *THE CATHOLIC WORKER* office. In fact when we have made gifts of food, clothing, a bit of money (though that seldom) it has usually been the other way around. The recipients have come back to see what they could do for us.

The early Christians started with the works of mercy and it was this technique which converted the world.

They run in this wise:

The corporal works—To feed the hungry; to give drink to the thirsty; to clothe the naked; to harbor the harborless; to ransom the captive; to visit the sick; to bury the dead.

The spiritual works are—To instruct the ignorant; to counsel the doubtful; to admonish sinners; to bear wrongs patiently; to forgive offense willingly; to comfort the afflicted; to pray for the living and the dead.

Not all of these works are within the reach of all—that is understood. But that we should take part in some of them is a matter of obligation, a “strict precept imposed both by the natural and Divine law.”

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P.S.—Not one of the ten prayer books we went through around the office listed these works of mercy, though they listed the seven deadly sins.

# Chapter 34

## Day After Day - March 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, March 1935, 3.

*Summary: Thoughts on Molly Maguires, labor organizing, a visit to the Cathedral in Toronto, the activities of young Communists, and the work of Catherine de Hueck. (DDLW #286).*

At a friend's house this evening we met the grandchild of a saloon-keeper who had been hanged as a Molly Maguire in the days when unionization in the coal fields was just beginning down in Pennsylvania. Not long ago we read an article in the Herald Tribune magazine section which told how the U.S. Bureau of Mines had worked to protect the lives of miners by inspections and enforcing safety laws and the installation of safety devices. There was not a word in that article of the work the Molly Maguires did in protesting against hazardous working conditions, long hours, child labor and such wages that the textile industries grew up in mine regions to exploit the labor of the women and girls of miners who had to go to work because the men of the family were not paid enough to support them.

The Molly Maguires took to violence, and thus brought discredit on the labor movement. But woe to those men who drove them to violence. Those mine owners themselves are guilty in the sight of God for the murders perpetrated by the miners in the vicious fight for bare subsistence.

All that the public generally hears about these early labor troubles is what he reads in dime novels about the Pinkerton boys and how they broke up the organization.

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We went up to Toronto this month on the invitation of Dr. Muckle, rector of the Cathedral, and spent a very enjoyable week. In illustrations of the idea of individual responsibility, he told me a story of a tinsmith working ten hours a day for \$44 a month, who sent money to different organizations to further their work, and gave all his spare time to his work as lay apostle.

The archbishop's palace in Toronto is a well-used place. We went there for dinner one night, and it is a good, bare place, anything but luxurious, with many rooms given over to meetings,

discussion groups, workers' clubs, and offices. There was even a working-girls' club, where the young women were having a St. Valentine's Day party, cooking in the kitchen, which was attached to the clubrooms, and dancing to a radio afterward.

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Speaking of church suppers, one of our young Communist relatives came in to see us the other day and talked of the unit dinner being given, cooked by the Ladies' Auxiliary. Also, together with all other members of the Communist party, he had been commissioned to sell chances on a five-dollar gold piece—the chance book looked dearly familiar. Also he had a book of stamps to be sold for the underground fund the Communist party is gathering together with the expectation that in the near future the party will be suppressed. All the younger members of the party look upon this prospect with joy. To work underground—to carry on secret propaganda and publishing and distributing “underground”—what fun! Even selling chances becomes an exciting adventure. We are very much opposed to giving them all this pleasure.

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Friendship House, where we visited in Toronto, is a place much like our own offices here in New York. The atmosphere is very much the same, though their place is cleaner and quieter. The group which is running the place under the direction of Catherine de Hueck is engaged in propaganda activities among the children and workers in one of the poorest districts of Toronto, bringing the thought of the church to those who up to the present time have only been reached by Communists.

There are two connected houses which have been converted into reading rooms and dining rooms, and upstairs on one side there is a hospice for men and on the other for women. Plans are under way to open another house for boys, putting it under the protection of St. John Bosco. The other two houses are called St. Joseph's house and St. Teresa's house.

Right now mimeographed leaflets like those put out by THE CATHOLIC WORKER are being distributed throughout the city.

This very active group of workers has been distributing two thousand copies of THE CATHOLIC WORKER every month, but now the order has been increased to four thousand.



# Chapter 35

## Day After Day - April 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, April 1935, 3.

*Summary: Description of her daughter's ninth birthday party and the child's Lenten mortifications. Notes the aim of Lent is to keep united to God through the suffering Humanity of His son. (DDLW #287).*

On the Riviera the munition makers made merry in their serious way last month. Agents of Krupp and Schneider, Humbert de Wendel and others were present. Says *Time*, the weekly news magazine, "Ostensibly the 107 delegates of Europe's munitioneers were meeting as the International Railmakers' Association, and on the Riviera was that blithe international railmaker, Charles M. Schwab. Explained he: 'My doctors say I react favorably to the excitement of roulette.'"

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We suppose the foregoing paragraph contains the pungent material desired by one of our correspondents last month. There's plenty of it to fill the paper, but we, too, "retreat" from such current events to recall occurrences of the month in a more cheerful vein.

There was Teresa's birthday party for instance. She was nine years old on the fourth of March, and there was a party, of course, up in the Harlem quarters with twenty-one of the little children who have been attending the classes there. First, there was a show and everyone sang with great willingness and afterwards there was a feast when tremendous quantities of cake and candy were consumed. The boxes of ice cream were like the widow's cruze in that they kept replenishing plates so that there were even some third helpings. One little girl got slightly ill, but otherwise there were no casualties. Little Lizzie, who was more discreet, took part of the cake home for her "poor old mother." Lizzie, who started off the singing of the afternoon was overcome with giggles at first, but she ended up gayly, singing all the popular songs with much verve.

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The names of the children who attended the party were, as [far as] Ade Bethune can remember, Dorothy, Hattie, Bernard and Rudy Charles; Louise Jeminot; Lizzie; Alice Mabin; Alice Foster; Aurora Foster; Bernice and Elinore Thomas; another little girl by the name of Elinor; a Bobby; a William, and Mary, Helen, Catherine, Christina, Georgia and Rosie Giogas.

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Teresa, this Sunday afternoon, was full of the excitement of counting up her mortifications for Lent. She was beginning well, with zest and enthusiasm. What were her mortifications? Eggs and candy and silence. The first you eat, the second you don't eat (but you are allowed cookies even with icing on them), and the third—well, silent periods one must learn to enjoy because of offering them up. These mortifications were for the convent life in general. During school hours there were sacrifices such as not looking out the window—and that is a tremendous one considering the forty days of Lent and spring on its way, and maple trees budding and starlings calling and two friendly old crows cheering the spring together.

Only yesterday, too, she looked out and soldiers were going down the country road and sacrifices and mortifications were forgotten in the joy of watching the marchers.

But in general, in the first flush of Lent, the struggle is undertaken bravely.

What if during the long weeks the fervor lessens and the work of accumulating graces was continued with many lapses, but by effort of will.

That time when *will* has to be brought into play is perhaps the most important of all, despite failures and the total lack of a sense of accomplishment, of growth.

Fervor comes again with Holy Week, joy comes on the day of resurrection, with all nature singing exultantly God's praises.

To keep united to God through the suffering Humanity of His son—that is the aim of Lent.

# Chapter 36

## Day After Day - May 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, May 1935, 3, 7.

*Summary: Describes house cleaning in preparation for Easter. Catholic workers promulgated Catholic social principles in leaflets and speaking in Union Square at a Communist rally. Notes the work of priests with men on the bowery. (DDLW #288).*

Today everyone is busy making the house clean for Easter. Larry Doyle and Walter Livermore have just finished washing all the windows on the first two floors and it is a bright sunshiny day for such work. Walter works nights in a brewery, but such is his energy that he gives his mornings to the Catholic Worker and picketing, distributing literature, doing up and delivering bundles, exhorting Newman clubs—nothing is too much for him. Window washing wasn't enough this morning, so he went on to mop up the office floor.

Teresa is home from school for her Easter vacation and she found her manual toil in bedmaking, one of the arts she has learned in school. You take off and fold up all the covers before you go to mass; turn up the mattress and hang up the clothes. Then on your return you begin from the bottom and make the bed completely—a big job for a very little girl. She can beat up omelets too (she's especially enthusiastic if they are jam omelets), but she's better at eating them.

The girls in the House of Hospitality will clean the rest of the house tomorrow—you never need to ask them to do anything. They take matters into their own hands and look around for work to do.

Just to add to the spirit of preparation for festivity, a friend brought in a huge spray of shad bush in blossom and it flaunts itself in front of a wall decoration made in carpet by one of our staff—a beautiful design of the Blessed Virgin and Child.

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News of the month in the way of Catholic Worker street activities. A Communist demonstration being held in front of Home Relief headquarters in an Italian neighborhood, we got out

a leaflet addressed to police. Home Relief workers and unemployed alike, bearing quotations from the early fathers and the Popes as to the distribution of created goods, and joining the unemployed in their appeal for more adequate food and clothing.

“The distribution of created goods must be brought into conformity with the demands of the common good and social justice,” the Holy Father has written, “for every sincere observer is conscious that the vast differences between the few who hold excessive wealth and the many who live in destitution constitute a grave evil in modern society.”

St. Gregory said that “when we distribute to the poor what they need, we are not giving what belongs to us, we merely pay back their own. We are paying a debt of justice, rather than fulfilling a work of mercy.”

With these reminders we are sure that social workers and home relief officials will be more conscious of the attitude of meekness and love they should maintain in dealing with the poor who come to them.

And who knows but that this reminder reaching the poor and rebellious who gather at these demonstrations may not bring them closer to the Church who ever has the needs of her poor at heart.

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One Saturday afternoon, during the latter part of last month, Dorothy Weston made her first appearance on a soap box in Union Square. It was not really a soap box but a step ladder surmounted by an American flag, and from this pitch Communists, the National Student Federation, also Communists, A. F. of L., Office Workers' Union and various others were represented.

On account of the Catholic Worker participation in the Ohrbach strike we had been invited to speak at the demonstration being held and after consulting a priest on the advisability of appearing on a platform with Communists, we were advised to go ahead.

Accompanied by a group of Catholic Workers, Dorothy Weston took the stand and gave a brief and forceful talk on the principles of social justice as upheld by the popes and the bishops in their statement on the present crisis.

In spite of traffic noises which included a few fire engines, Dr. Weston was able to make herself heard and was listened to with interest.

Realizing the necessity of bringing Christian social teachings to the man in the street, we wish to call attention to the story, SPEAKERS WANTED, in this issue of the paper.

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The Catholic Worker is penetrating farther and farther in the wildernesses of the world.

Last month a visitor came to us from the missions of Africa where he had been living in a mud hut with a tin roof for the last four years. This Irish missionary priest has been laboring among 50,000 natives of Nigeria where the temperature is 120 in the shade.

He asks us to send him the paper when he goes back to his labors next fall.

Last month we visited the Holy Name Mission on the Bowery where 1,200 men are cared for by Father Rafter and Father O'Connor.

"There are 15,000 men on the Bowery," Father Rafter said. "We've been working with them for the last 22 years. We saved for a long time, trying to get a building fund together, but the depression has exhausted that long since and the building has to be deferred."

Evidently Father Rafter believes and follows out the teaching of Bossuet that the Church's first concern are the immediate needs of the poor.

"We have five masses on Sunday morning," he said, "and they are all packed. These men would not go elsewhere. They are at home here with us."

And we thought to ourselves as we went through the shabby old building, what a gigantic task these priests of God have always with them, and with what cheer they undertake it each day, using what means they have at hand to work with.

Anyone who says that city agencies are taking care of all the poor and that he cannot find any work to do ought to go see Father Rafter and see what cooperation he can give him in the way of gathering clothes for the poor, for instance.

One of our Catholic Workers found something that he could do in playing the organ at evening services three nights a week. He is an invalid himself, but he's given his time and his strength willingly and with joy.

# Chapter 37

## Wealth, The Humanity of Christ, Class War

*The Catholic Worker*, June 1935, 4.

*Summary: Working to improve the material conditions of workers is grounded in Christ's humanity and the reality of the Mystical Body. Relying on violence betrays both workers and the brotherhood of man. (DDLW #290).*

### WEALTH

"The land of a certain rich man brought forth plenty of fruits. And he thought within himself, saying: "What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?"

And he said, "This will I do, I will pull down my barns and will build greater and into them will I gather all the things that are grown to me, and my goods. And I will say to my soul Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest; eat, drink, make good cheer!"

But God said to him: "Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God.

### THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

It is because we forget the Humanity\*\*\*\*of Christ (present with us\*\*\*\*today in the Blessed Sacrament just as truly as when He walked with His apostles through the cornfields that Sunday long ago, breakfasting on the ears of corn) – that we have ignored the material claims of our fellow man during this capitalistic, industrialist era. We have allowed our brothers and sisters, our fellow members in the Mystical Body to be degraded, to endure slavery to a machine, to live in rat-infested holes.

This ignoring of the material body of our humanity which Christ ennobled when He took flesh, gives rise to the aversion for\*\*\*\*religion evidenced by many workers. As a result of this worshipping of the Divinity alone of Christ and ignoring His Sacred Humanity, religious people looked to Heaven for justice and Karl Marx could say –

“Religion is the opium of the people.”

And Wobblies could say – “Work and Pray–live on hay; you’ll get pie in the sky when you die.”

It is because we love Christ in His Humanity that we can love our brothers. It is because we see Christ in the least of God’s creatures, that we can talk to them\*\*\*\*of the love of God and know that what we write will reach their hearts.

A. Yenukidze in the “Life of Stalin” wrote: “It is a well

known fact that the most difficult task for intellectuals among the workers has always been to find \*\*\*\*a tongue in which to speak to the workers’.”

And St. Paul said, “If you speak with the tongue of men and angels and have not charity you are become a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.”

## CLASS WAR

To assent to violence is to give way to the spirit of the times This is truly betraying the workers,

Agreeing with the necessity for force is making concessions to the immediate, the expedient. It is in reality denying the doctrine of the brotherhood of man and the dogma of the Mystical Body. “Why must the members war one against the other?”

To become one with the workers – to be the poorest of the poor, yes.

But to assent to the mob spirit is a betrayal. It is to be carried on the wave of a movement. It is the easiest way. To use all of our spiritual forces to propel that movement of the people is to be guilty of a terrible wrong.

## Chapter 38

### Day After Day - June 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, June 1935, 5.

*Summary: Reports on the ongoing work on the garden commune, and how it provides a green sanctuary from the city offices. Transcribes two conversations with the working poor, one from a biscuit factory worker who had been on strike and one from a restaurant worker. Describes her daughter's confirmation and the lovely gift of a hand-printed catechism. (DDLW #289).*

Out on the garden commune, Edelson works in his bare feet, his trousers rolled up to his knees, his shirt off, his undershirt clinging to his back.

He works with a pick, wielding it with large, strong swings. Every now and then he pauses and crumbles the dirt beneath his feet, meditating.

He will give us some weeks, he said, for the sake of comradeship, Christian Communism, cooperation, brotherhood, unity, as a member of the Mystical Body, because Christ was in his heart, in the spirit of the priesthood of the laity, and for a good many other reasons. Also because it would do him good.

Catherine Smith wanders around in a pair of baggy old trousers, muddy at the knees, and today she is carting stones and making a rock garden.

Hergenhan has been working at the vegetable garden for three weeks, bringing hundreds of boxes of top soil from the woods to enrich the carefully prepared beds. Tomato and cabbage plants are set out, the squash and cucumbers in their neat round hills; radishes, beets, onions and lettuce—all are coming up.

Hergenhan is a German and works with order and precision. It will be remembered that he was the author of two articles on the Municipal Lodging House which ran in the CATHOLIC WORKER last year, and also the one on the Harlem riot, printed a couple of months ago. The first articles roused grieved protests from city officials and the last brought in many favorable comments.

Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Johnson are in charge of the conference house as Hergenhan is of the garden, and some of the office work of the paper is done in the country, Mr. Johnson having formerly helped in town.



In town there is no back yard, there are no green things to refresh the eye. We have moved away from our petunia garden, with its asparagus plants, and fig tree and privet hedges. It is true that across the street there is an ailanthus tree, “tree of heaven” it is also called, and it arouses hunger and thirst in us for the country.

Aside from it, however, there is not a speck of green. For trees we have the masts and funnels of ships along the docks, and for grass and earth we have the uneven cobbles of the sidewalks in front of warehouses and trucking stations, with bleak and ugly tenements in between.

We are happy, all of us, in the consciousness that the garden commune is there, within a few hours ride of the office. Already in the past month there have been about thirty-five visitors and the garden work has progressed from day to day. The week-end conferences have not yet started, but postals will be sent out during the month announcing meetings to be held either over the entire week-end or on Sunday alone.

## Conversations

“The Sisters lost a lot on the biscuit strike. The ones that kept a day nursery and settlement used to come around every Friday night and one stood at each door. They must have got seventy-five dollars or so. They must have missed it for those sixteen weeks.”

“Lots of the girls got fat during the strike . . . It’s funny. I guess it was being out on the picket line for hours in the sun. I gained fifteen pounds. That comes of not being rushed all the time. There used to be eight thousand people working there you know, and after the new machinery there were only three thousand.”

“Do you remember last summer when we picketed with the brush makers? We all got fat, too, and sunburned!”

## Childs

“Yes I got laid off for three days . . . I made a penny error in the sales tax . . . Under the code we were supposed to get 19 and a half cents an hour but it only averaged 9 and a half cents. They take out fifty cents for meals every day and then you have to pay for your uniforms. They’re not supposed to charge you the fifty cents unless you work six hours, so if you work five and a half hours, they pay you for six and take out the fifty cents just the same . . . It would be cheaper to bring your lunch or eat at home. . . ”

“I went to work in Childs’ restaurant because I used to stand at the window and admire the food so much. I had worked as a cook on a freighter and then I was out of a job for a long time and used to study at the library. I was always hungry. I used to stand at the window and look at the food. So I went to work there.”

## Confirmation

“God has sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father!” And if it were not for this indwelling of the Holy Spirit we would not have this impulse towards the Father, to seek Him.

These thoughts are because Teresa was confirmed last month and received the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. She also received a new dress. “The only time I get new clothes,” she accounted, “is when I made my first communion and now for my confirmation.”

She was radiant and composed. “Did you see me?” she wanted to know. “I didn’t see you.” “But you knew I was there, didn’t you?”

“I thought you were, but I wasn’t sure. You might have had a *meeting*.” Always a slight impatience and scorn at the word meeting. “I can remember even the fruits of the Holy Ghost—maybe I can, if I don’t forget.”

But with the present of a Catechism (which I shall save for her) with wood cut borders by Philip Hagren, hand-made paper, handset type, printed on a hand press St. Dominic’s, at Ditchling, Sussex, I am sure reviewing catechism will be a pleasure. I have never seen so exquisite a piece of work, and we all, down on the garden commune, pass it reverently from hand to hand and in looking at the pictures, refresh our memory as to grace, the commandments of God, and the Beatitudes.

Mr. Graham Carey sent it to us as a present, and if he knew the pure and undiluted pleasure it has afforded us all, he would be well-rewarded.

# Chapter 39

## Security

*The Catholic Worker*, Jul-Aug 1935, p. 4

*Summary: Summary: A passionate rejection of the false security of wages and the maxim “Be moderate, be prudent.” Instead she promotes the counsels and precepts of the gospel in this time of world-wide crisis for religion and poverty. She asks, “What right has any one of us to have security when God’s poor are suffering?” (DDLW #939).*

## Security

Christ told Peter to put aside his nets and follow him. He told the rich young man to sell what he had and give to the poor and follow Him. He said that those who lost their lives for His sake should find them. He told people to take no thought for the morrow. He told his followers that if anyone begged for their coats to give up their cloaks too. He spoke of feeding the poor, sheltering the homeless, visiting those in prison and sick and also of instructing the ignorant. He said, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me.” He said, “Be ye therefore perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect.”

But the usual comment is: “You must distinguish between counsel and precept. You forget that He said also ‘All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given.’ ‘He that can take it let him take it.’”

Paul Claudel said that young people have a hunger for the heroic, and too long have they been told, “Be moderate, be prudent.”

Too long have we had moderation and prudence. Today is a time of crisis and struggle. Within our generation, Russia has rejected Christianity, Germany has rejected it, Mexico fights to exterminate it, in Spain religious orders have been expelled, in Italy Fascism has exalted the idea of the State and rejecting the Kingship of Christ, has now a perverted idea of authority. Here in the United States the President on the one hand ignores the simpering approval our Ambassador to Mexico has placed on the persecution of the Catholic Church there, and is busy experimenting to find “a way out” of our economic ruin.

## We Oppose the Wage System

In this present situation when people are starving to death because there is an over-abundance of food, when religion is being warred upon throughout the world, our Catholic young people still come from schools and colleges and talk about looking for security, a weekly wage.

They ignore the counsels of the gospels as though they never heard of them, and those who are troubled in conscience regarding them speak of them as being impractical.

Why they think that a weekly wage is going to give them security is a mystery. Do they have security on any job nowadays? If they try to save, the bank fails; if they invest their money, the bottom of the market drops out. If they trust to world practicability in other words, they are out of luck.

If they sell their labor (see Peter Maurin's essays) they are prostituting the talents God gave them. College girls who work at Macy's – is this what their expensive training was for? – boys who go into business looking for profits – is this what their Catholic principles taught them? – are hovering on the brink of a precipice. They have no security and they know it. The only security comes in following the precepts and counsels of the gospels.

## Members One of Another

If each unemployed nurse went to her pastor and got a list of the sick and gave up the idea of working for wages and gave her services to the poor of the parish, is there not security in the trust that God will provide? This is but one instance of using the talents and abilities that God has given to each one of us.

What right has any one of us to have security when God's poor are suffering? What right have I to sleep in a comfortable bed when so many are sleeping in the shadows of buildings here in the neighborhood of THE CATHOLIC WORKER office? What right have we to food when many are hungry, or to liberty when the Scottsboro boys and Tom Mooney are in jail?

St. Thomas says, "The counsels of perfection are, considered in themselves, expedient for everybody," and he adds charitably, "but owing to the varying dispositions of people there are some for whom they are not expedient because their inclinations do not tend in that direction."

But to those in whose minds these questions are stirring there are those words directed –  
"Today if you shall hear my voice, harden not your hearts."

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*This is the true fraternity, which overcame the crimes of the world; it followed Christ, attaining the noble kingdom of Heaven.*

–(From the Gradual for July 9.)

# Chapter 40

## Day After Day - July-August 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, July-August 1935, 2.

*Summary: Writes of how people are treated poorly at the Home Relief office. Describes a visit to the garden commune on Staten Island, swims, walks, the inviting smells of plants, and visiting children from Harlem. (DDLW #291).*

A day so wet and heavy that one could scarcely breathe. No sun, but the air felt hot as a blanket, hanging close over the city, and people walked around languidly, scarcely able to move with the oppression that was upon them.

Down to the Houston Street Home Relief Bureau with some friends who are on Home Relief and who are registering for work relief, and there marveled at the two policemen and five husky young men hanging around the entrance. Job holders they are, sneering at those who come for help. "A strong-arm squad," a member of the unemployed union told us, "to keep delegations out of the bureau. We were down last week, presenting a petition, and I got a black eye as a result. We come to ask for jobs, and all we get is kicks and curses."

A woman with a baby in her arms, probably not more than a few weeks old, came to ask why her rent had not been paid. She was refused admittance and told to leave her baby at home next time, with her husband, perhaps.

She did not speak English very well, but she made the strong-arm squad understand that "she had no husband."

And where did the baby come from, they jeered as she was forced to leave.

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Down to Staten Island in the afternoon to see how the family there were getting along. Bernard and Rudy, two little boys, six and eight, from the Harlem classes, and a former Jewish rabbi, homeless because of his conversion, are our latest guests there.

There was time for a swim before supper and the water was oily calm, with the sky hanging so low over it that you could almost reach up and touch it with your hands. We all crouched

in the water, digging for small hardshell clams with our hands, and found a dozen. Teresa was best at it.

After supper the atmosphere was a little brighter, with the rays of the sun stealing out from under the heavy curtain of clouds and just a suggestion of freshness in the air. So the children and Stanley and I went for a walk, arriving back in the dusk, the children stumbling not only with fatigue but because they insisted on walking with their faces uplifted to the moon.

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Another morning, hot and heavy, and with the first rays of the sun the cicadas begin their triumphant song. Teresa woke me to tell me they were the first of the year and it was pleasant to lie there in bed and listen to the loud crescendo rising to a climax and dying out again drowsily.

The children played out under the apple trees after breakfast, waiting for the grownups to be ready for a swim while the tide was high.

Midweek as it was, the beach was deserted and it was refreshing to swim out into the calm bay and then float, bathed in both sea, sky and sun, and silence, too, save for the happy calls of the children as they played with the little waves that foamed up on the beach.

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The garden progresses and for the last week, with the heavy rains, there had been no need to water it. We are beginning to study sprays and the labels which proclaim their efficacy for aphids, thrips and leaf hoppers, Mexican bean beetles, black fly, soft scale and midge. We have been eating the lettuce, onions, radishes and a few string beans and soon the tomatoes will be ready. One of the best smells in the world is the smell of tomato plants, or perhaps the wet earth after a rain, or honeysuckle or privet hedge in blossom. The world is full of good smells down here after the heavy smells of the city and crowded humans. Even the poison ivy we have discovered has a delicious odor when it is blossoming. So there is at least one good contribution from that venomous weed which has caused at least two of our workers to swell and burn and itch through sleepless nights.

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The only trouble with the garden commune is that one cannot be there all the time. There are a dozen permanent residents, and all the rest go and come to fulfill their duties in town as well as out. And it is always such a wrench to put on shoes and stockings and toil the hot long way up to the station and take the train into the city.

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Bernard has just come in with another bouquet for his mother. The two children pick daily bouquets which are gathered with loving care and then forgotten—wild carrot, wild onion, bay leaves, sassafras twigs, buttercups and daisies, Queen Anne's lace, clovers and the persisting honeysuckle.

From the open window by my side as I write, the smell of new cut grass is coming in from the field by the side of the house where Stanley is cutting. He has left the city streets and his apostolate of paper selling, has Stanley, and has become the guardian of the two small, colored boys for the week.

Today five little girls came down—Dorothy and Hattie, Louise, Bernice and Elinor. They, too, are Harlem children, and they don't need anyone to watch them, they said, because Dorothy is twelve and quite used to being guardian to three or four younger than herself.

The work in town calls, and one must go back and face evictions, court cases, hospital patients to visit, callers to see at the office and folders of letters which must be answered

# Chapter 41

## Day After Day - September 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, September 1935, 5.

*Summary: Describes the working conditions at a power plant and the indignity “clients” experience at the Welfare department. (DDLW #292).*

### Edison Plant

Distributing papers at the power house over in Brooklyn between four and five on a hot afternoon. The Hudson Avenue plant supplies all Queens, Brooklyn and lower Manhattan. It takes 700 men to work it and 680 are organized. At the offices of the Edison company there are 5000 working. There are in addition, seven district offices. For the actual generating of electricity there are two hundred in the plant. The men work in three shifts and some of them work eight hours straight and have no time off for eating. They eat while working. The mechanics work from eight to five and have an hour off for lunch. Before the men started the brotherhood of Edison Employees, the pay was \$23 to \$36. Now it is \$27 to \$46. The men are supposed to get a pension at 65 but usually long before this the pay is lowered to \$25 and the pension amounts to about \$7 a week. Or perhaps they get fired for mistakes.

While we distributed there was a steady roar of the machines in our ears which filled the air unbearably. The men work in the midst of this roar all the time. We could look out over the river while we waited for the men to dribble out of the plant, over a field of weeds, burdock, dandelion and grass growing cheerfully in the shade. There is a bend in the river right there and we watched the tugboats and the barges going by. The overhanging bridge was like poem. To one side there is a gantry.

This, one of the workers said proudly, is the largest generating plant in the world. They use coal to generate the electricity. The heat would melt the machinery so the men have to work practically in a refrigerating plant and in the hottest weather wear warm clothes!



## Welfare Dept.

Went with Margaret to the Welfare Dept. The waiting. room was small, and so crowded, by, nine thirty in the morning that fifteen people already were standing up. The investigators came out into this crowded room to interview their “clients.” It is hard to watch people trying to achieve some privacy, speaking behind cupped hands, their faces working. The investigators telling them to speak up. There are many children in the room underweight, pale and sad. It is hard to see grown people crying and young children with set sad faces terrified at the sight of adult despair.

There is a Negro there with crucifixes in her ears. A young girl with a trembling baby with an old white face. There is a strange contrast between the impassive faces of the investigators and the twisted anguished faces of those investigated.

# Chapter 42

## Day After Day - October 1935

*The Catholic Worker*, October 1935, 6.

*Summary: Shares some of the struggles of survival of the early Catholic Worker effort. Rejoices in the birth of a new baby in the community, for whom she and Peter Maurin will serve as godparents. Neighbors and friends have been generous to the Catholic Workers, presenting gifts from food to sacred images. Shares some intimate moments with her daughter, Tamar Teresa. (DDLW #293).*

K Travis, one of the girls in the Teresa-Joseph Cooperative, came in this morning and brought us two big cauliflower and the change from the dollar that bought them. We were deeply touched. It was a bit she made from house cleaning. The cauliflower we can make into a very good dish tonight, combining it with rice and cheese.

We have not bought meat around here since Lent, but we have eaten it, since a Brooklyn friend, Helen McCormick sends over cases of Home Relief Beef every now and then. Sometimes it is very good indeed, and sometimes it tastes like the cattle had gone hungry and thirsty a long time. Margaret is always trying combinations of stews, cooking it with kale from the country, cabbage, plain potatoes, noodles, etc., for our one big meal of the day. Breakfast and lunch both consist of cereal and coffee.

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During this past month a new Catholic Worker baby has arrived. Now there is Teresa, Barbara, Christopher and Damien, nine, one and a half, one year, and the last is now just three weeks old. We went to the Christening Sunday night, P. Maurin and D. Day godparents, and afterwards part of the fun of the feast was to see what was in the house to eat. A can of corn, a can of peas, one slice of bacon apiece, tomatoes, cheese, fruit and coffee made a regal repast, prepared and set on the table by the men while the women discussed babies and diets, etc. The guests were rather conscience stricken at eating up everything in the house, there being no money in the Catholic Worker community. But the new mother comforted all with the assurance that there was fruit and oatmeal in the house which would do for breakfast, lunch and supper the next day. It was a joyful occasion, baby slept like a log

through the christening, just shooting out his fists at the priest now and then (here's where he gets accused of being anti-clerical) and the supper was enhanced by a fine symphony coming over the radio, and the playing of Heifetz. An occasion such as this holds just about the truest, happiest one can ever know in this life. Thank God for this newest Catholic Worker who may some day be heading a farming commune in this storm-tossed country.

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Mrs. de Aragon presented the office with a most gorgeous tapestry of Christ the King, three feet by six, I should say – the copy of a tapestry which hangs in a French cathedral painted by herself. It now graces the office and we feel rich in these specimens of the handiwork of our gifted friends. We now have a magnificent statue of St. Anthony, the one which the Cardinal admired so much when it was exhibited several years ago, an oil painting of St. Anthony brought in by an anonymous friend of the paper in a taxi one early morning; a statue of our Blessed Mother, donated also by the de Aragons which has been blessed by one of the Holy Fathers and journeyed here from Rome, through Spain and South America; a statue of St. Joseph brought to us by Father Dougherty of his parish; a wall piece of Our Lady and the Child, designed by Ade Bethune, and executed in carpet by Lawrence Doyle; and there are also designs and drawings of Ade Bethune who, with Peter Maurin, ranks in the minds of the Catholic Workers as the genius of this concern.

## The Month Passes

Went down to the country today to see Teresa and we went walking through the country roads where the fallen leaves were thickest and she could scuff through them. Fall has a special smell which we welcome each year – the smell of burning leaves, or rotting apples, of concord grapes. In the city there is the smell of roasting chestnuts on the street corners, and through the Italian sections, the smell of fermenting wine.

Teresa was filled with the small chatter so dear to a mother's ears. About the feud between the day students and the boarders and how the boarders are going to be real good and show them; how Mother Chiarini is going to have a feast day; how one little girl there has a father and mother abroad; how music lessons are progressing.

It is a dear little school, Teresa's St. Patrick's Academy, nestled down in Richmond, in the center of Staten Island. There is a spirit of simplicity and poverty there, and it makes us happy to go there and visit the tiny chapel and say a few prayer while we wait for Teresa. Down one road there is a bakery from whence comes the warm filling smell of baking. Teresa visited there with Mother Chiarini last week and it was a wonderful place with a baker flinging a huge wad of dough over his shoulder and wielding a knife as big as a scimitar. . . Up another hill is a tall hill with a light house on top of it. Down another road there is an expanse of low land, fading into Arthur Kill. There are woods and fields and hills and the children go for long walks. There is but a patch of land with the convent so they take the country side for their roaming. It is good to walk, to pause in the turmoil of our lives to

collect leaves, the seed pods of the gum trees, the mitten leaves of the sassafras, and to try to locate the sleepy crickets, singing in little rock gardens by the side of the path.

## Chapter 43

# Day by Day / The Rural Life Conference

*The Catholic Worker*, November 1935, 3.

*Summary: Describes a trip to a meeting of the Catholic Rural Life Conference and hopes the movement will revolutionize Catholic thought in America as Lenin's did in Russia. Notes the Catholic Worker's support of such means as adult education, study clubs, forming co-operatives, and propagandizing. (DDLW #294).*

In reading the life of Lenin written by his widow, we were very much impressed some time ago at her account of what she terms a memorable meeting which was held in Paris one Sunday afternoon. Lenin had been living in exile all over Europe and gathering groups together wherever he could. It was just before the Russian revolution, and the meeting that took place was made up of some *forty people*.

We thought of that meeting of the people who were so soon to revolutionize a huge country and influence the thought of the entire world, while we attended the meeting last month of the Rural Life Conference in Rochester, New York. Considering the size of most gatherings, religious and political, that meeting was small. There were probably under a thousand people there, but among those people were leaders of Catholic thought in America, and their findings and the work which will result from those findings will probably, over a greater space of time perhaps, do much to revolutionize Catholic thought in America.

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Selections from the printed speeches that were available are reproduced elsewhere in this issue of THE CATHOLIC WORKER which is dedicated to rural life and cooperatives. Soon all the speeches delivered at the conference will be available in printed form, and will make a valuable pamphlet on the rural life movement among Catholics in America.

One of the speeches which was not available was that of Father James J. Tompkins, parish priest of Reserve Mines, Nova Scotia. He told of the co-operative movement in Nova Scotia,

how it began with adult education and study clubs and proceeded to the actual work of establishing consumers' and producers' co-operatives.

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Father Tompkins is an old friend of THE CATHOLIC WORKER and we recall the time when he visited New York a year ago, and he and Peter Maurin started a conversation at two o'clock in the afternoon which proceeded for twelve hours. It is true that it was interrupted by a meeting that evening (it was on a Sunday and Peter was due at a gathering in Brooklyn) but Father Tompkins was so interested in the talk he and Peter were having that he proceeded to the meeting with his guest and they returned afterward to continue discussing until early the following morning.

In his talk at the Rural Life Conference, Father Tompkins called attention to the article, "Bourgeois Colleges" which appeared in the October Issue of THE CATHOLIC WORKER.

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Unfortunately the program was prepared too early to include a talk by Peter Maurin, but in addition to many discussions with the leaders of the movement, he was able to hold several meetings after the conference. He also spoke to Nazareth College where the Sisters of St. Joseph teach.

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Dan Connolly, one of the Catholic workers from New York, got to the conference by hitchhiking and returned to New York on a truck, the ride being arranged by members of the Campion Propaganda Committee of Rochester.

The latter committee which entertained the members of the Catholic Worker staff while they were in Rochester, has just been recently formed. There are four members now, all of them extremely active, distributing the paper, speaking before schools and organizations, and organizing study clubs throughout the diocese which will deal with sociological problems.

The Committee is made up of John Lennon, Martin Rooney, Barry Wilson and John Fox. Anyone in Rochester who wishes to participate in the work can get in touch with them through the Columbus Civic Center.

Summary: Includes reflections on life of Lenin as related by his wife. Tells a little of the Sept. 1935 of the Rural Life Conference in Rochester, New York. Day writes of Father James J. Tompkins of Reserve Mines, Nova Scotia, and his cooperative movements there. She relates more than 12-hour discussion the year before, which Fr. Tompkins had with Peter Maurin.

Relates founding members of Campion Propaganda Committee of Rochester, including John Lennon, Martin Rooney, Barry Wilson, and John Fox.

# Chapter 44

## Liturgy and Sociology

*The Catholic Worker*, December 1935, 4.

*Summary: Distinguishes between individuals in society and persons in society. The former are isolated monads who are “weak and adrift”, the latter are a part of a body, (the Body of Christ) which draw strength from each other. The liturgy teaches this unity, which is indispensable for social regeneration. (DDLW #16).*

The age of individualism, laissez faire industrialism and self-seeking capitalism is dead and gone. Embers of the charred structure built up by the Protestant Revolution remain but it is nevertheless as dead as a doornail. Men are beginning to realize that they are not individuals but *persons* in society, that man alone is weak and adrift, that he must seek strength in common action.

The Mystical Body of Christ is a union – a unit – and action within the Body is common action. In the Liturgy we have the means to teach Catholics, thrown apart by Individualism into snobbery, apathy, prejudice, blind unreason, that they ARE members of one body and that “an injury to one is an injury to all.”

What of the success of Nazis, Communists and Fascists who have been only too successful in making clear the idea that they are bound together with a common philosophy and a common purpose? We must recognize the fact that many Nazis, Marxists and Fascists believe passionately in their fundamental rightness, and allow nothing to hinder them from their goal in the pursuit of their mission.

Our faith is stronger than death, our philosophy is firmer than flesh, and the spread of the Kingdom of God upon the earth is more sublime and more compelling. We Catholics must pray, act and sacrifice together for Christ the King, for the spread of His Kingdom and the salvation of the world. We Catholics, together, can conquer the world.

The Liturgy, then, is common worship, corporate worship, worship in one mind and with one heart, and with one mouth. Our common action in the Sacrifice of the Mass, impersonal, anti-individualistic is the best weapon against the world.

“Pius X tells us that the liturgy is the indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.

“Pius XI tells us that the true Christian spirit is indispensable for social regeneration.



“Hence the conclusion: The Liturgy is the indispensable basis of Christian social regeneration.”

PRAYER FOR PEACE AND UNITY

O Lord Jesus Christ, who said to Thy Apostles, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you”; look not upon my sins, but the faith of Thy Church; and vouchsafe to grant her peace and unity according to Thy will: Who livest and reignest, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Chapter 45

# Day by Day Account of Editor's Travels Thru West and North

*The Catholic Worker*, December 1935, 1, 2.

*Summary: Tells of a long bus trip and talks in New York, Chicago, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Canada. Is impressed with the work of Virgil Michel at St. John's College in Minnesota where he has started a school of social studies—"the theory of the personalist revolution must be studied." (DDLW #295).*

\*\* Large Audiences Testify to Widespread Interest in Paper; Campion Groups are Formed.  
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Started on a long trek west early on a Sunday morning. The bus was packed and just across from me were two Russians. I know their nationality by the fact that they were breakfasting on black bread soaked in vodka. They poured the liquor carefully on their bread and ate with gusto, and having finished this appetizer, they proceeded to consume smoked salmon on onion rolls and dill pickles. The smell was delightful. (I mean it, too.)

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An outstanding example of personal responsibility and hospitality which we found in Rochester was Mrs. L.A. Weider. She lives on the outskirts of the town, in Brighton, and told us with enthusiasm of the hundreds of quarts of berries she picked this summer from her few acres, the jars of beans, etc., she was able to do up.

She has always gone on the principle that what one had, one must share. She has six children, and a few grand children, and she has recently adopted another child. She has gone in for hospitality in a big way, and she hereby invites any and all of the Catholic Workers to stay with her whenever they are in Rochester or passing through.

"Even if I have to sleep on the floor myself," she said, "And many a time I've done it. We've had this house for nine years, but before that we had very little space and we often had to give up our beds to others."

Mrs. Weider is aiming to pay The Catholic Worker a visit in New York and spend all her time cooking for us. Just yesterday, she said, she cooked three turkeys and a great dinner for a church affair, and she would like nothing better than to arrange a menu for the Catholic Worker community.

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Traveled all day from Rochester to Cleveland. The grape country through New York state is beautiful and one rest stop by the side of a brook was memorable for its beauty. There was a delicious silence after the constant noise of travel, and it was a silence only broken by the tinkling of the little stream over pebbles as it made its way through the vineyards.

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In Cleveland I was shaken out of my bed by the earthquake. The hotel I put up in right near the bus terminal was a tall narrow one and I was on the top floor. I was awakened by a fearful clattering of the windowpanes, the truly terrible noise of the elevator cables clanging, and the smaller but just as ominous a noise of coat hangers clashing together in the closet. The whole hotel rocked as though it were in a high wind, and from all the rooms terrified occupants rushed out in their night clothes, all the way down into the lobby. If it had not been for the distraction offered by "Out of the Whirlwind" by Wm. Joseph Walsh, an engrossing novel, I should have been hard put to it for the rest of the night to sleep. As it was I stayed up until three reading and then was able to fall asleep. Many of the theatrical people staying in the hotel remained up over night, afraid to go back to bed.

Mass at St. John's cathedral in the morning – All Saints Day.

In Chicago the next night just long enough to sleep, and assist at a six o'clock mass at St. Mary's. The bus left at 7:30 and the trip through the lake country was delightful. I saw cabins chinked with plaster, one of them with the cooking utensils hanging on the outside as in Mexico.

A group of students from the Newman club who make up the Campion Propaganda committee of that section met me late in the evening when we pulled in and put me up over night. Spoke the next morning at St. Paul's Seminary where Mr. Neudecker has long been a Catholic worker. These young men will be priests who have rural parishes all through the north here, and we pray that they will further the rural life movement.

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Leaving St. Paul the next morning the rain turned to snow which continued all day, making the roads slippery and skiddy. The bus had to proceed slowly and we enjoyed the stormy

trip. A young man sat next to me, Francis Sullivan by name, who was going out to North Dakota to work on the power lines. We conversed on *The Catholic Worker* and its aims. The bus took on and let off farmers clad in mackinaws, high boots and pull down caps.

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Late at night we arrived at Grand Forks, North Dakota, where Father Arrell met me and took me to the hospital of the Sisters of St. Joseph, where I met with kind hospitality. I spoke the next evening at the town hall, where a dozen Communists enlivened the meeting by many questions, most of them dealing with fascism and the united front. The Newman Club of the University of North Dakota sponsored this meeting, and some of the young men there have formed themselves into a Campion group. Among the seven there is one Philippine boy, which makes twenty-three nationalities among us.

Father Arrell, who teaches ethics in the university, has long done splendid work among the students, circulating weekly leaflets and sponsoring a drama group which puts on a Passion play every year. This year they are going to have two companies, one of them touring the state. Last year seventy people took part, fifteen of them making up a Capella choir. It is a hobby of Father Arrell to collect Passion plays.

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Set out at 11:30 o'clock that night to reach Winnipeg at four the next morning, where Mrs. Jordan and daughter, Father Mac-Isaac and Mr. Tonkin, head of the lecture bureau, met me at that early hour. A great deal of distribution of *The Catholic Worker* has already been done among the workers in this city during the past six months, and a Campion group is formed here for distribution of leaflet and for propaganda work.

While in Winnipeg I was the guest of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, who have done much pioneer work through the Northwest.

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St. John's College, in Minnesota, is a most impressive place. The monastery is the largest in the world, sending out missionaries all over the country. I was the guest of Father Virgil Michel there and yesterday morning he showed me all over the place. It started with just a few monks and now they have a tremendous plant. We visited the kitchens, where the German Franciscan nuns take care of the needs of the community and college; the flour mill, where the grain from their own acres is ground; the butcher shop and the herds of steers and pigs, and barns where there are eighty cows; and the Liturgical press, which we make good use of back in New York. I spoke there to the students, seminarians and faculty, and they want Peter Maurin to come out and spend a week with them.

## Social Studies

Father Virgil has started a school of social studies at St. John's which takes up such subjects as war and peace, the state, labor and money. Since, as Lenin says, there can be no revolution without a theory of revolution, we hold it equally true that the theory of the personalist revolution must be studied in order that the ideas may be disseminated all over the country. And men will act according to the way they think and their thinking will be influenced by the teachers who come from St. John's.

St. Benedict's College for Women is just four miles away, and there I met our old friend Bishop Busch and was very happy to see him again. I visited the department where Gothic vestments are made and the sisters promised to contribute to our needs when we have our farming commune started and are able to build a chapel. The sisters here are also very appreciative of the work of Peter Maurin; I was able to promise them a visit from him in February.

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Right now I am in Minneapolis, where we have long had many friends. Tomorrow I shall set out for La Crosse, where there is a conference of the editors of college papers and where I will meet David Host from Marquette, who spent a month with us last summer in New York, and Nina Polcyn, who accompanied us to the scene of the Bremen riot and who fled with me down the street when the police were cracking heads in all directions.

## Home Again

The above copy was sent back but did not arrive in time for the November issue of the paper.

To complete the story of the trip I talked about The Catholic Worker, its aims and purposes in La Crosse, Milwaukee, Niagara falls, Ottawa and Montreal before arriving back in New York. There were friends everywhere and many of these friends were anxious to associate themselves with the Campion Propaganda Committee and help the paper in the communities in which they lived.

Not the least interesting part of the trip was the bus-riding and the friends made during the long fifteen-hour trips from city to city.

Between Cleveland and Chicago there was a Negro friend who had been raised in St. Mark's parish, New York, and was moving to Chicago, where he had no friends. "He had been a Catholic," he said. And that he might still be a Catholic, we passed him on in Chicago to Dr. Falls, our Midwest correspondent.

Then in Canada there was that copper miner on his way through from Saskatchewan to Nova Scotia, and we talked of co-operatives, and the Catholic philosophy of labor, and he asked that the paper be sent to him and to friends back in Winnipeg.

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