

Articles on War and Pacifism

Dorothy Day

The Catholic Worker, Various issues of the Catholic Worker

Summary: Various articles by Dorothy Day on war, pacifism, and the Catholic Worker positions on making peace. (DDLW #563).

[“Our Country Passes from Undeclared War to Declared War; We Continue Our Christian Pacifist Stand”](#) DOC #868, Score = 80

Summary: A month after Pearl Harbor she reaffirms the gospel basis of pacifism. Says she will not be carping in her criticism of our country but refuses to participate in war. Recommends constant prayer, the works of mercy, and mutual forbearance in disagreements.

[“Pacifism”](#) DOC #215, Score = 82

Summary: Outlines The Catholic Worker pacifist position: opposition to class war, imperialist war, and war preparations. Calls for the courage to disarm. “It takes a man of heroic stature to be a pacifist and we urge readers to consider and study pacifism and disarmament in this light.”

[“Why Do the Members of Christ Tear One Another?”](#) DOC #390, Score = 80

Summary: Protesting against a journalist’s assertion that they are sentimentalists in their pacifism and afraid of suffering, she challenges her critics to spend time in the city slums where Catholic Workers regularly battle the realities of disease, poverty, filth, cold, foul smells, etc. Quoting Dostoevsky, she assures her readers that Catholic Workers were not sanctimonious but approached their work with true humility and love. Notes with irony that pacifism, while not popular with society as a whole, was the philosophy which society wished to impose on the poor and disenfranchised victims of America’s class war. Rejects the suggestion that they should remain silent.

[“Catholic Worker Positions”](#) DOC #519, Score = 78

Summary: A concise restatement of the Catholic Worker philosophy emphasizing personal responsibility, a decentralized society, direct action, houses of hospitality, a revolution from below, and pacifism.

[Our Stand](#) DOC #360, Score = 78

Summary: Reasserts their pacifist stand and opposes the use of force in the labor movement, in class struggle, and struggles between countries. Quotes Catholic theologians and Popes. Repeats that God’s Word is Love and that using only non-violent means is indeed “the Folly of the Cross.” Doubts that the conditions for a “just war” can be met in these times.

[“The Use of Force”](#) DOC #306, Score = 78

Summary: Argues that Christians should not take up arms in the Spanish Civil War. Points to Christ, the Apostles, and martyrs whose willingness to suffer led to victory. Opposes the Communist cry to use force. Prays “give us the courage to suffer.” Keywords: pacifism, non-violence.

[“In Peace Is My Bitterness Most Bitter”](#) DOC #250, Score = 78

Summary: Expresses her anguish over the works of war in Vietnam, which are the opposite of the works of mercy. She is upset with churchmen calling for “total victory,” and notes that the Church is our Mother even though “she is a harlot at times.” Calls on each person to work on changing their hearts and attitude.