

Fall Appeal - October 1970

Dorothy Day

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Summary: Appeals for funds saying, "All small gifts add up, and we surely need them" Mentions the death of two catholic workers and anticipates a two-month trip around the world noting she has seen the poor of the world—"literally." (DDLW #930).

The Catholic Worker
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Dear Readers of the Catholic Worker:

This is the way I remember you in my prayers daily. For you, and for all who break bread with us, the poor, the sick, the unwanted, the prisoners; and for all of you who answer our appeals for help to keep the work going, year after year. All small gifts add up, and we surely need them.

At the farm at Tivoli there is a population of about fifty, and though the crops are good and plenty of fine vegetables, there are heavy expenses of taxes, utilities, laundry, flour for bread and so on. In town we have run our bread bill up at times to \$900 before our East Side baker gets impatient for payment. We pay for our beans, peas, lentils which thicken our soup, into which goes meat stock and all the fresh vegetables we can beg. We even are given hundreds of little cups of yogurt each week to feed the soup-line, which is growing longer and longer - usually there are about 300 meals served daily. A community means more than a houseful now; it also means neighbors and guests and wanderers from coast to coast.

There have been some deaths in our group since I last wrote. The latest is Italian Mike, who presided for years at the mailing-out table (a group of devoted volunteers mail out 85,000 copies of the C.W. each month). He sat because he could not walk, what with his ulcerated legs. When he could walk he fetched our bread and our fish from as far as twenty city blocks away, in an old baby carriage made into a cart. When he swept the sidewalk in front of our house, he swept also the two adjoining sidewalks. He knew all the neighbors. He died with loving friends visiting him each day at Bellevue.

But Fred died in a bar, visiting his friends on the Bowery. He had worked long with us on the farm. When I shared a room with old Agnes (who died a few years ago), he used to bring us coffee on a tray (the life of Riley, Agnes called it), and he cut her tangled hair when she was too feeble to do it herself, shampooed it too. We have seen unbelievable tenderness shown to the sick, the old and the dying, by “the undeserving poor.” Agnes herself once shared her room with three others, one of them a girl expecting a baby. “She cries in the night,” Agnes said.

I will be writing about the two-month speaking trip which is taking me literally around the world, paid for by priests in Australia who have known our work since World War II, when they visited all our houses of hospitality as they crossed the U.S. on their way home. Literally, I have seen the poor of the world, the aborigines of Australia, the poor of Hong Kong, of Calcutta, of Africa where Julius Nyerere, Catholic president of Tanzania, has nationalized land and, with an Israeli Peace Corps, is studying the formation of communes like the Kibbutzim. There are great and noble men in the world today, and they write, thank God, for those who read. Men like Dom Helder Camara in Brazil, Jayaprokash Narayan in India, and Ved Mehta and the editors of such journals as *Resurgence*, *Manas* *Peacemaker*, *Savadaya*—who give another view of history and economics, and man and his capacities. My trip is a two months’ long one, but I will be back in New York by the time you get this letter.

With love and gratitude for the help you give us,

Dorothy Day