

CATHOLIC  WORKER

The Peaceable Kingdom

There are many things that I've been thinking about during the last five months living here at Giuseppe Conlon House, as I think about my imminent return to my home-country of Canada in December.

First, I think about the strange skill set of a Catholic Worker. One needs to know a thing or two about cooking, cleaning and "moving stuff around" (as Martin puts it—an endless task in the Catholic Worker as supplies and donations are moved hither and yon). It's also good to know how to turn discarded real-estate advertisement signs into low-cost protest banners, or how to repair a toilet. And beyond these concrete skills there lies a whole set of less tangible ones—how to appear nonthreatening and welcoming for hours on end to one's roomful of eclectic guests, for example, or how to engage with a wide array of people who may all have clear but quite different ideas about propriety and respect. Such tangible and intangible skills, along with many more, are required to carry out the Corporal Works of Mercy (feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and imprisoned, bury the dead) that are a core part of the Christian vision and of the Catholic Worker as a special odd beautiful expression of that vision.

A whole other set of necessary Catholic Worker skills that I've been pondering involves balancing items from the list of Spiritual Works of Mercy (instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, admonish sinners, bear wrongs patiently, forgive offenses willingly, comfort the afflicted, pray for the living and the dead) with the special strange demands of Catholic Worker community life. Any community life—indeed, any permanent or temporary gathering of humans—requires a degree of care and consideration, as we humans are sensitive, touchy (*cont p4*)

Red as Poppies

"Now after John was arrested." And then Jesus went proclaiming the Good News, calling for repentance, change. Those first words of our Gospel reading today struck me hard. I'll come back to that.

On this Remembrance Sunday, we remember all the victims of war, those who died and were killed, especially in the world wars of the 20th century. We pay our respects, and we do respect the sacrifices that were made. And those too who continue to suffer – in Syria, Afghanistan, Congo, Palestine – the litany goes on. "At the setting and the rising of the sun, we will remember them" – and pray for them.

I was asked to speak about our work, our peace activism. Of course, our work includes that which happens here at Peter's Community Café with those who are hungry, homeless, or street drinkers in Hoxton and Dalston, or depressed or lonely – as well as those who just want to relax and have a cup of coffee or maybe some homemade soup and toast. Elsewhere, (*Cont p2*)



Giuseppe Conlon House, by Sarah Fuller

INSIDE:

p3 The Slow Crucifixion of Bradley Manning and Julian Assange
p4 Easy Essay by Peter Maurin
p5 Becoming a Personalist
p6&7 'A Catholic Worker Primer'

p8 Christian Anarchism, Part 4

p9 "Love of Brother" - Dorothy Day

p9 "Dorothy Day—Selected Writings" - for sale

p10 LCW NEWS

p10 DVD for Sale: "Fool for Christ" - about D Day

p11 Diary Dates & Standing Order form

London Catholic Worker:

We are: Angela Broome, Simon Watson, Henrietta Cullinan, Chris Goodchild, Scott and Maria Albrecht, Martin Newell, Soo Tian Lee, Sean O'Malley, Ciaron O'Reilly, Mirjam Johansson, Liz & John Hamblett, Sarah Fuller, Rebeka,

Dorothy Day House

16 De Beauvoir Road,
De Beauvoir Town, London N1 5SU
Tel: 020 7249 0041 Email:
londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk
We are: Dan Viesnik

Giuseppe Conlon House

49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG
Tel: 020 8348 8212 Email:
londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk
Dorothy Day House and Giuseppe Conlon House offer hospitality to destitute refugees, mainly men. We run Peter's Community Café and the Urban Table Soup Kitchen. We organise regular non-violent resistance, and produce this newsletter.

We are: Martin Newell, Sean O'Malley, Ciaron O'Reilly, Sarah Fuller

Catholic Worker Farmhouse:

Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Road,
West Hyde, Herts, WD3 9XJ
Tel: 01923 777 201 Email:
thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk
We are: Scott & Maria Albrecht and family, Mirjam Johansson, Rebeka,

The Farmhouse offers hospitality to destitute women. We vigil regularly at the nearby Northwood Joint Forces Military HQ. We also grow organic vegetables and have a poustinia.

Maryhouse also offers a home to four destitute women with children.

Peter's Community Café:

Open Mon-Weds 1pm-4.00pm
The Crypt, St Peter's Church,
Northchurch Terrace, De Beauvoir
Town, N1 5AT Tel: 020 7249 0041

Urban Table Soup Kitchen:

Open Sun. 2.30pm-4.30pm
The Old School Rooms, The Round
Chapel, Powerscroft Road, Hackney,
London E5 OPU

Peter's Cafe and the Urban Table are both attempts to imitate Jesus' practice of sharing his table with all comers. At the Café in particular we also hope to offer a space to build bridges between the disparate groups and individuals in our local community, as well as welcoming activists.

Anti-Copyright For Action

2

RED AS POPPIES *(from p1)*

in our houses, we live and work with destitute refugees. But I was asked about our attempts to "remember." Because to remember means to learn the lessons of history, since as it is said, "to be ignorant of history is to be doomed to repeat it." And the most important event in history, from which we as Christians are to learn, is the life of Jesus.

We as Catholic Workers are very aware of the words of Jesus when he said, "Love your enemies...pray for those who persecute you." We are aware that Jesus said "Put away your swords, your weapons." That when he was threatened with arrest and violence and murder and execution, he preferred to sacrifice himself than to sacrifice others in defence of himself or his cause – even though it was the most important cause ever – the Kingdom of God – as we heard him preaching in today's Gospel reading. Catholic Workers are also very aware that Jesus said about war: "when you hear of war and rumours of war, do not be frightened...refuse to join them... they will come using my name, deceiving you." They are not acting in his name – not in his name!

That is why, on October 7th last year, the 10th Anniversary of the invasion of Afghanistan, we went to Downing Street to remember the victims of the invasion by the UK, USA and other countries. We went and knelt in front of the gates to Downing Street, blocking entry to it, and poured out red paint in the street, as red as the poppies worn by so many today, to represent the blood of the innocent that is poured out daily on the streets of Afghanistan. We read out the names of the dead – Afghani, British, American.

For our act of remembrance we were arrested and spent the day in police cells. Two of us were fined. The bailiffs are threatening to come round and take stuff away, as we continue our conscientious objection by refusing to pay the fine. This is what conscientious objection to war, what Jesus called "not being afraid" of war and "refusing to join them", "proclaiming the Kingdom of God", looks like today. In an age of high tech warfare, of nuclear weapons and unmanned drones, they don't need our young men to go and fight wars, only our silence and our taxes. So by our voluntary poverty and simplicity, and our non-violent direct action, we withdraw our consent, our silence and our taxes for war. That's why we have been arrested many times and occasionally been in prison. Personally I've probably been arrested about 20 times and spent about 8 months in prison, all in.

In doing these things, we follow the example of John the Baptist – who in today's Gospel was arrested, then later imprisoned and executed. We follow the example of Jesus, and St Peter and St Paul – and so many other saints, prophets and heroes down the ages, who have been arrested and imprisoned. Many, like John the Baptist, were executed for opposing the state – the way things are – for refusing to go along with war. In this country these days, we live comfortable lives, off the fat of the land exploiting the whole world – so the worst they'll do is put you in prison.

This is what we believe Christians are called to do in this time and place. As someone said to me, who is quite conservative actually, "every Christian should get arrested at least once in their lives for something they believe in." This is what it means to follow Jesus, who is God Incarnate, Messiah – and prophet too. Christians are baptised "priest, prophet and king," in imitation of Jesus: so we are called to prophetic witness in our society. We heard in today's first reading about the prophet Jonah, who went to one of the world's greatest cities, Nineveh, and confronted the powerful and called for repentance. And we live here in London, in one of the world's greatest cities.

And maybe like Jonah, we will be successful – people will repent and change their ways – and then say, "What you were talking about – the disasters you said would happen never did". Or as more often happens, people don't listen, and they will say, "I don't know why you bother, you can't change anything." You can see why protestors – like Jonah – get depressed: you're damned if you do and damned if you don't. We follow a long line of prophets and protest.

These are the reasons why we stand on street corners with banners and placards and leaflets, outside army recruitment offices in Dalston, drones manufacturers offices near Liverpool Street, the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall and military bases in Northwood and elsewhere. Some say it's a waste of time. For example, after all these anti-nuclear protests, we've still got nuclear weapons. But I'd say – at least we haven't had the disaster that threatened – and that's a success. These are our acts of remembrance, of learning the lessons of history. To live, work and witness, so that there will be no more war or preparations for war, no more killing: especially not in God's name.

Based on a sermon by Fr Martin Newell, St Peter de Beauvoir Church, Remembrance Sunday 2012.

Readings:

Jonah 3:3-5:10

Heb 9:24-28

Mark 1:14-20

The Slow Motion Crucifixion of Manning and Assange

We are back in front of the U.S. embassy Grosvenor Square London. It is huge, taking up an entire city block, its Golden Eagle sculpture astride the building looks ready to strike against any dissent to Pax Americana, armed police patrol the perimeter. We are standing in line stretched out confronting the edifice with our message "Free Bradley Manning!" It is Bradley's 900th. day in custody since being arrested in Baghdad, tortured in Quantico and now going through the pre-trial motions of his military tribunal at Ft. Meade, Maryland. Somewhere along the line we adopted the discipline that whenever they take Bradley to court, we would go to the streets. Others have gathered today in solidarity at the gates of Ft. Meade and in the military courtroom itself. As we maintain a disciplined silence, the audio of the collateralmurder.com video is played aloud on the amp we have dragged into town on the tube – the audio the U.S. state tried to suppress and is presently seeking revenge on Bradley Manning and Julian Assange for making it known.

All the war-making state desires from civil society in order to carry out such crimes in these days is disengagement, silence and sedation. They no longer require popular support to wage their wars that are increasingly undeclared, robotic and constant background muzac. All we are asked to do in these times at the centre of empire is to avert our gaze from the killing on the extremities of empire. Bradley and Julian are accused of offending this arrangement. WikiLeaks put the realities of the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan and the daily machinations of empire before us. That is why Bradley and Julian remain in the crosshairs of empire.

This December will mark two years since Julian Assange was taken into custody in England. He has been detained two years without charge by a European Extradition Request issued by a police officer in Sweden. We accompanied Julian through all his dozen court appearances in London; from Horsferry to Woolwich to the High Court and the Supreme Court as he ran a gauntlet of character assassination and state harassment. Here we are outside the Ecuadorian embassy where we have managed to maintain a daily solidarity presence since Julian fled there 5 months ago. This is the latest stage on a 2 year sojourn. Five months in, Irish Tom and Chilean Clara are the mainstays of the daily solidarity presence. Clara lived through the U.S. sponsored coup in Chile as a nurse tending to torture victims, her husband detained for 2 years. She is aware that the British prosecutor of Julian Assange had defended Gen. Pinochet previously when he was fighting an extradition order in England from Spain. Tom crossed the water as a teenager many moons ago. He is aware that the solicitor defending Julian Assange is Gareth Peirce who

freed the Birmingham 6, the Guilford 4, Maguire 7 and other Irish set up on bogus charges. We stand silently confronting the diplomatic police surrounding the embassy waiting to arrest Julian should he emerge.



Above: vigil outside US Embassy, for Bradley Manning

There was a 24/7 solidarity presence maintained during the period before the granting of asylum when British Foreign Minister Hague was threatening to invade the embassy. The government has downsized the police presence since asylum was granted. The present cost of maintaining the siege is reported as £11,000 per day.

The way I look at it is that if you were one of the millions who marched against this war in 2003, you implicitly incited Bradley Manning, Julian Assange and others to seriously non-violently resist this war. Now that they are in legal jeopardy we have an obligation to accompany them in solidarity as the state places them in chains and confinement. As we stand in the light rain a block up from Harrods assuring Julian he is not forgotten or abandoned we do not know when and where this will end. Neither, it seems, do the cops. We regret the lack of courage and solidarity for Julian and Bradley of those who claim to be the peace movement and are reminded of the words of Fr. Daniel Berrigan SJ:

"We have assumed the name of peacemakers, but we have been, by and large, unwilling to pay any significant price. And because we want the peace with half a heart and half a life and will, the war, of course, continues, because the waging of war, by its nature, is total--but the waging of peace, by our own cowardice, is partial. So a whole will and a whole heart and a whole national life bent toward war prevail over the mere desire for peace..."

Daniel Berrigan

THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM (cont from p1)

and vulnerable creatures. When we stand together in crowds we try not to bump into each other unduly, when we converse we monitor each other for signs of agreement or anxiety. When we live together in biological families, we are vulnerable, and experience and foster nurture or destruction (or often, some combination of the two) as we interact with each other. In communities of people bound together by something different than or in addition to biological family, certain human vulnerabilities may not run as deep but others may be just as sensitive—certainly the needs of belonging, safety and respect apply to us as social creatures no matter what kind of strangely-constituted pack we find ourselves a part of.

Life in a community of other humans would be a piece of cake if only we and the people around us weren't so annoying and flawed. Sometimes the people around us (and we ourselves) are even dangerous, whether through intentional malice or (more often) through potent defence strategies we've developed in reaction to our own experiences of weakness that, unchecked or misapplied, cause carnage. That the danger of other humans is potentially real to our actually truly vulnerable human selves only adds to the difficulty of trying to find ways to live together.

So, considering that humans under ideal circumstances are annoying, touchy, difficult to get along with and sometimes even dangerous, how can we be together? It seems unlikely. But this brings me back again to the list of Spiritual Works of Mercy. I think that one aspect of being able to live well in a community—any community, biologically bound or not—involves balancing and wisely applying the different Spiritual Works of Mercy—which, the Catholic Encyclopaedia tells me, are obligatory for Christians anyways. Particularly, I am captured by the tensions inherent in seeking to apply “instructing the ignorant” and “admonishing sinners” alongside “bearing wrongs patiently” and “forgiving offences willingly.”

Personally, I much prefer instructing others on their sins and ignorance to being instructed myself. Christ captures and warns against this human preference when he says in the gospels, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ...You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.” He prefaces this with what is one of the most

sobering things written in the gospels: “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

In every place that I've lived, it has been a challenge to negotiate this tension. It's hard for me to tell the difference between the sincere desire for the spiritual growth and edification of another person and my own sense of hurt and anger at what I feel are other people's failures and weaknesses when they affect me personally. It should be easy to distinguish these things, but it isn't. And then having the self-discipline to limit my words and actions to a concern for the former instead of allowing them to seep satisfyingly—but ultimately poisonously—into the realm of the latter is another project entirely. It's a project that is so difficult that perhaps it can only be achieved supernaturally, through an appeal to God for the powers of grace, forgiveness and humility—things which I definitely have no great store of in myself.



The Lamb, Ade Bethune

Beloved Quaker artist Fritz Eichenberg, has produced a number of images on the theme of “The Peaceable Kingdom,” an image which is itself taken from a vision of the kingdom of God in Isaiah (11:1-9). Here, dangerous animals relax with their habitual prey, and natural enemies become peaceful companions. A baby plays with a viper. Robert Ellsberg sees in this image a picture of the community striven for and also sometimes encountered in the Catholic Worker itself, “with its wide diversity of personality types, ranging from lions to lambs.” The Catholic Worker indeed attracts many wild, exotic and wonderful creatures, and part of the joy of the movement is being able to exist among them for a while, even if none of them are, well, tame. The very unlikelihood of the menagerie is a crucial part of what makes it a sign of the kingdom of God, even if living peaceably, even as a special sign of divine peace, is a constant struggle against the natural inclinations of our own wild selves. There are only a few degrees of separation between a sword and a ploughshare, as we know from exercising the raw materials we find in our own personalities. It's difficult, usually fails, the road to it is littered with traps, and it requires more grace and discipline than I have naturally within myself, but I can still see that being a sign of peace—like those animals together on God's holy mountain—is a beautiful vocation—requiring the cultivation of a bizarre skill set but—mostly—requiring a lot of prayer.

By Sarah Fuller, Giuseppe Conlon House

Becoming One's Self (*becoming a personalist*)

Kant wrote that all of our philosophical inquiry could be summarized by three questions: "What can I know? What ought I to do? And what may I hope?" and I think that any worthwhile philosophy should be able to offer clear answers to all three. Emmanuel Mounier was French Catholic, who lived from 1905 to 1950. He was the child of peasants, like Peter Maurin; a philosophy prodigy at the Sorbonne, like Simone Weil; and accused of Stalinism, like some of the best of us.

Beginning with his diagnosis of modern times, he wrote that every value has been devalued... so that even the rôles of sanctity and heroism are played by glory and 'success', that of spiritual force by 'toughness'; where love is debased to eroticism, intelligence to intellectualism, reason to cunning, meditation to introspection, and the passion for truth reduced to the shallowest 'sincerities'. He blames much of this degradation on the modern systems – capitalism and socialism – which, although first created by humans have now come to determine and dominate us. As the objects of either of these systems - alienated from the ground up by capitalist premises, or manipulated from the top down by a socialist state - we are denied the chance to separate the personal from the political, and so have no hope of healthily combining the two later on.

Personalism, on the other hand, is not a compromise in the middle of that spectrum but a triangulating third option, a generative rather than reactionary stance, seeking to hold us accountable to the best version of ourselves. Mounier writes that one does not free someone by detaching him or her from the bonds that paralyze the soul; one frees a person by attaching him or her to their own destiny. I think that responsibility to strengthen what we know to be good, rather than try to destroy what we believe bad, is such an essential responsibility of anyone seeking to deliver good news, certainly of any Catholic Worker. The simplest and least romantic formulation of personalist civilization is one directed towards the development, as persons, of all the individuals constituting it, who have, as their ultimate end, to enable every individual to live as a person – to exercise a maximum of initiative, responsibility, and spiritual life. That's a pretty broad formulation of what it means to be a person, and, educated as I was to search for oppressive (or misogynist, or racist) intent in any such generalization, I'm naturally suspicious of it. But I can't find anything objectionable in his claim, and I'd really, really like to know if there are more productive definitions of what it means to be and become a person!

So how does one become ones self? Through leaving the safe but limiting prison cell of our own will - through doing our best to evacuate the ego, so that the space it leaves is filled by something less lonely and violent, more

sustaining. Mounier wrote that we have no authentic existence until we have an interior stronghold of devotion, against which we do not believe that the fear of death itself could prevail. I think that very quickly becomes the demand of Christianity: there should be no person that I would not die to protect. Mounier describes several methods of coming to know ones self, some of which are prayerful and internal, and some of which work through responsibility. It's interesting here to think of responsibility as literally being able to respond and communicate. He writes of a fearless generosity that we should all aspire to, a giving without measure and without hope of reward. It is only through that fearless generosity that we can dissolve the ego and annul the solitude of the subject. If I'm honest with myself, I think I am much more often on the receiving than the giving end of that sort of generosity, and it's really, really hard to take - I find it shamefully hard to accept real love. And on that subject, I think Mounier says something astonishing, and in its way generous: that generosity fails only in the face of certain resentments more mysterious than those of contrary interest, hatreds which seem to be directed against disinterestedness itself.

To be a person in Mounier's formulation, then, is to be defined not by what one earns, or consumes, or wills, or even by what one believes - but rather by what one loves. He wrote: the communion of love, in liberating him who responds to it, also liberates and reassures him who offers it. Love is the surest certainty that a person knows; the one irrefutable, existential cogito: I love, therefore I am. Through seeking at all times to love and revere the mysteriousness and divinity of the other, it's not that we abandon hope of understanding their individual gifts, needs and specificity; but that we first and foremost know that we will never know that person completely -- that their subjectivity is just as real, complicated, and valuable as our own. One of my favourite Mounier quotes, to that effect is, "the universe is full of men going through the same motions in the same surroundings, but carrying within themselves, and projecting around them, universes as mutually remote as



Giving Drink to the Thirsty

You're already on page four — it's high time for answers to the important questions not answered by the first three pages of this rag. Questions like, "What is this Catholic Worker thing, anyway?" And "Where do they get their funding, now that the Soviet Union has collapsed?" And "What won't they print to fill space in their newspapers?" But instead, we offer

A CATHOLIC WORKER PRIMER

AN EMBARRASSINGLY SKEWED OVERVIEW OF CATHOLIC WORKER BASICS [by Chuck Traphus]

WE START WITH HISTORY

since that seems to be everyone's worst subject.

In 1933, everyone was still Depressed from 1929, WWII (not a web address) was on its way, and NYC was a hotbed of homelessness, unemployment, and the occasional radical.

Enter Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin (sort of right, sort of wrong).

After two years of assorted classrooms at the University of Illinois,

Dorothy moved back to her native New York to take up with the wild Greenwich Village crowd and the likes of Eugene O'Neill. She wrote for commie papers, was arrested as a suffragette, and again as a radical, had an affair, an abortion, a short-term marriage, a motorcycle gang, a sex-change, and numerous other outrageous things, some of which I am making up. Her "common-law marriage" with Forster What's-His-Name ended when Dorothy converted to Catholicism and had their daughter Tamar baptized.

Peter Maurin was a couple decades older than Dorothy, the oldest of several dozen children in a peasant family from southern France. A former Christian Brother, he

had been arrested for vagrancy and again for hoboing, was into manual labor and Catholic social teaching and not bathing, and just couldn't stop talking. When Peter and Dorothy met in 1933, Peter's vision and Dorothy's typewriter collided to produce a radical Catholic newspaper. Peter wanted to call it The Catholic Radical (really) but Dorothy changed it to The Catholic Worker, no doubt unaware that one day Catholic Workers would note a common characteristic of many in the movement: "They're not Catholic and they don't work."

TIME FOR MATH

The paper went for a penny a copy — still does, despite some 67 years of inflation (and it remains the priciest of all CW papers at that). In 1933, the 2,500 copies cost \$57 to print. Figure it out. At 1¢ per, no ads, the Catholic Worker couldn't begin to pay for itself, and so began a proud tradition of insolvency that has energized and impoverished Catholic Worker Houses ever since.

Houses, you say??

Well, Peter's penchant for threes brought us:

- 1 Round Table Discussions
- 2 Houses of Hospitality
- 3 Farming Communes



as well as:

- 1 CULT,
- 2 CULTURE, and
- 3 CULTIVATION
- 1 PRAYER,
- 2 ACTION, and
- 3 SACRIFICE
- 1 LITURGY,
- 2 LITERATURE, and
- 3 AGRICULTURE
- 1 ROME,
- 2 REUNION, and
- 3 RECONSTRUCTION
- 1 BIG SHOTS,
- 2 LITTLE SHOTS,
- 3 HOT SHOTS

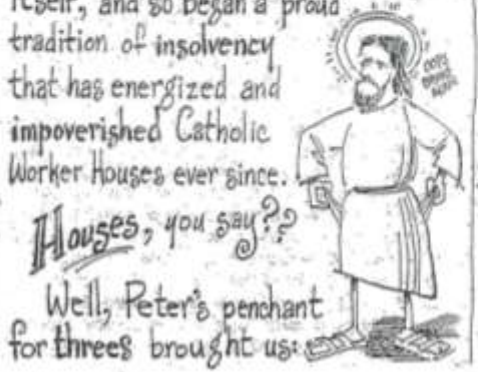
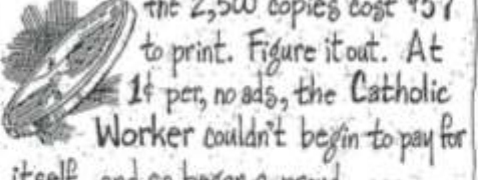
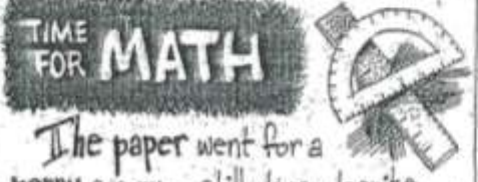
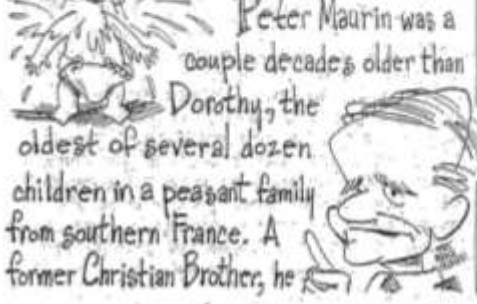
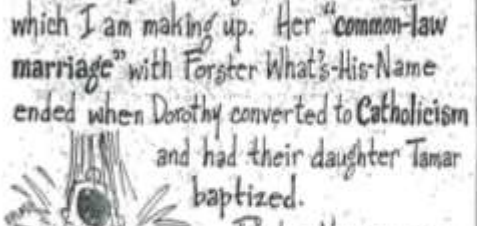
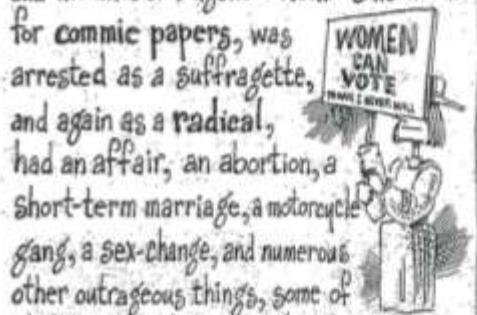
Of all these, houses of hospitality for the homeless, the transient, the unemployed, the hardcore Bohemians, seem the most accessible, and thus we have lots of 'em — maybe a hundred or more. Trouble is, some CW communities run more than one hospitality house, like, say, Milwaukee CW, which probably has their own suburb by now. Count each house separately and we can inflate our number most impressively. What do you think should the Milwaukee CW count as 1 or as 27?



Call them up at (414) 344-5745 and voice your opinion!

A LITTLE GEOGRAPHY NOW

Since the first CW house of hospitality burst on the NY scene, the movement has spread like bread mold. New houses



spring up like cockroaches at night; old ones vanish like coffee in a Catholic Worker pantry.

And cockroaches are not exclusive to the US. — that is, CW communities can be found in Canada, Mexico, England, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia, and North Carolina.

(There are none, as far as we know, in Vatican City.)

Of course, all these CWs are metric, and therefore smaller.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Big Idea behind the CW is

PERSONALISM: being personally responsible for everybody else's problems. The word comes from another French guy, Emmanuel Mounier, who would be shocked to see what craziness has been wrung out of that one little word.

Beyond that, the CW is one of the great indefinables of our time, like God or electricity or the Internet.

While many CWers run houses of hospitality, many others think they're CW snobs (in the most polite sense of the word) and embrace a broader vision of the CW as a "Green Revolution," "a society where it is easier to be good," "a path from where we are to where we should be," even as their "agronomic universities" are choking from too many weeds and not enough human contact. There are those in the movement who think pacifism is silly, or Catholicism

isn't much better than Satanism, or gardening is best left to migrant farm workers, or cartoons have no place in a respectable CW newspaper; and generally a few sour apples won't ruin the cider.

So when you hear that the CW condemns usury or supports unions or denounces computers or eats wilted turnip greens, know that the CW also possesses a stubborn anarchist streak, making generalizations impossible. (That doesn't stop some of us, however.)

If you say, for example, that Personalism prevents CWers from seeking tax-exempt status and operating with boards of directors and salaries and insurance programs, you would be right. But you would also be ignoring the couple dozen CW houses that have incorporated or are United Way agencies or are in the Fortune 500. After all, anybody can call themselves a Catholic Worker; there's no licensing or qualifying test or membership card.

In this way, the CW is like a big, somewhat dysfunctional family. Some of whose members have run off with the circus.

ART CLASS

Peter was big on a craft-based economy, — and he didn't mean refrigerator magnets and plywood lawn ornaments. We must stay connected with the work of our hands, avoid becoming industrial slaves, and write in short, Choppy,

Free-verse lines Like this. And read *Easy Essays*, by Peter Maurin. Which is all about envisioning a computer-free society, but since it was actually written before computers he had to use a lot of veiled, symbolic language. But it's

in there, trust me. Some CWers dip candles, some weave rugs, some bake bread, some carve spoons, and some answer the phone so others can do these things. Imagine basing an economy on this.

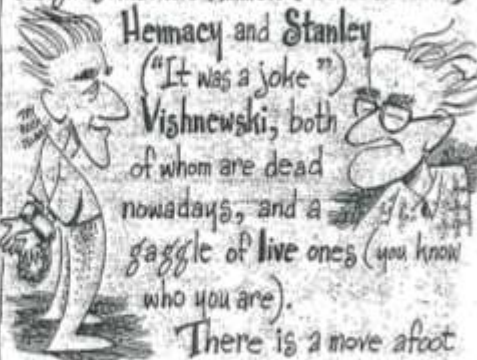
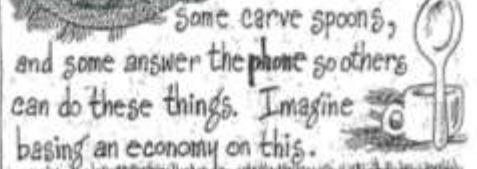
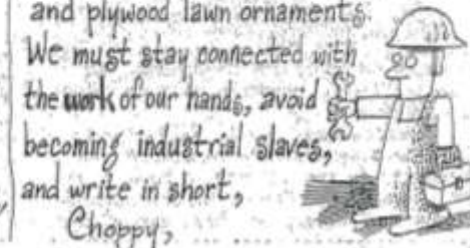
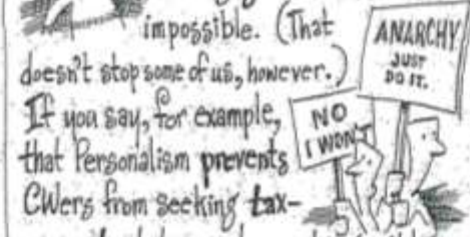
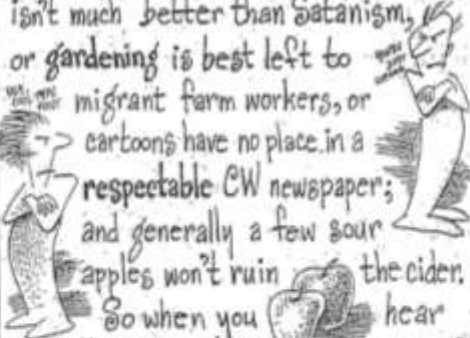
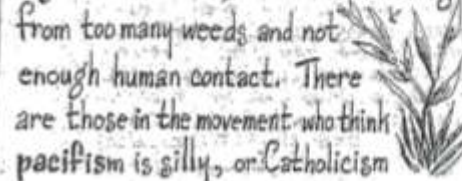
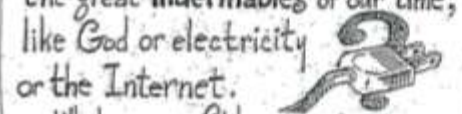
IS IT TIME FOR RECESS YET?

Peter died in 1949, Dorothy in 1980; we're on our own now. Other CW heavyweights include Ammon ("Arrest me") Hemacy and Stanley ("It was a joke") Vishnewski, both of whom are dead nowadays, and a gaggle of live ones (you know who you are).

There is a move afoot to canonize Dorothy, of all people, and when she gets wind of it she's going to spit her splenius, so to speak. It's not that her reading of banned books or her association with godless communists or her openness to women priests disqualifies her from the Saintly Honor. Rather, it's what Dorothy feared most:

-DISMISSAL-

Take away her radicalism, her selective "obedience" to church authority, her willingness to get arrested, her French peasant mentor and sidekick, and put this nice old lady way up on a pedestal in your dusty chapel and what have you got? Beats me, but please don't label it *The Catholic Worker*. Thank you. Class dismissed.



Christian Anarchism: A Revolutionary Reading of the Bible,

Part 4: Enslavement to the State

As to the state, Christian anarchists claim that it fails to live up to the very purpose that it claims to fulfil. That is, far from preserving justice and security, the state merely distorts injustice and perpetuates organised violence; and in doing so, far from safeguarding individual freedoms, it systematically imprisons its citizens by a clever mix of hypnotism, economic slavery and legitimised brutality – often with the blessing of the church. That, at least, is what Leo Tolstoy says in the various political essays that he published during the last thirty years of his life, after he converted to (his very idiosyncratic understanding of) Christianity. For him, the semblance of order achieved through the state is just as unjust as the disorder that it is supposed to save humanity from. The limited scope of this paper makes it impossible to summarise all the criticisms that Christian anarchists level against the state – but Tolstoy’s views are a good taster. Therefore, although much more can be found in some of the sources listed in the bibliography (including in Tolstoy), only part of Tolstoy’s specific critique of the state as modern slavery will be outlined here.

The line of argument is fairly simple: Tolstoy first notes that there are always disagreements within society about proposed laws, and this then implies that some form of – unchristian – coercion or threat of it will always be required in order to enforce any particular law. But for Tolstoy, “being compelled to do what other people wish, against your own will, is slavery.” Hence if violence must always be potentially called upon to enforce laws among defiant minorities, then all laws by definition amount to slavery. Moreover, for Tolstoy, the cloak of democracy does not in the least redress this fundamental injustice:

When among one hundred men, one rules over ninety-nine, it is unjust, it is a despotism; when ten rule over ninety, it is equally unjust, it is an oligarchy; but when fifty-one rule over forty-nine (and this is only theoretical, for in reality it is always ten or eleven of these fifty-one), it is entirely just, it is freedom!

Could there be anything funnier, in its manifest absurdity, than such reasoning? And yet it is this very reasoning that serves as the basis for all reformers of the political structure.

Tolstoy thus clearly does not consider democracy to escape from his criticism of law as amounting to slavery. Besides, as the parenthesis in this excerpt reveals, Tolstoy anyway does not believe that democracy is truly democratic: for him, it is driven by a small proportion of the population who impose their will upon the majority under a hypnotic presence of democratic legitimacy. Furthermore, on top of this legislative dimension of slavery, Tolstoy criticises the modern state for perpetuating a cunning form of economic slavery too. Tolstoy’s denunciation of his contemporary economic system in fact continues to ring true today:

If the slave-owner of our time has not slave John, whom he can send to the cess-pool to clear out his excrements, he has five shillings of which hundreds of Johns are in such need that the slave-owner of our times may choose anyone out of hundreds of Johns and be a benefactor to him by giving him the preference, and allowing him, rather than another, to climb down into the cess-pool.

Whereas physical violence was once needed to force slaves into carrying out degrading work, today’s more advanced economic system has so successfully transposed the coercive element into the “system” that employers can portray themselves as benefactors when they offer no less degrading work to the “lucky” employees who were picked out of many candidates who were forced to apply for such a job out of sheer hunger and economic necessity.

Such (legislative or economic) slavery, of course, does not appear to be so much of an improvement from the initial “state of nature” that humanity is assumed to have been saved from through the social contract that theoretically established the state. Indeed, the state behaves exactly like the villain it was supposed to eradicate – only on a much broader, institutionalised scale. It secures obedience to its laws only through the threat and use of violence against its citizens, and thus maintains the people it was designed to save under a systemic kind of slavery. The order that it therefore protects is fundamentally unfair and unstable. Violence breeds more violence, and so sooner or later, the state’s acts of violence and injustice result in retaliatory acts of further violence and injustice.

More to the point, the outcome is the opposite of both the letter and the spirit of Jesus’ teaching. The only real alternative, for Christian anarchists, must come through an unequivocal rejection of violence. This alternative society, this anarchist vision, can only grow bottom-up, and it must be a society of peace, love, care for another, forgiveness of wrongs, and willingness to suffer in the process if need be. This alternative society, for Christian anarchists, is the true church, the gathering of radical Christians which Jesus intended his disciples to be. And for that gathering to come about, “true” Christians – that is, Christian anarchists – must lead the way, teaching it not by fear or coercion but by example. That is, Christian anarchists must “be the change they want to see,” so that this revolutionary society can be built “in the shell of the old.”

Taken from: “Christian Anarchism: A Revolutionary Reading of the Bible” in *New Perspectives on Anarchism*, edited by Nathan Jun and Shane Wahl (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010), pp. 149-167. With permission.

EASY ESSAYS by Peter Maurin

We Seem to Think

St Francis thought
that to choose to be poor
is just as good
as if one should marry
the most beautiful girl in the world.
We seem to think that poor people
are social nuisances
and not the Ambassadors of God.

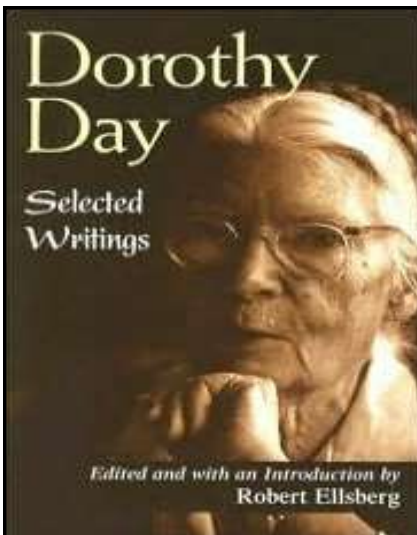
We seem to think
that Lady Poverty
is an ugly girl
and not the beautiful
girl
that Francis Assissi
says she is.



Love of Brother means....

“Love of brother means voluntary poverty, stripping one’s self, putting off the old man [sic], denying one’s self. It also means non-participation in those comforts and luxuries which have been manufactured by the exploitation of others. While our brothers and sisters suffer, we must suffer with them. While our brothers and sisters suffer from lack of necessities, we will refuse to enjoy comforts. These resolutions, no matter how hard they are to live up o, no matter how often we fail and have to begin over again, are part of the vision and long range view which Peter Maurin has been trying to give us these past years.”

Dorothy Day, first published in *On Pilgrimage*, Dec. 1948, taken from *Dorothy Day—Selected Writings*, p. 229



SPECIAL OFFER:

“Dorothy Day - Selected Writings”

for £5 + £2.50 p&p.
normal price £14.95 - 370 pages

**“ Reads like a sustained prayer -
for peace, for love, for humility,
and most of all, for activism. ”**

-Christian Century

Make cheques payable to “London Catholic Worker”
Send to: LCW, 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG

LCW NEWS...NEWS...NEWS

Autumn has come and not yet gone but it feels like Christmas is already upon us. The autumn leaves, everyone says, have been glorious, but if I'm honest I haven't much noticed. Dorothy would not approve!

They say that there are two ways of experiencing different CW communities: one is to move around a variety of CW houses. The other is to stay put, and watch while people come and go and see the community in the house and the way people fit together, live together and work together (or not) change with them. Like the leaves on the trees, change is constant, but underneath the changes the basic themes are the same. The struggles and the joys, in varying balance, of trying to live community, hospitality and resistance continue, trying to be faithful to our Gospel tradition.

So as the winter leaves fall, we also say farewell tomorrow to John Raven, who has enlightened us with tales of 'plumb' or right posture and dry, self deprecating wit. **In early December, Sarah will return to her family home in Canada,** dreaming of community life at home. She has left her mark with her beautiful linocuts in the CW tradition, which beautify our home as well as the front page of this newsletter. **Liz and John Hamblett are also away,** discerning their future.

In case you are thinking that the CW tree is looking worryingly bare, fear not! This week Dave and Roland are both visiting as part of the process of hopefully joining our life and work, and there should be more green shoots on the way.

On the streets, Ciaron and Ben with able support, have been continuing the vigil outside the Ecuadorian Embassy. It is a real lesson in the riches with which we are surrounded here in London, to walk the streets there - Harrods, Sloane Street, Knightsbridge and the rest. The kind of places I only normally see on 'Absolutely Fabulous' - fairy tale riches, but real. Ferraris, Maseratis, Lamborghinis.... Even one of those who more than pay all our bills for over a year, for all our houses and work - yet our guests have to survive on pennies,

working so hard to keep their dignity and self respect intact.

Christmas will be an even harder time for many of them, so far from their families. It's a measure of how great the gap is, how desperate their circumstances, that it is a matter of congratulation when they leave and move into NAS accommodation, dispersed around the country, away from friends and family, into the relative 'luxury' of a room in a shared house and maybe £35 a week in vouchers to live on....

At least we are able to do a little try to stop the poverty, oppression, war and violence from which so many have fled. In September we welcomed Maya Evans from Voices for Creative Non-Violence UK (VNCV-UK). She spoke at a public meeting at Giuseppe Conlon House about her trip to Afghanistan last year with Kathy Kelly. She has organised the first UK peace delegation to Afghanistan. Susan Clarkson of the Oxford CW is part of the group, which is leaving next week. **In October Chris Cole of Drones Wars UK came to speak about the growing use of drones by the UK and especially US militaries.** These pilotless planes are in the air constantly over Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan, where the 'drone' of their engines is always audible. The fear and anxiety this creates is like that of having a doodle bug constantly overhead, a fear which some older readers may remember, always wondering when the engine will cut out and where the flying bomb will land. So we continue to do our very little, to plant our seeds, by vigilling outside the Tower 42 UK offices of drones makers 'General Atomic'.

At this time of year when we prepare once again to celebrate the birth of the Messiah, who came to bring peace on earth and good news to the poor, we thank you once again for your generosity and prayers that enable us to continue our work for Christ, for the 'least of these', to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, as Jesus did, and so continue to make His presence in our world real, to remind ourselves and others that Christmas was not the end but the beginning of a revolution of the heart.

By Martin Newell

DVD FOR SALE:

"Fool for Christ - the story of Dorothy Day"

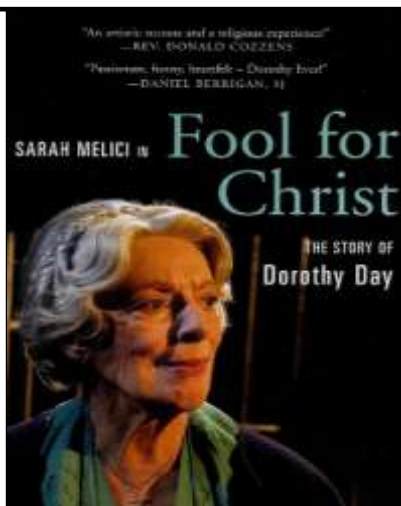
- the best introduction to Dorothy Day on film. 55 minutes.

"Passionate, funny, heartfelt - Dorothy lives!"

- Daniel Berrigan SJ

AVAILABLE from LCW for just £10 inc. p&p

**- write to London Catholic Worker, 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG-
make cheques to "London Catholic Worker"**



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Regular Events:

Vigil Thursdays 3.30pm

Northwood Town Centre

Contact CW Farmhouse
for more details

Ecuadorian Embassy: Vigil in solidarity with Wikileaks & Julian Assange: every day 2pm-5pm

Behind Harrods: Hans Crescent, London SW1X 0LS.

Drones Vigil

Every second Friday, 4.30-6.00pm

Outside Tower 42 (the old NatWest tower)
25 Old Broad Street City of London, Greater London EC2N 1HQ Contact Giuseppe Conlon House for dates

Giuseppe Conlon House:

tel:0208 348 8212 E: londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

Catholic Worker Farmhouse

tel: 01923 777 201 E: thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk

Becoming One's Self *(Continued from page 5)*

the constellations.”

Knowing this, we can only attain freedom by conferring it to others; we are commanded to love one another as subjects, rather than hurt one another as objects. And actually, I'd go even farther and say that to subjectify the other is the fundamental act of loving them, and to objectify them to do them harm.

I want to end on an aspect of personalism that is especially interesting to me, as both an addict to the internet and an evangelical believer in the Catholic Worker's resistance to technology. Mounier is very, very suspicious of technology; he writes that the power of

abstraction in the machine is indeed frightening: by its severance of human contacts, it can make us forget,

more dangerously than anything else has ever done, what happens to those whose work its controls and whose bodies it may sacrifice. Perfectly objective, altogether explicable, it de-educates us from all that is intimate, secret, or inexpressible. I think that's an amazing description of mechanized warfare, drones, and iPhones - but I also think it can be applied to the human mind. We've displaced and accelerated the power of abstraction by worshipping objects, but that power of abstraction has always existed in the way we objectify everything, and every one, that we are afraid to love. Basically: we will always be subjugated to the (literal, political, ideological) machines we build so long as we love anything more than human subjectivity.

By Kate Riley, volunteer at Giuseppe Conlon House

STANDING ORDER MANDATE

Please fill in the form in **BLOCK LETTERS**. Filling out this form enables us to set up a monthly standing order with your bank. It can be stopped at any time by informing your bank.

I wish to pay London Catholic Worker £10 / £20 / £40 / other amount per month / other

Payments to be made monthly / other First payment to be made on: ... / ... / 12 and monthly thereafter.

Your Bank Name.....

Your Bank Address.....POST CODE.....

Your account name:.....

Your account number:.....

Your sort code:.....

Please pay: Triodos Bank
Brunel House,
11 The Promenade
BS8 3NN

Credit of:
London Catholic Worker
Sort Code: 16 58 10
A/C No: 20066996

Until further notice, the sum of the value indicated above.

PLEASE RETURN TO "London Catholic Worker"
at: 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG

YOUR NAME & ADDRESS:.....

.....

..... POSTCODE:.....

TEL:.....

CONTACT US

NOTE: Postal Address:

49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG

Tel: 020 8348 8212

E: londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.londoncatholicworker.org

I want to receive the London CW Newsletter. [I enclose stamps/
donation / cheque payable to "London Catholic Worker"]

NAME

ADDRESS:.....

.....POST CODE:.....

Dorothy Day House & Guiseppe Conlon House, and Urban Table Needs

FOOD:

- Dry goods, rice
- Instant coffee, fruit juice
- Tuna & corned beef
- Sugar & herbs & spices
- Tinned tomatoes & canned foods
- Cheese and eggs
- Breakfast cereals, porridge oats

OTHER

- Handyman / woman
- Plumber, electrician
- Shampoo & all toiletries.
- Cleaning materials & equipment
- Volunteer drivers with car / van.

OFFICE:

- IT help & Help producing and sending out newsletters

HOUSEHOLD GOODS:

- Bike locks & bike lights
- Single sheets and single duvet covers

MONEY! - see p11 for standing order form

- **New full time community members, volunteers and participants in vigils etc!**

"Prayer - without this, all the rest is useless"

CW FARMHOUSE NEEDS:

- Food, esp. juice, milk, cheese, butter, cooking oil
- Toilet paper, nappies, baby wipes
- New members & help with gardening, cleaning, cooking, DIY
- People to take part in vigils & round table discussions
- Visitors to use our poustinia (for a donation)

OTHER CATHOLIC WORKERS IN THE UK: OXFORD :

St Francis CW House, 227 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 Tel: 01865 248 288 - and see their page on our website.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

The London CW is part of the radical, pacifist Catholic Worker movement started in 1933 New York & inspired by the Gospel vision and practice of our founders, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. There are now over 150 CW houses and communities in the US and about 10 other countries. Check out the US-based CW website www.catholicworker.com, and come visit us!

CW houses and our finances are independent. There is no 'headquarters' or central organisation. We in London are a network, not an organisation.

To donate to Dorothy Day or Giuseppe Conlon House make a cheque to "London Catholic Worker".

To donate to the Farmhouse, make a cheque to "Catholic Worker Farmhouse".

CATHOLIC WORKER IN YOUR AREA?

START YOUR OWN! We can offer some help and advice, and / or see the main Catholic Worker website, www.catholicworker.org, for more information.

We are not paid for this work: it is a gift of the heart. We receive nothing from the government. For reasons including our political witness, we are not a registered charity. Between us, we now have 4 houses hosting 42 destitute refugees not allowed to work or receive social security benefits - among the most disenfranchised in our society. We also run a community café and a drop in soup kitchen. So we continue to rely on our supporters and readers donations, to pay our rent on houses and other costs. Our accounts are available on request. Please make out a Standing Order and give generously to support our work with the crucified of today's world. You will have your reward. (Luke 16:39)

Standing Order form overleaf.