

The Hartford Catholic Worker

St. Martin De Porres House
St. Brigid House



The poor tell us who we are...

-Philip Berrigan

*We want the war horse,
Jesus rides a donkey.*

*We want the eagle,
The Holy Spirit descends as a
dove.*

*We want to take up swords,
Jesus takes up a cross.*

*We want the roaring lion,
God comes as a slaughtered
lamb.*

*We keep trying to arm God,
God keeps trying to disarm us.*

Rev. Benjamin Cremer



An American Nativity

Hope and Incarnation 2024

The Hartford Catholic Worker

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The Hartford Catholic Worker is published quarterly by the St. Martin De Porres Catholic Worker community. We are a lay community of Catholics and like minded friends, living in the north end of Hartford, working and praying for an end to violence and poverty. We are a 501c3 tax exempt organization. We do not seek or accept state or federal funding. Our ability to house the homeless, feed the hungry, and work with the children depends on contributions from our readers. We can be reached at: 18 Clark St., Hartford CT 06120; (860) 724-7066, purplehousecw@gmail.com and www.hartfordcatholicworker.org We are: Brian Kavanagh, Baby Beth Donovan, Anthony Harris, Joshua Collazo, Jacqueline, Ammon, and Christopher Allen-Douçot.

Our Board of directors include: Justin Evanovich, Danielle DeRosa, Sr. Pat McKeon, Rex Fowler, Marybeth Albrycht, Isaiah Jacobs, and James Conway.

Our tax EIN is: 26-1223920.

An Appeal to Support our Works of Mercy



We look to our patron saints, Martin de Porres and Brigid of Kildare for inspiration. Martin centered hospitality in his ministry and humility in his spirituality. He was also so prolific in his miracles that the were prayers for him to ease up! Meanwhile Brigid gave her father's jewel encrusted sword to a hungry beggar so he could trade it for food. Brigid also could turn water into beer and prayed that the poor would be welcomed to heaven by a lake of beer! And so the other day I had a beer and prayed to St. Martin for a miracle. After a second beer I heard Brigid, or maybe it was Jackie, say "*look to your community for miracles*". And so...

We look to you to be our miracle. We look to you to keep the miracle of loaves and fishes going by supporting our work to feed the hungry, house the homeless, and practice other Works of Mercy. Our work depends upon your support. Please consider supporting us in one, or more, of the following ways:

- ♥ *Please use the enclosed envelope to send a donation to: HCW 26 Clark St. Hartford CT 06120*
- ♥ *Please become a monthly donor*
- ♥ *Consider remembering the Hartford Catholic Worker in your estate planning*
- ♥ *Share this newsletter with others*
- ♥ *Invite a younger person to match your support*
- ♥ *If you use Facebook turn your birthday in a fund-raiser for HCW*
- ♥ *Ask your faith community to support our work and/or invite us to make a presentation about our work*
- ♥ *Invite one of us to meet with you and a group of your friends for a Catholic Worker coffee chat so that we can introduce them to our work and beg for their support.*
- ♥ *Pray for us.*

Thank-you!

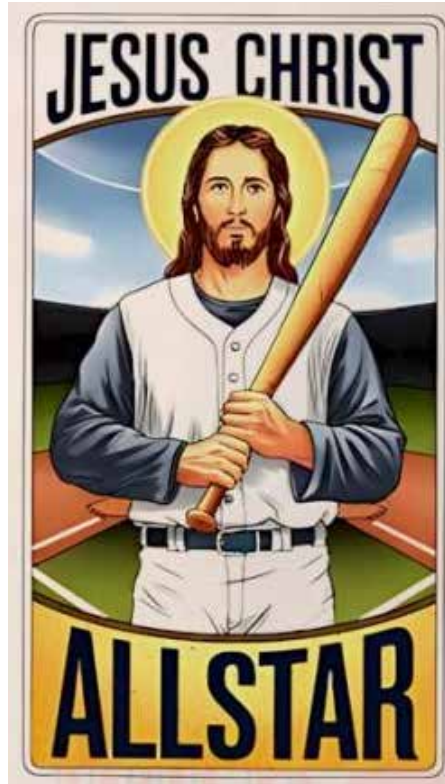
Christopher J. Douçot

Well, the Red Sox were awful again this year. They are the Jeekyll and Hyde team of this millennium, but Sox fans live in hope for next year, especially since that hope was fulfilled in '04, '07, '13, and '18! Back in the twenty teens one of the Sox' main rivals, the Toronto Blue Jays, were pounding the plate with stars [Jose Bautista](#) and [Edwin Encarnacion](#). The Baptist and the Incarnation, alas, a holy lineup of "promise" and "fulfillment" was not enough for the Jays to win the World Series.

The winter issue of our newsletter is typically the "Advent/Christmas" issue, this year we are calling this our "Hope and Incarnation" issue. The Baptist promised hope and through the Incarnation Jesus delivered. Edwin Encarnacion eventually left the Blue Jays- but Incarnation endures.

Nobody has ever mistaken me for an optimist (did you just mutter "no kidding Capt. Obvious?"), but I am hopeful. Sure, I see the glass as half empty, but that's because I know something meant to be is missing, and not that the glass is too big. I'm confident that things are meant to be better and can be made better. This is how I understand hope. We are not meant to be hungry or homeless, neglected or uneducated, persecuted, scared or alone. Yet all of us will experience at least one of these sufferings, some of us will experience several of them, and more than an unlucky few experience them all.

It's a few days after the election and I can't get Admiral John Stockdale's voice out of my head. Stockdale, Ross Perot's running mate in '92, was ridiculed after he introduced himself to the nation during the vice-presidential debate by asking "[Who am I? Why am I here?](#)" With the re-election of a deeply flawed, racist, misogynist, homophobic, mean spirited, and dishonest man we should be asking ourselves who we are and why we're here. Our faith leaders should be asking this from the pulpit, our teachers from the lectern, and



we need to be asking this of ourselves and each other. We must especially ask this of people we don't agree with so that we can hear them, and in turn they can hear us.

Of course, not everyone who voted for the president elect is racist, or misogynist, or homophobic, or mean. Nor is everyone who voted for his main opponent pro-abortion, or pro-fracking, or supportive of the carceral state. I didn't vote for either; I am not a Democrat or Republican. Few among us would answer the admiral's first question with a curt "I'm a Democrat/Republican", because all of us are more than a party member or Red Sox fan.

I'm sure my dad understood the look on my face when I first saw him don a red MAGA hat (if you want to make a quick buck invite me to play poker). Still, we drove to a restaurant in the same car, sat at the same table, and had a civil, if awkward, meal with my mom and my bride. I had only recently become aware of how reductive it was of me to tell folks my dad was a welder and now I was forced to consider if it is likewise reductive to reduce his identity to that of a MAGA guy.

He *was* a MAGA guy and a welder, but he was also my dad, a husband, a brother, a grandfather, a guy who liked fast cars and remote-control planes, he loved fishing, he was generous, patient, compassionate, and much more. He was not the only MAGA voter who is more than a MAGA voter- I just happen to know his backstory because we had a relationship. I knew my dad did not agree with Donald Trump on everything. I also knew that my dad did not agree with how I've spent my life, but he didn't reduce me to a simplistic caricature: a hippie or commie or any of the other inaccurate labels that have been hurled at me over the years by people who don't know me. He didn't reduce me because he *did* know me. Maybe that begins to answer the admiral's second question- maybe we are here to know each other, and maybe we are here to know each other because we need each other.

Who are we? I fear that increasingly we have reduced ourselves to customers and consumers. Carrying a customer mindset into the world denigrates relationships by defining them along transactional lines, while also erasing other vital axes of identity.

In education the customer mindset has displaced the student mindset and so going to school has become less about nurturing imagination and developing critical thinking skills and more about buying a credential to get a job.

In healthcare the customer mindset has displaced the patient mindset by reducing a basic human right to a commodity. The level and quality of care we receive is determined by what we can buy. We are often reduced to complaints codified for billing; every element of care has been itemized and assigned a price tag- even stepping on the scale has a billing code! Doctors nary [have a minute](#) to actually care for us, as their practices are under pressure to increase efficiency, reduce costs, and maximize profit.

In government we have forfeited

(Please see: [Hope](#) p4)

Hope cont.

a civic mindset. We elect businessmen without experience in the public sector. Policy is not guided by concern for the common good, but rather by a bottom line that considers the common good “*bloat*”, “*waste*”, or “*inefficiency*”. Just consider how some *prisons have been subcontracted* out to private for-profit companies: how can Corrections Corporation of America fulfill their fiduciary duty to maximize profit for their shareholders, while also maximizing public safety and inmate rehabilitation?

Young people enter adulthood indentured by college, vehicle, or credit card debt. Patients *are mined* by the health care industry (*sic*) to boost the returns of *private equity* vultures. Incarcerated people are reduced to raw materials- processed for profit. Whither our civic duty for the common good? Much less our Christian duty to the least among us? A vibrant society in which everyone can flourish can't be bought, it can only be forged by its people seeking relationships and working together.

Teacher/customer, Doctor/customer, Elected representative/customer relationships are wrong relationships, the antithesis of right relationships, of shalom. Genuine empathy with your customer, especially if “you” are a mammoth corporation, is not a winning business strategy. When relationships go wrong, or break, or never form in the first place, we become suspicious of one another. Suspicion segues to alienation, alienation feeds anxiety and fosters loneliness; unchecked alienation can fester into calls for elimination of the “alien”.

As the distance between us, geographically, emotionally, and otherwise increases, it is increasingly difficult, and eventually impossible,

to see what other folks are going through. Distance begets apathy, unacknowledged hurting morphs apathy into antipathy, fear mongering of the “other” gives way to open hostility and eventually violence. I'm not sure it is possible to have genuine empathy for dehumanized strangers, much less for adversaries and “*enemies within*”. We might be capable of pity, but pity is about oneself and an uninterrogated sense of superiority. Whereas shared knowledge of our common suffering, a third universal feature of humanity, opens the door to solidarity.



Consider a few counterpoints to this divisive dynamic.

During his 1972 third party run for president, on an avowedly racist platform, Alabama governor George Wallace was shot by a would-be assassin. Also running for president in '72 was *Shirley Chisholm*, at the time the only Black woman in Congress. *Chisholm visited Wallace* while he was in hospital. She had compassion for a severely wounded fellow human being.

In 2009 Nazi officer *Wilhelm Hosen-*

feld was honored by enshrinement in the Yad Vashem, the memorial to Holocaust victims in Israel, as a “Righteous Among the Nations”. During the Nazi occupation of Poland Hosenfeld found *Wladyslaw Szpilman*, a Jewish person, hiding in Warsaw. According to Szpilman's memoir, Hosenfeld apologized to him, brought him food, gave him his coat, and told him of a better place to hide. Hosenfeld recognized in Szpilman a fellow human being, and the Yad Vashem likewise recognized Hosenfeld's humanity.

In Rwanda today Tutsi survivors of the Hutu led genocide of 1994 are still figuring out how to live alongside and be in relationships with Hutus who killed 800,000 of their countrymen and women in 100 days. In the wake of the genocide Rwanda has chosen to pursue a pre-colonial, *indigenous informed course of restorative*, rather than retributive, justice. On an individual level survivors have met with those who killed, or ordered the killing of, friends and family. On a society wide level there have been active efforts to seek and tell the truth and to publicly memorialize, that is to create a lasting public memory of, the genocide. It hasn't been a *perfect process*, and it isn't a painless process. But Rwanda realized that if all those complicit in the genocide were incarcerated

for decades there simply would not have been enough free adults left to rebuild and run society. Hutus and Tutsis need each other.

Solidarity is among the first benefits of restored or emergent relationships. We need each other. Not a single human in all of history would have survived their first week of life without the care provided by other humans. Our first and most important

(Please see: Hope p6)

Join or Die: [Watch it](#), Then Do it

Matthew Cantor

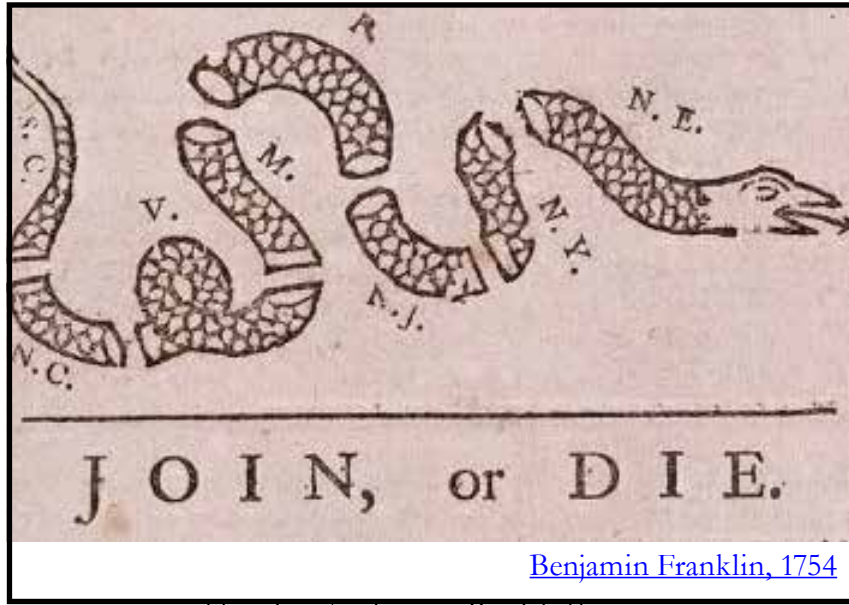
(This review originally appeared in [The Guardian](#), July 23, 2024)

Between the 1970s and 1990s, the number of Americans who attended a single local civic meeting in a year plummeted by 40%. The number who went to a single meeting of a club – say, the Rotary – dropped by 50%. Even the number of picnics Americans joined dropped by 60%. And as the social scientist Robert Putnam has been telling us for decades, this matters, it may be a question of life or death.

That’s because, as Putnam has told audiences, “your chances of dying over the next year are cut in half by joining one group.” And it’s not just a matter of our own health – it’s about the health of democracy itself.

Hence the strikingly direct title of a new documentary focused on Putnam’s life: [Join or Die](#). The phrase harks back to Ben Franklin’s call for unity among the colonies, appropriate given the film’s central message: a healthy democracy depends on citizens’ sense of connection to each other, and that sense depends on participation in organizations of all kinds, from churches to bowling leagues. The decline of these groups, the film argues, is linked to plunging faith in our system of government.

The film combines a memoir of sorts with a call to action... Its central character is Putnam himself, the gregarious author of the landmark 2000 book [Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community](#). The book... made waves in American civic life... The topic it shares with the film – the decline of social cohesion in the US, and the accompanying downward spiral of democracy – might sound



[Benjamin Franklin, 1754](#)

like a bit of a downer. But *Join Or Die*... makes its case in upbeat terms, with delightful archival images of 20th-century clubs, sketch-like animations by Mark Lopez and enthusiastic narration by Pete Davis.

“We weren’t setting out to make a biopic of Bob’s life as much as we were making a biopic of the ideas that Bob set on fire in the world,” co-producer and co-director Rebecca Davis said to the Guardian. The result is a film that seeks to recreate the experience of a student in Putnam’s undergraduate class, as Pete was a decade ago. “This is a film about why you should join a club,” Pete says at the outset.

The reasons become clear through the lens of Putnam’s life story. He grew up in a small Ohio town, Port Clinton, that touted its many community organizations on a road sign welcoming visitors. In high school, “I belonged to everything,” he says, from the forensics league to, perhaps auspiciously, the bowling team. At Swarthmore College, a political science class – and his interest in a classmate he’d later marry – piqued a latent interest in community dynamics, and changed the course of his life.

He and his now wife, Rosemary Putnam, attended John F Kennedy’s inauguration, where the new president’s call to “ask not what your

country can do for you, but what you can do for your country” resonated powerfully. “I thought he was speaking directly to me,” Putnam says. “Bob Putnam, you have things to do for your country.” But if it marked a turning point in Putnam’s own life, it also heralded an era of decline. “We were within a few years then of heading into a long, 60-year plunge into ever greater inequality, ever greater polarization,

ever greater social isolation.” Kennedy’s quote “wasn’t Reveille; that was Taps”.

But social science gave Putnam tools to tackle the growing problem. At the time, Italy was decentralizing political power, offering an opportunity to compare emerging regional governments. The most stable and successful ones were those with high social and civic engagement – where people participated in organizations, read the newspaper, trusted each other. The finding led Putnam to the concept of [social capital](#), a term other sociologists had used but which became synonymous with Putnam’s work. “The core idea of social capital is so simple I’m almost embarrassed to say it sometimes,” he says. “It is that social networks have value.” In a social network, “if you cheat somebody, other people will hear about it. So the more I lose by cheating ... the more likely I am to be honest.” On a grand scale, this creates what he calls “generalized reciprocity”: “I’m going to be nice to you just because you’re in this community, and you’re likely to be nice to me.” In short, social capital produces trust. And according to Putnam, it’s “what makes democracy work”.

Meanwhile, in the US, trust in government was sinking: roughly 70%

(Please see: [Join, p6](#))

Hope cont.

axis of identity is our shared humanity.

The Incarnation is God seeking solidarity with us. The Incarnation continues because each of us is a “*Temple of the Holy Spirit*”. God re-enters the world with the birth of every babe. The utterly vulnerable nature of every newborn human requires feeding, protection, cleaning, and care by others. We require love to survive, and by loving newborns we gain the experience of unconditional loving. In so doing we increase the presence of God in our lives and world. Incarnation as sacred solidarity, therein lies my hope. The bit of the Divine in

us yearns to connect with that bit of Divine in others.

The Incarnation is not simply Jesus sharing in our humanity, it is also Jesus seeking relationships with us as sinners- another universal axis of identity. Jesus sought relationships with sex workers, tax collectors, thieves, soldiers, fair weather friends, and betrayers.

Being in a relationship is not an endorsement of the sins of the other, it is an endorsement of their humanity- and the most basic expression of our own humanity. It was a crowd of sinners, encouraged by Jesus to seek solidarity with each other, who performed the miracle of loaves and

fishes by sharing what they at first held back from the community at large.

We are each other's hope.

So, yes, Incarnation endures! But so too will crucifixion until we can receive one another with the same reverence the Magi had for the Christ child. Christ is born anew in people trans and straight, Black and white, rich and poor, American or immigrant; Christ was born anew in me and you too.

And so we are also each other's Eucharist. As we nourish bodies with the gifts of creation, and relationships with the gifts of ourselves, so too will we flourish into the Beloved Community that we all yearn for. Ω

Join or Die cont.

of people trusted the government to generally do the right thing in 1960, compared with just about 25% in 1990. And so, Putnam noticed, was membership in all kinds of groups: parent-teacher associations, voters' groups, bowling leagues. People were still bowling, but they were doing it alone.

Critics poked holes in Putnam's arguments, claiming he was, for instance, simply looking at the wrong clubs. He spent the next five years on *Bowling Alone*, the book, which addressed those criticisms using reams of historical data. Union membership was down; as of the 2010s, it had fallen by 66% since the 60s. Attendance at churches, synagogues and mosques – institutions once central to American life that help to raise civic leaders – were down; today, 20 years after the book's publication, they have declined 35% since the 1960s. The numbers say social capital is on the decline and, as Putnam puts it: “Our communities don't work as well when we're not connected.”

While the correlation between that decline and Americans' fading trust in government is clear, why exactly we've bailed on clubs is murky. What changed in the 1960s that made us

lose interest in civic engagement? One possible factor is television, which took over American homes just as the decline began; research found that those who attended the fewest club meetings were those most likely to say



TV was their “primary form of entertainment”. Before TV, “civic life was entertainment,” Pete said. And TV may not just be gobbling up our time but also rewiring our brains: we can form meaningful, if imaginary, social ties with the figures on our screens rather than those around us.

All this feels prescient today, as Murthy warns of a loneliness epidemic, and after events like January 6, which took place during the film's production, beginning in 2017. At the

time, Obama-era national optimism was fading. “The internet didn't solve things. The latest social movement didn't solve things, the latest politicians didn't solve things. And we kept kind of returning to that question of: what is the foundational thing that's going to be the path forward in our country?” Pete said.

If Putnam is right, and the path forward is rebuilding civic engagement – getting out there and joining clubs – how, exactly, do we encourage people to do it?

“One of our favorite lines in the film is when Jane [McAlevey] admittedly says: ‘Democracy is a pain in the ass,’” Rebecca said. “It is hard going to community meetings, duking it out with your neighbors after a long day.” But the payoff comes from doing the hard thing. A sense of commitment to a community – joining an organization where people will notice if you're missing and check up on you – builds stronger bonds than attending an occasional yoga class. And these organizations, Pete added, can ultimately make socializing “a lighter lift” by creating communities of people who accept each other, warts and all.

“The film does have this upbeat idea: we can fix this,” Putnam said. “But you [have] got to begin by getting to know your neighbor better. And that is sort of counterintuitive, but it's actually quite hopeful.” Ω

The Provocations of Dorothy Day ⁷

Kate Hennessy

(Kate is one of Dorothy's granddaughters. This is an excerpt from the October 2023 New York Catholic Worker newspaper. We will publish the other 8 provocations in the next few issues)

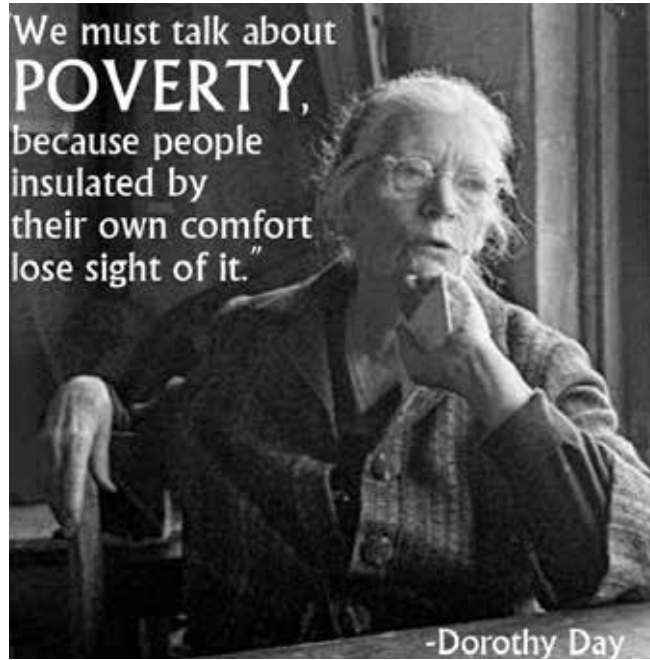
I spent years reading Dorothy's diaries, articles, letters and books, and poring over videos, recordings and thousands of photographs. I examined every clue I could gather—in my memories, my mother's memories, the memories of friends, family and strangers. Anyone I could track down, or who tracked me down. Through this process I discovered that I am no different from those for whom even one brief meeting with Dorothy decades ago changed their lives. Through these stories, I have come to believe there is little point in simply admiring Dorothy Day. If you're going to pay attention to her, your life will be turned on its head.

After her death in 1980, I sometimes would sit alone in Dorothy's room in Maryhouse, the Catholic Worker house of hospitality on the Lower East Side, New York, where she lived her last years and where she died. I sat in the armchair where she read *The New York Times*, *The Catholic Worker* galleys or the Psalms, a cup of coffee at hand. I wanted to be comforted by her lingering presence, but instead I felt like a swirl of dead and dry leaves blowing about in the wake of her footsteps. I was unable to make any sense of her within my own life, and so I spent years living as if she weren't my grandmother, where people didn't know of her, or didn't know of my relationship to her. But there comes a time when you must return home, even though you aren't sure you're ready, for you can't keep running away, especially

from the saint in the family closet.

There is no academic, political, theological or philosophical stance for me to take here.

If Dorothy Day doesn't rip something open within you, crack wide



your heart and leave you with what feels like an affliction, and yet also leaves you breathless with wonder and possibility, then it is all for nothing. All the admiration, accolades, studies, even the canonization process are all for nothing. And I say this not only for myself but for each of us who has been grabbed by her, even if we don't fully understand why. There is pain, difficulty and an odd exhilaration in allowing and acknowledging Dorothy into your life. It will lead you down a path you have little control over, if you are true to it.

When Dorothy died people wondered if the Catholic Worker movement would survive her passing. The CW is celebrating its ninetieth anniversary this year—I think that question can be laid to rest. A better question to ask now is: What is she still teaching us? I have—daringly—identified nine major teachings,

which I have referred to as consolations, lamentations or ruminations, but most commonly “provocations.” These are not rules or step-by-step instructions. They are more akin to adding ingredients to a soup, or a weaving of intertwining threads, and I may be doing a disservice by putting them in some kind of order.

I can't claim to know much about each provocation, and I have many more questions than answers. Dorothy spoke of the mystery of our freedom—one of the greatest gifts God gave us, she said. She also said that we struggle against both freedom and responsibility, and we always will. There is no point in telling people what to do. It has to be a revolution from within, a revolution of the heart. I do see the provocations as an alternative to anger, lethargy, despair, helplessness, or worst of all, indifference. They are

a practice and a map to a path you must forge for yourself. As Bilbo said (and I'm comfortable quoting Tolkien because my grandmother and I read *The Hobbit* together the summer of 1973): “*It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out of your door. You step on to the Road, and if you don't keep your feet, there is no knowing where you might be swept off to.*”

But how do you take that first step? I think desire, however vague, and a deep sense of personal responsibility is the best way to begin. One of the provocative choices Dorothy presents is: Do we declare we know exactly who she was? Or do we accept her challenge and just “do the work”? Dorothy famously said, “*Don't call me a saint. I don't want to be dismissed so easily.*” Many have worried like a dog with a bone at this, wondering what it says about her. But of

(Please Provocation, p8)



Dorothy Day picketing with the United Farm Workers in 1973

course it isn't about her—it's about us. And this fits nicely with the first provocation—make yourself deeply uncomfortable.

Provocation 1: Make Yourself Deeply Uncomfortable

Dorothy's life, her work and words can be utterly uncomfortable. Pick any element of the Catholic Worker program and philosophy, and you might find yourself running for the hills. Opening houses of hospitality in which nothing is asked of those who are given refuge, whether the "deserving" or "undeserving" poor. Her stance on nonviolence can provoke people into anger, and her insistence on voluntary poverty cuts at the very roots of our society and most of what we strive for. She was an "obedient daughter of the Church" and yet challenged and chastised the bishops when she saw need. She insisted on always responding to the here and now in practical terms, emphasizing personal responsibility and not resting in ideology. All the Catholic Worker beliefs are expressions of the deep trust in the Gospels, a deep trust in Christ against all reason. Such trust

can be deeply unsettling and uncomfortable.

Dorothy rarely felt comfortable. She felt keenly the pressure of the drunkenness, the madness, the anger of those who came to the Worker, along with the never-ending struggle of living with the noise, filth and smells. She

wasn't a natural public speaker, she could find people's neediness, and criticism, overwhelming, and she needed her solitude. It never became easy for her, and yet she continued. There are no bromides to be found here, no cheap grace, no sentimentality, no soothing or sensible solutions. And yet, paradoxically, all of these Catholic Worker elements also have such capacity to lead to joy.

Making ourselves deeply uncomfortable requires an honest self-examination of how we are choosing to live our lives, but there can be debilitating discomfort in feeling we have done far too little or made too many mistakes. Or that we are part of the problem, and not the solution, or maybe both. And what value lies in lingering feelings of deep regret and shame? Sometimes it is difficult to recognize the difference between such powerful emotions as grief and discomfort. Or of knowing the difference between which discomforts are meaningless and which aren't. We do need to feel compassion for ourselves, rest when we can and find our spiritual sustenance, but still we can't stop there. It was often said of Dorothy that she afflicted the comfortable and comforted the afflicted. I think she asks us to do this within ourselves, holding oneself to discom-

fort while generously giving comfort to others. It takes courage to make yourself deeply uncomfortable, and it is a form of intentional suffering. Truth can be extremely uncomfortable, both in speaking it and hearing it. Then there's that discomfiting shock when you realize that something you were unequivocally sure of is just plain wrong. Probably the most difficult aspect of this is sometimes there is no solution, or no sensible solution, to what discomforts you. There is no point in feeling comfortable with Dorothy, and yet we need comfort of some sort, and that, paradoxically, may lie within the discomfort.

I have found both in being Dorothy's granddaughter. I am comforted by my Dorothy stories and by the memory of our love for each other. For years I found comfort in the relics I held on to—her last driver's license, the Hopi woven man in a maze she used to have in her room, and the woven Bolivian bag she used during her last arrest in California in 1973, picketing with the farmworkers at the age of 75. I thought these relics would ground me in some way, slake a thirst for some mysterious element of hers. I have been letting these relics go one by one over the years, passing them along to others, as I don't feel the need for that comfort any more. As Dorothy's granddaughter, I've been made to feel intensely uncomfortable, beginning when I was barely out of my teens and an old friend of the Catholic Worker asked me, "*Are you going to follow your grandmother's footsteps?*" And before I could stop myself, I said, "*Hell, no.*" He was shocked, and replied, "*You should be ashamed of yourself, you, Dorothy's granddaughter.*" I still stand by my statement, and I insist on forging my own path, but of course I did feel ashamed. And uncomfortable. I've been uncomfortable all my life being her granddaughter and will always be so. I have, though, made my peace with this, and I carry on as best as I can. Just as Dorothy did. Ω

“Love without courage and wisdom is sentimentality, as with the ordinary church member. Courage without love and wisdom is foolhardiness, as with the ordinary soldier. Wisdom without love and courage is cowardice, as with the ordinary intellectual. But the one who has love, courage and wisdom moves the world.”

— Ammon Hennacy

“An anarchist is someone who doesn’t need a cop to make him behave.”

— Ammon Hennacy

Notes, cont.

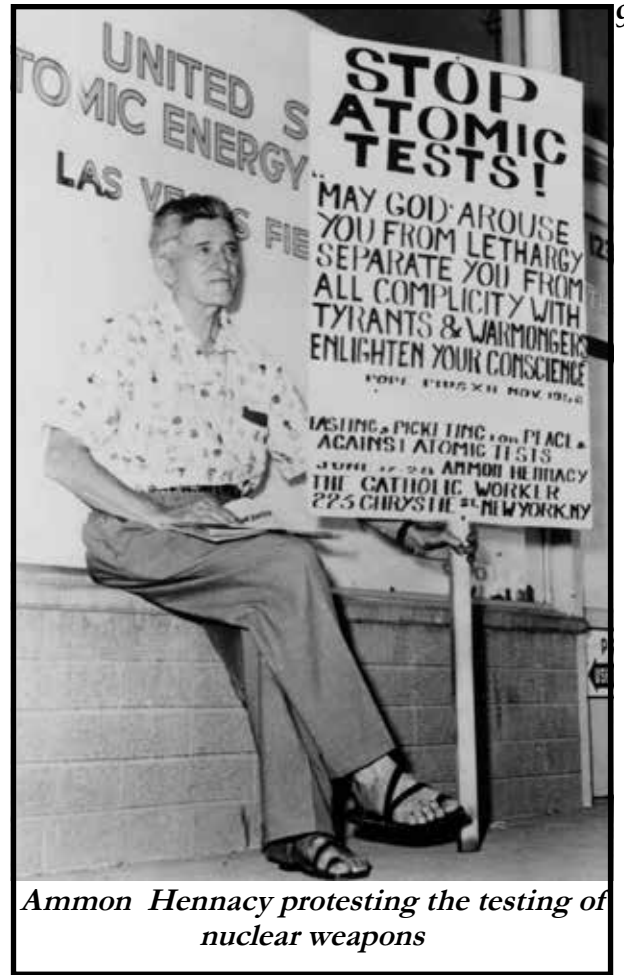
depend to keep weekly programming safe and supervised. UConn Husky Sport and Northwest Catholic carting their students all the way to the North End to spare my ankles from being broken by the ever more agile children. My beloved aunt Teri and Dwight facilitating our outreach to the undocumented community. The Horans, Viviana, Ms. Edna, former Green House kid Catherine Cruz, and Princess Di for making wonderful lunches for Saturday program. The many, many donors, including the Knights of Columbus, who come together to make this place the bastion of support and love that it is.

However there is the part of me, who, like the frustrated kid in circle, is having difficulty focusing on gratitude when the next four years promise violence and suffering at the hands of a second Trump administration. I do not believe that the Democrats would have saved us, or that they are any less

bound by the flow of billionaire money, but an electoral defeat of Trump would have at least granted our country the veneer of fighting against the bigotry inherent in our founding, alas the ballots delivered no such rebuke, and have in fact likely given the worst parts of our country a permission structure to reveal themselves in earnest.

Our duties do not change under a Republican administration, they only intensify. We will continue to protest the ongoing genocide of Palestinians, even as Trump galvanizes the murderous Netanyahu regime to [“finish the job.”](#) We will continue to provide food and aid to those who have come to this country in desperation, whether or not the government recognizes their humanity- we do. We will continue to help those in our community who have been condemned by poverty, even as the richest man in the history of humanity, Elon Musk, decries what meager aid our government gives as [“waste”](#) even as his wealth increased by [\\$60,000,000,000](#) (that’s billion!, that’s a stack of \$100 bills more than 35 miles high!!) in the days after the election without Musk actually working.

The government will not save us, that is not what it is here to do. It will facilitate the exponential [growth of wealth](#) for the richest among us and [distribute destruction](#) on a mass scale, as it has done for the entire lifetime of anyone reading this. If the Democrats were the bastion against Trump that they claim to be, the last month of their time in office should be marked with



Ammon Hennacy protesting the testing of nuclear weapons

the frenetic pace of our ten second countdown to circle: protections put in place for the vulnerable, agencies appointed with inspector generals to fend off incoming fascism to start. Instead during his final weeks in office president Biden has endeavored to dissuade Senators from bringing up a hold on military aid to Israel and to allow Ukraine to launch American made missiles into mainland Russia and deploy anti-personnel land mines paid for by our tax dollars. The work of saving each other from what comes will be just that- work.

When I was younger, I liked the anarchist label granted to our movement by my namesake [Ammon Hennacy](#), it was cool and edgy, now I hear all the labor hidden in that title. When neither ballots nor bullets will achieve our goals, all that is left is individual revolution in all of us. It is our duty to seek out the basic work of pursuing mercy and loving justice, and it is work and it is tiring. I guess all of this is to say my name is Ammon and I’m thankful for all the people who have helped us do that work and embrace the One-Person revolution. Ω

Amaya B.



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Notes From De Porres House

Ammon Allen-Douçot

Anyone who has been around on a program day circa five p.m. has experienced the end of the day ritual at the Green House. About ten minutes before close we do a ten second countdown, kids scramble to get a basketball for a last second buzzer beater, the littles latch on to the volunteer or counselor they want to be next to for circle, Beth will corral our rough oval into an impressively organized circle, and then we go over the rules: everyone says their name and a thing their thankful for, truly the thinnest strands of connection that will interweave and overlap in time to form an intricate web of community. It is not an explicitly religious practice, though usually at least one kid will say they are thankful for God. Other common beats include parents and grandparents, friends



and cousins, basketball and the dog. Some days we are lucky enough to be the thing that kids are thankful for, sometimes the kids are

only thankful for themselves, and while occasionally it's a statement of frustration with the community, I try to receive it as the statement of self love- that it is, it's OK to be thankful for yourself.

As we put together the last newsletter of the year, the house article is very much like circle, we need to take time to acknowledge the church communities and individuals that come together to make this place work. The churches like St. James Episcopal, St. Patrick/St. Anthony, St. Peter Claver, St. Mary, St. Tim's, Christ the King, St. Ann, St. John Fischer, Our Lady of Mercy, and Holy Family that have given thousands of pounds of food to the pantry, and thousands of dollars in support. Our volunteers like

Jim, MaryBeth, Mae, Jeanette upon whom we

(Please see: Notes, p9)