

# Dorothy Day/One Day Retreat

## SCHEDULE

*(Schedule may vary slightly as the day unfolds)*



**9:00- 9:15**

Opening Prayer Service

**9:15-9:40**

Introductions

**9:40-10:10**

Talk: Dorothy Day and Personalism

**10:10-10:20**

Break

**10:20-10:45**

Time for Personal Reflection

**10:45-11:00 am**

Group Sharing —

“Anything you would like to share from your personal reflection?”

**11:00 – 11:30 am**

TALK – Dorothy Day and Gratitude

**11:30-12:30**

LUNCH

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**12:30-12:40 pm**

Re-gathering Prayer

**12:40-1:00**

SMALL GROUPS/ find gratitude symbol

**1:00-1:20**

Large Group Sharing

**1:20- 2 pm**

Gratitude Celebration

**Adjourn**

# Dorothy Day -- One Day Retreat

## Opening Prayer

### Opening Song- Ubi Caritas

#### Reading

The most significant thing about the Catholic Worker is poverty, some say. The most significant thing is community, others say. We are not alone anymore. But the final word is love. At times, in the words of Dostoyevsky, it has been a harsh and dreadful thing, and our very faith in love has been tried through fire. But, we cannot love God, unless we love each other.

-Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*

#### Silence

#### Reading: Matthew 25:35-40

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you? And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

#### Sung Response: Ubi Caritas

#### Prayer of the Community

**Leader:** As we enter more deeply into the Divine, let us say together a prayer of community.

**Reader One:** O God, we give you our hearts,

pliable vessels  
made so by the  
greatness of  
your  
love. Recreate  
each of us that  
we may grow  
strong.



#### Response:

Thank you for  
your presence, O God.

**Reader Two:** Stretch us, O God, that we may be open to new awarenesses and that we may receive, free of judgment, our companions in this sacred circle.

**Response:** Thank you for your presence, O God.

**Reader One:** Stretch us, so we may accept ourselves and each other graciously – shadow and light, sadness and joy, ignorance and wisdom – as You do.

**Response:** Thank you for your presence, O God.

**Reader Two:** Bless us, Holy One, as we explore the life and witness of Dorothy Day. May the works of mercy she performed, and the gratitude with which she lived - guide us as we explore our own individual journeys of shadow and light. This we pray with deep faith in the most holy and sacred One.

**ALL:** Amen.

#### CLOSING SONG:

Light is flowing all around us – All around us  
in this place. (repeat) Sources: *The Long Loneliness* by Dorothy Day, *Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas*, Jan. L. Richardson, All woodcuts used this weekend by Ade Bethune

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# Dorothy's Spirituality

## *Characteristics*

**Love of Scripture:** Throughout her life, Dorothy received comfort and inspiration from the Bible, especially the Psalms, the Pauline writings, and the Gospels. They were part of her daily meditation, and scripture verses and images spontaneously wove themselves into her writings. The example and teachings of Christ were at the heart of her spirituality.

**Solidarity with the Poor:** In the Catholic Worker community, Dorothy shared her daily energies with and on behalf of poor people. Her writings, direct practice of the works of mercy, and her own voluntary poverty bound her to poor, homeless, sick, and desperate people.

**Personalism:** Dorothy loved doing works of mercy because they allowed her to take direct and immediate action for her brothers and sisters in Christ, and against the ills of society that robbed them of their life, freedom, and dignity. Her engagement with other people flowed from her wholeness as a person; her heart and mind were cultivated through her reading, reflection, conversations, writing, and worship. She wanted the fullness of life for herself and every person.

**Prophetic Witness:** By her public words and work, Dorothy sought to imitate Christ's witness against injustice, even when such witness seemed folly. Like Christ, she was critical of the powers and structures of injustice, and endured ridicule and opposition for her witness.

**Peacemaking:** A steadfast pacifist, Dorothy opposed all wars and the use of force and violence to solve human problems. She practiced and promoted human dignity with the spiritual weapons of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, civil disobedience, and works of amendment. Like Jesus, the woman at the well, and Saint Paul, she took her message to the people in the streets.

**A Sacramental Sense:** Dorothy looked to sacramental celebrations, especially the Eucharist, for daily spiritual sustenance, and she saw the world, its people and all of nature, to be full of God's grandeur and love as well.

**Gratitude:** In good times and in bad, Dorothy had a keen sense of appreciation and learned to trust in the providence of God. Dorothy regularly expressed gratitude not only to God but to those around her and to The Catholic Worker's readers.



## Questions for Personal Reflection:

1. How have the works of mercy and personalism been a part of my life?
2. How has “living out” the works of mercy affected my experience with the Divine? How is it an expression of the Divine?

Possible quote for reflection:

We confess to being fools for Christ and wish that we were more so....What we would like to do is change the world – make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And to a certain extent, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, of the poor, of the destitute, we can to a certain extent change the world, we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw a pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world.

We repeat, there is nothing that we can do but love, and dear God – please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as well as our friend.

— Dorothy Day



## **Small Group Discussion Questions**

### **Afternoon**

**(Discuss all – a couple – or come up with your own...)**

1. What struck you the most about Dorothy's experiences of gratitude?
2. In what ways have you experienced the works of mercy and gratitude working together in your life?
3. Is the Divine speaking to you in any specific way regarding gratitude and the works of mercy in your life?

# Dorothy Day Gratitude Celebration

**Opening Song- Light is Flowing All Around Us**

**Prayer**

**ALL:**

**Holy One,**

**Thank you for this day.**

**Thank you for all we have shared and experienced.**

**May we be filled with gratitude, and may this gratitude shine out with divine love and service for others.**

**Silence**

**Symbols of Gratitude Ritual**

**Chant of Response: Deo Gratias**

**Closing Reading:**

**Reader One:**

We were just sitting there talking when Peter Maurin came in.

We were just sitting there talking when lines of people began to form, saying, "We need bread."

We could not say, "Go, be thou filled."

If there were six small loaves and a few fishes, we

had to divide them.

There was always bread.

**Reader Two:**

We were just sitting there talking and people moved in on us.

Let those who can take it, take it.

Some moved out and that made room for more. And somehow the walls expanded.

**Reader One:**

It was as casual as all that, I often think. It just came about. It just happened...

**Reader Two:**

The most significant thing about The Catholic Worker is poverty, some say.

**ALL:**

The most significant thing is community, others say.

We are not alone any more....

It all happened while we sat there talking, and it is still going on.

-Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*

**SHARED SONG (AMEN)**

