



**Charlottesville's Catholic Worker Community**

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## **Dorothy Day Guild of Central Virginia Overview**

The Dorothy Day Guild of Central Virginia is sponsored by Casa Alma, Charlottesville's Catholic Worker community. We aim to increase awareness within local parishes of Dorothy Day's extraordinary life of faith and to open opportunities to build relationships between local parishes and the Casa Alma community.

Casa Alma hopes to recruit teams of 2 or more people to serve as representatives of the guild in these parish communities:

- Charlottesville: Church of the Holy Comforter, Church of the Incarnation, St. Thomas Aquinas
- Crozet: mission community of Incarnation, Our Lady of the Rosary
- Scottsville: St. George
- Palmyra: Sts. Peter and Paul
- Quinque: Shepherd of the Hills
- Waynesboro: St. John the Evangelist

We recommend that the guild representatives meet monthly for prayer, fellowship, and planning, and engage in four activities each year. Parish guilds receive resources and support from Casa Alma and are asked to stay in touch with a representative of Casa Alma on a quarterly basis to share stories, photographs, or feedback from their activities.

We hope this guide serves as a resource for guild meetings, parish activities, and connections with Casa Alma and welcome guild members to continue to contribute to its ongoing development.

With gratitude,

Laura and Steve Brown

on behalf of the Casa Alma community

**"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, "Love is the Measure," *The Catholic Worker*, June 1946.



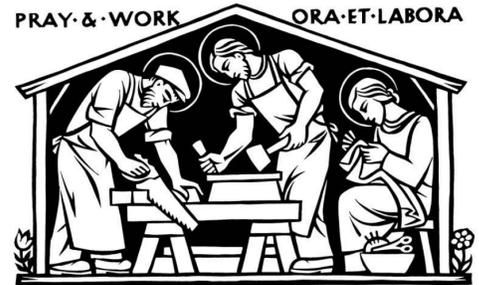
## Dorothy Day Guild of Central Virginia

### Aims and Means

***Aim: Increase awareness of Dorothy Day's life and the cause for her canonization.***

While Dorothy herself said, "Don't call me a saint, I don't want to be dismissed so easily," she also reminded us, "We are all called to be saints, St. Paul says, and we might as well get over our bourgeois fear of the name. We might also get used to recognizing the fact that there is some of the saint in all of us."

"Like a true prophet, Dorothy Day combined denunciation of the world's injustice with annunciation of a new world - of forgiveness, solidarity and compassion - and she bore witness to the possibility of that world in her daily living. Like a true disciple, she was able to reconcile her love for the church with keen suffering over its sins and failings. Like the saints she revered, she was able to mediate the message of Christ and the challenges posed by her moment in history." *From Dorothy Day: Selected Writings, xii.*



Ade Bethune, "Ora et Labora," 1935

***Means: These ideas for parish activities are suggested starting points. Find additional resources on p.4***

#### Less planning/commitment

- Request a mass intention for Dorothy Day (born 11/8/1897, died 11/29/1980)
- Submit an educational bulletin announcement.
- Suggest prayers of the faithful for daily or weekly mass.
- Maintain a supply of Dorothy Day prayer cards in the parish commons.
- Gather to pray a novena before or after mass.

#### Medium planning/commitment

- Develop a display or parish bulletin board to highlight Dorothy's life and the CW.
- Purchase (or request donations of) books on Dorothy Day for the parish library.
- "Go out two by two." Introduce the guild to parish leadership, existing ministry committees or small groups with a 5 minute presentation.
- Distribute materials on Dorothy's life with the parish leadership, RCIA, Christian Formation, or Youth Ministry.
- Request that the Guild be listed as a resource on the parish website.

#### Greater planning/commitment

- Host a small group book study to read about Dorothy and the CW movement.
- Host a parish film screening and conversation.
- Host a roundtable discussion series on "The Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker"
- Pray monthly with others as part of the [Dorothy Day Prayer Calendar](#).
- Sponsor a prayer service for the cause of canonization.
- Sponsor an existing parish event (i.e. Lenten soup supper) or participate in a parish activity (i.e. angel tree) as the guild.

## Dorothy Day Guild of Central Virginia

### Aims and Means

***Aim: Open opportunities for connection and building relationships between the parish and Casa Alma, Charlottesville's Catholic Worker community.***

Founded in 2009 by local Catholics, Casa Alma is an all-volunteer community that provides hospitality to homeless families and cultivates an urban homestead. We sponsor times of prayer and learning; we engage in action for peace and justice. Casa Alma coordinates a network of "Christ Rooms" where hosts welcome individuals in need of temporary housing into their homes. We practice gospel-centered simple living and are inspired by the words of Dorothy Day who said, "I wanted life and I wanted the abundant life, and I wanted it for others too."

Learn more at [casa-alma.org](http://casa-alma.org)



*Ade Bethune, "Cultivating the Garden of the Heart," 1934*

***Means: These ideas are suggested starting points; connect with Casa Alma for further support.***

#### Less planning/commitment

- Maintain a supply of Casa Alma newsletters or flyers in the parish commons.
- Submit bulletin announcements for upcoming Casa Alma events or volunteer needs.
- Invite parishioners to sign up for the Casa Alma e-newsletter.
- Encourage parishioners to plan a "day away" or 24-48 hour retreat at Casa Alma.
- Personally invite someone to join you for a visit to Casa Alma.

#### Medium planning/commitment

- Invite a representative from Casa Alma to give a presentation to a small group or to the parish.
- Recruit parishioners to participate in Casa Alma events or service days as a group.
- Distribute Casa Alma newsletters or event flyers in person after mass.
- Personally invite someone to take a volunteer role at Casa Alma.
- Request that the Casa Alma be listed as a local resource on the parish website.

#### Greater planning/commitment

- Organize a collection of food or household supplies for the Casa Alma community pantry.
- Co-host a tour of Casa Alma for parishioners and parish leadership.
- Co-host a youth service day or experiential learning time for families at Casa Alma.
- Request a parish second collection for Casa Alma.
- Provide referrals to Casa Alma for prospective guests.

## Resources for Parish Activities

An excellent source for information on Dorothy's life is [catholicworker.org](http://catholicworker.org). The site also includes a searchable database of her writings, resources on her cause for canonization, information on the Catholic Worker movement, the writings of co-founder Peter Maurin, and a directory of current communities.

### Sample Bulletin Announcements:

Join the Dorothy Day Guild: On March 10, 2000, The Holy See opened the Cause for the Beatification and Canonization of Dorothy Day. In order to assist the canonization process, The Guild for Dorothy Day has been established. Its purpose is to spread the word of her life, work, and sanctity and to document her ability to intercede for people in need of God's healing mercy and assistance. If you are interested in becoming a member of The Dorothy Day Guild or would like more information, please contact \_\_\_\_\_.

Be inspired by Dorothy Day: Join representatives of the newly established Dorothy Day Guild of Central Virginia for a [book study, workshop, retreat] to learn more about the life and cause for canonization of Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement. For more information, contact \_\_\_\_\_.

### Sample Prayers of the Faithful:

For the Church, that we would recognize Dorothy Day's extraordinary life of faith, service, and work for social change, and be inspired to act likewise...

For Catholic Worker communities across the world, that God may strengthen them in their practice of the Works of Mercy...

The following are taken from the resource "We Are Salt and Light," a project of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. More at: [www.wearesaltandlight.org/pray-together/linking-liturgy-and-justice](http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/pray-together/linking-liturgy-and-justice)

For the life and dignity of all God's people, that we may protect life and promote dignity in law and policy, we pray to the Lord.

For the poor and the vulnerable, that God will lift them up and answer their need through us, we pray to the Lord.

For those who suffer injustice, that God will inspire us to champion their rights and to set them free, we pray to the Lord.

For all those who labor, that they will have a voice in their work, enjoy the just fruits of their work, and find sustenance for their lives and families, we pray to the Lord.

## A Novena:

“Hope in Hard Times: A Novena with Dorothy Day” (prayer/novena) developed by the Guild in 2020.

Day 1: Solidarity, Day 2: Healthcare Workers, Day 3: Generosity and Those Who Have Lost Work,

Day 4: Essential Workers, Day 5: The Marginalized, Day 6: Justice,

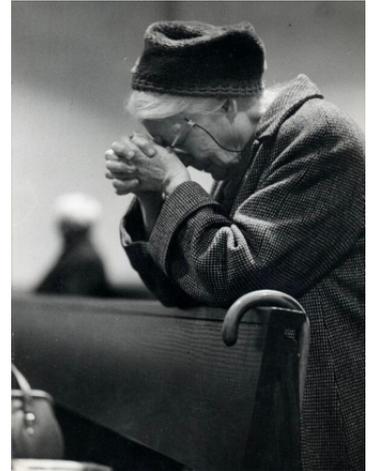
Day 7: Faith Communities, Day 8: Non-violence, Day 9: Hope and Delight.

[novenawithdorothyday.org](http://novenawithdorothyday.org)

***“I am convinced that the life of prayer,  
to pray without ceasing, is one of prime importance.”***

*-Dorothy Day, On Pilgrimage, March/April 1975.*

*Photo © Bob Fitch Marquette University Archives*



Dorothy Day was a Benedictine Oblate of St. Procopius Abbey. Learn more:

<https://www.procopius.org/dorothyday>

## Eucharistic Adoration:

Praying In The Presence Of Our Lord with Dorothy Day. David Scott, Series Edited by Fr. Benedict J. Groeschel, C.F.R., Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2002.

## The Chaplet of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, Catholic Workers:

<https://famvin.org/enarchive/2005/10/22/social-justice-chaplet-of-dorothy-day-and-peter-maurin/>

*Did you know? The Franciscan University of Steubenville awarded Dorothy Day, along with Mother Theresa, their Porcellio Medal in 1976.*

## Books and Articles on Dorothy Day

See [catholicworker.org/about/bibliography.html](http://catholicworker.org/about/bibliography.html) for a thorough listing of books by and about Dorothy and tips for finding articles and other publications. This is one of our favorites:

Dorothy Day: Selected Writings. Edited by Robert Ellsberg, Orbis Books, 2005.

For additional resources and updates on the canonization process, see [dorothydayguild.org](http://dorothydayguild.org) or <https://www.facebook.com/dorothydayguild>.

Cardinal Timothy Dolan announced at a 2012 gathering of bishops,

***“I am convinced [Dorothy] is a saint for our time.***

***She exemplifies what’s best in Catholic life, that ability we have to be ‘both-and’ not ‘either-or.’”***

<https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/blog/dorothy-day-the-both-and-servant/20044/>

## Resources for Monthly Meetings

Suggested format for a one hour meeting:

- Opening prayer
- A few moments for centering silence, awareness of God's presence
- Scripture excerpt or reading of the day
- A short excerpt from Dorothy's writings
- 3-5 minutes of silence
- 2-3 minutes of sharing from the heart, uninterrupted, from each person in attendance
- 30-40 minutes of discussion on planned activities
  - Are there any learnings or take-aways from the most recent activity?
  - What is planned for the next quarter? Next steps, persons responsible, timeframes.
- Announcements
- Closing prayer

Recommended roles: someone to keep time, someone to take notes

Recommended supplies: a candle, a bible, a book of Dorothy's writings

## Prayer Resources

*From the Dorothy Day Guild website:*

God our Creator,  
Your servant Dorothy Day exemplified the  
Catholic faith by her conversion,  
life of prayer and voluntary poverty,  
works of mercy, and  
witness to the justice and peace  
of the Gospel.  
May her life inspire people  
to turn to Christ as their savior and guide,  
to see his face in the world's poor and  
to raise their voices for the justice  
of God's kingdom.  
We pray that you grant the favors we ask  
through her intercession so that her goodness  
and holiness may be more widely recognized  
and one day the Church may  
proclaim her Saint.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Benedictine Oblate prayer (adapted):*

O Loving God,  
we ask your blessing this day.  
May we be guided by the  
Benedictine tradition of 'ora et labora,'  
work and prayer.

Help us to become people of prayer and peace.  
Give us hearts wide enough to embrace each other  
as well as those whose lives we touch.

Enable us to listen and to learn from each other  
and those around us each day.

May we be models  
in our homes, neighborhoods, and communities  
of wise stewardship, dignified human labor,  
sacred leisure, and reverence for all living things.

Above all, O God, may our presence  
among others be a constant witness of justice,  
compassion, and hope to all. Amen.

*From Dominican Praise/Liturgy of the Hours:*

Merciful God,  
you call us to imitate the ministry of Jesus  
with the neglected and forgotten ones.  
Show us where and how to touch wounded hearts  
in the name of Jesus  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God forever and ever. .  
Amen

*From Dominican Praise/Liturgy of the Hours:*

God of all goodness,  
your love sustains us.  
Watch over us and guide us on our way to you.  
Teach us how to preach the truth  
in our words and actions.  
Keep us close to you  
and always mindful of the needs of our sisters  
and brothers. We ask this in the name of Jesus,  
through the Holy Spirit, now and always. Amen.

### **Short Excerpts from Dorothy's Writings**

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—the rights of the worthy and the unworthy poor in other words, 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 our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world. -The Catholic Worker, June 1946.

We always need to be thinking and writing about poverty, for if we are not among its victims its reality fades from us. We must talk about poverty, because people insulated by their own comfort lose site of it. -Poverty and Precarity, May 1952.

The mystery of the poor is this: That they are Jesus, and what you do for them you do for Him. It is the only way we have of knowing and believing in our love. The mystery of poverty is that by sharing in it, making ourselves poor in giving to others, we increase our knowledge of and belief in love. -The Mystery of the Poor, April 1964.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are: to admonish the sinner, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive all injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead, The Corporal Works of Mercy are to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to ransom the captive, to harbor the harborless, to visit the sick, and to bury the dead. When Peter Maurin talked about the necessity of practicing the Works of Mercy, he meant all of them. He envisioned Houses of Hospitality in poor parishes in every city of the country, where these precepts of Our Lord could be put into effect. -The Scandal of the Works of Mercy, 1949.