



# The Visitation

The Publication of the Nativity House

September 2018

Volume 8 Issue 4

## Looking for Light: Roundtable Discussions

by Venus Wozniak

*Watch carefully then how you live, not as foolish persons but as wise, making the most of the opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not continue in ignorance, but try to understand what is the will of the Lord.*

*Watch carefully then how you live... (Ephesians 5:15-17)*

Choices. Our day is filled with them. Do I get out of bed? Do I sleep in? Do I eat a healthy breakfast? Do I eat Fruit Loops? Will I be kind to the coworker that irks me? Will I shut them out? There are bigger choices too. Will I spend my life tied down to a mortgage? Will I commit to life as a mom, dad, wife, husband,

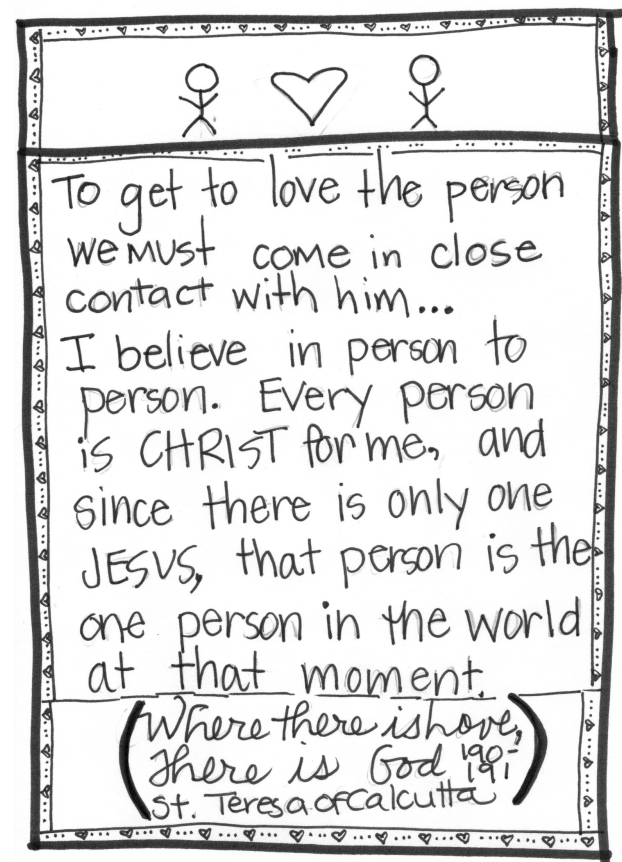
single person, etc? Will I ascribe to the teachings of Faith?

All of these choices, both big and small, really could be siphoned down to one question: what shall I do with this life I have been given?

St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians is very clear that we should mull over this question carefully. "We should be filled with the Spirit when discerning choices; we should give thanks always and for everything in the name of Jesus..." (Ephesians 5:18-20)

These days, with my ear to the

*continued on page 5*



## Be Careful What You Wish For

by Amar Patel

I became a Catholic in 1993 at St. John's Catholic Newman Center in Champaign, IL. I spent six years enjoying my participation in the retreat program, choirs, bible studies, prayer groups, service with the Knights of Columbus, and being in a tight-knit community. My friends and I felt nourished and strengthened in our faith on a daily basis. The Lord introduced me to my wife, Angie, there as well. We were married right after I finished my Master's Degree and moved to Bloomington so Angie could finish her coursework.

As soon as we left Champaign, my wife and I found ourselves in

a spiritual wilderness. We faithfully continued to attend Mass and follow Church teachings but we didn't feel like we fit in our local parish as young people. After a year in central Illinois we moved to the Chicago suburbs, but we were strangers in a strange land in both of the parishes we attended until we had our two children.

As our babies reached school age, my wife braved Mass parenting alone to allow me the flexibility to serve as a Lector every few months. Eventually, when my daughter entered second grade, the Director of Religious Education made a request for

catechists to fill the position of her class. I felt called to make sure she would get a good preparation for First Reconciliation and First Communion so I volunteered. It wasn't more than a few months into the school year that my co-teacher and I encountered a challenge.

The curriculum failed to capture the children's imaginations. It seemed like we were torturing our students with vocabulary and theology inaccessible to them. These same children would come alive over secular heroes like Harry Potter and Percy Jackson. I prayed before the Blessed

Sacrament, "Lord, I wish there was a story book about Jesus that was as captivating to our kids as Harry Potter."

Now, I didn't hear an audible voice, but in my heart I heard the Lord answer, "You will tell that story!" The Holy Spirit filled my mind with the inspiration for a novel that would parallel the Joyful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary and the life of a young girl. I can't really describe the experience in words. My response was, "Why me? I am a math teacher, can't you find a writer or English teacher for this job?" The

*continued on page 3*

# The Visitation

## Letter from the Directors

---

Dear Friends of Nativity House,

*On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples  
a feast of rich food and choice wines,  
juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.*

Isaiah 25:6

Christians trust that God is faithful- that beyond our problems and the divisions among us, God is working to bring us a final gladness, if only we wait in hope. Here at the house, we strive to follow this path of trust and faith as we engage in the various works and activities that bring our community together.

Fall is a big time of transition at Nativity House, a time when interns and guest moms typically come and go. As the summer ended, Sarah and Annemarie moved on and were sent with our best hopes for their futures and careers. Our guest mom completed a professional certification and passed the state exams. It has been a great season of accomplishment and growth!

Our community continues to discuss the greater picture of our relationship with a turbulent time of economic, environmental, and international crisis. At our recent roundtables, we were able to hear from excellent presenters on these topics and build community while tackling some withering challenges.

The CSA garden is winding down. New harvests this year included many more apples than before (we are still waiting for pears and cherries). We had a couple surprises this year: We launched an experiment with ground cherries, which turned out to be a delightful treat, and are a great choice even for small gardens. We also discovered a wild grape vine clinging to a tree back behind the goat yard. We hauled out the ladder and soon had ten jars filled with tasty grape jam. This find gave us the confidence that if natural grapes come so easily around here, surely we can cultivate a few of our own.

And we will have more than jam.

The peace of Christ to you and yours,

Justin and Venus Wozniak

## *About The Visitation*

This newspaper, *The Visitation*, is a publication on topics of social justice, spirituality, and theology. It is published four times a year by Nativity House. Submissions are accepted from readers everywhere.

To contact us, email us at:

[newspaper@nativity-house.org](mailto:newspaper@nativity-house.org)

Past issues are online at:

<http://www.nativity-house.org>

## *About Nativity House*

Nativity House serves as a house of hospitality for first-time mothers in need of residence in the southwest Chicago suburbs. Nativity House operates an on-site community supported farm (CSA) that provides nourishment for the Nativity House and the greater community. Overall, we envision a healing environment focused on the dignity of each person, the dignity of work, and stewardship of the earth.

Nativity House is administered by a board of directors and an advisory committee of individuals with a broad range of experience. Nativity House has formed positive relationships with relevant local organizations that are extremely helpful in carrying out the mission of the house. Nativity House was recognized as a public charity in August, 2011.

To connect with us, please email Venus Wozniak at:

[venusad@nativity-house.org](mailto:venusad@nativity-house.org)

Postal mail should be addressed to:

Nativity House  
17141 W. 143rd St.  
Lockport, IL 60441

We extend the sincerest thanks to all.

# The Visitation

answer might as well have been, “Be careful what you wish for.”

Over the next several months I started writing. Every time I felt stuck the Lord would give me insight in a new storyline or plot filler. When I would get wrapped up in my own life or professional duties, the Lord would call me back to task. I couldn’t escape it. A series of events lead to me taking part time teaching duties to complete and edit my novel, *The Joy of the Lord*. The heroine, Regina Marie Andrews, is taken back in time by the archangel Gabriel to witness the Joyful Mysteries as they happen. The Lord returns her to our time to share the story of Jesus. The biggest theme is that the eternal truth of the Gospel relates to all of our lives.

I thought when I completed this novel my task would be done. I mean, I knew the novels for the other Mysteries would still need to be written but that the Lord would be satisfied. Little did I know that this was only the tip of the iceberg. The same month that novel was published I found out that a friend of mine from college was near death with cancer. Unfortunately he passed within weeks, but at his wake the Lord taught me another lesson. I ran into dozens of old friends from my church community from the Newman Center. In honor of our fallen friend, we sang the hymns we loved. It was as if 20 years had never passed. The Lord showed me how much our fellowship meant to me and its enduring strength through time. Many of us have been corresponding and rekindling our friendships.

I thought I had enough excitement in my life at that point, but then came the contentious presidential campaign of 2016. Through all

the tumult I found myself learning a lot about Catholic Social Teaching, the rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. I lamented in my prayers why I couldn’t support any of the presidential candidates in either the two major parties. This is where the divine sense of humor came to get me again. I stumbled across the website of the American Solidarity Party, where I learned there were people who had created a platform committed to common ground, common sense, and the common good informed by Catholic Social

Teaching. Intrigued, I posted a few questions and was soon contacted by an Illinois representative who asked if I wanted to share an adult beverage and talk. This led to me being asked to be a Illinois committee member. After several months, I was asked to run for the National Committee and I won one of the open seats. A week later I was elected as Vice-Chair.

I have seen God’s hand at work throughout these years of craziness. Several times, I have felt overwhelmed and tempted to say, “Enough! Lord, let me just live a simple life.” I have been

comforted by Our Lady in these times and reminded of her words, “Let it be done to me according to your word.” God is calling all of us to holiness but the process begins by accepting the Holy Spirit into your life and allowing Him to take charge. I was being facetious in the title of this article. Don’t be careful, let go and let God.



*Amar is a Catholic, Husband, Father, Vice-Chair of the American Solidarity Party, and Math Teacher. His email is: amar.patel@solidarity-party.org*

## Interns Wanted at Nativity House



Past Interns: Annemarie and Sarah

*“Nativity House has been such a blessing to me, it has given me a chance to use my gifts and talents to serve others, but most of all it has taught me to love and be loved.”  
~Annemarie*

### job description:

- One Year Commitment
- Living at Nativity House in Intentional Community
- Monthly stipend plus free room and board

#### Our Community includes:

Venus and Justin Wozniak (Directors) their 10 yr old daughter, Gracie, 2 interns and 1-2 guest moms  
We pray Morning and Evening prayer together as a community.

#### Tasks include:

- Caring for the specific needs of 1-2 guest moms (expectant mothers in need)
- Household tasks: cleaning, each community member cooks for the community once a week, composting, laundry, answering phone
- Farm tasks: feeding chickens, goats, we also have 1 dog and 2 outdoor cats, Saturday morning and Thursday evening Garden (planting and harvesting fruits and vegetables in our backyard)
- Formatting, writing for, and delivering the Nativity House newspaper, *The Visitation*
- Helping plan and run 2 Fundraisers
- Being open and flexible to the Holy Spirit and whatever may be needed!

Interested? e-mail Venus Wozniak at [venusad@nativity-house.org](mailto:venusad@nativity-house.org)

*Are you passionately Pro-life? Seeking a Year of Service? Eco-friendly?*

Nativity House, a non-profit Catholic Worker House in Lockport serving expectant mothers, is seeking 2 full time interns

#### Join us in:

- serving expectant mothers in need in our community
- living in intentional, prayerful community
- caring for our home and small farm



## Once a Catholic Worker, Always a Catholic Worker: Carrying Community Forward

by Annemarie Coman

This past year as the full time intern at Nativity House has been so blessed. Let me count the ways. Sharing morning and evening prayer together, community dinner nights of laughter, working hard together to pull off events last year such as the Christmas Party and Farm to Table, just to name a few. I have been blessed to share a year of life with the beautiful community at Nativity House and I am so grateful. Grateful to Venus and Justin for opening their hearts to the idea of starting a Catholic Worker House. Grateful to the whole community for deep friendships and bringing joy to my life through games, playing music together, ice cream outings (even some improv comedy!) Grateful to our guest moms (past and present) for letting me be a part of their life. Watching the joy of new life as a sweet baby girl is born and watching her grow and explore the world around her. What a gift it all has been!

I also truly enjoyed being the editor of the Nativity House newspaper. In a sense this article is me “signing off”. God gifted me in so many ways that I could not have imagined when I first said “yes” to being an intern at Nativity House. Looking back, all I really knew going in was that it was a place with a commitment to rich intentional Catholic community, care for the earth, and care for those in need- specifically expectant mothers who would otherwise be homeless. I don’t think I knew it was a Catholic Worker House, but all these elements drew my heart towards this place that seemed to exemplify everything I loved: my faith, my love of nature, my desire

to serve my community...

Little did I know, my life would be enriched and I would be given opportunities to grow in so many ways. The more I learned about the Catholic Worker way of life, the more I fell in love with it. I was inspired and challenged by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, two spiritual friends who I now believe will continue to inspire me for the rest of my life. Community life stretched me (in a good way!) as I learned to live with others striving always for peace and harmony. Many times I know I failed, and I am grateful to the community for when they loved me anyway.

Overall I am left somewhat speechless when I think of all I’ve been given. All I can pray again and again is “Thank you, Lord!” And I hope that this prayer and Nativity House stays in my heart forever. I know that everything I learned during my year there will stay with me for the rest of my life. I even have dreams of one day living again (or even maybe starting) a Catholic Worker, God willing.

For now I am beginning a new adventure as a Youth Minister at St. Petronille Church in Glen Ellyn. I trust and pray that God will use me and continue to help me grow and help others to grow in faith and community through this position. I hope to share with the young people I encounter the joy and wisdom that I have lived and learned at Nativity House. I haven’t left my roots of intentional community behind as I am now living in an intentional catholic community with 2 young women (one of whom was my

fellow intern at Nativity House). We are even in the process of starting a young women’s prayer group that I believe will enrich all of our lives. With Christ and the guidance of Mother Mary, all things are possible! Please continue to pray for Nativity House that God may bring those who are meant to be interns next

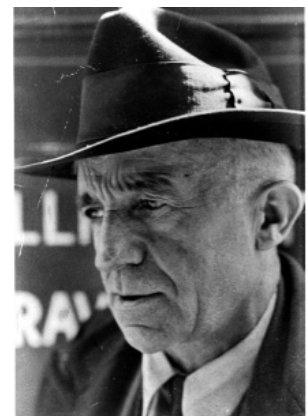
year to this amazing place. I know they will be blessed to experience the graces that I did in a special way in their own lives. God is good!



*Annemarie is a former Nativity House intern and current Youth Minister at St. Petronille.*

### *Easy Essays:* **Reconstructing the Social Order**

by Peter Maurin  
(1877-1949)



*The Holy Father and the Bishops ask us to reconstruct the social order.*

*The social order was once constructed through dynamic Catholic Action.*

*When the barbarians invaded the decaying Roman Empire Irish missionaries went all over Europe and laid the foundations of medieval Europe.*

*Through the establishment of cultural centers, that is to say, Round-Table Discussions, they brought thought to the people.*

*Through free guest houses, that is to say, Houses of Hospitality, they popularized the divine virtue of charity.*

*Through farming colonies, that is to say, Agronomic Universities, they emphasized voluntary poverty. It was on the basis of personal charity and voluntary poverty that Irish missionaries laid the foundations of the social order.*



# The Visitation

## Looking for Light

*continued from page 1*

ground, I hear grumblings of division from every direction. There are so many things to be deeply troubled over. Sex abuse, racism, the opioid crisis, the refugee crisis, neverending war: the list goes on and on. I have a choice: I have to make sense of it all. I toss it all around my head and my heart.

Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day, the founders of the Catholic Worker Movement, managed to make choices rooted in the Gospel. They worked to create a new society within in the shell of the old where it is easier for people to be good.

Peter Maurin was adamant that one of the ways to accomplish this was through Roundtable Discussions. In the tradition of the Catholic Worker Movement roundtable discussions are rooted in the Gospel message and help to better inform our choices. Peter Maurin would frequently assert: *Roundtable discussions are for clarity of thought.* Knowing this and struggling with the current state of society, it was time for another series of Nativity House Roundtable Discussions.

\*\*\*

On July 11, at Nativity House we hosted the first Roundtable Discussion in the series: "Keeping Hope Alive in Today's Quagmire." Our facilitator was Tom Garlitz, Director of the Office of Human Dignity for the Diocese of Joliet. We had a gathering of fifteen Nativity House friends.

Tom gave us much to think about. He began by stating that while today's current societal

atmosphere is one seemingly lacking hope it is important to remember that the United States of America is not God's Kingdom and God does not need the USA to continue being the USA in order for His Kingdom to continue. My first reaction to these two statements was a cringe. But the tension slowly left my shoulders as I let the statement sink in. It is true. It's kinda like during the 2016 World Series: no doubt both fans of the Cleveland Indians and the Chicago Cubs were devoutly imploring our God for a win. But what does God inevitably care about? His people.

Tom moved on to urge us: we are citizens of a great country that touts liberty for each human. We as Christians are called to take great advantage of that liberty to work for the common good. This is where our hope lies. We are called to move forward toward what Jesus has in store for us. We are in fact in a time of restoration- where all is being called back to the Creator. What then is our mission as Christians?

It is easy to get bogged down in the drudgery of the current state of things. But Christians we are called to be image bearers! We are actually created in the image and likeness of God. So we are actually image bearers of God, of Jesus, of the Spirit. Finding hope in today's quagmire is a matter of making a choice of how to live. I can choose to be wrapped up in the societal woes and let them be the doctrine I ascribe to. Or I can be part of the light illuminating hope in the darkness.

\*\*\*

On August 15, we hosted the second Roundtable in the series: "I Don't Want to Talk About It: Stories of Civil Dialogue." With

so much division and debate and disrespect floating around, it is clear that we could all brush up on our civil dialogue skills. Our facilitator for the evening was Kaleb Nyquist, a grad student at the University of Chicago pursuing a joint degree in public policy and a masters of divinity.

Kaleb began by telling a story of his childhood, how he came to appreciate his natural surroundings and how that led to a conversion of sorts of becoming an activist for the Earth. This was to demonstrate that storytelling is at the root of civil dialogue. What happens when we listen to the stories of others? A human connection is made and understanding is promoted. Civil dialogue then is not the same as debate. It is not about winning an argument or proving your are right. When entering civil dialogue we are actually asserting that the relationship with the other is more important than being right.

Kaleb then spoke about conviction. We all have convictions; they are, in fact, gifts from God given to share. Conviction is where self identity and belief meet. This is why we hold them with such passion. Convictions are deeply personal. Caleb urged that when expressing conviction the conversational outcomes of compromise will look more like a solution (not so much the winner of a debate).

Again, we have choice. Shall we enter this paradigm shift from debate to dialogue? From relationship over pride?

\*\*\*

*The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if*

*you are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!* (Matthew 6:22-23)

Kaleb concluded the evening of discussion with this scripture passage from the Sermon on the Mount. This is fabulous advice for our times, as Jesus' Gospel message usually is. If the eye is the lamp of the body we have a choice to make. Don't we want to be vessels of light? We must then train our eyes to look for the light. We choose Hope in the midst of the Quagmire of today because we are indeed seeking out light. We desire and value relationship over and above the need to be right and winning.

Come and gain more clarity of thought with us Wednesday, September 12. After a potluck dinner at 7pm, a discussion on "Practical Hospitality: The Poor, the Refugee, the Immigrant" will commence at 7:30pm. We will close with evening prayer at 9pm.



*Venus is the Director of Faith and Formation at Saint Dennis Parish, and the Director of Nativity House.*

*She can be contacted at: [venusad@nativity-house.org](mailto:venusad@nativity-house.org)*



# The Visitation

## My Joy in Serving

by Ellen Coman

I am blessed to have the flexibility and energy to volunteer some of my time in a way that makes people's lives better (including my own). One area of my volunteer activities involves assisting refugees and immigrants through World Relief as an English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom aide, Bible story leader, private tutor, and friendship partner. The most fulfilling aspect of my volunteer efforts has been forging relationships with the people I serve.

World Relief offers ESL classes to refugees and immigrants who have little or no English skills near my home in Wheaton. These students come from all over the world. The students I have worked with directly during the past year have come primarily from Burma. Others have come from various African countries, Iran, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Nepal, and Mexico. As a classroom aide, I sometimes get to work one on one with the students. This offers me an opportunity to get to know them a bit more personally. I am always inspired by their hard work trying to learn English and make a better life for themselves and their families in this country where

everything is different for them. I recall two young women in particular, one who had a physical and speech impediment, who came to evening classes twice a week following their full workday. Sometimes, they were so tired they could hardly keep from nodding off. But yet they pushed themselves to be there. The students are so grateful for the opportunity to get free English instruction. At the end of each term, the classes celebrate with games and an ethnic food potluck. Sharing a meal and some laughs brings us even closer. It is beautiful to see classmates from various religions and cultural backgrounds sharing a common goal of learning English and helping each other in peace.

As a private English tutor and friendship partner, I visit a Burmese family each week and spend an hour playing with the kids and practicing vocabulary, grammar and general conversation with the mom. The 5-year old girl calls me "pee-pee", which they say means "Grandma" in their Chin language. This family seems so content with so little! Last Advent I brought a chart for us to fill out to compare how we each prepare for Christmas. While I checked about

a dozen tasks I do, they had only checked two! For them, there was no gift buying, card sending, home decorating, tree trimming, cookie preparing, etc. The only activities were the essentials – go to church and be with family and friends. This was eye opening to me and allowed me to see how silly I was, creating needless stress while running around trying to accomplish so much. I have a deep sense of gratification knowing that through my persistence their daughter was able to successfully attend a church preschool on scholarship last year and can now speak English. Yes, there are many differences in how we do things and we may not agree 100%, or even have many of the same interests. However, essentially what matters is that we genuinely care about each other and are learning so much from each other.

Another family I befriended through ESL class is from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Their deep Catholic faith and trust in God is a huge inspiration to me. Not through World Relief, but just through my own desire to be a friend, I choose to assist them with their many needs that arise from trying to raise a family of three young children without any

family or close friends on a meager single income without much English fluency. I admire their strength and courage as they persevere through obstacle after obstacle. Through my assistance with them I have learned of the Chicago Dental Society Foundation, a charitable organization that provides free dental care to people who cannot afford care. I have also learned how difficult it is for people who don't have private dental insurance coverage to get adequate care for their family's serious dental problems.

Helping refugees and immigrants has made me appreciate everything I have so much more. I sense that my values have shifted further away from material towards relational. I am so grateful I can share some of my time and energy in this way. I trust that God is using my small acts done in love to bless His children. What a joy!



*Ellen Coman is the mother of former intern, Annemarie. She is a liturgical musician who enjoys composing and arranging music to add beauty and joy to the world for God's glory.*



# The Visitation

## Aims and Purposes

by Dorothy Day

From **The Catholic Worker**,  
February 1940.

*Summary: Restates the central vision of the Catholic Worker Movement as working for "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein justice dwelleth." This vision recognizes the "primacy of the spritual" and the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ. The Catholic Worker is "a new way of life" involving Houses of Hospitality for the daily practice of the Works of Mercy and Farming Communes where each person can take responsibility of doing their part.*

For the sake of new readers, for the sake of men on our breadlines, for the sake of the employed and unemployed, the organized and unorganized workers, and also for the sake of ourselves, we must reiterate again and again what are our aims and purposes.

Together with the Works of Mercy, feeding, clothing and sheltering our brothers, we must indoctrinate. We must "give reason for the faith that is in us." Otherwise we are scattered members of the Body of Christ, we are not "all members one of another." Otherwise, our religion is an opiate, for ourselves alone, for our comfort or for our individual safety or indifferent custom.

We cannot live alone. We cannot go to Heaven alone. Otherwise, as Péguy said, God will say to us, "Where are the others?" (This is in one sense only as, of course, we believe that we must be what we would have the other fellow be. We must look to ourselves, our own lives first.)

If we do not keep indoctrinating, we lose the vision. And if we lose the vision, we become merely philanthropists, doling out palliatives.

The vision is this. We are working for "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein justice dwelleth." We are trying to say with action, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We are working for a Christian social order.

We believe in the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. This teaching, the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ, involves today the issue of unions (where men call each other brothers); it involves the racial question; it involves cooperatives, credit unions, crafts; it involves Houses of Hospitality and Farming Communes. It is with all these means that we can live as though we believed indeed that we are all members one of another, knowing that when "the health of one member suffers, the health of the whole body is lowered."

This work of ours toward a new heaven and a new earth shows a correlation between the material and the spiritual, and, of course, recognizes the primacy of the spiritual. Food for the body is not enough. There must be food for the soul. Hence the leaders of the work, and as many as we can induce to join us, must go daily to Mass, to receive food for the soul. And as our perceptions are quickened, and as we pray that our faith be increased, we will see Christ in each other, and we will not lose faith in those around us, no matter how stumbling their progress is. It is easier to have faith that God will support each

House of Hospitality and Farming Commune and supply our needs in the way of food and money to pay bills, than it is to keep a strong, hearty, living faith in each individual around us - to see Christ in him. If we lose faith, if we stop the work of indoctrinating, we are in a way denying Christ again.

We must practice the presence of God. He said that when two or three are gathered together, there He is in the midst of them. He is with us in our kitchens, at our tables, on our breadlines, with our visitors, on our farms. When we pray for our material needs, it brings us close to His humanity. He, too, needed food and shelter. He, too, warmed His hands at a fire and lay down in a boat to sleep.

When we have spiritual reading at meals, when we have the rosary at night, when we have study groups, forums, when we go out to distribute literature at meetings, or sell it on the street corners, Christ is there with us. What we do is very little. But it is like the little boy with a few loaves and fishes. Christ took that little and increased it. He will do the rest. What we do is so little we may seem to be constantly failing. But so did He fail. He met with apparent failure on the Cross. But unless the seed fall into the earth and die, there is no harvest.

And why must we see results? Our work is to sow. Another generation will be reaping the harvest.

When we write in these terms, we are writing not only for our fellow workers in thirty other Houses, to

other groups of Catholic Workers who are meeting for discussion, but to every reader of the paper. We hold with the motto of the National Maritime Union, that every member is an organizer. We are upholding the ideal of personal responsibility. You can work as you are bumming around the country on freights, if you are working in a factory or a field or a shipyard or a filling station. You do not depend on any organization which means only paper figures, which means only the labor of the few. We are not speaking of mass action, pressure groups (fearful potential for evil as well as good). We are addressing each individual reader of The Catholic Worker.

The work grows with each month, the circulation increases, letters come in from all over the world, articles are written about the movement in many countries.

Statesmen watch the work, scholars study it, workers feel its attraction, those who are in need flock to us and stay to participate. It is a new way of life. But though we grow in numbers and reach far-off corners of the earth, essentially the work depends on each one of us, on our way of life, the little works we do.

"Where are the others?" God will say. Let us not deny Him in those about us. Even here, right now, we can have that new earth, wherein justice dwelleth!



*Servant of God Dorothy Day  
(1897-1980) founded the Catholic  
Worker Movement in the 1930's.*

# The Visitation



*In this issue:*

- **Thoughts on modern Christian life**
- **Reflections on service**
- **Lessons from the saints**

Nativity House  
17141 W. 143rd St.  
Lockport, IL 60441



## The Diverse and Inspirational Lives of the Saints

by Kayla S. Jacobs

As a convert I'm still quite enamored by much of what I experience in the Church. The most powerful is the Eucharist (of course!). The sense of community. The opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our teaching on the consistent ethic of life. And so much more. But one aspect of our faith that I want to highlight, as we prepare for the Solemnity of All Saints, is our reverence for the communion of Saints.

I usually like to start my day by getting the coffee started and then reading the Saint of the day before we start our community morning prayer. This practice of reflecting on the lives of the Saints has brought a lot of inspiration to my life and I believe it has helped me grow to be a better Christian. Conversations with the Saints have also helped me when I'm feeling lost and alone, they've helped me make life decisions, and have strengthened my relationship with God.

While I'm always blown away

by the lives they lived and the things they accomplished I'm most inspired by how normal they are. They are all just human beings like me, therefore those great feats they accomplished are actually doable in my own capacity, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They make the impossible seem possible. They were sinners. They were sisters and brothers. They were wives and husbands. They were single. They were children. They were ethnically diverse. They were poor and vulnerable. We're blessed with Saints with such a deep wellspring of backgrounds. Because of their diversity we literally have a Saint to accompany us for anything that might occur.

Struggling with depression?  
There is a Saint for that...St. Dymphna!

Struggling with relationships?  
There is a Saint for that...St. Rita!

Struggling with being merciful?  
There is a Saint for that...St. Maria Faustina!

Struggling with a wasps infestation?  
There is a Saint for that...St. Friard!

Literally anything.

The Saints lived out their vocations in a plethora of different ways but they all have common characteristics and the most central is their commitment to the poor. It would be difficult to find a Saint that didn't live their life in some type of service to the vulnerable, because they don't exist. Saints lived a life of habit for goodness and, in the words of Peter Maurin one of the Catholic Worker Movement's founding Saints, created a society where it is easier

for people to be good. The world has truly been transformed by the lives of these holy people, both the lasting impressions they made during their lifetime and through their intercession.

We all have the desire to become saints, that is to attain the gift of Heaven, as we strive towards this goal let us learn from the example of our diverse communion of Saints and ask for the intercession of the Saint of all Saints, Mary Mother of God who most perfectly lived out the vocation of Sainthood. St. Mary, Queen of All Saints, Pray for Us!



*Kayla can be reached on Twitter:  
@KaylaSueJacobs*

