Dove in Flight" by Ben Borden

NO TO CANONIZATION

SAINT DOROTHY DAY

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KINGS BAY PLOWSHARES 7 UPDATE p.7

"Dove in Flight" by Ben Borden
By BRIAN TERRELL

In September, 2015, Pope Francis spoke to the assembled United States Congress: “In these times, when social concerns are so important, I cannot fail to mention the Servant of God Dorothy Day, who founded the Catholic Worker movement. Her social activism, passion for justice and the cause of the oppressed, were inspired by the Gospel, her faith, and the example of the saints.” Since that day the process toward having Dorothy Day canonized, officially declared a saint by the Church, that began 15 years earlier, has received much public attention. Many among those who knew Dorothy and members of the Catholic Worker movement she and Peter Maurin founded welcomed this attention and support the work of the “Dorothy Day Guild” toward her canonization, but not all. While articles sometimes mention that there are some in the movement who are ambivalent or even opposed to the Church naming Dorothy a saint, those reservations are usually not articulated. It has largely been left a mystery, how Catholics who knew her personally or who came later and dedicated their lives to the movement she co-founded might not be more interested in talking with the good friends who do not share them or to cast aspersions on their good intentions, nor do I wish to derail or even to influence the process, even if I could. I write this in the spirit of “clarification of thought” that Peter Maurin and Dorothy called an essential facet on the practice. Before this, the naming of saints was a homegrown affair. Sometimes a bishop would proclaim the acclamation of the laity that left the Church naming Dorothy a saint. The devotion to the saints that imputed the house was not so much one of overbearing piety as of easy familiarity. The icons and other images of the saints on the walls were interspersed at random with photos of friends and community members. One vivid memory of walking into St. Joseph House for the first time was a crucifix flanked by the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on one side and a poster of Che Guevara on the other. The list of saints that Dorothy revered and emulated was not limited to those who had been officially recognized by the ecclesial institution through a canonical process. Some of those included in her calendar of saints were unknown or even disapproved of by that establishment. We might even include the saintly Father Zossima amongst her circle of holy men and women, though he was not Catholic and was a fictional character in Dostoevsky’s great novel The Brothers Karamazov.

Historically, the Church of Rome did not canonize anybody until the tenth century and it was another couple hundred of years before it established even a limited monopoly on the practice. Before this, the naming of saints was a homegrown affair. Sometimes a bishop would proclaim a local deceased person’s sanctity and sometimes that saint’s reputation spread to other places. Other times a saint was named by a popular acclaimation of the laity that left the clergy no choice but to join in. None of the apostles or evangelists nor the Roman martyrs were canonized. Not St. Nicholas, not St. Patrick, not St. Martin of Tours, not the Blessed Mother and not St. Joseph, whom Dorothy “picketed” to pay the bills—not one of these is a canonized saint. Sometimes, the Church has gone back in its files to make an old saint official. The beloved Saint Dorothy Day was often irritated by the personality cult that was already growing up around her.

“In the last years of her life, when I knew her, Dorothy Day was often irritated by the personality cult that was already growing up around her. She could be more gracious, some-times, responding to the angry abuse of demented or intoxicated guests at our table than to the pious adulation of the good people who read in a magazine that she was a “living saint” and wanted to get a look at her while they still could. In the former she recognized “Christ in His most distressing disguise” deserving of her patience and deference. The latter were just wanting her time and their own. “That’s the way people try to dismiss you,” Dorothy told a reporter for The Chicago Tribune in 1977. “If you’re a saint, then you must be impractical and utopian, and nobody has to pay any attention to you. That kind of talk makes me sick.”
Bill Hoard 1945–2021 R.I.P.

By Jeff Dietrich

Bill Hoard has always claimed that he was the first person to eat in our soup kitchen, so that means that Bill has been a part of our lives for more than 50 years. I first met Bill when, after the 1971 Sylmar earthquake, he lost his job as a security guard at VA Hospital. He was at work at the time and had to leave under a cloud of anger, debris, and rescuer workers did to him out of the rubble. That was the last steady job that Bill had. Mostly he “walked papers,” walking doors to doors attaching handbills and advertising supplements to people’s mailboxes with rubber bands. At the time, Bill lived in the Elysian Park area of L.A. and ate in our soup kitchen.

In 1973 Bill joined our blood strike campaign against the Blood Bank for a higher amount for Shil Bow blood donors, who at that time received five dollars for a pint of blood that the blood banks sold to hospitals for sixty dollars. We strike all the at the soup kitchen and slept in the kitchen upstairs. We did this for three months—with mixed results.

Bill was born in Northern California. When he was very young, his parents died in a car accident. He then lived with his grandparents until they also died, at which time he was sent to Boys Republic. When he turned 18 and “aged out” of Boys Republic, he joined the U.S. Navy.

Many years later, when we tried to help him apply for veterans’ benefits, we told him that he had only been in the Navy for one month, but Bill told us that he was in the Navy for two years and worked for Naval intelligence. His assignment was to pose as a new recruit to investigate allegations of abuse at various boot camps.

In the 90s he came to the hospital as a stabilization specialist, he did not come from Pope Pius XII, Dorothy took that authority upon herself. So, Catherine brought him home and we put him in a room on the first floor. Later that night Cath- erine woke saying she heard a noise. We went downstairs and found Bill passed out on the floor in a pool of blood and vomit. We called an ambu- lance and rushed him to the hospital. He was in a coma for fifty days. In fact, one day when we visited him we encountered our friend and housemate, exhale. He was as he was coming out of Bill’s room saying, “I just gave him the Last Rites.” When he finally came out of the coma, the doctor told me that he had a brain aneurysm, a vessel that caused a weaken- ing of the blood vessels in the brain and that he could go at any moment from a brain hemorrhage. Bill spent the last twenty-five years in vari- ous nursing homes. Before the heart attack he suffered five years ago, we would bring him to the kitchen every Saturday to sit down and chat with other

By Mike WisenSKI

Sr. Dianna Ortiz, an Ursu- line nun from New Mexico, joined the Heavenly Cloud of Witnesses on February 19, 2021, in Washington, D.C., after a short battle with cancer at age 62. Sr. Dianna is remembered for her steadfast work on behalf of torture victims, after she herself was brutally abducted, raped, and tortured at the hands of U.S.-backed Guatemalan security forces in 1989. Sr. Dianna was committed to working tirelessly for human rights, peace, justice, and human dignity throughout her life. From an early age she wanted to become a nun and joined the Ursu- lines in 1978. She taught in Catholic schools in Kentucky before moving to Guatemala in 1987, at age 26, to work with indigenous Mayan children. Dianna explained that she wanted “to teach young indigenous children to read and write...and to understand the Bible in their culture.” It was perilous work at a teacher-

The Cover Art

By Uzozokama Maduka

I don’t think of Ben Borden’s cover artwork, I think of the embedded code of the Nucene Creed—“Look forward to the coming of Christ. This command imparts, among many things, an essential insight: even as secular systems and society breaks down, or fatal illnesses seem to emerge, there rises from the deep waters, calid, a sacred kernel, which is itself the hint or trace of the world to come. We can only perceive this trace by and through patience. Patience, which is opposed to despair, because it is the helpmeet of hope and belief. The truly radical action is actually sitting with the breaking, patiently attending to the image of the future, which reveals itself as the present world falls away.”

That is the tension of activism in the Catholic tradition—creating the future we also have to wait for, while not allowing impatience or despair to take over and cause us to abandon our acts of mercy, nor to rush them artifically or judge their efficacy on worldly terms. Is anything happening when it feels like nothing is happen- ing? Yes. Just wait, be patient, and keep moving—however you are called to do so.

Terrell Cont’d from page 3

Benedit, for example, died in 543 CE and was long revered as a saint before he was finally canonized in the year 1220. The visionary St. Hildegard of Bingen lived until 1179 and was canonized the year after, were recognized by a process other than canonization. In his book, Making Saints, Anne K- enth Woodward describes in detail the process through which saints are canonized. In the first millennium and some who came after, were recognized by a process other than canonization.

In “all history popes and bishops and father abbots seem to have been blind and power loving and greedy. I never expected leadership from them. It is the saints that keep appearing to us through history who keep things going.” Dorothy said. She did not look to the popes and bishops to tell her who is a saint and she did not need them to tell her concerning from whom to seek intercession. One did not need to be a Catholic, or even a Christian, to be held up by her for her belief that labor organizers struck for Christ. “Inasmuch as ye have lapsed in the Passion of Christ. In him His will forever be offered to the Eternal Father. This is Jesus himself, although they be- lieved it. Therefore, ye have done it unto me.” Dorothy regarded the “What glorious hope! There are those in the world over, she was not one of those who did not need to be a Catholic, or even a Christian, to be held up by her for her belief that labor organizers struck for Christ. “Inasmuch as ye have lapsed in the Passion of Christ. In him His will forever be offered to the Eternal Father. This is Jesus himself, although they be- lieved it. Therefore, ye have done it unto me.” Dorothy regarded the...
The book, Principalities In Particular: A Prac-... (Introduction xxii). In his review, Wylie-Kellerman states, “This gift...patterns of sociopolitical life” (Forward xvi).

The book covers certain people and events up to 2017 inclusive, including within its personal and familial life, the experiences of his mentors’ works and the impact of his mentors’ works and the impact they had on the discussion, quoting them extensively on various topics, and he also describes his personal relationship with them (mentors) and how they and their work impacted his life, and the theological sphere.

The early chapters enlighten the reader about his mentors, Stringfellow, Ellul, and Wink, who propelled him to the awareness of the principalities and powers and how and why many of them fell from grace. Wylie-Kellerman lists some of his mentors’ works and the impact they had on the discussion, quoting them extensively on various topics, and he also describes his personal relationship with them (mentors) and how they and their work impacted his life, and the theological sphere. He also highlights Dan Berrigan in another chapter and their discussions that touched on death and resurrection, war, nuclear weapons, and acts of resistance—and those involved.

He then begins the principalities and powers discussion with the two biblical creation stories and opposing imperial creation mythologies, as well as Jesus and the cross and its power that disarmed the principalities and powers. From there within each of the remaining chapters he takes the reader on a journey in time, locations, and situations that detail the different characters, good and bad, and their effect on life’s various situations. He judiciously explains that, “A recurring theme running through these chapters is the complexity of our lives, the way in which our actions, our choices, our decisions, and our beliefs interact and affect one another. This complexity is what makes our lives so rich and rewarding. It is what makes life worth living.”

In the chapter describing Church (eklesia) as a Power, Wylie-Kellerman deals with the current state of affairs as he writes, “To be elected to be church as exemplary power in this present moment is to be freed of the general education as useless or a harmful impediment to their goal: becoming hirable by getting a professional degree. This aim could result in something hollow about the end goal of liberal education and “liberalizing” work in the midst of a whirlwind of news about the declining state of the world and the nation.”

But that dissatisfaction was hard not to misunderstand as some personal failure or deficiency inherent to me and anyone else who could not get the program. The expectations are impossible for so many to fulfill because they are incommensurable with a seemingly forgotten human need to support and be supported that cannot end at the arbitrary boundaries of family or nation.

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Yes, change is inevitable. However, change is driven by some who most benefit at the expense of the many who do not. We have seen change before and in what we see now call the United States and the countries and the leaders and the people that call those places home, we see the same thing at work.

In 1845, after a devastating earthquake the Catholic Mission was destroyed. Mexico named the clump of the Tongva to the last remnant of their homeland. Boyle Heights is located in East L.A., Boyle Heights was dismantled as sodomisation started in the 1920s. The Tongva were forced to move again from Boyle Heights to the last remnant of their homeland. The Tongva were forced to move again from Boyle Heights to the last remnant of their homeland.

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When I walked into our Skid Row soup kitchen before the sun had risen that day, I could already smell the garlic, herbs, and spices wafting in the air because Ben had arrived a few hours before the rest of us to fill the pots, load the beans, and contemplate what the taste to come would be of our soup du jour. Ben Borden found the L.A. Catholic Worker by way of coming across the writings of our beloved co-founder, Dorothy Day. Born and raised in the same coastal prairie town of Maloy, Iowa, Ben spent much of his youth picking: working out at the beach and conducting explorations of the old abandoned buildings, around town, which were quite plentiful. After high school, he followed his childhood dream (as many of us have) of getting as far away from home as possible. McGill University in Montreal, Canada was apparently far enough from the Gulf of Mexico for him. There he studied urban planning, religious studies, and started experimenting further with music. From there Ben went to Europe, on tour with a band playing the synthesizer and whatever other electronics he could carry to use as instruments. After returning to the States in 2016, he decided to move to Los Angeles where he accepted a job at the Loyola Marymount Center for Urban Planners in Pasadena, where he still teaches. It was also around this time he started volunteering at the Hippie Kitchen, and has written a few articles in past editions of the Agitator.

Since the start of the pandemic, Ben has been working with us non-stop as a volunteer. This past year, all while still living in the same room where he is peeling the potato, making the dressing from scratch, or cooking, he, like many others, blurs the line for some of us “full-timers” here at the L.A.C.W. of what it truly means to be a community member. You can currently find him working on many of his days off here at the Hennessy House, helping out with our reconciliation efforts. But on any given kitchen day, there is again, at the dishwashing station where he finds the most joy. That is, at least until there is a little creature in the much awaited change, where we are all looking forward to, so he can fly home to Corpus Christi to visit his parents for the first time in more than a year and take that much desired vacation he and all deserve.

Better Know A Volunteer is written by Jed Poole.

BETTER KNOW A VOLUNTEER

BEN BORDEN

Jeff Dietrich is editor emeritus of the Agitator, and Scholar-in-Residence, Af- filiated Faculty, Loyola Marymount University.

JEFF DIETRICH cont’d from p.2

guests. Bill had many friends among the volunteers and guests at the kitchen. He loved teddy bears, and never complained about anything.

On March 8, he joined the angels in heaven and is now at peace.

On March 8, he joined the angels in heaven and is now at peace.

Dietrich's forty-year-old resolution does not need more Dorothy Day being canonized. At this critical juncture, the world needs not more Dorothy Day admirers, nor does it need Dorothy’s prophetic paradigm of the people’s cultural agenda. The world desperately needs cathers in her footsteps, and I fear that this talk of canoniza- tion is a distraction from that.

We let嗾 fresh air into the Church and are not others. We need not denounce the people the laicization is considering the people who have lived among us. Let us do that. Dorothy clearly saw abortion as a tremendous tragedy, but in her lifetime her opinion on this matter was almost as privately held as the fact that as a young woman, she herself had an abortion.

Dorothy’s insistence that “we need to overthrow this rotten, decadent, patriotic imperialism” is the only solution that is better than the system I rage against.

This gentle woman dedicated to the truth and nonviolence will be greatly missed. Even though she officially died of cancer, that death was an archdiocesan censor in response to his suspicions about the geline of the newspaper she edited: “While The Catholic Worker supports all that is being done to give free, or reasonably cheap care to mothers in the way of clinics and hospitals, prenatal and post-natal care,” she was also adamant that “we are not going into the subject of birth control at all. Dorothy clearly saw abortion as a tremendous tragedy, but in her lifetime her opinion on this matter was almost as privately held as the fact that as a young woman, she herself had an abortion.

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BRITISH NUKES

The United Kingdom announced, on March 16, that it will increase its nuclear arsenal limits for the first time in decades. Instead of maintaining a cap of 180 warheads (as previously stated), the UK will increase its stockpile cap to 260 warheads. — theguardian.com/us-news

MINIMUM WAGE

The Raise the Wage Act of 2021 would help eliminate poverty-level wages by raising the federal minimum wage to $15 per hour by 2025. The raise is long overdue and would deliver broad benefits to more than 32 million workers (21% of the workforce) and the economy.

• The current federal minimum wage is $7.25 per hour and has not been raised in over 10 years. A full-time federal minimum wage worker today earns 18% less than what their counter part earned at the time of the last increase, after adjusting for rising costs of living ($15,080 annually in 2021 versus $18,458 in 2009).

• In 1969, a minimum wage worker earned $10.59 per hour in inflation-adjusted terms. 46% more than today's $7.25 federal minimum wage. The minimum wage today would be over $22 per hour had it tracked inflation.

We hope that you find this copy useful. If you have any questions or feedback, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to your continued support.

Life has carried on much as it has for the past year for Hennacy House residents. With games played, we watch TV and movies, share tasty meals together in our community, and sometimes visit our friend Farmer Nick to pick fruit! Thanks to the generosity of our financial supporters, we have been able to continue serving our community.

Life is written by Matt Harper.
**SPECIAL NEEDS**

We are in need of disposable razors. Also, CANES—preferably adjustable metal canes, used or new. Thank you. Many blessings.

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**WILL YOU HELP PLANT SEEDS?**

Many of our hard-working volunteers have blessed us over the years, but with each *Catholic Agitator* issue printed, our mailing list dwindles. We need, and would greatly appreciate, your assistance scattering seeds of faith that these works of mercy might carry on no matter what crises sweep the world. Please help us keep growing by sharing this issue with someone, or e-mail info@lacatholicworker.org if you do not yet receive this newspaper or if you need extra copies to hand out. Thank you.

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**SHARE YOUR EXCESS BACKYARD FRUIT**

If you have fruit trees, specifically citrus fruits, on your property and have an excess, our kitchen guests would certainly appreciate whatever you will not use, especially during this pandemic. Citrus fruits help strengthen the immune system. Please consider donating. Thank you. Many blessings.

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**HAPPY 88TH BIRTHDAY**

On May 1, the Catholic Worker movement will celebrate its 88th year in existence. In 1933, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin began this magnificent prophetic movement of radical gospel living, choosing solidarity with the marginalized, and resistance to empire. We give God thanks and praise for this amazing gift and pray that, as long as there are poor among us, the movement will have the grace to continue comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable, calling for a more just and equitable order where peace may prevail.

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**THE LOS ANGELES CATHOLIC WORKER**

The Los Angeles Catholic Worker, founded in 1970, is part of the international Catholic Worker movement. We are a resistance community that operates a free soup kitchen in Skid Row, a house of hospitality in Boyle Heights for some of our unhoused friends from the Row, and publishes this bi-monthly publication—the *Catholic Agitator*. Visit our website - https://lacatholicworker.org.