

Dorothy Day: Revolution of the Heart

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In the year 2022, the 125th birthday of Dorothy Day was commemorated (1897-1980). She was the founder of the Catholic Worker movement, and widely regarded as the radical conscience of the American Catholic Church. Pope Francis featured her among four “great Americans” in his speech to the US Congress, and lately her cause for canonization has advanced to Rome. Who was she? What were the influences that shaped her? What does her life mean for the church in the United States and as a model for Christians today?

This program will examine her life, her response to the “signs of the times,” and the original aspects of her witness. These include her integration of the works of mercy with the struggle for justice; her focus on the peace message of Jesus; and the dimensions of her underlying spirituality, on the “social dimensions” of St. Therese and her “little way.” In light of her possible canonization, we will also reflect on the ways she drew on the model of the saints and invented a new model of holiness for today.

Resource Person: Robert Ellsberg, MA, is the editor-in-chief and publisher of Orbis Books, where he has worked since 1987. In 1975-80, he spent five years with Dorothy Day at the Catholic Worker in New York City, serving for two years as managing editor of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper. He has edited five volumes of Dorothy Day’s writings, including her *Selected Writings*, her diaries and letters, and two volumes of her writings from the

1960s and 1970s. A founding member of the Dorothy Day Guild, he was appointed by the Archdiocese of New York to the Historical Commission to prepare her cause for canonization. Otherwise, he is best-known for his writings about saints, including ***All Saints***, (Crossroad, 1997) ***Blessed Among All Women*** (Crossroad, 2007), and ***The Saints' Guide to Happiness*** (Image, 2005). For over ten years he has contributed a daily reflection on "Blessed Among Us" for *Give Us This Day* (Liturgical Press, 2016). His most recent book is ***Dearest Sister Wendy... A Surprising Story of Faith and Friendship*** (Orbis, 2022), drawn from his correspondence with Sister Wendy Beckett.

Suggested References

Ellsberg, Robert, ed., ***Selected Writings of Dorothy Day*** (Orbis, 1992). ***On Pilgrimage: The Seventies by Dorothy Day*** (Orbis, 2022)

The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day (Image, 2011)

Forest, Jim. ***All is Grace: A Biography of Dorothy Day*** (Orbis, 2011)

Hennessey, Kate. ***Dorothy Day: The World Will Be Saved by Beauty*** (Scribner, 2017)

Riegle, Rosalie. ***Dorothy Day: Portraits by Those Who Knew Her*** (Orbis, 2003)

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