

# GLASGOW CATHOLIC WORKER

'Faith, Works, Love, Mercy'

## Reflections on the Catholic Worker

By Bruce Kent

The Catholic Worker movement has been, at a distance, a big part of my life for a long time. Someone must have given me a book about Dorothy Day--astonishing and courageous woman, once a communist but a later a convert to Catholicism. I had the privilege of meeting her in London, and then at the Spode House Dominican conference centre in about 1970. Her lifestyle and commitment to the poor as well as to radical and pacifist politics made a deep impression on me. So did the life of Peter Maurin, the prophetic, wandering, French ex religious Brother, whose Easy Essays--poetry on social issues-- always hit the nail on the head.. More or less together they founded the Catholic Worker movement in New York.. Those independent houses of hospitality have now spread to many parts of the United States and now to this country as well.

The Catholic Worker paper comes regularly from the USA and is always an encouragement. Folksy no doubt, and with over -lengthy articles, it is an inspiration.. These odd people thousands of miles away were and are trying to live out the call of the Gospel in very down to

## Peace on Earth



earth ways. To the younger me, as a middle class private school Catholic just out of the army, I could only admire, to start with, from a distance. I was, in my own opinion, a good and even an aggressive Catholic, always ready to defend the church but quite strong on immediate charity. In fact at University we even formed a St Vincent de Paul group, visited the local poor and took their children out on picnics. But living with them?

Not my style.

Later on I learnt that even before WW2 there had been a CW community in Lancashire created by the courageous Bob Walsh. Then in the 1960s one in London. It was in the 1990s that the new generation of houses started with the one in Oxford. Then another in Glasgow and now one just up the road from us in north London. With that one I am a little involved.

I don't think organising an evening

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## Violence

As I write this Ghassan and Udai Abu Jamal, cousins from the Jerusalem district of Jabal Mukaber, walked into a synagogue in Israel and killed 5 people, 4 of whom were rabbis, with a meat cleaver and a gun.

In response to any violence by Palestinians revenge is promised by Israel. In response to violence by Israel revenge is promised by Palestinians. Violence in the Middle East as elsewhere is the default response to violence. According to the Global Peace Index 500 million people live in countries at risk of instability and conflict, at risk of violence.

If you accept that a certain amount of violence is acceptable you need to be clear about the consequence of violence. Jacques Ellul suggests that there are 5 laws of violence.

### 1. Continuity.

Once you start using violence you cannot get away from it. Violent revolution may replace the previous regime but it in turn will be maintained by violence. The Prime Minister will be protected by men with guns just as he himself once carried a gun.



2. Reciprocity. Violence creates violence, begets violence and procreates violence. Saddam Hussein ruled Iraq through violence. We

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# Violence

By Michael Sutherland

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invaded Iraq resulting in 100,000 civilians killed, ISIS now rampages with mass killings and beheadings...

3. *Sameness.* Every violence is identical with every other violence. The violence of the soldier who kills for us is the same as the violence of the policeman who bludgeons someone to keep us safe is the same as the violence of the protester who commits arson to protest our rights.

4. *Justification* The man who uses violence always tries to justify it and himself.

ment of murder, that the recruiting and drilling of armies which Kings, Emperors, and Presidents carry on with so much self-assurance are preparations for murder'.

As Christians living in Scotland we have the sexual violence against children and the violence against women. We may consider ourselves non-violent however what we do through others we do ourselves. We have our army which consistently each year for the last hundred years has been involved in killing somewhere (the UK scores 47th in the 2014 Global Peace Index). Down in England at RAF Waddington near Lincoln we control armed drones which are today killing people in



Catholic Worker banner at the Scrap Trident demonstration 30 Nov 2014

5. *Violence begets violence – nothing else.* Violence can never realise a noble aim, can never create liberty or justice. The end does not justify the means, evil means corrupt good ends.

The world at best seems to try and control violence by making treaties, by making laws and by institutionalising violence as we do in the armed forces. Again we should be clear what we are dealing with, as Leo Tolstoy said, 'It should be understood that an army is an instru-

Iraqi and of course 20 miles from Glasgow we have the ultimate weapon of violence in our Trident nuclear armed submarines.

## Total non-violence

To this world of violence Jesus was born and with the incarnation we were given a new commandment 'I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.' Both by what He said and how He lived He taught us the way of non-violence. It is simple and profoundly radical.

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## Support Us:

*Non-perishable food donations welcome. We are particularly looking for hot chocolate, sugar, fruit juice, tinned meat, tuna and black bags. You can also set up a standing order to make a donation to us—see the back page.*

## Join Us:

### Round Table Discussions

*On the 3rd Tuesday of every month we meet to discuss a topic and help us together to clarify our thoughts. We meet at 6:15 in the Place of Welcome and share some food. Please come along or get in touch.*

### Soup Kitchen Fridays 9-10pm

*Help out at our weekly Soup Kitchen in Cadogan Street, Glasgow City Centre*

### Place of Welcome for Refugees: Saturdays 9am-1pm

*Help teach English at Garnethill Multicultural Centre (Basement) 21 Rose Street Glasgow or just socialise.*

### Monthly Witness at Faslane Nuclear Submarine Base

*Join us on the first Saturday of each month at 2:30pm outside the North Gate.*

## Website:

[www.catholicworker.org.uk](http://www.catholicworker.org.uk)

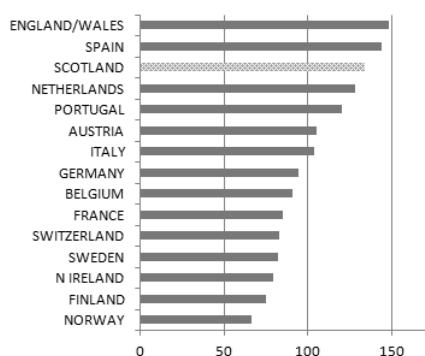
**Email:** [glw@catholicworker.org.uk](mailto:glw@catholicworker.org.uk)

**Twitter:** @CatholicWorkerG

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/glasgowcatholicworker](http://www.facebook.com/glasgowcatholicworker)

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Who are we to love? Jesus tells us that we should put down our sword and love our enemies doing good to those that hate us. He tells us that to return wrong for wrong, an eye for an eye, is incompatible with the Kingdom of God. We should resist evil but never with violence. Non-violence is the fruits of love. I have come to realise that this non-violence starts with me as I am in the way I treat my children, my spouse, the people I meet in shops and work extending to all my brothers and sisters everywhere at home and abroad. God loves the ISIS



*Scotland has the third highest per capita prison population in Western Europe*

fighter in Iraq as much as he loves me. He loves the Palestinian as much as he loves the Israeli.

To the Catholic Worker nonviolence is an absolute and many have over the years been jailed for peaceful protest against violence despite at times being a lonely voice. Jesus said 'Blessed are the peacemakers', not those who think peace is a good idea as such but those who work for peace. As Catholic Workers we resist evil, but the self-emptying love which Jesus brings 'by its very nature excludes the possibility of violence, even when one is in the right (who after all was more right than Jesus?)'

I will leave the last word to Fr John Dear who brings the matter to its logical conclusion.

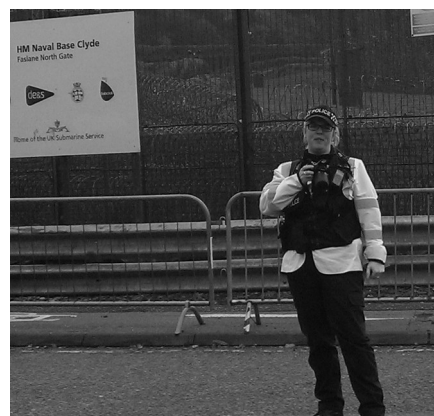
'That's why I've come to the conclusion that no one can claim to be an authentic Christian any more if they support warfare and weapons. You cannot seriously call yourself a follower of the nonviolent, peacemaking Jesus, whom we celebrate and honor at Christmas, if you own guns, support our wars, defend our nuclear weapons arsenal, tolerate

executions and catastrophic climate change, and participate in violence in any form. Anyone who supports warfare, weapons or killing, even if they be a priest, minister or bishop, goes against the nonviolent Jesus. To be a Christian is to be a practitioner of creative nonviolence. To follow the peacemaking Jesus means becoming a peacemaker.'

#### 4 Minute Witness at Faslane— Pictures



*Getting ready November 2014*



*Getting our picture taken November 2014*



*Submarine coming into Faslane—October 2014*



*Dutch troops outside Faslane—October 2014*

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# My favourite Saints

By Tamara Horsburgh

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*"We are free when we practice voluntary poverty. We fly unimpeded to God". Saint Katharine Drexel*

*"I am convinced our salvation depends on the poor." Dorothy Day*

I believe it was CS Lewis who said "how gloriously different are all the Saints." I've been thinking about this statement lately as I've spent some time reading about Saint Francis De sales, the Saint of Love. The personalities and gifts of the men and women of God never fail to astound me with both their diversity and their unity in love of God and neighbour.

Saint Katharine Drexel and Dorothy Day have both had a huge impact on my life – both lived holy lives dedicated to loving Jesus in the Eucharist and loving Jesus in the "least of these my brethren". Both are American, female Saints, born in the 1800s, who never let their gender stop them from following the path God chose for them. Yet, their paths were so diverse, and so distinct, each brining to their lives a passionate and even fierce love of the Lord through service to those most in need.

Who was Katharine Drexel? Born an heiress in the latter half of the 1800s to a prominent Philadelphia family, Katharine was raised in a Catholic home, with a step mother who taught her and her sisters about love of God and love of neighbour and a home that has been called one of both "vast wealth and profound holiness". At an early age Katharine exhibited a great love

for our Savoir. She was taught as a very young child that one must feed and clothe the poor and her father had a daily and active prayer life. Katharine was raised in a pious and giving Catholic home, and the natural course would have been for her to marry well and continue the philanthropy of her step-mother, while building on the family fortune. Yet, God chose a very different path for



St. Katharine Drexel with Native Americans

her.

Katharine had a calling within her. As a teenager she began to seriously consider giving her life to the Lord – though she was uncertain what form that would take. She had a spiritual advisor with whom she discussed her longing to join a religious order, and who initially dissuaded her though he eventually became convinced of her calling. Katharine visited Europe with her sisters and had an audience with the Pope Leo XIII. She had taken to heart the plight of Native Americans and African Americans and asked the Pope to send more missionaries to these people. The Pope then said words that changed her life: "My child, why don't you become a missionary?"

Katharine Drexel started her own order, the "Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indian and Colored People". At a time when racism remained both personal in the hearts of Americans and institutional in

the laws of the land and even within the Church, Katharine dedicated her life and her finances to trying to alleviate the suffering of those on the margins of American life. She was convinced that schools and universities needed to be built in both the South and in the West. She refused to be intimidated by the racial hatred she encountered when she opened schools, colleges and uni-

versities to serve those of colour. She refused to let threats stop her when there was a need to be met in the south. She visited and helped in missions in the west ignoring the warnings of dyptheria and malaria. By the end of her life her vast fortune had been spent build-

ing schools, universities and missions, and invested to ensure that the Order of the Blessed Sacrament for the Indian and Coloured could continue beyond her death. She said of herself "I am and always have been, one of the happiest women I know." When she died thousands of people came out in stormy weather to attend her wake, and one man lifted his son up to her coffin, saying "take a look at the Nun son – someday you can say you looked upon a Saint".

Dorothy Day took a very different path to being our Lord's servant. Born in an average, if somewhat eccentric American family, raised in New York, California, and Chicago, Dorothy had neither the wealth nor the Catholic background of Katharine Drexel. Dorothy showed an early interest in books and ideas, in independent living and excitement. The streets of Chicago exposed to her the world of the poor and disadvantaged and at a young age she developed a social con-



science. This led her into the world of anarchism and communism, as she tried to write about ideas of social justice, emancipation and equality. Dorothy campaigned with the suffragettes, becoming a voice for the rights of women. She embraced freedom, and sought after love, and sadly had an abortion, a traumatic event for the young Dorothy, and one she regretted her whole life. Dorothy eventually fell in love with Forster Batterham. She became pregnant with his child and it is then that Dorothy's life changed drastically.

Thoughts of God, the love of the baby growing inside her, the beauty of the Church all began to call Dorothy as her pregnancy proceeded. As she explained she was so joyous and she "needed someone to thank – but nobody was there." She spent time studying the Catholic faith and became convinced her child should be baptized. Her lover and common law husband could not cope with her ongoing conversion and Dorothy had to eventually choose between the Church and Forster. She chose the Church for herself and her child, but remained friends with Forster throughout her life never losing her affection for him.

As a new Catholic and single mother with a new baby daughter, Dorothy prayed for a way to help the poor and the destitute while fully embracing her faith – communism was no longer an option, and she felt lost. Enter Peter Maurin. This French peasant with a heart for peace and love and charity convinced Dorothy that it was their calling to start a newspaper to advocate for the poor using Catholic principles of social justice. Along with the newspaper a soup kitchen was started and eventually Houses of Hospitality for the destitute and farms for the growing of food and living near nature - the birth of the



*Dorothy with Forster Batterham*

Catholic Worker movement. Dorothy spent her life serving the poor, the hungry, the mentally ill, and those with addiction. She embraced voluntary poverty. She called all Catholics to embrace the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and she was a pacifist who witnessed against war and weapons until the end of her days. Dorothy has been called a "servant of God" by the Pope, and I am convinced that she will be declared a Saint by our Church. Many of us believe she is up in heaven with Peter Maurin praying for the continued work of the Catholic Workers, and all people of peace throughout the world.

So, Katharine Drexel and Dorothy Day? What did they have in common? One lived a seemingly holy life from the day she was born, starting a religious order, and using vast wealth to open schools, universities and support missions. One lived a life of freedom and mistakes, studying and writing and embracing communist ideas. Yet, at the end of the day, what they had in common is the only thing that really matters – a passionate love of their Lord which was shown through how they treated others and served the poor.

Both of these women encountered opposition – Dorothy for her pacifism, Katharine for her insistence that people of colour are God's children too. Both had a deep love for the Eucharist and believed that Jesus is present in the bread and blood – Katherine naming her order the Sisters of the Blessed Sacra-

ment, Dorothy at daily Mass attendance. Both embraced voluntary poverty – Katharine giving away her fortune and Dorothy giving away any money that came her way, and living in the Houses of Hospitality among the poor.

As I approach my 2 year anniversary as a Roman Catholic I get inspiration from both of these courageous women. I pray to Katharine to keep me on the path to holiness, and to help me love and respect the rules of the Church. I pray to Dorothy to help me stay true to my values and principles even when they collide with those of the modern world. I pray to both to help me learn what sacrificial love is. And I am grateful that God has chosen to make his Saints diverse, and interesting and beautiful each in their own way!

*Dearest Forster,*

*...I just got Tamar to bed. She has the most angelic disposition. With all the dragging around she remains cheerful, and only shows her fatigue by becoming obstreperously lively. As for me, I'm as blue as indigo. I told you it was much harder for those who went away than for those who stayed. I have felt nothing but a blank loneliness since I left you. Life is indeed a most miserable affair. Why don't you become reasonable or indulgent or whatever you want to call it and tell me to come back and marry you? We could be so happy together. And even if we fought it would be better than this blank dead feeling. You know I love you and it isn't just loneliness which makes me long for you so....*

*All my love,  
Dorothy*

*(Letter from Dorothy Day to Forster Batterham.)*

## Peter Maurin's Easy Essays

### Usurers Are Not Gentlemen

The Prophets of Israel  
and the Fathers of the Church  
forbade lending money at interest.

Lending at interest  
was called usury  
by the Prophets of Israel  
and the Fathers of the Church.

Usurers were not considered  
to be gentlemen  
when people used to listen  
to the Prophets of Israel  
and the Fathers of the Church.

When people used to listen  
to the Prophets of Israel  
and the Fathers of the Church  
they could not see anything gentle  
in trying to live  
on the sweat of somebody else's  
brow  
by lending money at interest.



## Reflections on the Catholic Worker

By Bruce Kent

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meal twice a month counts as deep involvement but I have always been a supporter. Not being much



*Cardinal and Archbishop of Canterbury Visit Giuseppe Conlon House*

of a cook I just chat with those who come, while the more qualified of our parishioners prepare the meal. It is always a moving and impressive evening. Those who come are mostly, in one way or another, refugees from various parts of the world. From many parts of Africa, from some of the ex-Soviet republics, even South America. Their stories are all different but also much the same. Hand to mouth living. Never sure when the Border Agency will catch up with them. Working at below the minimum rate for some exploitative employer who has them over a barrel.

We see, often enough on telly, the refugees at Calais trying to steal a lift on a lorry across the channel. They share the mistaken belief that in Britain all will be well. If only!!

That we have a local CW house is itself a bit of a miracle. [Giuseppe Conlon House] The Diocese could well have sold the redundant church and presbytery but decided not to and handed over the premises to the Catholic Worker community.

Full marks to Westminster Diocese..The Local Authority might well have decided that this was not suitable residential accommodation and have said NO. But they didn't. Local residents might have made a fuss about the number of somewhat down at heel single men coming to the area. But no complaints came. There might have not been enough volunteers to keep the House going? Not at all. Lots of people, mostly young and not all Catholics, have come from many places to be part of our local Worker community.

The church as a whole has a lot to learn from Catholic Worker ideals and practice. I don't know if Pope Francis has ever visited one of the Houses but, if he did, he would certainly feel right at home.

After all, his first visit out of Rome as Pope, was to the little island of Lampedusa to meet the refugees from Africa who had made the dangerous journey often in dangerous boats across the sea to get there. His call is always for justice as well as charity.



*If we had a caption competition this would be it! Brian Quail at the Scrap Trident demonstration on 30 November 2014.*

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# No More Politics Please

By Martyn Sabell

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We at the Catholic Worker have heard it suggested that the content of our newspaper is unduly political. Is there any truth in this charge?

Well, of course, it depends what we mean by 'political'. Those bringing the accusation are implying there is something undesirable about political content in a Catholic paper. Indeed there are negative aspects to politics, namely the exercise of social control in a coercive or manipulative way, dispensed by men and women who are all too easily seduced by the trappings of



power. Governments of every state ultimately depend on the threat of force, as their claim to rule relies on holding a monopoly of power against all challengers.

Now this notion of politics is the antithesis of what the Catholic Worker stands for. We are rooted in an ethics of non-violence, of servanthood rather than domination. Our loyalty is to Christ, not to any political party.

But perhaps our critics attach an alternative meaning to politics, one no less valid. Maybe they think

of politics merely as describing the ordering of affairs in society. This would imply there is nothing improper in politics itself, just that somehow the subject doesn't seem appropriate for inclusion in a Catholic journal.

Here we run into a problem. Since the publication in 1891 of Pope Leo XIII's ground-breaking encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, on Capital and Labour, his successors have developed a wide-ranging body of Catholic social teaching. This spans the sanctity and dignity of life, family, communal solidarity, peace and reconciliation, dignity of work, rights and responsibilities, social justice and more. Where the Glasgow Catholic Worker has not yet promoted these teachings, we promise to do so in future issues.

Still, those with misgivings may, deep down, find these issues too radical, too unpalatable, dramatically overreaching the personal piety that Jesus promoted. Such a view finds little biblical support. The prophets of ancient Israel

had plenty to say about injustice and God's displeasure with it. Only since the birth of the modern so-called 'enlightenment' has it now become fashionable to divide off politics from religious belief.

Even before Jesus' birth, Mary his mother was led to utter a notably political song of praise to God, recorded in Luke's gospel.

*He has brought down the powerful  
from their thrones  
and lifted up the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with  
good things*

*and sent the rich away empty.*

Jesus himself had a revolutionary message for his hearers. His proclamation of the Kingdom of God was a widely predicted fulfilment of David's kingdom. What was different about Jesus was the nature of his politics. Not a warrior king, Jesus, Lamb of God, inaugurated a servant kingship, redeeming the world through his suffering as far as death.



*The oppressed workers, above all,  
ought to be liberated from the savagery of greedy men, who inordinately use human beings as things for gain.*

Pope Leo XIII

Our Lord was not afraid to challenge the establishment in the land, the powerbrokers, upholders of the status quo. These were the very men who conspired to have him executed as a political subversive, a threat to the state.

Ever since God vindicated his Son by his resurrection, followers of Jesus have been called to obedience to him. Anyone familiar with his Sermon on the Mount will know how challenging this is. Some would avoid the challenge by giving gospel teaching a private, otherworldly status. Politics can then be hived off to the 'real world' of career politicians. We reject such an approach. We claim that the political task of the Church is to model God's Kingdom to a fallen world.



*Pictures from our plot in Possilpark where we will be growing some vegetables to use in our soup for the Friday night soup kitchen. An arrow marks our Catholic Worker plot. (The barrels contain water by the way!)*

### Premises

If anyone knows of premises that might be available in the City Centre we would be interested in hearing about them. We need cooking facilities and a large room or rooms. Please email us.



### Donating to the Glasgow Catholic Worker

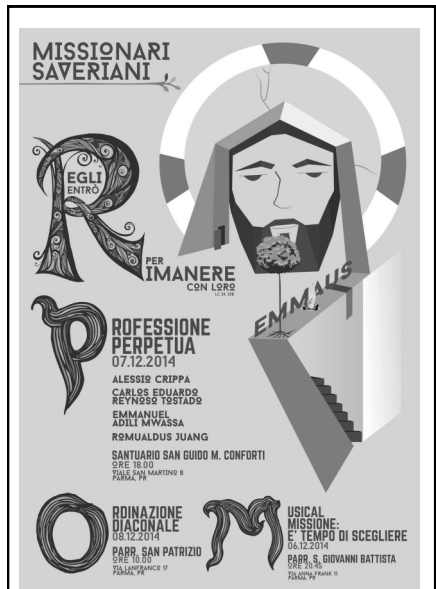
We exclusively depend on donations from people who support our aims and vision. We do not pay anyone for the work they do and do not in principle register as a charity. Most of our food and clothes are donated. If you would like to donate food or warm/waterproof clothing please get in touch.

Any money donated helps us to pay Rent and costs we need cash for.

If you would like to contribute money to our work:

To transfer donations to us using your bank's phone or online service, please use these details:

- **Bank:** Triodos Bank
- **Account name:** Catholic Worker Glasgow
- **Account number:** 20467753



### Alessio Crippa

We pray for our good friend Alessio who helped us out over the last few months. Alessio is back in Italy preparing to be ordained to the Diaconate. The ministry of the deacon is described as one of service in three areas: the Word, the Liturgy and Charity.

At one of our round table discussions we talked about how Jesus sent the Twelve out two by two to preach that men should repent. This we said should give great comfort to Alessio as they didn't yet really understand Jesus' message. So don't worry if you still feel overwhelmed Alessio!