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Black Lives Matter opens a portal

Sel Nytshade

I believe that Black Lives Matter is opening a portal to a new era of human history. It is revealing a painful truth many people would rather not face. It is boldly making public the oppression faced by black communities.

I believe it is saying: 'Look, there is external oppression. The problem does not begin in individuals.'

This movement will begin the liberation of all minorities and oppressions; the disabled, the poor, the gender dysphoric, the forgotten working class, all oppressed persons. Once we realise that society can change, the door will be open to us all.

It has been both cathartic and painful. It makes me realise the following maxim: No internal development without external development. No real bettering yourself when you are being oppressed on a daily basis.

The only way to fully better ourselves as individuals is to bring down the oppressive forces which truncate us and make us live in a compromised state. When minorities are no longer forcefully classified with a negative tribal identity then we can fully begin the task of individuation.

Of course we should strive to do the best that we can whilst we are in this compromised state. We cannot bring about social change if we are all poor, broken and depressed.

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Above The premises at Mattison Road, home of Giuseppe Conlon House, include a disused church, hall and house **photo: Henrietta Cullinan**

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Donations Welcome!

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Therapy, self-healing, creative thriving, and so on, are all worth pursuing. The individual is important. But development of the individual should be done recognizing the following maxim: A plant cannot bloom in poisoned soil. Isolated plants scattered across great distances do not make a garden.

I have heard a lot of well-to-do white friends tell me it is all in me, or that it starts in me. It isn't all in me and it doesn't start with me. There is no 'me', as there is no 'you'. There is a simultaneous relation – it starts in me when it starts outside of me. People might think they are empowering others by placing all the emphasis on the individual. In reality it is frustrating and false; a platitude that leaves us in an oppressed state, wondering why we can never get anywhere. We can only bring about social change together, by being a node of consciousness in a great sea. Eventually we reach a tipping point, the system inverts, critical mass is reached and oppression is washed away by our collective tide.

Black Lives Matter is a mirror held up to society. It is a reminder that these dark and sad feelings, these inferiorities and self-hatreds come from without. Not just for black people but by extension to all oppressed people. Systematic oppression can feel like a personal problem when it isn't addressed on such a mass scale.

And why would power want it addressed? And why would those more free from systematic oppression be willing to face up to the dark truth of the freedoms they take for granted? We cannot always rely on allies and even less on the system which creates such problems in the first place.

Black Lives Matter.

Sel Nyteshade is a writer at the threshold of philosophy, psychology and spirituality.

Engaging with the Black Lives Matter movement

Ghazal Tipu

Black Lives Matter is not just another movement for the Catholic Worker to make a mental nod to and then move on. Following the shocking killing of the unarmed George Floyd in the U.S, there is now an opportunity to probe and absorb this movement and discern what it is demanding.

The London Catholic Worker needs to engage with Black Lives Matter. The London Catholic Worker, in particular, supports destitute asylum seekers who are overwhelmingly people of colour. It must engage with movements for racial justice in order to raise consciousness and to deepen compassion for the asylum seekers it is seeking to support. Refugees find themselves facing a myriad of problems: the Kafkaesque systems of the Home Office, the hostile environment policy and of course the lived experience of racism. The London Catholic Worker cannot solve these unfortunate circumstances. But by seeking to understand racism in its overt and covert guises, there is an opportunity to deepen empathy with refugees and understand more fully what it is to stand in their shoes.

Below: Ade Bethune, Works of Mercy: I was in prison and you visited me



I work for an NHS mental health organisation as a communications professional. In an interview for the staff magazine during Refugee Week, I spoke to a psychotherapist who works with refugees and asylum seekers. When I asked her how the pandemic had affected refugees she told me that while the pandemic had affected her clients negatively, the indiscriminate killing of Floyd had been more significant. 'Since this racist and horrific attack, the distress is far more severe than the distress of the pandemic,' she explained. 'A client told me that he could not bear hearing "I can't breathe" because of his experience of being tortured back in his country; this has been distressing for them, triggering memories of ill-treatment.'

Covert racism could even come from live-in volunteers, albeit unwittingly. As well as deepening compassion for refugees' lived experiences, engaging with critical race theory provides an opportunity for individuals and organisations to foster self-awareness. Armed with concepts like white privilege, white fragility and unconscious bias, volunteers can look inside themselves and identify their own potential complicity. This is not to say live-in volunteers are racist. But it is to say that engaging with these concepts provides an opportunity for reflection and self-scrutiny. If volunteers are to take their work seriously, they must bravely ask themselves if they are unknowingly racist themselves.

I've said before, in these pages, that a house of hospitality is not a utopia. But developing the project must start from a position of examining race. The question we can ask ourselves is: Does a house of hospitality recreate or reinforce the archetype of the benign white saviour and subordinate that is present in our collective psyches? The white saviour archetype is rooted in colonialism and can still be seen in international NGOs and represented through mainstream films. The Catholic Worker movement is not necessarily free of this

archetype. Often what struck me in house meetings was how reluctant the guests were to speak up and voice their needs. Is there a power dynamic at play which nullifies their sense of autonomy?

This movement needs to engage with concepts like 'white saviour complex' to engage critically with its own practices. Why is this important? Refugees have literally had the carpet pulled from under their feet and have had their choices taken away from them. They are in limbo and facing an uncertain future. Rather than being 'saved' by a house of hospitality, what they need is autonomy and to be afforded freedoms as far as possible. Many of the refugees have lived for several years at Giuseppe Conlon House. Could the London Catholic Worker offer these refugees the opportunity to become community members?

One of my early experiences of the house was observing the dinner table in which it appeared the white people sat on one side and the people of colour on the other. Over time, I came to accept this pattern as an expected part of human behaviour conveyed by the proverb, 'Birds of a feather flock together'. I said to myself: Is this pattern necessarily a bad thing? If guests sit with those they are comfortable with and those they share a common native language with, then dinner can become a place of solace and home. On the other hand, if these patterns end up forging deeper connections over time with people only of their own colour then that is problematic. A clarification of thought about race can engage with these matters.

I see all of this as an opportunity to enhance the practice of the Works of Mercy and not as a criticism. In my three years of being involved in the London Catholic Worker, I've attended one talk about race, which I gave myself, on the movement to decolonise the National Curriculum, which is incidentally gaining more traction following the Black Lives Matter demonstrations. It

isn't a coincidence that, as one of the few volunteers who is a person of colour, I was the one to convene this talk. Racism is a lived experience and it is unlikely that a white volunteer would come forward and take an interest in organising around these themes. The Catholic Worker movement needs to actively come from a place of compassion and consciousness and proactively position race as a priority and as part of its ongoing agenda.

The Black Lives Matter movement is an opportunity. So where to start? London Catholic Worker can organise a clarification of thought or invite local racial justice activists over for dinner. As part of that critical reflection, volunteers can read beyond canons by white, middle-class privileged men. The political is personal, everyone knows that. Some books which come to mind are *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* or Frantz Fanon's *White Skins, White Masks*. More contemporary works are *Brit(ish)* by Afua Hirsch and *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People about Race* by Reni Enno-Lodge.

On a personal level, for me, Black Lives Matter is a defining movement of my life. The movement has raised my own consciousness as a woman of colour. It has made me realise that I too have tried to fit in and hide parts of myself. But the brown colour of my skin won't hide. And even if I were to try and scratch it off, it would grow back the same colour. The movement has allowed me to be seen for who I truly am. It has allowed me to talk about race at work, where I see a real willingness and openness to engage with concepts like white privilege. I feel that the global pandemic has softened people's hearts. A raw and genuine feeling of indignation has swept through all sectors of society following the killing of George Floyd. May he rest in peace.

Ghazal Tipu is a communications professional, writer and activist, who volunteers at Giuseppe Conlon House and Urban Table.



The Catholic Worker in the UK

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Giuseppe Conlon House offers hospitality to destitute refugees. For the time being, Urban Table, a joint project of London Catholic Worker and URC Clapton Park, provides a takeaway meal for up to 160 vulnerable people on Sundays. We organise acts of nonviolent resistance and produce this newsletter.

The Catholic Worker Farm

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The Farm offers hospitality to destitute women. We grow organic vegetables and have a poustinia and hermitage retreat.

Glasgow Catholic Worker

www.catholicworker.org.uk
glw@catholicworker.org.uk

We offer a place of welcome for asylum seekers and destitute refugees in the centre of Glasgow at the Garnethill Multicultural Centre, open Saturday 9:00—1:00pm, and a soup kitchen on Friday nights. We keep a vigil at Faslane Nuclear Base and hold monthly meetings and prayers.

Reconciliation you say?

Rev. Nathan L. McGuire

Reconciliation you say,
A process we must engage in,
Your response to the reality you so readily ignored for so
long,
I wonder to myself,
Why now? Why has this word become so important to
you?
A word that was so far from your mind all this time I was
sharing,
You always knew,
What is different?
All this time I shared with you my pain,
Reminding you of your ancestor's societal gain.
Reconciliation you say,
Is it because I now say, no reconciliation without justice?
A paradigm you argue seems harsh and unfair,
Labelling me indifferent to your signalling for care,
I swear,
I've spoken for so many years on this word reconciliation,
While you sat around in your perfect bliss,
Some would say you're taking the p***,
I care more than you know not just about people who look
like me,
Our eternal Salvation is far from free,
Jesus, my brother and sister, judges those who follow him
with a higher standard,
Separating the goats from the sheep,
The goats I'm told, pandered,
They did not listen to the tug on their hearts,
They did not do justice hence Christ asked them to
depart,
Reconciliation you say,
Let us talk this one through,
Your new favourite word which you argue should be
implemented with haste,
Otherwise, this 'unity' will be replaced,
Your approach is being used to silence the oppressed,
Because deep down you believe we are angry pests,
When powerlessness sets in your tune changes,
don't rush, let's be strategic and oh yes let us not offend
the status quo,
lethargy designed to kill the yeast in the dough,
Whose side are you on?
One wonders again,
Christ's Kingdom is like...
Matthew 13:33
I will let you read it since you are so obviously a devotee.
I'm so tired I don't think you really understand,
Constantly battling through your eternal resolve to see
my case through,
Maybe, this is the perfect place to have a review.
If I had said nothing and we continued to do life together,
Would you have raised my plight?
Even fight, for what is right, with conviction and resolve,

History has spoken,
Injustice remains unbroken.
Reconciliation you say,
Let's be honest here,
You have allies across all ethnicities all over the world,
Complicit and trained well, upholding your power,
We both know how fragile it is,
Because when challenged it crumbles like a flower,
It's chilling this level honesty,
The truth is razor-sharp I know,
sharp like a fart,
Your ancestors whitewashed centuries of art.
Pause.
I'm sorry,
I should know better I'm a pastor,
My language and tone should be clean isn't that true, my
master?
Disaster,
Again, I'm sorry,
Foot in the mouth it's a gift that keeps on giving.
Please note your approach means black people are no
longer living,
Or breathing for that matter of fact
But, my white brother and sister, I will let you lead on this
'reconciliation act'.
Why?
Because you are so passionate about it of course,
Years and years of using oppressive force,
To keep power and riches all to yourselves,
Why would you want me to touch your wealth?
Is that not why you've put it on the very top shelf?
Reconciliation you say,
I will finish with this thought,
Imagine a world where we did not need to talk this
through,
Where blacks and whites walked in the same shoes,
Where justice and peace were experienced by all.
Like the garden of Eden before humanity's fall,
laughing together without the walls,
There is a hunger in all our hearts to be loved and not
hated,
If you paused, listened and stopped being so defensive,
You would see why reconciliation without justice is so
offensive,
You would hear that reconciliation is what our hearts cry
after.
An end to the world of segregated laughter.

*Rev. Nathan L. McGuire is associate minister at
Streatham Baptist Church. You can find more of his
writing at <https://www.nathanlmcguire.com/blog>*

Because I am white...

Susan Clarkson

I felt inspired this week to make a list of all the advantages I have enjoyed because of my unearned, white privilege. This list is not exhaustive and I need to be open to adding things to it.

Here it is so far.

I have never been afraid of being attacked, physically or verbally, for being white.

I was never bullied as a child for being white.

I have never had to think twice before going to certain areas of a city because of the colour of my skin.

Because I am part of the dominant culture in Britain, I can always get the food I like and I can always be understood when speaking English.

Because I am British and white, I've had a passport since 1971 with no problems of renewal.

Because I am British and white, I've never been refused a visa and have travelled to Cameroon, Madagascar, Afghanistan, the USA and Russia with no problem.

I've been given preferential treatment in all the countries I have visited because of my white skin. I've never felt fear of attack when in an all black area, for example, in Washington DC or LA, because of the colour of my skin.

I never questioned the whiteness of my culture, e.g. in literature, music, art. God forgive me but I still have to make myself leave my European centric cultural taste and branch out. I have never been afraid of the police and always felt safe around them because I am white. Even when arrested, I have never feared harm at the hands of the police because I am white.

In prison I was treated with care by the other prisoners because I am white – and old and disabled too, possibly.

In Cameroon, Madagascar and Afghanistan, because I was white, I was protected by physical boundaries, the walls of the compounds, secure doors and windows and by local people who watched over us and guarded us through the night.

In Afghanistan, the Afghan Peace Volunteers were placed in heightened danger because of our presence, because we were white.

Even though I was born and brought up in what has been a city on the decline for most of my life, I still enjoy more privilege than many of my fellow citizens whose origins are in the former empire.

Susan Clarkson blogs at [Reflections on a Journey in Faith susanclarksondotcom.wordpress.com](http://susanclarksondotcom.wordpress.com).

Written while attending a course: [Black Lives Matter: Whiteness and racial justice learning for Quakers](#)

Below: Susan's home town of Bradford

Editorial

As Sel Nytshade and Ghazal Tipu remind us, Black Lives Matter is a portal and an opportunity. It is an important call to the London Catholic Worker, for compassion and solidarity, for continuing reflection, for further inquiry into its anarchist roots. It is a desire for true fellowship. Assembling this newsletter has led me, personally, to consider new topics, or at least old ones in a different light. Exploring the engagement of the Catholic Worker with BLM, both historically and now in the UK, I hope will be a guide for many issues to come.

A recent biography of Dorothy Day (see p9) describes her visit to *Koinonia*, the 'inter-racial' farming community founded by Baptist minister Clarence Jordan. At the time, the community, in south Georgia, suffered greatly from local boycotts, harassment and violent attacks on their property and livestock. For several weeks in 1957, Day took part in the work of the community, listened to their stories and witnessed how the local boycott made it hard for them to buy seed and fertilizer, and sell their produce. While on night watch, the vehicle she was in was shot at, leaving her very shaken. She wrote three letters to her regular column, *On Pilgrimage* in the *Catholic Worker* paper. I include part of the third letter.

Dorothy Day in Koinonia

'There is so much work around here, that the time flies, and I could not write each day. So many things happen too, little things, but frightening. Yesterday Clarence Jordan was coming home from Americus, at high noon and as he drove alone in the station wagon, a pickup truck without a license suddenly cut in in front of him so close in its attempt to force him off the road, to wreck his car, that his fender was damaged and his car was all but turned over. [...] When he came in he telephoned the sheriff but of course he was not believed.

In addition, the bags of pecans and the other packages which were being shipped out by post and freight office, were damaged by having turpentine sprinkled on them by persons unknown during the short time the driver of the car was in the post and freight offices. **[continued on page 9]**





Above: Fr. Martin Newell and Rev. Sue Parfitt on top of a DLR train at Shadwell station, East London, in October 2019 during the XR two week Rebellion. **Photo:** Christian Climate Action

Canning Town and Shadwell from the roof of a train

Fr. Martin Newell cp

So much is determined by where you start from: whether it is a marginal place in society, such as the one inhabited by asylum seekers and refugees, or the spaces inhabited by homeless people, or a prison cell, or the roof of a Docklands Light Railway [DLR] train.

I have lived and worked alongside those who are in all of those places. The last one has been the most controversial recently. The action I took part in last October has been called foolish, mistaken, and counter-productive, among many things. We left north London early one Friday morning. First we arrived at the wrong station, before reaching Shadwell DLR station 15 minutes later than intended, just as rush hour approached. This was one of a number of aspects of the action that did not go to plan. Another was that we had no banner with us, because we were not happy with the ones we had been given, and there was no time to find an alternative.

These examples give a sense of the shortcomings of our planning which led to some mistakes. The action was rushed. Preparation time was short. I realised afterwards that I had mistakenly assumed certain things had been thought through by others. I felt that we should have tempered our sense of urgency with a more careful consideration of all the elements. However, time was not on our side. And this kind of direct action always seems to throw up unanticipated factors, one way or another.

The parallel action at Canning Town station that same morning became, in the words of one journalist, a ‘man-bites-dog’ story that went round the world. Two men from Extinction Rebellion (XR) were dragged off the roof of a Jubilee Line train onto the crowded platform and attacked. Supporters on the platform were afraid for their own safety, and some of them had questions about the planning and preparation.

However. However. I do not regret taking part in the action at Shadwell. The climate and ecological emergency will lead – is already leading to – has already lead to, even in this

country – much more serious disruption of the routines of daily life than this.

I lived in Newham for five years, working in the Catholic parishes there, including four years at St. Margaret’s Canning Town. After the action, I went to join some friends of mine, who were setting up an XR Newham group, at a stall in Canning Town. Interestingly, the only non-XR local person who mentioned the events at Shadwell said, in reference to the controversy surrounding it, ‘Oh, don’t worry about that! That’s just in the Twitter sphere’. A few weeks later XR Newham recruited hundreds of new members in one afternoon at a stall outside Stratford station.

So for these and other reasons, I don’t believe this action was counter-productive. Yes, membership of XR stopped growing at the end of that two week ‘Rebellion’. Yes, there seemed to be a loss of energy in XR after that. On the other hand, the protests had not been getting the level of attention or positive public or media support they did in April. But that was never likely. In April, we had been like a football team that won 5-0 with new tactics that the other

team had no idea how to counter, despite their superior resources.

This time, six months later in October, it was only the 'train action' that 'cut through' the noise of mobile social media and vast numbers of television channels and other distractions. The action even reached India: a regional newspaper reported on two priests – Rev. Sue Parfitt and I – arrested for being on top a train in London.

In October the police took a harsher approach which took a lot out of those who took part, many of whom were perhaps naive about how easy it would be to do what we planned, based on the April experience. But I believe the message of the urgency of the climate and ecological emergency went around the world again, with a snapshot vision of the disruption and its consequences that this reality will bring, and is already bringing, with it.

The XR honeymoon period is well and truly over. Now the long slog begins. As I write, we are in the middle of another Rebellion, alive and vigorous, despite the coronavirus pandemic. One part of the long slog is for XR to become more mature. This involves outreach to, for example, black and minority ethnic and working class communities. Which have been, for me personally, the context of the bulk of my adult life.

Now what is needed is the courage and perseverance, along with a combination of urgency and patience, to be ready to stand up and continue the struggle, in season and out. For those of us who are Christians, we need to keep taking the time to pray, to discern our path and the choices that face us, to see that the Holy Spirit is leading us. We need to be prepared to follow the example of Jesus, the marginal Jew.

I started writing on Sunday August 30th. The readings for Mass that day are instructive:

Jeremiah says,

You seduced me Lord, and I have let myself be seduced. You have overpowered me; you were the stronger. I am a daily laughing-stock, everybody's butt. Each time I speak, I have to howl and proclaim: "Violence and ruin!" The word of the Lord has meant for me insult, derision, all day long. I used to say, "I will not think about him, I will not speak his name any more." Then there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones.'

The psalm continues the sentiment of unavoidable need for God, something that was very real for me in those days late last year.

'O God... for you my soul is thirsting, my body pines for you... Your love is better than life... My soul clings to you, your right hand holds me fast.'

Saint Paul, writing to the Romans, reminds them, as we need so often to be reminded,

'Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind [the mind of Christ].'

Jesus reminds His disciples that He is destined to suffer and to be executed. Jesus harshly tells

Peter that Satan is speaking through him, when Peter tries to persuade him to follow another, easier, path. He reminds them that to follow Him is to be prepared to renounce ourselves, to be willing to really lose our lives for Truth and Goodness and Love. For what is more precious than Life?

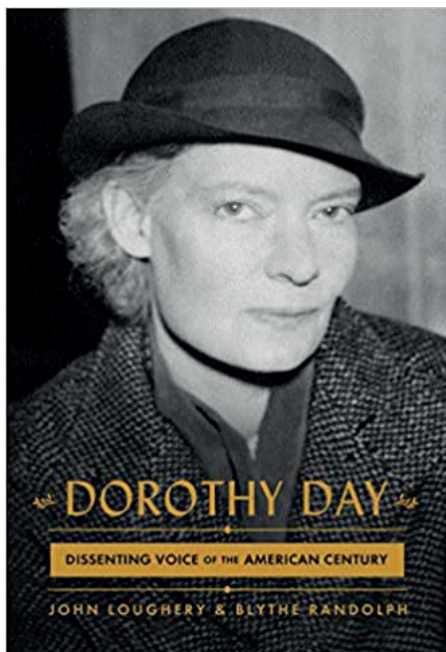
These words give me strength for the cultural and spiritual revolution that is needed, that 'revolution of the heart' that Dorothy Day talked about so often. We need to learn to live in the new relationship to God's Earth and God's poor that Pope Francis wrote so eloquently about in *Laudato Si*. We are living in a new age, an age where the human family has the future of all life on God's garden planet, God's Eden, God's Temple of this Earth, always in our hands. I pray that we can learn quickly to take good care of God's gift.

Fr. Martin Newell cp is a founder of the London Catholic Worker. He lives in a house of hospitality for refugees in Birmingham.

To read more about Christian Climate Action, including further reflections on the action at Shadwell station visit <https://christianclimateaction.org>

Below: Phil Kingston glued to the side of the train. **Photo:** Christian Climate Action





Book review

Dorothy Day: Dissenting Voice of the American Century

John Loughery and Blythe
Randolph

Simon and Schuster

ISBN

978-1982103491

448 pp

Sam Hickford

Dorothy Day was disdainful of the inertia of the Catholic Church in the U.S.A. in the face of mounting inequality and increasingly mechanised and unethical warfare. Such disdain led to a very antique solution. A Medieval House of Hospitality in New York for the exponentially increasing, impoverished and homeless population, influenced by the vision of Peter Maurin, a French vagabond who chanced into Dorothy. This House of Hospitality (which originated from the paper, *Catholic Worker*) was of its time; it helped to alleviate the worst excesses of the Great Depression. It also helped to provide a refuge for conscientious objectors, who were still sent to prison for their refusal of the draft during World War II. It was part of

a sustained vision for a humane world, in opposition to warfare and the idea that a military government could be expected to reliably alleviate poverty, which also included farming communes.

This story is well-known, and telling it risks cliché, or consigning this difficult struggle to the annals of grisly twentieth century (American) history. We needed Houses of Hospitality then: now, especially in the U.K., we have a benefits system which, I've heard it argued, ensures that nobody needs Dorothy Day's fiery and urban brand of voluntary poverty. Yet so much of the latest biography of Dorothy Day - written by John Loughery and Blythe Randolph - places her squarely in the maelstrom of the twenty-first century; in conflicts which have simply not been resolved yet. Her endless struggles for racial equality are skilfully and presciently highlighted in the book; she persistently and forcefully asked why there were so few black Catholic priests, and was part of a committee lambasting anti-Semitism before World War II.

She had a fierce dispute with some in her House of Hospitality in New York City - even one of her fellow community members viciously attacked her - for her profound and pioneering generosity to the black community in New York. On the question of racial discrimination, she was at odds with so many around her, even Catholic writers, like Hilaire Belloc, who influenced the *Catholic Worker* so profoundly.

That Dorothy Day's life matters now, and her struggles are unfinished (she was also an anti-nuclear campaigner, and nuclear warheads emphatically persist), is made alive by this timely and meticulous biography. Nor is Day's struggle solely 'American'. We learn, in countless ways, that Dorothy was a committed Anglophile, and that her ideas

and dynamism were charged with interactions with English writers. W.H. Auden, of all people, rescued the New York Catholic Worker from financial ruin, and Dorothy corresponded with Aldous Huxley, sharing his fear of a modern society in which true humanity is sanitised away. The relationship is one of the many surprising relationships that the two biographers draw attention to, informing us that Huxley and Day were in 'full agreement about prayer as an act of mortification'.

For those in the U.K. energised by her message, this biography brings Dorothy Day's vision across the Atlantic and pinpoints its enduring relevance to the conflicts of today. This is aided by the extensive research of the biographers, which leaves no stone unturned in Dorothy's early life. A harrowing incident in her Greenwich Village days recalls an Augustine-like moment in her journey towards faith, one that Day rightly avoids in her autobiography *The Long Loneliness*, in which she witnesses the heroin-induced death of one of her accomplices. However, while the biography beautifully relates the full intellectual and political history of Day's life, I do find it difficult to reconstruct what daily life at the New York Catholic Worker must have actually been like. Namely, we don't get a sense of how Dorothy Day's day took shape, and how the New York Catholic Worker - at its less intense moments - was lived. This is slightly frustrating to someone with an enduring commitment to the Catholic Worker community in London. Yet perhaps we must seek this elsewhere, and embrace how deeply pertinent this biography makes Dorothy Day.

Sam Hickford has worked as a teacher, editor, care-worker, note-taker. He is a live-in volunteer at Giuseppe Conlon House.



Above: 'Elbit arms: tested on children' Street protest outside the offices of Elbit Systems in London. Red paint, symbolising the blood spilled in Palestine, is visible on the pavement and the front entrance.

Photo Henrietta Cullinan

Palestine Action

Kieron Turner

After a month of successful actions at sites around the country, Palestine Action held a public protest outside the London offices of Elbit Systems, Israel's largest private arms producer. Palestine Action's growing popularity has begun to be seen as a threat to both Elbit's business in the UK and Israel's apartheid regime.

At a recent meeting between Israel's Minister of Strategic Affairs, Orit Farkash-Hacohen and the British Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, Minister Farkash Hacohen demanded that the British government take action against the BDS campaign that protests both Elbit Systems and Israel's apartheid regime, specifically referring to the successful actions of Palestine Action.

This meeting took place before the Palestine Action protest on Saturday 5th September outside 77 Kingsway, home to Elbit Systems head offices. Throughout the afternoon, police attempted to crack down on, coerce and repress the protest, violently arresting Palestine Action activists, throwing a Palestinian woman to the ground in the process of one arrest. She was arrested, for protesting the war criminals that maintain and operate Elbit Systems war profiteering here in the UK.

We welcome the recognition of our actions by the Foreign Secretary and Strategic Affairs Minister Farkash-Hacohen in such a high profile meeting as free advertising for Palestine Action. But more importantly, we see that these threats to crackdown on Palestine Action and BDS campaigners reveal one important thing. We are winning.

Palestine Action is a new grassroots network of activists dedicated to ending Israeli apartheid, occupation and colonisation. In one month we have expanded our support, escalated our actions against Elbit Systems and threatened the legitimacy of its profiteering from Israel's apartheid regime and the subsequent war crimes that maintain it. This attempt to crack down on BDS activism shows that we have the potential to shut Elbit down and end all UK complicity with Israel's apartheid regime. If we continue to expand, if we continue to grow our support, and if we continue to escalate we can and we will win.

This is the state of affairs. The UK government, through the use anti-protesting legislation, is working to protect the interests of Israeli apartheid and Elbit's war profiteering. It is attempting this through coercion and intimidation of the right to protest, by violently oppressing its own citizens and protesters while simultaneously failing to hold Elbit Systems to account for their immorality, their illegality and their violations of international law with the weapons they produce and export to be tested and deployed upon a besieged, refugee and occupied Palestinian population.

This must be countered, and every step the UK government takes to repress Palestine Action and BDS activists, is another step towards our victory at shutting Elbit down for good and ultimately the severing of all links between the UK and Israel's apartheid regime. These threats show us that those who support and maintain Israeli apartheid, occupation and colonisation are running scared. Palestine Action has the energy, the passion and the potential to win. Now is the time to join us. Now is the time to get organised to get mobilised and to #ShutElbitDown.

To find out more about the work of Palestine Action visit
<https://palestineaction.org/news/>

[continued from page 5]

Every noon the whole community has lunch together, and letters are read from all over the country from friends, letters, which are calculated to encourage and strengthen those who are here. I noticed while the letters were being read that the strain was telling on Clarence Jordan -- his eyes were sad and tired and his face showed the terrible strain he has been under.

The fact of the matter is that he is the target. He is the minister, he is the founder of Koinonia, and it is his planning and vision which has kept things going since 1942. He has consistently tried to follow the teachings of Jesus, living the Gospel message of love of brother. The entire way of life of the community -- the firm foundation of non-ownership, is a challenge to the capitalist system of America.

If others followed the example of Clarence Jordan -- if priests and ministers throughout the country set out with their flocks, to build up a new society within the shell of the old by the hard labor of their hands, an oasis where they would be common ownership and the responsibilities which went with that common ownership, the problems of tenant farming, sharecropping, day labor, peonage, destitution, debt, and so on, would be solved [...]. There would be less absentee ownership, corporation farming. There would be the farming commune envisaged by Peter Maurin as a solution to unemployment, old age, sickness, alienation of all kinds.

There is growth. Whether or not Koinonia succeeds or fails, whether or not the families here move elsewhere, shaking the dust from their feet of this hostile town of Americus, this hostile country of Sumpter, integration of the races will continue.

"What we want to do," Clarence Jordan says, "is simply the will of God. If He shows us we should move, we will move, but as up to now, our conviction is that we must stay. And how I'd like to forget about all this furor and get out there in those fields and plant a few tons of peanuts." '

From Dorothy Day's column, On Pilgrimage, May 1957 in the Catholic Worker newspaper

<https://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/articles/722.html>

Giuseppe Conlon House



Above: Detlef Piepenbrink, who many at Giuseppe Conlon House knew as Declan, first visited us at St. Peter's Cafe in De Beauvoir, Hackney.

A member of our family

Nora Ziegler

On Sunday 5th July, our friend Detlef Piepenbrink, who we knew as Declan, died in intensive care, only a few days after being hospitalised. After his death, they found that he had lung cancer. Many of you who have met him at one of our events or have stayed at Giuseppe Conlon House will no doubt remember him fondly. He has been a member of the London Catholic Worker community longer than any of us who live at GCH now. He first became involved with this community through Peter's Community Cafe in De Beauvoir, Hackney. Over recent years he would visit GCH two or three times a week to share a meal and conversation.

It often felt difficult to sustain a coherent conversation with Declan. Yet in significant ways he spoke truth about the world we live in. He was kind, humble, compassionate and generous. Sometimes spending time with him felt like exhausting work.

But it was the kind of work that is worth doing, that makes it worth being in community. He was one of the people that make community necessary and possible because he allowed us to care for him in the ways we could and, in turn, cared for us in the ways he could. With a friendly smile, an anecdote, a Christmas card, a little donation, or a song. He was always there; a member of our family. He was one of the people we too often take for granted.

At GCH people come and go and we often find that the space they leave is filled very quickly. This is not because people are replaced but because our time and energy is quickly absorbed by other tasks, other people, other problems. We therefore want to take the time to grieve Declan's passing and to celebrate his life and the time we shared. We are planning to hold a memorial service for Declan in our church space at Mattison Road when restrictions on social gatherings are lifted so that more people are able to come.

Update

Life at Giuseppe Conlon House is much the same as when you heard from us in June. Our guests are all well and are living in hotels and hostel accommodation throughout London, provided by the authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we only have five guests with us at the moment. We still do not have any public events here at the house or external volunteer cooks. We have found it a challenge to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, but also had some unexpected joys. There has been no shortage of food supplies. Br. Johannes is back in the community and Joseph has moved on to help his family with some building works.

We are still helping to organise and cook for Urban Table, which takes place on Sundays and delivers food to vulnerable people in the Hackney area. The project has changed a lot but survived the flotsam and jetsam of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, we have also taken on an entirely new project: Friday Free Food - a scheme to provide food to people in the local area, which we now do every Friday evening. The numbers vary, but on one evening we served around 35 people. We're still clarifying the details around this, but the project seems to be going very well so far, and we hope that, with guidance, it will continue to blossom.

Our church door has been providentially fixed by our dear friend, Chris. We can now open the doors by the Mary grotto in the morning again to allow people to come in for a moment of solitude or quiet.



Above: Volunteers from Giuseppe Conlon House serve free food in Haringey at the new Friday Free Food project. **Photo:** London Catholic Worker

Enough for fifty

COVID restrictions mean some volunteers have been cooking a large pot of food for Urban Table at home.

Black-eyed beans with aubergine and green beans

3kg dried black-eyed beans
15 - 20 onions

four heads of garlic

two pieces of ginger about 6cm long

12 aubergines, cut into 2cm chunks

10 400g tins of tomatoes

carrier bag of green beans, chopped into 2cm lengths

salt and pepper, smoked paprika and chilli flakes

Soak the beans overnight with a spoonful of bicarbonate of soda. In the morning, drain and cook until tender.

Lay the aubergine chunks onto baking trays with oil, salt and pepper. Roast in the oven until tender.

Slice or chop the onions. Finely chop the garlic and ginger.

In a large 30 litre pot, heat up about 1cm sunflower oil. Add the onions. When they are well cooked down - they'll look more stewed than fried - add the garlic and ginger. Keep stirring and cooking. Meanwhile open the tins of tomatoes. Add the

tomatoes, salt, pepper, smoked paprika, chilli flakes to taste. Keep stirring until the tomato sauce is a nice dark reddish brown colour. You can now build the dish! Add the aubergine, beans, some of the bean water and the green beans. Keep heating through until the green beans are cooked.

Hi everyone, my name is Mo. I would just like to summarise my time at Urban Table. I was gently introduced to it about three years ago. I am extremely lucky to have joined when it had been established by these wonderful people. From the first moment I started I was made to feel valued though my skills are little, a little cog in a big wheel so to speak. I love the ethos and how it is well organised. I have met and continue to meet lovely volunteers and guests. I thank God for it. Long may it continue.



The Catholic Worker Farm needs your help!

The Catholic Worker Farm has been hit hard financially due to the COVID - 19 restrictions. They will be losing approximately £25 000 in funding this year.

Anything you can do would be greatly appreciated. The money will be used for rent, food and utilities.

To donate please visit:
thecatholicworkerfarm.org

Vigils

Join the Giuseppe Conlon House community at their regular Thursday vigil.

Prayerful witness calling on government to ensure safe passage for refugees.

Home Office, Marsham Street, Thursday 1st October and Thursday 5th November 12:30pm.

Prayers for rough sleepers and marginalised people in the local area.

Finsbury Park near the Manor House entrance. Thursday 15th October and Thursday 19th November 12.30pm.

Giuseppe Conlon House Wish List

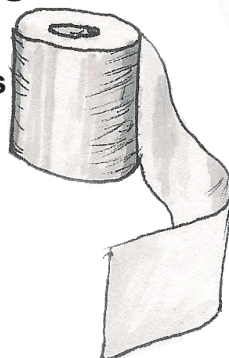
Food

Chopped tomatoes
Peanut butter
Cooking oil
Kidney beans
Lentils
Chickpeas
Easy-cook rice
 Basmati rice
 Brown rice
 Oats
 Couscous
 Noodles
 White vinegar
 Hummus
 Nutritional yeast
 Tahini
 Soy sauce
 Spices & herbs
 Honey
 Muesli
 Breakfast cereal
 Fruit juice and squash
 Herbal teabags
 Chilli sauce
 Nuts and seeds



Toiletries

Toilet paper
Toothbrushes
 Toothpaste
 Deodorant
 Shampoo
 Liquid soap
 Razors



Cleaning

Eco-friendly products:

Anti-bacterial spray
 Bicarbonate of soda
 Multi-purpose cleaner
 Toilet cleaner
 Laundry detergent
 Floor cleaner



Miscellaneous

NEW Men's underwear
 M-XL
 Candles and tea lights
 Umbrellas



Support our work

We are a part of the radical, Christian, pacifist Catholic Worker movement started in 1933 in New York by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. There are now over 150 houses and communities in the United States and in other countries. Catholic Worker houses are financially independent. There are no headquarters, nor is there a central organisation. For more on the international movement visit: www.catholicworker.com.

At Giuseppe Conlon House we run a house of hospitality for around twenty homeless, destitute asylum seekers who are not allowed to work or claim benefits. In collaboration with two local churches we also serve a meal for over fifty people on Sunday afternoons.

Donations welcome!

We are not paid for this work. We receive nothing from the government. For reasons to do with our political witness, we are not a registered charity.

We rely on our readers' donations to pay utility bills, volunteer and guest expenses, for building repairs, printing, and household supplies.

Ways to donate:

Cheque: send cheques payable to 'London Catholic Worker', to Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG

Online banking: London Catholic Worker, Triodos Bank, Acc No: 20066996 Sort Code: 16 58 10 IBAN:GB98NWBK60000410018573

Paypal: visit our home page www.londoncatholicworker.org

Standing Order: to arrange a standing order use the adjacent form (left) or visit www.londoncatholicworker.org

Please do not donate pork or pork products!

Many of our guests do not eat pork for religious reasons. Also, please do not donate soup, tinned spaghetti or baked beans as we already have enough.

Standing Order Form <small>Please use block letters</small>	
I wish to pay the London Catholic Worker £10/ £20/£40/other amount per month/ other	
Payments to be made monthly/ other First Payment to be made on: / / 20 and monthly thereafter	
Name of your bank	
Address of your bank	
Your account name	
Your account number	
Your bank sort code	
Please pay:	For the Credit of: London Catholic Worker
Triodos Bank	Account Number 20066996
Deanery Road	Sort Code: 16 58 10
Bristol BS1 5AS	Until further notice the sum of the value indicated above
Signed	Date
Please return to :	Your Name and Address
London Catholic Worker	
49 Mattison Road	
London N4 1BG	Email