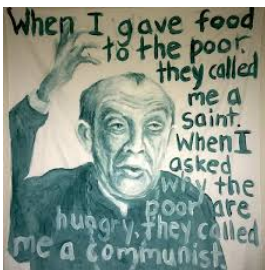

Wallyhouse News



A Franciscan Catholic Worker at St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church,
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Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin founded the Catholic Worker movement on May 1, 1933 in NY City with the inaugural edition of the Catholic Worker newspaper. Their vision based on the radical life and message of Jesus, continues today in over 200 CW communities, in cities and on farms, throughout the world. Wallyhouse, the Honolulu Catholic Worker founded in March 2018, too, is committed to nurturing the poor in body, mind and spirit, non-violent resistance of oppression and practicing radical acts of kindness.



From Dom Helder Câmara (1909-1999), Archbishop of Olinda and Recife, Brazil:

“A look, a smile, gestures of peace and friendship, attention and delicacy, these are the universal language, capable of demonstrating that we are much closer to one another than we imagined. Everywhere kindness touches, injustice wounds, peace is an ideal.” — *Spiral of Violence*

Standing in friendship and solidarity with Christchurch CW, New Zealand

As soon as we heard the horrible news of the mosque shootings in New Zealand, we thought of our sister Catholic Worker community in Christchurch. Fr. Jim Consedine responded to Wally Inglis's message of friendship and solidarity with the following poem:

Terror at the Mosque by Jim Consedine

a lone killer, morally rudderless
fueled by Islamophobic racism
that hideous code of supremacy
spewing venomous bile
strikes sacred lambs at Friday prayers
butchering brutally
gentle folk, fifteen countries
hearts open only to Allah

as our nation reels
recoiling from the horror
their blood cries from the earth
ninety-eight shot, fifty fatal

a mindless massacre
which leaves families bereft
thousands traumatized
the world aghast

shrouded in sorrow
left to weep into our futures
we must avoid poison pits
quagmires of bigotry, hatred
embrace Cosmic Love
the universal creed of all faiths
sow seeds of inclusivity, respect
in deeper, richer soil

More than ever we need to live and spread the message of nonviolence, and to show loving solidarity with our Muslim brothers and sisters everywhere. Thank you, Jim, for your sharing and helping us to better clarify our thoughts, which hopefully will bear fruit through action.

Blessings to Christchurch CW and the grieving people of your city.

Friendship extends West too:

Visitors have been important to us during our first year as a Catholic Worker community. They remind us that we are much more than a handful of residents and volunteers living and working in a small house on the edge of a church parking lot. Their presence and encouragement make us realize that we are part of a global community with a long history and deep spiritual roots.

We were privileged a month ago when Sr. Anna Koop, a Loretto sister and founder of the Denver Catholic Worker house in 1978, came to help us serve food at the weekly lunch for our houseless neighbors. An energetic octogenarian, she was in town visiting her friend Rosemary Casey, a friend and supporter of Wallyhouse.

A 2016 fire in the house she founded 40 years ago forced Anna to relocate, but their community's mission continues despite the setback. In a recent interview, she spoke of her "passion to live with homeless people ... not just people I'm taking care of, but friends with whom I'm living."

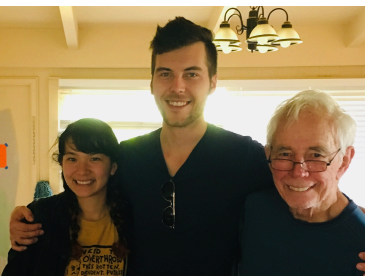
Visitors and correspondents connect us to the earliest days of the Catholic Worker movement, founded in the 1930s by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin.

Sr. Anna first met Dorothy at the New York mother house, later hosting her in Denver. Dorothy is also a strong presence in our Honolulu house, with two portraits sent by her granddaughter, Martha Hennessy. Also helping to educate and inspire us are the numerous newsletters we exchange with Catholic Worker communities ranging from New Zealand to Connecticut.



Other recent visitors are Patrick Stall and Jade Suganuma from Bishop Dingman House in Des Moines,

Iowa, a city with a long Catholic Worker history. Tony, a Palama neighbor and regular at our Tuesday lunch, speaks fondly of his contact in earlier years with Catholic Worker houses across the country: in New York, where he once met Dorothy Day, as well as in Des Moines, where he encountered veteran Catholic Worker activist, Frank Cordaro.



A friend of Niambi's, Sarah Dole, not a Worker but a nurse who fit in well, came from New Hampshire to offer a health day to our community. Even a representative of the entertainment world

has come to our doors, not just to visit but to help. Late last year Eddie Cahill, actor and volunteer at the Los Angeles Catholic Worker, was in town to film a segment of the famed TV series, "Hawaii 5-0." During a work break, he walked from Waikiki (no short stroll!) to join us for a few hours and return again for Sunday mass at St. Elizabeth's.

Yes, visitors continue to enrich and uplift us as our community takes root here in Honolulu. We look forward to the arrival of many more who will strengthen bonds with our Catholic Worker sisters and brothers throughout the world.



Do we Empower or Enable? by David Catron

Recently a leader of our Church wondered aloud if, by providing our houseless community with basic necessities, we were enabling their indolent lifestyle, as opposed to encouraging them to improve themselves and, not incidentally, to leave our area. "After all," the thinking goes, "why should these people leave when they've got it so good by staying?" (By "good" they refer to the services we provide as Catholic Workers: food, hygiene kits, laundry, clothing, internet access, an art studio, and soon, a hot shower and a community peace garden). This sentiment, spoken by one person, surely reflects the unspoken thoughts of many. This is America, a nation of hardworking, god-fearing individuals who succeed by getting ahead. We don't need to be enabling bad behavior by pretending to empower good.

Even we as Catholic Workers are not immune to this thinking. While our houseless guests encamped all around us are relatively peaceful, their very presence attracts youthful gangs from neighboring communities who prey on them, stealing clothing and valuables, sometimes even assaulting them. We are judged as enablers of this criminal activity, which spills over to us.

Reasonable people can differ on the meaning of "good" and "bad." Which is why our founders, Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day, sidestepped these imponderables and focused their attention instead on the Works of Mercy found in Matthew 25 of the Christian New Testament. Some of these are featured on two banners on either side of our main altar here at St. Elizabeth's (see photo). As example, "I was naked and you gave me clothing" does not ask us to judge the petitioner's appearance ("you don't look needy to me"), or to ask the purpose of a new outfit ("a job interview?") but rather to respond out of mercy.

Doesn't this set us up for abuse? In Brazil we used to honor requests for bus tokens until we found out our clients were exchanging them for shots of *cachaça* (Brazil's "rum") at a nearby bar. But what if one of those young men used his to go downtown to the public library?

Charity is hard if judging is required. The good news is we are not called to judge, for we are not qualified. Nobody is.

More good news. Acts of Mercy do not benefit the receiver nearly as much as the giver. This is underplayed so much people think it is a quaint notion from centuries past. Nor is it necessary to "love your neighbor," a high bar we sometimes cannot clear, given the nature of the people we serve. The only requirements are tolerance and a desire we all share to do good, to get out of ourselves for a bit and revel in the quiet joy of community. This is not enabling bad behavior, it is empowering the good. Leo Tolstoy put it this way: "Joy can be real only if people look upon their life as a service, and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness."



Wallyhouse hours of service:



Monday-Friday 8:00am - 12:00pm and 2:00pm - 4:00pm
Saturday 8:00am - 12:00pm
Saturday afternoon and Sunday: CLOSED

Tuesdays 11:00am Kay's Cafe - a delectable hot lunch
3rd Fridays 2:00pm Community meeting with local houseless
Last Mondays 5:30pm Potluck and Clarification of Thought
First Business Day 11:30am Peace Vigil at State Capital



COME and VOLUNTEER if you are local, and/or

MAKE a tax-deductible Charitable Contribution!

(Make checks payable to St. Elizabeth's Catholic Worker—mail to address on masthead. Thank you!)

Counting the Homeless by Wally Inglis

The Mayor's Office of Housing, in releasing results of an annual point-in-time count of our island's homeless population, reports that there are 4,311 people without permanent housing. Some are in temporary shelters, but most have no roof over their heads. In other words, some good news and a lot of bad news: the overall number is down 4% from 2018; the number of people living on sidewalks, parks and beaches is up 12%! My personal response to all of this is one of skepticism. Having been a member on a "counting" team one year, I have reason to doubt the reliability of the results. Our instructions were to not count people who chose not to be interviewed. During my one night on the streets, I encountered several obviously unhoused individuals who took that option. I'm not alone in believing that the numbers are much higher than a one-week canvass can accurately count.

In the midst of these seemingly conflicting statistics, one can either succumb to paralysis—or take the stance that statistics are not that much help anyway for us who interact with homeless people, close-up and on a daily basis. For those rooted in the Catholic Worker tradition, the people living in tents behind our house and along the entire street are our friends and neighbors. They are part of our community. And they are certainly not statistics!

After analyzing the data, the report gives instructions which are a direct challenge to our Wallyhouse mission: "We encourage community members to think twice before ... providing food and supplies to unsheltered persons, without the presence of a professional provider." We Catholic Workers don't need to think twice before following the gospel mandate of feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. Although we are merely rejecting governmental advice, and not breaking any laws, our convictions are strengthened by our "ancestors" in the Catholic Worker movement who did not hesitate to practice civil disobedience in the name of a higher law. To end on a positive note, I call attention to one statement in the report from the Mayor's Office with which all of us can agree: "As long as one person remains homeless, our work is never done."

Wisdom from Chickens by Niambi Mercado (*Note: Honolulu is graced with lots of feral chickens*)

"Cock-a-doodle-doo!" It's three a.m. and the rooster right outside my window has decided to make his presence known... again. The three a.m. wake-up calls usually do not keep me up long, but the sudden unwanted alarm clock does bring out a certain murderous intent that I do not have at another time in my day. Yet after an hour or two more of sleep and saying our communal Daily Morning Prayer, the thoughts of eradicating all chickens vanish and my appreciation for their determination and consistency returns. That is what it means to live in community: loving the good, tolerating the annoying, and communicating about both.



"Chirp, Chirp, Skua!" It's noontime when I hear the chirping of a lost chick followed by the clucks of a worried mother hen. The chick is reunited with its brood and together, the group starts foraging for food in our backyard. Sometimes I feel like that lost chick crying out for comfort, looking for a hug. Other times I feel like the worried hen running around ensuring my brood is safe. One time I had to find a wheelchair that had been stolen, another time I rushed to open our gates so a woman could hide from her boyfriend who was yelling at her. Living in community means adapting to the situation that is presented.



"SKWAAAAA!" It's three o'clock in the afternoon and a chicken is screaming bloody murder. I turn to look out the back window and see a child chasing a chicken around the yard. I'm furious because the child had to jump the fence in order to reach the chicken, shattering our privacy boundary. The poor chicken has been harassed by these children for weeks. The children catch the chickens and sell them to people who use them in cock fights. This particular chicken is bigger than the other males, and stands out as a prize amongst the youth in our neighborhood. The chicken is currently huddled in the corner of our yard and is even being harassed by other chickens. Being different is hard, finding communities that will love you for your differences is even harder. Wallyhouse is a place for the lost chickens of the world to find community; a place to roost for as long as you need. *Thank you neighbor artist Liejun Wu's watercolors inspired by the chickens.*