

To Make Love Loved

Dorothy Day

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Summary: An appeal for funds. Lauds begging and says what is given is given to Christ who is sometimes hard to see in the destitute. Says all are poor in some way. (DDLW #912).

To our Fellow Poor:

Who are all poor in one way or another, in soul, mind or body, in exterior or interior goods. Yet even the widow gave her mite, and the little boy his loaves and fishes, and the Lord will see to it that they are multiplied to cover our needs.

All through the year we take what comes to us from day to day to keep our three houses going in this area, and sometimes clothes come in, sometimes bread, and last week a whole carton of tea! It is only twice a year that we imitate most truly the poverty of Christ, and beg. There is a story of St. Francis, how when he was a guest in the house of Cardinal Ugolino, he did not eat the food offered but went out to beg, saying playfully: "I have shown you honor by giving honor to a greater Lord in your house, for the Lord takes great pleasure in poverty, especially in the form of voluntary begging."

Individually, we beg from the one who holds the purse here and that is only filled by you, our readers. In return we give what we have, *The Catholic Worker*, its articles and reviews, and our services as your stewards to the destitute who come to our doors. Your house is full, the breadline comes morning and afternoon, and there are always fallen ones on your doorstep. We are commanded to love our brothers with a love that moves us to give ourselves and what we have earned by our hard work, our life's blood. It is truly giving up our life for our friend. We are commanded to see Christ in them ("inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these ye have done it unto me") and that is a supreme act of faith when we can see so little semblance to Christ in these men and women who are groveling like beasts, who are stupefied by drink *and by want*. To see Christ in His most destitute ones, and not to refuse an alms to Him, is sometimes the only way by which we know that the faith and the love of God is in us. It is hard indeed to see Christ beneath the bruises, the filth and the spittle.

The Cure of Ars used to say, "We should never repulse the poor. If we cannot give them anything let us pray the good God to inspire someone else to do so. Some say 'they will make bad use of what I give them.' Let them make what use of it they will; they have to answer for the use they make of your alms, and you will have to answer for the giving or not giving it."

Pope Pius XII says we should never hesitate in contracting debts to serve the poor but we confess to grave qualms as we see the mounting food costs. Every time we sit down to table

we wonder if there will be enough to go around and there always is, praise God, and thanks to our friends, and to Chu and Bill who are cooking here and to Hans who bakes the bread at Peter Maurin Farm, and to John and Joe who raise vegetables and can them at Maryfarm.

The greatest need to our hearts is to love, and the surest way to increase that fire is to throw on it the fuel of our alms. So please help us once again. We beg in the name of St. Francis, and in the name of St. Therese, whose desire was to make love loved.

Gratefully in Christ,
DOROTHY DAY