

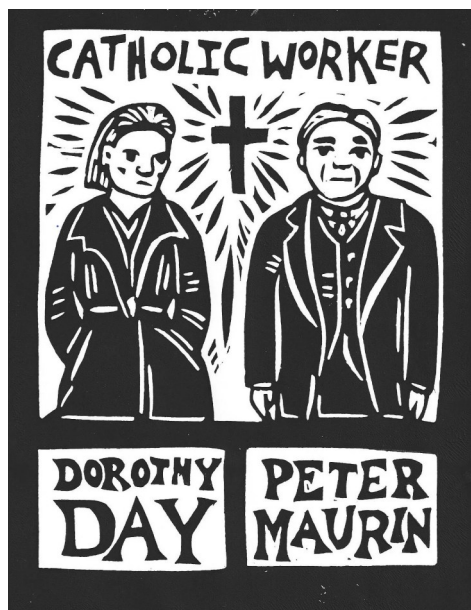


The Vermont

Catholic Worker

www.vtcatholicworker.org

The Best Kept Secret of the Catholic Church



artwork by Sarah Fuller, www.sarahfullerart.com

Serving Meals at Champlain Place

The Vermont Catholic Worker is partnering with the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) to serve dinners to the residents at the Champlain Place Emergency Shelter, which their website describes as “a low-barrier, semi-congregate shelter program committed to providing safe, supportive housing and resources to individuals experiencing homelessness.”

The meals are prepared ahead of time, all our Catholic Worker volunteers will need to do is heat it up and serve. It's a simple but meaningful way to get to know one another and our neighbors in need, and to involve ourselves more in the work that should be the heart of our Christian mission.

If you'd like to learn more, you can come to a Tuesday meeting, or email: deaconjosh@vtcatholicworker.org

For those who are sitting on benches in the warm spring sunlight.
For those who are huddling in shelters trying to escape the rain.
For those who are walking the streets in the all but futile search for work.
For those who think that there is no hope for the future, no recognition of their plight, *THE CATHOLIC WORKER* is being edited. It is printed to call their attention to the fact that the Catholic Church has a social program.

With these words, Dorothy Day introduced *The Catholic Worker* newspaper to the streets of New York City on May 1st—the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker—1933.

In an attempt to popularize and make known the encyclicals of the popes and the program offered by the Church for the constructing of a social order, this news sheet was started.

For the Clarification of Thought

Catholic Worker co-founder Peter Maurin advocated for having what he called *Roundtable Discussions*, “for the clarification of thought.” These regular gatherings would examine current events through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching. Maurin believed that such ideas and teachings were best spread through dialogue.

In keeping with that tradition, the Vermont Catholic Worker is holding monthly Roundtable Discussions at the Holy Family parish hall, on Lincoln Street in Essex Junction.

Topics are chosen in advance and will be announced in our newsletters and on our website. Come join the discussion!

It has often been said that Catholic Social Teaching is “the Church’s best kept secret.” Ninety-four years later, the work of *the Worker* continues. We work to promote the social teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church in word and in deed.

Much has changed in the world since that inaugural issue, and yet so much seems the same. People still struggle—to find work, to put food on the table, to make a good life for themselves and their families. *The Catholic Worker* is about recognizing these struggles, understanding that all those who struggle are our sisters and brothers in Christ, and sharing what we have for the good of our neighbor.

The work of the Catholic Worker is about doing whatever we can to help.

Upcoming Events

Tuesdays, 6:00pm: weekly informational and planning meetings at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 7415 Williston Road, Williston, Vermont. We meet downstairs in the parish hall.

Saturdays: Join our Monthly VTCW Roundtable Discussions, 1:00pm at Holy Family Parish Hall, Lincoln Street, Essex Junction.

May 2nd: A Christian Response to Migration. Jan Steinbauer of the Chittenden Asylum Seekers’ Assistance Network (CASAN) will give us an overview of the ongoing and expanding needs of new Americans in our region.

June 6th: Deacon Josh will speak on *Dilexi Te*, Pope Leo XIV’s Apostolic Exhortation on Love for the Poor.

To Be Determined: We will be organizing rotating groups of volunteers to serve dinner to the residents of the Chittenden Shelter on Shelburne Ave in Burlington. Contact us to learn more or to sign up to volunteer!

For more information on any of the se events, contact Deacon Josh: deaconjosh@vtcatholicworker.org



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A Call to Give Back

By Amy Poor

This winter, I felt called to give back to our community, and I was grateful to discover a welcoming group, the VT Catholic Workers in Williston. One of our outings brought us to serve dinner at the Champlain Place Emergency Shelter. Four of us arrived not quite knowing what to expect, but we were immediately put at ease by a staff member who greeted us warmly and showed us around. When the doors opened, a line quickly formed—people who were clearly eager for a warm meal. Every guest we encountered was polite, and many expressed genuine gratitude for our presence.

After the last guests had been served, we tidied up and headed out, having spent about an hour and a half at the shelter. As I got into my car, my phone rang—it was my mother, anxiously asking how everything had gone. In her eyes, I'm still 16, not in my 40s. A mother's love never chang-

es. As I began to share my experience, I felt a wave of emotion rise as I reflected on the evening. I thought about the person coping with frostbite, the individual who spoke of loneliness, and another who shared excitement about finally securing a place of their own, met with genuine enthusiasm from a staff member who paused to listen.

When I arrived home, I saw my space differently. The small complaints I often carry—about a messy house or things left undone—suddenly felt insignificant. The experience was eye-opening, a reminder of the inequities within our communities and the importance of showing up for one another and supporting programs like these.

I encourage you to contact the VT Catholic Worker if this sounds like something you would like to be a part of. We are in the process of making a rotating schedule to serve this community at The Champlain Place.

According to Each One's Need

Throughout the season of Easter, our scripture readings at Mass take us through the Acts of the Apostles, recounting the life of earliest Christian communities. We are told that *"they devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers"* (Acts 2:42). In this passage we get, I think, a foundation – four pillars on which the community of the Church was built.

And throughout history, we see Christian communities within the Church returning to these basic principles. The desert fathers, the Benedictines, the mendicant orders of Saints Francis and Dominic; every few centuries it seems like the Holy Spirit has to take us back to basics. And the Catholic Worker movement fits neatly within that trend.

Dorothy Day devoted her life to those four principles: the teaching of the

apostles, to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread, and to prayer. Her writings were heavily seasoned with the teaching of the apostles – with a hearty blend of Scripture and Church teaching. And prayer was the lifeblood of everything she did.

But the heart of the Catholic Worker movement has always been the Communal Life, and the Breaking of the Bread – a generous sharing of life and livelihood, and especially of food.

In the earliest Christian communities, we are told, *"had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need."* The modern Church – even the Catholic Worker movement – rarely goes to that extreme. But it serves as a reminder of a basic truth of our faith: that our possessions are not meant for us alone, but are entrusted to us for the good of all.

That is the spirit I hope to inspire through the Vermont Catholic Worker. Even if we don't leave behind our earthly possessions to live in community with the unhoused and destitute, we still have the spiritual and moral obligation to do something for our neighbors in need.

The Vermont Catholic Worker should serve as a reminder that we are all called, as Catholics and as people of good will, to do whatever we can to help those less fortunate in our community.

~Deacon Josh

The Pope's Monthly Prayer Intention for May is:

That everyone might have food.

Let us join Pope Leo in praying that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food.

Donations can be made to the VT Catholic Worker Fund through the Vermont Catholic Community Foundation