

# Dorothy Day and the Love of Neighbor: The Theological Implications of Day's 1958 Diaries

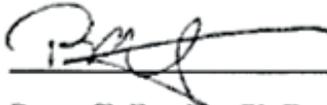
By: Jane M. Curry

August 7, 2020

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Practical  
Theology

St. Thomas University  
Miami Gardens, Florida

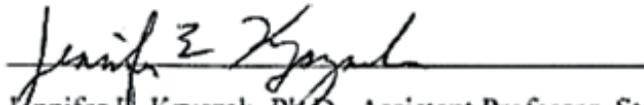
Approved:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Bryan T. Froehle, Ph.D., Professor, St. Thomas University  
Committee Chair



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Carter Waren, D.Min., Associate Professor, St. Thomas University  
Committee Member



\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer B. Kryszak, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, St. Thomas University  
Committee Member

ProQuest Number:28085803

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent on the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 28085803

Published by ProQuest LLC (2020). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All Rights Reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

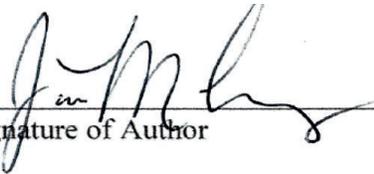
Copyright 2020 by Jane M. Curry

All Rights Reserved

## Copyright Acknowledgement Form

### St. Thomas University

I, Jane Curry, understand that I am solely responsible for the content of this dissertation and its use of copyrighted materials. All copyright infringements and issues are solely the responsibly of myself as the author of this dissertation and not St. Thomas University, its programs, or libraries.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Author

8-7-20  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Chair

8-7-20  
Date

**St. Thomas University Library Release Form**

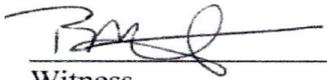
Dorothy Day and the Love of Neighbor:  
The Theological Implications of Day's 1958 Diaries

Jane Curry

I understand that U.S. Copyright Laws protects this dissertation against unauthorized use. By my signature below, I am giving permission to St. Thomas University Library to place this dissertation in its collections in both print and digital forms for open access to the wide academic community. I am also allowing the Library to photocopy and provide a copy of this dissertation for the purpose of interlibrary loans for scholarly purposes and to migrate it to other forms of media for archival purposes.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Author

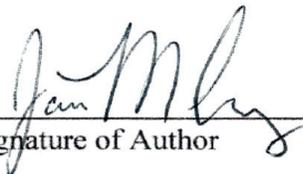
8-7-20  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

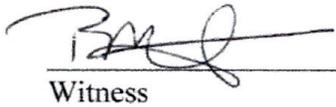
8-7-20  
Date

## Dissertation Manual Acknowledgment Form

By my signature, I, Jane M. Curry, assert that I have read the dissertation publication manual, that my dissertation complies with the University's published dissertation standards and guidelines, and that I am solely responsible for any discrepancies between my dissertation and the publication manual that may result in my and dissertation being returned by the library for failure to adhere to the published standards and guidelines within the dissertation manual.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Author

8-7-20  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

8-7-20  
Date

## **Abstract**

This dissertation explores the practical theological implications of Dorothy Day's 1958 diaries. Dorothy Day's 1958 diaries were brought in dialogue with the moment in history in which they were written as part of a practical theological method that emphasizes context and everyday spirituality. These elements were correlated with Scripture, particularly the parable of the Good Samaritan, to generate theological insights on Day's life as recounted in her 1958 diaries. The results suggest new directions to theologize about neighborliness as well as research methods in practical theology and the study of everyday theologizing in the contemporary context. The dissertation focuses on the integration between faith and daily life. This information can be critical to advance scholarship on Day, practical theology, everyday theology, and critical virtues embodied in the Christian tradition and Day's diaries for conversations in contemporary society.

*Keywords:* Dorothy Day, 1958 diaries, practical theology, everyday theology, neighborliness

## Acknowledgments

This work reflects the extraordinary riches of the collection of Dorothy Day's personal letters, diaries, notes, and transcripts in the archives of Saint Thomas University. Profound thanks to Jessica M. Orozco, director of the library, and her colleagues, particularly Isabel M. Medina, director of the Favalora Museum and Archives.

I deeply appreciate the support of my professors and other scholars in this journey. My dissertation committee members, Mary Carter Waren, Bryan T. Froehle, and Jennifer E. Kryszak, are extraordinary scholars and mentors of a lifetime. I thank Mary, who also played a critical role in my vocation as a Catholic theology teacher at Saint Thomas Aquinas High School. I thank Bryan, who introduced me to the dairies after I expressed my desire to learn more about this soon-to-be-saint of the Catholic Church. I thank Jennifer, who blessed me with expert advice, care-filled guidance, and unwavering encouragement. Brad Hinze and Stephen Krupa graciously welcomed critically important conversations. Joe Holland and the late Frank Sicius shared passion and extraordinary insight. Jonathan Best's editorial guidance and scholarship were invaluable.

This work would not have been possible without my family – my parents, Patrick and Cynthia Curry, esquires; my compassionate mother, Molly Curry; my sisters, Catherine Ann, Patricia Erin, and Susan Elizabeth. My parents made many sacrifices to ensure that my sisters and I received Catholic education: in a very real way, this is the fruit of their love. My aunt Jane, principal of Saint David's Catholic school, inspires me in her dedication to her family and Catholic education. Finally, I thank my husband, David, who has taught me more about love, commitment, and friendship than I could ever hope to express.

## **Dedication**

This research is dedicated to Catholic Workers who embody core elements of Catholic life – practices of love, solidarity, and resistance. They witness to God’s love and extend Day’s vision. I dedicate this work to them and their families. Above all, I dedicate this to Dorothy Day for her unwavering commitment to the poor, sick, the Catholic Worker, and anyone who felt that they did not belong. Leading a life of passion while believing passionately, Day understood that loving and embracing those in need must be fueled with humility, courage, and perseverance.

This dissertation was partially developed from my experiences in the classroom where I have come to understand love and commitment to others, especially young people. I dedicate this work, then, also to all my students and teachers who have taught me the value and worth of each unique person. My experiences with administrators, teachers, and students inspired me to continue writing, researching, and supporting those who have made such an important commitment to Catholic education and life. In like manner, I dedicate this work to the foster children who I tutor and all such students from whom I may teach and learn in the future.

Lastly, to our precious unborn child, your father and I have loved you from the start. Each day that I feel you grow, my heart grows. My hopes are that every moment you walk this beautiful Earth with all of God’s glorious gifts that you know that you are loved. You will be accompanied by not only your parents and family, but also by the one who has the most abundant, overflowing love of all, our Lord, Jesus Christ. To you and all the unborn, may you always feel accepted, protected, and never alone. You are our miracle, our gift from the Lord, and we will be forever grateful for you, body and soul.

## Table of Contents

Copyright Acknowledgement Form .....	iii
St. Thomas University Library Release Form .....	iv
Dissertation Manual Acknowledgment Form.....	v
Abstract.....	vi
Acknowledgments .....	vii
Dedication.....	viii
Table of Contents .....	ix
List of Figures.....	xiii
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b> .....	1
Brief Background of the Diaries of Day .....	2
Dorothy Day in 1958 .....	4
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Gaps in Previous Research .....	8
Purpose of the Study.....	10
Significance of the Study to the Church .....	12
Significance to Practical Theology .....	12
Significance to Church Practices and Ecclesiology.....	13
The Intersection of Faith and Politics .....	14
Supporting the Laity .....	15
Encouraging Pilgrimages .....	15
The Role of Women.....	16
The Research in Relation to Practical Theology .....	18
The Research in Relation to Diary Studies .....	21

The Circle Method.....	23
A Brief Background of the Circle Method .....	23
The Circle Method and the 1958 Diaries of Day .....	24
Method of the Study: The Circle Method .....	25
First Movement: Identifying and Inserting .....	25
Second Movement: Assessing and Analyzing .....	25
Third Movement: Correlating and Confronting.....	26
Fourth Movement: Empowering and Extending.....	28
Fifth Movement: Evaluating and Summarizing.....	28
Assumptions Brought to the Research.....	29
Conclusion .....	30
<b>CHAPTER TWO.....</b>	<b>32</b>
The Context of 1958: Exploring the Social, Cultural, Political, and Ecclesial Characteristics .....	36
Dorothy Day and the 1950's.....	39
A Year in the Life: Dorothy Day in 1958 .....	44
Dorothy Day's 1958 Diary in Dialogue with Joseph Conrad's 'The Congo Diary' .....	52
People in Day's Life during 1958.....	60
Reflecting on the Good Neighbor.....	65
Conclusion and Implications for the Church .....	67
<b>CHAPTER THREE.....</b>	<b>72</b>
Reflecting on a Practical and Contextual Theological Approach to Day's Diaries of 1958 .....	76
The Context of 1958 .....	81
A Glimpse into a Particular Social Context of 1958.....	82

Day's Life in 1958 .....	83
The Diaries in Relation to the Context .....	87
Data Collection .....	88
Data Coding .....	90
What do the Diary Entries Reveal about Day? .....	92
Reflexivity .....	92
Revisiting Assumptions Brought to the Research .....	93
Stressors .....	96
Power Dynamics .....	100
A Hopeful and Optimistic Thinker .....	102
An Appreciation for the Natural World .....	105
Attending to the Theological Implications of Particular Events and Day's Diary	
Entries .....	108
Exemplifying an Engaged Spirituality .....	109
A Brief Glimpse into Day's Everyday Theology .....	112
Conclusion .....	115
<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b> .....	117
The Biblical Concept of the Good Neighbor .....	119
Interpretive Lens for this Research Project .....	120
Explicating the Parable through a Brief Engagement with Exegetical Sources .....	123
Attending to the Concept of Love of Neighbor as Evident in Works of the Twentieth and	
Twenty-first Centuries .....	126
Attending to the Diaries in Relation to the Biblical Narrative and Theological Concept of	
Love of Neighbor .....	128
Dorothy Day as the Samaritan .....	133

223 Chrystie Street and the Inn from the Good Samaritan.....	134
A Dangerous Road for Day and the Catholic Workers.....	135
Neglecting Those in Need.....	136
How Do Day’s Diaries Expand an Understanding of the Love of Neighbor? .....	137
Day’s Self-Consciousness and Love of Neighbor .....	138
Day’s Self-Consciousness and Love of God .....	141
Day’s Self-Consciousness and Love of Self.....	142
Practices of Love, Solidarity, and Resistance.....	145
Conclusion.....	148
<b>CHAPTER FIVE.....</b>	<b>151</b>
Day and Her 1958 Diary: Sustaining a Healthy Attitude of Hope and Action.....	153
Day in 1958: Praxis-Oriented Approaches Regarding Protest .....	155
Day’s Everyday Theologizing: Finding God in the Everyday .....	157
Day as a Voice for Ecological Conversations.....	161
Directions for Future Research.....	161
Implications for Practical Theology.....	163
Everyday Theology and Dorothy Day .....	164
Day’s Theology of the Neighbor .....	165
Towards a More Adequate Theology of the Neighbor: Embracing the Messiness .....	167
Conclusion.....	171
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>172</b>

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1. Overview of Methodology and Methods Employed .....	80
Figure 2. January – March 1958 Work Frequency.....	89
Figure 3. Overview of Codes Developed from the Research .....	91

## CHAPTER ONE

The literature on Dorothy Day (1897-1980) has been growing in recent years (Cook 2018; Rakoczy 2019; Wolfeich 2017). An expanding body of literature explores Day's diaries (Ellsberg 2011; Martin 2008; Piehl 2008; Phillips 2013).<sup>1</sup> The diaries highlight "both the common events of the day as well as personal struggles" of Day (Seasoltz 2008, 472-472).<sup>2</sup> In 2011, Robert Ellsberg explored Day's diaries publishing the rich text *The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day*. The name of the text is Ellsberg's way of honoring Day. The intention for her never written epilogue of *The Long Loneliness*, Day's 1952 autobiography, was to be titled *Duty and Delight*. The title was a reminder of one of Day's most significant teachings, which is to "find God in all things – the sorrows of daily life and the moments of joy, both of which she experienced in abundance" (Ellsberg 2011, xxv).

Mel Piehl (2006), author of *Breaking Bread: The Catholic Worker and the Origin of Catholic Radicalism in America*, rightfully commemorates Ellsberg's work stating that the text provides valuable insights on the particulars of Day's life. Here it is important to note that Piehl also asserts, "In some cases where the diaries are thin or significant events go unremarked, he (Ellsberg) incorporates Day's Catholic Worker pieces or other writings that explains or fill in the gaps" (2006, 23-24). This dissertation seeks to continue this conversation of Day's diaries in a way that pays particular attention to her

---

<sup>1</sup> In order to help guide the reader, differentiating between a journal and diary is helpful. A diary is not meant to contain reflective entries: that is the purpose of a journal.

<sup>2</sup> The focus on everyday life is palpable in these documents. As Seasoltz puts it, "They (the diaries) seemed to give her the opportunity to work out her problems and to reflect on the meaning of the complex experiences" (2008, 473).

daily practices<sup>3</sup> during a particular time frame of her post-conversion life. Similar to Ellsberg, the literature in this chapter, as well as other chapters, is engaged in such a way to help explain and fill in the gaps connected to Day's daily life in a given year, 1958. This is not only to add to existing literature on Day, but it is also an opportunity to explore the meaning associated with some of her deepest complexities.

Day's diaries of 1958 are more beneficial than perhaps one may think. This is because the diaries of 1958, when explored through a practical theological lens, expose implications that are important for conversations regarding church practices of the current United States context. This dissertation not only elicits important information of Day in 1958. It stimulates responses to the question, "How does this exploration open up venues for further research?"

### **Brief Background of the Diaries of Day**

In 2008, the *National Catholic Reporter* writer Dana Greene commemorated Ellsberg's work, asserting that "to read these diaries is to enter the world of Day, to see that world as she did, and to hear firsthand her conversations with God" (Greene 2008).<sup>4</sup> *The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day* presented hundreds of diary entries ranging from the 1930's to the 1980's.<sup>5</sup> As per Day's wishes, her diaries "were to be

---

<sup>3</sup> A key throughout is that of "practices - those intentionally chosen embodied modes of action that engage immediate world, culture, religious tradition, community, and self of the practitioner - have too often been regulated to the realm of application, referenced primarily as illustrations and examples of theological or doctrinal principles at work. As a result, the distinctive knowing in practice itself has been overlooked" (Griffith 2014, 53).

<sup>4</sup> Greene continues, "The reader is privileged to be invited into this intimate dialogue" (2008).

<sup>5</sup> Ellsberg writes, "The collection of diaries begins on March 14, 1934 and the last entry was on November 20, 1980, which was the final diary of Dorothy discovered only in 2006" (Ellsberg 2011, 682).

sealed until twenty-five years after her death” (Ellsberg 2011, ix).<sup>6</sup> Filled with deep spiritual reflections and indications of daily activities, *Duty and Delight*, was the title inspired by the collection at Marquette University. There is also another set of her diaries at Saint Thomas University in Miami Gardens, Florida. The first set was explored by Robert Ellsberg at the Marquette library. Ellsberg’s work develops the context from which the diaries were written, paying careful attention to the people and events. Ellsberg can perhaps articulate her voice in the diaries better than others since he was Worker in the mid-1970’s (Riegle 2003, 95-96). When one is immersed in a particular community, the person has an opportunity to observe from a different perspective than others.

The diaries were permitted to be unsealed after being kept at Marquette University’s Raynor Memorial Libraries in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Ellsberg 2011, ix). Thanks to Day’s biographer, William Miller (1982), and the work of Frank Sicius, a long-time member of the history faculty at St. Thomas University, a set of the diaries were housed in the archives of Saint Thomas University’s Main Library in Miami Gardens, Florida. The blue boxes in the archives of STU are full of private letters, the typed diaries of Day, prayer cards, old newspaper articles, postcards, and other ephemera such as retreat cards. There is also a stack of papers held together by a rusty paperclip with the words “diary” and “1958” on the front page. This set of papers contain entries dating from January 1, 1958 to December 31, 1958. One may infer that Day was writing

---

<sup>6</sup> Ellsberg reflects on the history of his work with the diaries when he states, “As that anniversary was approaching in November 2005, I received an invitation from the university to serve as the editor of these writings – both her diaries and the letters that will be the focus of this volume. Over the course of the next year I received a total of eleven CD’s containing scanned versions of all of Day’s extant journals from 1934-1979. These disks contain many thousands of files each consisting of a single scanned page of handwritten text. When transcribed, this material amounted to over a thousand single-spaced pages, which I subsequently reduced by about half to arrive at the present volume” (2011, ix).

daily during this year of her life. These writings offer a unique opportunity to explore Day's life and work in as-yet unexplored directions.

### **Dorothy Day in 1958**

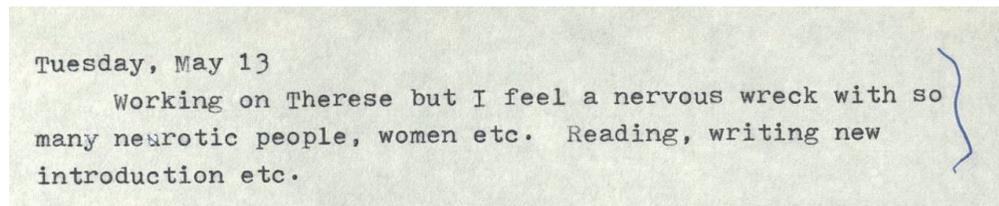
In 1958, Day had many roles as mother, grandmother, leader, and writer. Some of her daily chores included cooking, cleaning, and writing. Sleeping in a jail cell with fifteen other women (Day 1952, 73), nursing the sick during the Spanish Flu (92), and “dropping into the cathedral” in New Orleans (109) would have been rather distant memories at this time for Day. She was no longer writing for *The Masses*, a socialist newspaper, and had long since co-founded the Catholic Worker Movement with Peter Maurin (1877-1949). Loved by many and sometimes neglected, according to Day (Ellsberg 1983, 47), Maurin had a profound influence on Day's life and was even the instigator of a “second conversion” (Jordan 2017, 32) when they met in December 1932 (Day and Sicius 2004, 37).<sup>7</sup> Day describes that Peter's great mission “was to bring back the communal aspects of Christianity, to rescue the communal from Communism” (xx).

In the final year of Pope Pius XII's pontificate (1958), Day was confronted with many challenges. Maurin was no longer by her side, the New York Catholic Worker was facing eviction notices (Day 1958), and Day was dealing with physical and even mental health concerns. For instance, she wrote on February 24 that she has “great fatigue headache” and indicates that she was suffering a toothache on June 18 (Day 1948,48). She was somewhat content about the toothache since she wrote “glad of an excuse to get

---

<sup>7</sup> Frank Sicius writes, “She had just returned from reporting on a “Hunger March” of the unemployed, which had taken place the week before in Washington, D.C and the trip made her realize how far her new faith had carried her from issues that had been central to her life” (2004, 37).

out of a meeting” on the same date (Day 1958, 48).<sup>8</sup> Regarding her mental health this year, Day describes particular challenges that came along with living and leading the Catholic Worker at this time. She indicates that “lack of privacy and no room of her own can be difficult, especially when living and working with the poor and sick (Day 1958, 49). In May 1958, Day writes on the challenge of attempting to write with “neurotic” people around her:<sup>9</sup>



Tuesday, May 13  
Working on Therese but I feel a nervous wreck with so  
many neurotic people, women etc. Reading, writing new  
introduction etc.

Day’s life at this time was not without challenges, but yet without these challenges, Day and many of the Catholic Workers would not have made the impact that they did. Her life and work at this time offer insight on the hard work of empowering women and people who care for the poor and sick, without sentimentalizing the struggles and challenges in their lives.

Her friend Charlie announced that he was leaving the New York Catholic Worker on January 2, 1958, which Day described as a “great shock” and asserted that “there was no one to take his place” (Day 1958, 1). In addition, she writes that this situation of Charlie leaving was “heartbreaking” (1). As Rosalie G. Riegler states in the text *Dorothy Day: Portraits of Those Who Knew Her*, “it was a very, very, difficult time, one of the

---

<sup>8</sup> On Wednesday, June 18, Day writes, “Went to bed early with a toothache and glad of an excuse to get out of a mtg. Working all day and meetings at night are too much” (Day 1958, 48).

<sup>9</sup> All excerpts in this dissertation from the 1958 Dorothy Day diary collection come from scanned copies made at St. Thomas University, Miami Gardens. All quoted material from the 1958 collection originated from these scans and was thereupon inserted into this dissertation.

real low points in the Catholic Worker history” (2003, 64).<sup>10</sup> The biggest concern of Day at this time was that the city was planning to evict her by the end of the year (Day 1958). Nevertheless, Day continued to protest war and write. She published articles for the *Catholic Worker* and wrote a biography of Saint Thérèse. Writing was very important to her during this time. Here one can think of the diary entry in the previous paragraph that identifies her frustrations when dealing with distractions in light of her writing goals. Traveling to Mexico, Day writes that she went on a “pilgrimage” in the earlier part of 1958 stopping at places like Indianapolis, Chicago, and Kansas City. She was living among the poor, those who may not have known where their next meal was coming from, even as she aided those who were sick and visited families and friends, including many women religious.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Dorothy Day’s way of addressing the challenges of the poor,<sup>11</sup> marginalized, and vulnerable offer a new entry point to the theological understanding of neighbor.<sup>12</sup> Practices of exclusion propelled by fear, greed, domination, and advancements in technology that nurture social disengagement (Rainie and Zickuhr 2015) create challenges of living in community, challenges that seemingly have only escalated since her time. Practical theologians develop and reflect on practices to help individuals and

---

<sup>10</sup> Riegle continues, “It looked as if the Catholic Worker might even die. Money just wasn’t coming in. The subscriptions had not gone up much from the post-World War II period. Couldn’t pay the grocer, the printing bills” (2003, 64).

<sup>11</sup> According to a *Pew Research* study, “Although the overall U.S. poverty rate declined and incomes rose rapidly for the second straight year in 2016, many poor Americans fell deeper into poverty, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau (Bialik 2017).

<sup>12</sup> Though critiqued for its absolutism, the word neighbor, according to Franz Rosenzweig, means “in Hebrew as well as in Greek, the nearest neighbor preciousely the moment of love, the one who is nearest to me, at least at this moment, regardless of what he may have been before or what he will be after” (Moyn 2005, 153).

communities live and grow with others (Volf 1996, 21),<sup>13</sup> especially the poorest among us. For this reason, Gustavo Gutiérrez argues that there is a need to “work out” a “theology of neighbor” (1988, 116).<sup>14</sup> Others observe an empathy deficit in our world (Konrath, O’Brien, and Hsing 2010).<sup>15</sup> Few have explored the diaries of Dorothy Day, one of the most remarkable figures of the Catholic Church in the United States, in light of these concerns. Her diaries of 1958 are unique windows into her love and compassion for the poor and vulnerable, the care and responsibility that came with being a leader of the Catholic Worker, and her profound commitment to the Catholic Church despite frustrations and sufferings.

I have done my best not to take the approach of a “sentimental hagiography.” This was famously a concern of Day herself since she feared how such an approach reduces an awareness of human nature (Ellsberg 2011, 1). I avoid generalizations of Day by employing methods that focus on the specifics of daily life. This opens the door for research strategies that draw on and analyze the everyday aspects of people’s lives. If scholarship is to research the lives of major figures in ways that yield wisdom today, the subjects must be relatable. Using these approaches, I have tried to illuminate the real, authentic, and human side of Day.

---

<sup>13</sup> Miroslav Volf encourages one to investigate how “visions of human flourishing are already embedded in our instructions, practices and in the depths of our souls” (2017, 21).

<sup>14</sup> Gutiérrez asserts, “And a theology of the neighbor, which has yet to be worked out, would have to be structured on this basis.” Here, Gutiérrez reaffirms that a theology of neighbor should focus primarily on “those whose human features have been disfigured by oppression, despoliation, and alienation” (116). A reflection on Gutiérrez’s claim can also be found in the dissertation of Marcus Mescher (2013) titled “Doing Likewise: A Theology and Pedagogy of Neighbor-Formation.”

<sup>15</sup> According to a study from the University of Michigan, researchers found that college students today are 40% less empathetic than in previous years, with the steepest decline coming in the last ten years (Konrath, O’Brien, and Hsing 2010)

The results of the research indicate that Day's diaries of 1958 are valuable for conversations today. This is because the diaries of 1958 expose implications that are important for conversations regarding church practices found in the contemporary United States context. Methods drawn from scholars associated with archival and diary research were important to this work and help reveal the detailed accounts and practices of Day's everyday life for one year. This dissertation not only elicits important information of Day in 1958, but also stimulates proper responses to the questions such as how are the 1958 diaries of Day important for conversations in light of church practices and how does this exploration open up venues for further ideas and research?

### **Gaps in Previous Research**

My work also fills in gaps in previous research. In 2011, Robert Ellsberg published Day's diaries but there are significant differences between those in the St. Thomas University archives and those available to Ellsberg from the sources he used. In Ellsberg's text, for example, Day's March 8 entry is one sentence: "Our poverty lies in lack of room or privacy, never knowing which bed you're going to sleep in" (2011, 233). The diaries on hand in the Saint Thomas University archives provide more extensive entries and thus offer as yet unresearched material on Day. In Ellsberg's text, for example, Day's March 8 entry is one sentence: "Our poverty lies in lack of room or privacy, never knowing which bed you're going to sleep in" (2011, 233). The diary set at STU provides an extended entry:

Saturday, March 8 30°

Episcopalians X Called off mth because Fr P.'s  
homecoming. I think Ann Marie was disturbed.

Mass--Letters until 12. Opera--Othello. Short ride  
after supper. Our poverty lies in lack of room or privacy,  
never knowing which bed you're going to sleep in. Sheila is  
feeling it.

Day does not indicate why Ann Marie is disturbed. Yet, this entry takes into consideration Ann Marie's disturbance over the priest's homecoming. Day would make it a habit not to speak ill of priests of the hierarchy of the Church. This entry also provides glimpses into Day's practice, or discipline, of Day's writing since she wrote "letters until 12" (Day 1958). The degree at the top of the entry was most likely the temperature in her room or outside wherever she was writing. Indicating the weather and temperature was a common practice for Day in her diary writing. Such indications of the weather and temperature reflected her engagement with the specific conditions characteristic of any particular day she experienced. This entry also highlights Day's admiration for opera, no surprise since Day was known to have enjoyed listening to this type of music (Seasoltz 2008, 473).<sup>16</sup> It may have been a way for Day to cope with lack of privacy that she had to endure. Most importantly, she brings up poverty and connects it to a lack of privacy. It is difficult to imagine living with a few people, let alone hundreds of people who would come to the Worker. Day and the other workers had to move their beds and be open to the lack of privacy, which caused difficulties and stress in their lives. When Day writes that "Sheila is feeling it" at the end of the diary it is safe to assume that Day is referring

---

<sup>16</sup> Seasoltz indicates that Day's "life was enriched by her wide-ranging literary interests, her keen appreciation of the opera which she listened to faithfully on Saturday afternoons, and her sensitivity to beauty where and whenever it could be found – in a single rose in a glass jar, in a glass of vermouth before supper, in the happy face of a child" (2008, 473).

to the lack of privacy and hardships that came with this way of life at the New York Catholic Worker. To say that it was easy would be an adventure in missing the point.

This much richer entry from the Saint Thomas University diary archive collections indicates the weather degree, different people, and even the opera, which “she listened to faithfully” (Seasoltz 2008, 473). In addition, frequent indications of the words *Mass* and *letters* may also infer that Day went to Church that day as well as wrote and read letters until noon, which usually took up “a good part of Dorothy’s life” (Riegle 2003, 146).<sup>17</sup> As mentioned earlier in a footnote, Ellsberg indicated in his preface of *Duty and Delight* that he “reduced by about half (of the diary entries) to arrive at the volume” (2011, xi). It is important to note also that there are some diary entries in the Saint Thomas University (STU) set that are completely absent from Ellsberg’s publication. This dissertation is not a comparative analysis on Day’s entries with those published in Ellsberg’s work. Rather, this project seeks to further explore the diaries from a practical theological perspective.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The central purpose of my dissertation is to explore the 1958 diaries of Day through a practical theological perspective, and in so doing to offer an opportunity for others to draw implications for reading the “signs of the times” (Wolfteich 2014, 2). A critical reflection on the diaries and the biblical concept of love of neighbor reveal implications that connect to conversations of the Church. *The Catechism of the Catholic*

---

<sup>17</sup> Jim Forest explains, “A good part of Dorothy’s life was spent reading and writing letters – even her monthly columns were usually nothing more than long letters” (Riegle 2003, 146). Here it should also be noted that the word *mass* appears fifty-eight times in the 1958 diaries. The words *letter* and *letters* appear twenty-one times in the 1958 diaries of Day. This is important to note since it indicates that participating in Mass and writing letters were a priority for Day during this year of her life.

*Church* defines Church as “a convocation or an assembly” with roots in Latin, *ecclesia*, and Greek, *ek-ka-kleim*, which means “to call out” (1997, 197). Ecclesiology, then, “pertains to or is of the Church” (875) and is even referred to as “a theological theory of the church” (van der Ven 1993, x).<sup>18</sup> A critical correlation with the diaries and the Good Samaritan story (Tracy 1975, 22)<sup>19</sup> follows from the Circle Method (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijisen 2005), a practical theological approach that encourages an interdisciplinary approach to the theological task (Cahalan and Mikoski 2014, 7). Specific analytical approaches suggested by diary studies further helped me concentrate my focus on the effort to collect and analyze content from the diaries at a micro-level. By turning to content analysis<sup>20</sup> in various portions of my work, this work articulates an authentic interpretation of these first-hand accounts of Day’s everyday life. This content analysis<sup>21</sup> seeks to articulate an authentic and organic interpretation of the first-hand accounts. The Circle Method has been used in other practical theological works that focus on promoting social action and justice. One may argue that the method, then, not only mirrors Day’s radical social activism, but also an important aspect of the biblical neighbor, which is when Christ requests people “to go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37).<sup>22</sup> In addition, the call to “go and do likewise” at the end of the parable plays an important role in Day’s life at

---

<sup>18</sup> van der Ven asserts, “It (ecclesiology) distinguishes itself from a sociological theory of the church by its formal object and not by its material” and “ecclesiology is concerned both about the future of the church and about the church of the future” (1993, x).

<sup>19</sup> David Tracy continues, “And use that method to interpret the symbols and texts of our common life and of Christianity.”

<sup>20</sup> Content analysis is understood in this study as the critical analysis of the diaries, or written work. This work focuses particularly on the diaries of Day. That said it could be considered also an “historical document analysis” (Ammerman, Carroll, Dudley, and McKinney 1998).

<sup>21</sup> Content analysis is understood in this study as the critical analysis of the diaries, or written work. This work focuses particularly on the diaries of Day. That said it could be considered also an “historical document analysis” (Ammerman, Carroll, Dudley, and McKinney 1998).

<sup>22</sup> This work draws on scripture from *The New American Bible, Revised Edition* published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

this time. She was radical in her approach to following Christ and understands that the call to go and do likewise is a call to participate in practices of social justice especially for the poor and marginalized. This resonates with important characteristics of not only practical theology, but also the Christian way of life, since practical theologians and Christians encourage ongoing praxis or reflective action for those in the most need.

### **Significance of the Study to the Church**

This work is significant to the church in three capacities: to the discipline of practical theology, conversations of ecclesiology, church practices, and to the literature of a potential future saint.<sup>23</sup> This is not to suggest that these three main areas are mutually exclusive. Rather, the capacities overlap and, at times, share commonalities, acting as complimentary.

### **Significance to Practical Theology<sup>24</sup>**

The significance of the work to practical theology is multilayered. First, this study is attempting to employ qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data from the diaries. This contributes to the growing body of “empirically validated theological knowledge” and “testifies to practical theology as a full-grown theological discipline that is academically integrated in the scientific framework of the university while remaining faithful to its practical cause” (Schilderman 2014, 131). In addition, this study contributes to conversations in the social sciences when scholars (including theologians) “collapse or ignore the difference between divine love and human love” (Moyn 2005, 151). Though

---

<sup>23</sup> The process for Day’s canonization formed in 2000 when Cardinal O’Connor named her a “Servant of God.” This process has developed over the years enabling the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to formally endorse the request in 2012.

<sup>24</sup> Practical Theology is defined by Swinton and Mowat as the “critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world” (2006, 6)

this is not the main objective of the dissertation, the focus on practices helps to identify some distinguishable characteristics of Day's understanding of divine love and human love in order to avoid this theoretical pitfall. In addition, "Catholic reflection on practice has become readily taken for granted today in part because it has always been part of the tradition" (Cahalan and Froehle 2014, 43). A focus and reflection on practices provides an opportunity to explore Day's faith and how it is lived, which is an important aspect of practical theologians since they too are curious on "what faith is and how it was lived" (Cahalan and Froehle, 2014, 43).

Exploring diaries and journals of saints and the like are not necessarily new adventures in theology or theological and pastoral methods. Charles F. Kemp, influenced by the journal writing of religious saints, favors free writing as a form of pastoral counseling (1973, 26). Day had to confront joys and sufferings during this time. Day made it a habit to write daily, however. This time was important practice for Day since it was in the quiet time where she would most find the Lord. In addition, Day would associate writing with her prayer life and oftentimes saw it as a form of prayer. Perhaps the diaries were a way for Day to deal with the stresses that came with her life at this time.

### **Significance to Church Practices and Ecclesiology**

The significance of this work to conversations in ecclesiology is important to highlight. Here it should be noted that this dissertation focuses on aspects of Catholic Church practices and ecclesiology. The Catholic Church is the largest Christian church body in the United States, including some 51 million Catholic adults according to a 2018 *Pew Research* study (Masci and Smith 2008). The church has faced a number of

challenges in the last few decades. Rather than exploring the challenges of the Catholic Church per se, this work offers insight from the diaries so as to advance a dialogue with these challenges. From the research, the data from the diaries are correlated with themes relevant in the current U.S. context and the Catholic Church in the United States, such as identity, daily life, protesting, the laity, and women. In addition, the themes developed from the diaries are brought into dialogue with insights from scholars of Day and practices of love, solidarity, and resistance.

### **The Intersection of Faith and Politics**

In 2015, Pope Francis highlighted Day in an address to the U.S. Congress recognizing her social activism (Francis 2015c, 3). This speech was the first time a pope addressed the US Congress. Francis presents Day's life as a model in the way in which she is able to live her life with a Catholic approach, linking faith and social justice. Day's life in 1958 mirrored the questions concerning the identity of the Catholic Church in the United States today: How does one stay faithful to the Catholic Church while continuing a life in a pluralistic culture? Day's diaries recognize and act on her theological commitments over her political ones. It is clear for Day that her loyalty was to the Church from the moment she converted (Riegle 2003, 93). Michael Harrington, author of *The Other America* and former Catholic Worker, argues that Day was "not political at all, didn't vote, and wanted everybody to practice the Works of Mercy" (1997, 58-59). Her "political" protests, publications, and work with unions were derived from and furthered by her love of Christ. Truly, what she held most dear was "social justice and the poor" (93). In addition, there is no question that her strong pacifist stance sought to bring peace to the world. Day engaged her politics as a response to the works of Mercy, Beatitudes,

and so on. This coupled with habitual practices of going to Mass and saying the rosary, to name a few, allowed her to stay faithful to the Church in a politically fueled environment.

### **Supporting the Laity**

Is the Church in America too concerned with riches and power over the laity? The diaries indicate that Day was struggling financially during this time in her life. Fears of being evicted caused her to make pleas in *Catholic Worker* (CW) publications.<sup>25</sup> This appeal was published in the *Catholic Worker* in April 1958. In this letter, Day refutes the rumor that the *Catholic Worker* is closing and addresses why the *Catholic Worker* needs financial support. Yet, Day makes her plea by not forgetting the others who have no homes and closes by reflecting on a quote from Saint Paul, “Lord, what will you have me do” (Acts 9:6). To have written this plea means that Day was desperate for money. This proposes a few questions regarding the laity: How can the bishops strengthen their credibility among the laity? How can the laity support and be more supported by bishops and leaders of the Church?

### **Encouraging Pilgrimages**

Leaders in religious education are constantly seeking ways to reach out to people, partially young adults. Threaded with these aims is the need to embrace the Latino/a community that is increasing and will continue to do so in the U.S. (Masci and Smith 2018). The Catholic Church should not revisit imperialistic practices but rather seek to embrace communities with a loving presence since we are all “made in the image and likeness of the Lord” (Gen 1:27). Catholicism is the main religion of Mexico. Today, many Mexicans, according to *Pew Research*, are “more Catholic and often more

---

<sup>25</sup> The *Catholic Worker* published many letters written by Dorothy Day in 1958. These appeals can be found on the *Catholic Worker* website: <https://www.catholicworker.org/>.

traditional than Mexican Americans” (Donoso 2014). In the diaries of 1958, Day discussed the way in which she traveled to Mexico, which she would refer to as a pilgrimage, meeting and engaging with people in the neighboring country. Day participated in Mass with members of the Our Lady of Guadalupe community, for example. Day, grounded in her Catholic faith, teaches a valuable instruction on evangelization methods by demonstrating respect and engagement with others. Not only does Day feed the poor, she seeks them out and crosses cultural barriers. This suggests a depth of significance for pilgrimage and taking action to ‘find’ neighbors.

### **The Role of Women**

What roles should women have in the Church? Research indicates that there are increasing numbers indicating that lay women seek to work professionally in the Church (Fox 2006, 185). This will surely be an ongoing conversation until the needs of women are met. According to *Pew Research*, six in ten Catholics in the United States think the Catholic Church should allow priests to marry and allow women to become priests (Masci and Smith 2018). The diaries do not necessarily recognize women’s ordination nor does this work make an argument as to feminism and Day. Rather, this work seeks to explore Day’s relationships with herself as a woman and the women indicated in the diaries. Thus, on January 12, 1958, Day reflects on the mothers at Our Lady of Guadalupe while on pilgrimage (1958, 5).

Sunday, January 12 This morning to Our Lady of Guad.--  
out to the hill of Tepeyac and the crowds were so great it  
was all but impossible to get to communion. Pilgrimages on  
foot, on knees, and whole families camped out in the square,  
cooking their meals over a tiny charcoal fire, crouching to  
the ground. No trouble with babies. They are always held.  
They are almost part of the mother's body. They only leave  
her arms and breast when they begin to toddle away. I am so  
moved by the people here, their simplicity, their joy, and  
their melancholy. A day of worship. One is all but stunned  
by impressions.

Here one cannot help but reflect on themes of embodiment and the way in which the mothers had an impact on Day. Since Day was a mother and grandmother in 1958, she may have been more prone to focus on these nurturing practices. In addition, the simplicity that she interprets was also an act that Day appreciated and sought to practice in her own life. Day demonstrates a kind of everyday theology in her approach by highlighting that this was a “day of worship” at the end of the entry. More importantly, she is integrating simplicity, motherhood, and notions of worship, a synthesis that is itself reflects a kind of practical theological approach.

Day writes of women in other sections of the diaries where she explicitly states that women should have more of a voice. Nevertheless, the data reveals important information on Day’s approach and appreciation of women who were in her life at this time. The diaries do not indicate the number of women living with Day at this time, nor do they indicate the number of women associated with the Catholic Worker in relation to men.

The diaries do indicate that women played an important role in the housekeeping chores. For example, Angus and Veronica, who were members of the Catholic Worker House on Christie Street in New York alongside Day during this year, contributed to cooking the meals for those staying at the Worker.

As we know, there is reason to believe that exploring the written accounts of models of faith is worth the time and effort. The letters of Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) and the diaries of Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938) come to mind. The practice of self-reflective writing has been part of the Church's history since the early Christians. One might also recall Augustine of Hippo's (354-430) autobiographical text, *Confessions*. The 1958 diaries of Day are unpublished, creating rich soil for further reflection.

When reminiscing on Day's future fame at a party, and the lack of concern Day has for it, Michael Harrington, a former Catholic Worker member and major admirer of Day once stated, "When the history of American and Catholicism in the 1950s is written, Francis Cardinal Spellman will be a footnote and Dorothy Day will be a chapter (Riegle 2003, 58).<sup>26</sup>

### **The Research in Relation to Practical Theology**

Day has been highlighted in practical theological publications prior to this project (Rubio 2014; Religion & Ethics Newsweekly 2014). Jan H. Rubio commends Day for "aligning every aspect of her life with faith" and emphasizes the need to take context seriously in future explorations of Day (2014, 215).<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, to claim that this

---

<sup>26</sup> In the 2019 article titled "New York Archdiocese responds to Cardinal Spellman Groping Allegation," Spellman is being accused of groping, yet the NY Diocese reassures "that they are taking this seriously" and "there has never been a substantiated allegation of abuse against Cardinal Spellman before this, who died in 1967" (Jones 2019).

<sup>27</sup> Rubio asserts that "more people will strive to live heroically because they will no longer be limited by low expectations of the ordinary" (2014, 215-2016).

work is from a practical theological perspective, it is important to highlight concerns and uses of practical theology. They include: an activity of believers seeking to sustain a life of reflective faith in the everyday, a method, a curricular area of study, and as an academic discipline (Miller-McLemore 2014, 5). Though each use is important to this study in some respect, some have priority over others. Regarding the first task listed, the way in which an astronaut has space or how a fisherman has the sea, practical theologians have everyday life. Bonnie Miller McLemore asserts, “Practical Theology either has relevance for everyday faith and life or it has little meaning at all” (7). In fact, practical theologians focus on finding religious meaning in the mundane in order to give “an activity-oriented view” (7). This research seeks to explore Day’s ‘mundane’ practices in order to put them into conversations with ecclesiology, especially the role of the laity, leadership, women, and so on. Practices, according to Ted A. Smith, are “activities like medicine, agriculture, prayer and the care of the souls” (2014, 247). Smith continues to assert that “practical theology becomes theological reflection on and for the sake of practice (250),” which relates to the perspective from which this research is grounded in.

In the text, *Opening the Field of Practical Theology*, editors Kathleen A. Cahalan and Gordon S. Mikoski highlighted eleven “major concerns” of practical theology (2014, 1). Two concerns are attentive to the way in which practical theology is focused on practices and is performance oriented. According to the two theologians, practical theologians engage patterns of practice to explore the complexities of communities and individuals (2). Throughout the 1958 diaries, “patterns of practice” emerge from the research. Day acknowledges the weather and temperature conditions almost daily, for example. In addition, she indicates practices and references to cooking, cleaning,

traveling, and writing frequently. The practices not only form patterns associated with anthropological foundations, they also demonstrate patterns that adhere to Day's theological commitments to the Church. In addition, collapsing divine love and human love is an area of concern for theologians and social scientists (Moyn 2004). These methods help differentiate her practices of love for God and those that connect more so with her love of humans, reflecting the broader conversation about method within the social sciences. The term differentiate is not to suggest that these practices are separate or unconnected.

Practical theology understands the importance of focusing on particular experiences of people, preferably the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized, in order to develop theological, action-oriented responses. In general, practical theologians tend to favor Aristotle's concretion and realism over Plato's abstraction and idealism (Moyn 2004, 3). One reason is that practical theologians explore and seek out "facts on the ground" (3) of particular individuals and communities. This understanding leads to a rejecting of applied theology, especially since individuals and communities are dynamic in nature (3). In addition, it seeks to critically reflect on the ways in which these 'facts,' or in this case the data from the diaries, correlates with Christian text, a very important movement in practical theology (Tracy 1975, 43-59). But practical theologians do not stop here. They understand the significance of "praxis-based approaches" and "attempt to produce insights" (37) based on the research. This is similar to the way in which this research seeks to add to conversations in ecclesiology. In addition, insights and practices will be explored in Chapter Five that relate to ways in which people can take action in and for contemporary society.

## The Research in Relation to Diary Studies

Scholarly publications on the use of diaries in scholarship have been expanding (Krpan et al. 2013; Ranz 2019). “Diary studies” is a contemporary field of scholarship that as such offers something to this research and the practical theological method it employs. Today, a diversity of scholars are exploring the positive attributes of daily diary writing for students (Bakker, Vergel, and Kuntze 2015). One recent study of daily diary writing focuses on human behavior and finds that “active repaid and perceptions of control over emotions may contribute to enhanced affective functioning associated with optimism” (McHale, Clark, and Tramonte 2015). Within religious studies itself, work within this field of “diary studies” is expanding (Idler et al. 2015). Charles Kemp was influenced by the diary writing of religious saints and notes that free form writing has great usefulness in pastoral counseling (Kemp 1973, 26). Such work offers guidance to the practical theological method in this work.

This work engages with Day’s diaries of 1958 as the primary source. Her diaries thus play an important role in this study. As such, her writing in her 1958 diaries reflects her engagement with the daily life of people (Ohly 2010, 79). This work underlines the potential usefulness of contemporary scholarship on diaries and similar original source material in a way that engages the much larger literature of diary studies, more general work on qualitative<sup>28</sup> and quantitative<sup>29</sup> tools, and the use of computer driven analysis. Future work on Day’s diaries will surely use approaches such as these to engage Dorothy

---

<sup>28</sup> Qualitative research “involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study; personal experience; introspection; observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine lives” (Denzin and Lincoln 2001, 4).

<sup>29</sup> Quantitative methods draw on statistics and analysis tools to understand the fluctuations and patterns (Schilderman 2014, 123-132).

Day as a theological conversation partner. Future work on Day's diaries will surely engage diary studies as it seeks for example, to develop models of faith and certain elements of pastoral counseling such as the practice of free writing.

This research thus "refers to experiences and processes during the day without referring to a particular event" (Ohly 2010, 84). One such study focuses on human behavior and claims that "active repaid and perceptions of control over emotions may contribute to enhanced affective functioning associated with optimism" (McHale, Clark, and Tramonte 2015). This method thus influences an effort to explore daily entries of Day and acknowledges the significance of reducing the "retrospective bias" since the entries are most likely filled out at the end of the day (Ohly 2010, 84). For example, Day dated her entries of 1958 in chronological order and used past tense grammar. One may assume that she was writing these entries closer to the end of the day. If Day was writing at the end of each day, the experiences of the day were certainly relatively fresh in her mind. In addition, methods from daily dairy studies help reveal patterns and fluctuations in everyday experiences "by collecting data at the daily level or even several times a day" (Ohly 2010, 84-85). These patterns also help reveal the practices that are not indicated in the research, which also develops meaning on the life of Day.

When it comes to exploring and researching archival documents, for instance, the diaries of Day in 1958, such research leads to important questions that may lead to deeper understandings of the data from the diaries as well as the author of the diaries. In the text *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*, authors Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson C. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney propose the question "how do you turn

this mass of archival documents into a meaningful source of information” (Ammerman 1998, 210).

The present research asks a similar question in light of the diaries of Day in 1958. To develop insights flowing from this question, however, focusing on a “single source of information” can be useful since it helps focus the work and seeks to avoid “simply absorbing the information that the story tells” (Ammerman 1998, 210). It is important to note that the authors are referring to a particular congregation (Ammerman 1998, 210). Yet they agree that such a focus has the ability to develop “valuable insights into the culture, norms, and significant themes” (Ammerman 1998, 210).

Such insights, combined with the available data from Day’s 1958 diaries, are helpful since they develop meaning and knowledge through investigative practices. This information can be very important for advancing scholarship on Day, practical theology, everyday theology, and critical virtues embodied in the Christian tradition and Day’s diaries.

## **The Circle Method**

### **A Brief Background of the Circle Method**

In the text *The Pastoral Cycle Revisited*, Holland traces the history of the Circle Method. One area of interest is the Catholic Action movement and the “publicized methodology” of late Belgian Cardinal Joseph Cardijn’s “see, judge, and act” method (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2005, 9). Holland traces the history of the movements back to Aristotle highlighting the importance of social encyclicals and the “late Scholastics who took up the defense of the original people of the Americas [Native Americans]” (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2005, 9). Holland asserts that important information may be

waiting to be revealed regarding the connection of liberation theology and these philosophical foundations. Holland makes connections between the dynamic “see, judge, act” method and social encyclicals that share a similar three step method. In a footnote, he also makes clear that origin of these social encyclicals sharing this method should be attributed to documents before *Rerum Novarum* (“On the Condition of Labor”) in 1891 (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2005, 12).

Early Christians clearly employed versions of the method. Paul, for example, would address and explore the situation, make explicit theological reflections on Christ and the ways of the cross, and usually make some request from those he is addressing (Stirewalt 2003, 25-56). More research needs to be done on this comparison. The method clearly has a rich history.

### **The Circle Method and the 1958 Diaries of Day**

A version of method presents itself in academic discussions as well as in the diaries of Day. On Thursday, February 6, Day refers to the Cardijn center in her diaries (Day 1958, 5). This educational center, created by Belgian Cardinal Cardijn, included a library and meeting rooms where open discussions on the see, judge, and act method would commence. It seems as if that Day is referring to this center in her diaries. Perhaps the group’s discussion, sharing of ideas, and calls to action made an impact on Day. It would seem possible, then, that Day would be familiar with some of the characteristics of this method. The initial reason for this method in this dissertation had little to do with this connection nor was it because of the rich history. The method is familiar to those who seek to develop knowledge that is significant for the church of the future, especially giving attention to concerns of justice (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2005).

## **Method of the Study: The Circle Method**

The Circle Method provides an opportunity to make contact with intimate experiences, to ask why conditions and experiences exist, reflect (theologically) on the role of the human person in relation to God, and seek ways to act (Mejia, Holland, and Wijzen 2005). The movements are complementary yet distinct and are used “as a vehicle for relating the Church’s social teaching to practical issues facing change agents in pastoral terms, social activists, development workers, instructors, and so on” (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2005, 24). In this study, the data collected is brought into dialogue with concepts of the neighbor. This, in turn, seeks to further conversations in light of the implications of the research. The Circle Method, then, was chosen for more than one reason.

### **First Movement: Identifying and Inserting**

The first movement identifies the setting, developments, and understandings of God’s engagement of Day. In other words, this movement brings to light “daily activities” and “real-life struggles” (Mijia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2005, 17). What was Day’s daily life like? What were her struggles and moments of joy? How did she practice her faith in her daily life amidst the challenges? This work focuses on one year of her life in an attempt to answer these questions.

### **Second Movement: Assessing and Analyzing**

The second movement asks, “What is happening” (Mijia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2005, 17)? Day was a converted Catholic embracing Christians and non-Christians alike. She felt a moral responsibility to love those around her in the moment, day, month that she was in. Her act embracing was a response to her love for Jesus and Jesus’ love for her.

This is not to suggest a simplified universalism. In order to refrain from such universalism, this project seeks to derive these theological connections from a temporal time frame of her life. In addition, the notion that Day was loving to those around her does not mean to suggest that her life at this time was by any means easy. The challenges and struggles of her life in the 1950's, as well as in 1958, are highlighted along with the people and events connected to her during this time. This does not indicate every person and event that was attested to her. Nevertheless, these connections are important in revealing the value of these diaries. Connections to Joseph Conrad's *The Congo Diary* are made in order to not only indicate a strategy on how she may have been dealing with the struggles at this time, but also indicate similarities that will later resonate with ideas pertaining to future research strategies in practical theology.

In this movement, some of the historical or cultural factors influencing Day's attitudes, behaviors, and emotions are addressed. One of the major stressors that Day was facing during this year was the eviction of the New York Catholic Worker. In addition, Day was protesting the anti-raid drills and faced jail time because of her actions. This chapter focuses on the ways in which Robert Moses and his post-World War II construction of New York ideas played a role in Day's life at this time in the United States. In addition, the heightened anxiety over Russian technological advancements as well as nuclear war helped influence Day's reactions during this year.

### **Third Movement: Correlating and Confronting**

This movement indicates the data and information collected from her diaries. The way in which this information is drawn from the diaries is explored in light of particular methods drawn from social sciences. For instance, the social sciences employ

quantitative methods in order to reveal detailed accounts of people's lives, which paves a path for more relatability and potential inspiration. In addition, the data indicates that Day was taking action through protesting, writing, praying, participating in a pilgrimage to Mexico in this year, as if she were "going and doing likewise" in her own life (Luke 10:29-37). A question that this movement asks, is there anything about scripture that could help guide this research pursuit to draw meaning from the diaries? What theological implications are developing from the research that relate to leadership methods? Some principles of the Church will be threaded throughout this movement "to help guide the evaluation" of Day's daily practices (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijssen 2005, 20). The term *critical* here does not mean to impose negative meanings (Tracy 1975, 7).<sup>30</sup> Day visits Mexico as indicated in her dairies in the earlier part of the year (1958). Here she prays with those in the community, sings at Mass with them, and even watches their dance rituals. In addition, the data indicates that Day was taking action through protesting, writing, praying, participating in pilgrimages in this year, as if she were "going and doing likewise" in her own life (Luke 10:29-37). These are a few examples yet holistically this movement resonates with notions of David Tracy who recognized that "the principle task of the theologian will be to find appropriate interpretations of the major motif of the scriptures and of the relationship of those interpretations to the confessional, doctrinal, symbolic, theological and praxis expressions of the various Christian Traditions (Tracy 1996, 44).

---

<sup>30</sup> Tracy asserts, "But critical does mean a fidelity to open-ended inquiry, a loyalty to defended methodological canons, a willingness to follow the evidence where it may lead" (1975, 7).

#### **Fourth Movement: Empowering and Extending**

From the biblical reflection, a fundamental question arises: are we not all called to embrace the poor and marginalized in our current times, situations, and even in our daily lives (Mescher 2013, 3)?<sup>31</sup> Practical theologians have a distinct objective of method, which is to “have a transforming influence on religious faith in congregations and society” (Miller-McLemore 2014, 11). This resonates with another main question of this movement: “What do we do” (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2004, 18)? The data collected and analyzed raise questions that pertain to ecclesiology (i.e. church leadership and activism in promoting social justice). Some include, but are not limited to: How can the poor, sick, and women be supported by the Church? How does Day contribute to these conversations as well as ones that pertain to the identity of the laity?

#### **Fifth Movement: Evaluating and Summarizing**

This movement summarizes the data and explores the theological implications associated with the research. In what ways does this research develop new insights of Day’s daily life? The results of the research or the data drawn from the dairies and analyzed in light of the Good Samaritan and the concept of neighbor is reflected in light of similar practices in concerns that exist in the current United States context. For example, the research indicates that Day was dealing with an eviction in her life at this time. Eviction and poverty are two major issues in the current United States. How can the dairies of the context of the dairies contribute to this conversation? Day provides a unique

---

<sup>31</sup> Mescher argues that “doing likewise” relies on the analogical imagination to faithfully and creatively discern what is required to follow the Samaritan’s example in one’s own social-cultural context.” (2013, 3).

window into the ways in which she protests and can serve those want to integrate faith and protesting practices.

Other implications relate to notions of the sacredness of community, the integration of faith and daily life, and the conscious courage it took for Day to lead during a time of anxiety and fear of violence. These notions relate to issues and concerns in relation to the context of the United States. These connections are explored during this movement, or Chapter Five, attempting to push the work forward for new conversations and insights. Finally, insights that are associated with research strategies in light of practical theology are explored in order to contribute new knowledge to the discipline of practical theology and other contemporary discussions relating to issues of 2020.

### **Assumptions Brought to the Research**

To add to this growing literature on Day and to contribute to conversations in ecclesiology, this research explores one year of Day's life using the diaries of 1958 as the primary source. A focus on the context from which the diaries were written as well as the context from which they are read and researched will be highlighted. Reflection on assumptions, biases, and limitations are practiced throughout this dissertation. This is an attempt to provide an authentic and organic understanding of Day as well as to recognize the researcher in relation to the research. Day was not necessarily a supporter of her autobiographical work being published or a biography to be written on her life (Miller 1982, ix). Assumptions are always present when researchers collect and analyze data (Creswell 2014). Perhaps the best way about this is to address them throughout the work. That said, this work comes from the lens of a female Catholic educator with an academic

background in liberal arts and practical theology. Here it also should be noted that the researcher clearly admires Day and regard her as an extraordinary figure, a saint.<sup>32</sup>

Another underlying assumption of this study was that the practical theological exploration would indicate deeper understandings of Day's daily life. In addition, it was assumed that the diaries could be easily understood. Yet, the sentences are often broken without contextualization or even indication of those to whom Day is referring to in her diaries. The contextualization that occurred during the early stages of the research indicated information on Day that has yet to be discussed. Moreover, the study reveals important information regarding the conditions of Day and the struggles and joys that she experienced daily. The diaries reveal the suffering as well as the joys of Day's life at this time. This research does not claim to be the only way to research Day's diaries nor does it begin to exhaust the need for more research on Day and a theology of neighbor.

### **Conclusion**

The conclusion, therefore, is that the 1958 diaries are in need of further exploration and with the help of different methods such as the Circle Method and practical theology, deeper meaning behind the personal reflections begin to appear, creating implications that relate to important discussions of the church today. The findings, however, are indicating that the diaries provide rich insights. This will be highlighted in the following chapters of this dissertation. Though these diaries are difficult to read and organize, they yield a sense of the intersections of her daily joys and struggles, politics and faith, and love for Christ and others. When reflecting on the diaries

---

<sup>32</sup> This assumption is identified early on in the work to help the reader know where the researcher stands early on. Addressing assumptions is significant to the scholarly work and research of practical theology.

through a practical theological lens, it becomes clear that the diaries indicate that Day was putting into practice one of the most significant lessons from Christ: a daily love of neighbor. This dissertation seeks to learn more of Day's example that "we love God through our love of one's neighbor" (Gutiérrez 1988, 115).

## CHAPTER TWO

This chapter will explore the context from which the 1958 diaries of Day were written through a practical theological lens. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first movement of the Circle Method will be employed. The first section, then, investigates social, cultural, and political forces that helped shape 1958. Keeping in line with this research being developed from a practical theological perspective, it should be noted here that contextualization is at the very heart of theology. This coincides with insights from Steven B. Bevans (1992) in the book *Models of Contextual Theology*. He writes as follows:

There is no such thing as “theology;” there is only contextual theology; feminist theology, black theology, liberation theology, Filipino theology, Asian-American theology, African theology, and so forth. Doing theology contextually is not an option, nor is it something that should only interest people from the Third World, missionaries who work there, or ethnic communities with dominant cultures. The contextualization of theology, the attempt to understand Christian faith in terms of a particular context, is really a theological imperative. As we have come to understand theology today, is it a process that is part of the very nature of theology itself (1992, 187).

The second section focuses on the experiences of Day particularly in 1958. An initial exploration of human experiences is significant to practical theology. Perhaps it is safe to say that it is one of the starting points of practical theology. The other is the very doctrine or experience of God, as mentioned in the text *Practical Theology and*

*Qualitative Research* (2006),<sup>33</sup> for what is experience without God? Moreover, this section includes resources from the social sciences and other literature since integration of disciplines is a characteristic of practical theology as shown in *Opening the Field of Practical Theology* by Kathleen A. Cahalan and Gordon S. Mikoski (2014, 4).<sup>34</sup>

Particularly this research focuses on methods in order to understand the way in which Day would respond to events and people during a particular year of her life. This helps provide insight into her daily practices. It is not easy to explore someone's diaries, especially someone who has been declared a "servant of God" in the official canonization process (Riegle 2003, xiii).<sup>35</sup> For data on Day's daily life to emerge naturally, careful, detailed literary analysis of her diary texts offers a means to theologically reflect on the daily practices of Day. Practices are "intentionally chosen embodied modes of action that engage the immediate world, culture, religious tradition, community, and self of the practitioner" (Griffith 2014, 53).<sup>36</sup> They are tied to a particular context, dynamic in nature, and represent particular moments of history and tradition. Practices include human activities such as writing, eating, praying, and playing. They even include listening to opera, cooking, and shopping (Day 1958, 32).<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Authors John Swinton and Harriet Mowat assert, "While we have suggested that the starting point for Practical Theology is human experience, in fact this is not strictly the case. *God* and the revelation that God has given to human beings in Christ is the true starting point for all Practical Theology" (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 11).

<sup>34</sup> The editors of the text write, "While particular practical theologians use the social sciences in diverse ways, we share a commitment to critically engage multiple sources available to us that can shed light on our work" (Cahalan and Mikoski 2014, 4).

<sup>35</sup> Rosalie G. Riegle states, "It's easy to mythologize this woman who said, "Don't call me a saint," and yet has been declared a "servant of God," the first step in the official canonization process" (Riegle 2003, xiii).

<sup>36</sup> Colleen M. Griffith suggests that practices "have too often regulated to the realm of application, referenced primarily as illustrations and examples of theological doctrinal principles at work. As a result, the distinctive knowing in practice itself has been overlooked" (Griffith 2014, 53).

<sup>37</sup> On April 14, Day writes, "Very quiet. Shopping, beach, cooking. No writing except letters" (Day 1958, 32).

To think of practices as only cooking and shopping (or what people do) would limit the full potential of the term itself and how one is to understand practices. Yes, they include human activities such as praying and reading, but they are also “theory-laden” (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 19). They are gateways to understanding the deeper meaning of Day’s spirituality. This resonates with Claire Wolfetich’s suggestions that spirituality “best understood as a way of life embedded in a tradition and woven together with relationships with God, self, neighbor, community, and the created world” (Wolfetich 2014, 331). Day’s writing is also understood as a practice in itself, which opens the door for conversations in literature. This focus on diary writing practices suggested correlations with Joseph Conrad’s Congo diaries. This will be highlighted to present initial findings of the research as well as deeper insights into the context and theories on why Day may have written her diaries.

Third, the Good Samaritan in Scripture (Lk 10: 25-37) will be reflected on in light of the insights developed from the contextualization of 1958 and Day’s experiences. If the aim of practical theology is to “enable the Church to perform faithfully as it participates in God’s ongoing mission in, to and for the world” (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 25), then an exploration of arguably the most important commandment will help in this endeavor. The reflection seeks not a simple comparison but coincides with Robert J. Schreiter’s theological study of culture when he writes, “To maintain the desired openness and sensitivity to a local situation, it was suggested that the prevailing mode of evangelization and church development should be one of finding Christ in the situation rather than concentrating on bringing Christ into the situation” (1985, 39). It is this openness and integration of the social sciences with insights from the Catholic tradition

that makes a re-entry into the diaries of Dorothy Day practical, which in turn helps develop insights of her and her life.

Moreover, Day demonstrates a commitment to the Catholic Church, her family, and the poor during a difficult time in her life. Despite lengthy travels, challenging living conditions, criticism, and fear of eviction, Day makes time for herself through writing, prayer, even traveling. She enjoys spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren. These insights, as well as others, are put into conversation with objectives and practices for the current Church community.

This research focuses on the context of the U.S. Catholic community so as to ultimately explore a full range of issues from a practical theological perspective. This step is significant since a theological exploration should encourage not only contemplation, but also “ongoing action” (Schreiter 1985, 17).<sup>38</sup> The reflection on action and potential action is just as important as the contextualization for practical theologians (92).

This offers a means of advancing discussions on Day’s spirituality and theology while reflecting on the implications of her life for current conversations in the Church community. This last section, then, seeks to briefly reflect on the ways in which the contextualization of the diaries resembles a theology of praxis, which is perhaps “the most powerful approach to social transformation available to theology at this time” (92).<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Schreiter states, “Theology is certainly intended for a community and is not meant to remain the property of a theologians class; the expression of faith in theology should make a difference in people’s lives otherwise it is a mere beating of the air. Reflection for its own sake may lead to contemplation, but contemplation should lead to action as well” (1985, 17).

<sup>39</sup> Schreiter continues, “The method of praxis has been extended to other cultural settings less clearly marked by oppression, often through the small-Christian community movement (1985, 92).

## **The Context of 1958: Exploring the Social, Cultural, Political, and Ecclesial Characteristics**

1958 was not a calm year for the world: technological advances, war, racial tensions, and the space race produced a roller coaster of high tension, historic events. In the United States (US), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was developed for space exploration and launched the first U.S. moon rocket (Grun 1991, 543).<sup>40</sup> By the late 1950s, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had taken on leadership of the burgeoning Civil Rights movement. Despite efforts such as *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) tensions spread primarily in the South as the U.S. attempted to desegregate schools (542).<sup>41</sup> It had been 38 years since women had received their right to vote. In addition, Boris Pasternak had refused the Nobel Peace Prize in Literature because of alleged pressure from the Soviet Union in 1958. New questions began to emerge that focused on climate change. For example, A *New York Times* article titled “Frozen Key to Our Climate” asked, “What is happening to the world’s ice” (Engel 1958, 1). When it came to the Visual Arts, Gene Kelly was starring in the film *Marjorie Morningstar*. The infamous Guggenheim Museum, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, opened in New York (Grun 1991, 542-543). Unemployment in the U.S. reached almost 5.2 million, which is much lower than the current unemployment rate at 22 million, according to *The Washington Post* (Long 2020).<sup>42</sup> In light of the daily lives of Americans, Elvis Presley

---

<sup>40</sup> This rocket would “fail to reach the moon but traveled 79,000 miles from earth” (Grun 1991, 543).

<sup>41</sup> Grun continues, “Governor Orval Faubus of Arkansas defies the Supreme Court by closing schools in Little Rock, reopening them as private, segregated schools” (542).

<sup>42</sup> According to Long, “More than 22 million Americans have filed for unemployment aid since President Trump declared a national emergency, a staggering loss of jobs that has wiped out a decade of unemployment gains and pushed families to line up at the food banks as they take away government assistance” (2020, 1).

was being played on repeat. Air raid drills were common, for which Day and her pacifistic followers would protest and be jailed for at least once a year in the 1950s (Moss 2011, 37).

The existence of political parties in the U.S., however much related and however often at odds with each other, were the same two parties that have dominated much of U.S. political history: Democrats and Republicans. Dwight D. Eisenhower, known for his military background and promotion of military spending, was the Republican president at the time. Fears of the draft, communism, and the use of nuclear weapons were prevalent. According to *Congressional Record*, “most Americans supported the cold war against communism and feared nuclear war” (MacArthur 1951, 1). In light of American political identities, moderates favored “conventional means that might avoid major war or the use of atomic weapons” while the Right were more concerned with the “dangers of military weakness” (Laurie and Story, 2008, 43).

Responding to the Cold War and the fear of communism in 1958, the U.S. signed agreements for the “co-operations in the peaceful use of the uses of atomic energy,” which created “competition among superpowers” (Lekarenko 2018, 432-34). This, of course, raised the question: “What does a peaceful use of atomic energy actually mean?” In turn, there was the response to Russia’s release of Sputnik 1. An article from the *National Archives* describes the year highlighting common fears of Americans:

If an American happened to be gazing at the stars on Friday, October 4, 1957 he may have noticed an object crossing the evening sky. Radio listeners, too, may have heard a series of "beep, beep, and beep" sounds coming from their radios. A momentous event had occurred in the region of the Soviet Union known as

Kazakhstan – the Soviets had launched an artificial satellite into orbit around the earth. The satellite named Sputnik, Russian for "traveling companion," transmitted the beeping sounds as it followed its orbit around the globe. Rather than celebrating this momentous scientific feat, Americans reacted with a great deal of fear. The event came at a period near the end of the McCarthy communist "witch hunts," a time when schoolchildren were involved in "Duck and Cover" air raid drills, and citizens were encouraged to build their own civil defense shelters. It was widely believed that if the Soviets could launch a satellite into space, they probably could launch nuclear missiles capable of reaching U.S. shores. (Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library n.d., para. 1)

While Russia was sending Sputnik to space in 1958, U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower was sending troops to Lebanon (Labelle 2019, 172).<sup>43</sup> This was primarily the result of the civil war in Lebanon, sparked by the murder of Nassib Matni who openly opposed the president of Lebanon in an op-ed column (176). This was not the only act of violence and war with which the U.S. was involved. The country had recently experienced the Korean War (1950-1953) and was now at the beginning of the Vietnam War (1955-1975). Fidel Castro was sparking violence in Cuba against the Batista government (Grun 1991, 542) eventually creating more fears of communism and tension between the United States and other countries.

The Catholic Church was also responding to the threat of communism and fear of nuclear weapons and poor working conditions. In 1958, the year in which he was

---

<sup>43</sup> Labelle notes that "U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered what would amount to roughly 14,000 U.S. forces to intervene in the land of cedars (172).

succeeded by John XXIII as head of the Catholic Church (Grun 1991, 542),<sup>44</sup> Pius XII published the encyclical *Ad Apostolorum Principis* (1958a), which focused the Church's relations with both communism and China. The following month (July), Pius XII published the second encyclical of the year, *Miminesi Iuvat*, which addresses notions of unity. Fearing Western cultural developments such as nuclear weapons, Pius XII states in the encyclical (1958):

By now, of course, that war is over, but a just peace does not prevail, nor do men lie in concord founded on brotherly understanding. For the seeds of war either lurk in hiding or – from time to time – erupt threateningly and hold the hearts of men in frightened suspense, especially since human ingenuity has devised weapons so powerful that they can ravage and sink general destruction, not only the vanquished, but the victors with them, and all mankind (Pius 1958b, xii).

Even the Church was fearful of war, violence, and destructible political waves after experiencing the destruction caused by Hitler and Stalin.

Major shifts in the struggle to correct social injustices had taken place in the nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century, more study and reflection on social issues had grown within the Catholic Church. New voices in turn emerged to develop and strengthen new directions.

### **Dorothy Day and the 1950's**

One of these pioneers was Dorothy Day (1897-1980). The third of five children, Day was born into a lower middle-class family. By 1958, Day had her own child and was a Catholic convert who cared for the poor and sick. She was no longer the editor at *The*

---

<sup>44</sup> Grun asserts, "Cardinal Roncalli elected Pope John XXIII (Grun 1991, 542).

*Masses*, a daily Socialist newspaper, nor a nurse working in the hospital during the Spanish flu (1952, 90-91).<sup>45</sup> She no longer earned extra money posing for art classes and finishing her bachelor degree was long since off the table (Day 1952, 36). Instead, she was living her dream of being Catholic, which she once referred to as “rich and real and fascinating” in her autobiography *The Long Loneliness* (Day 1952, 106). Day found time to sit by the beach, listening to the sounds of the waves crashing the shore, and feeling the breeze in her face – something she thoroughly enjoyed. Yet, reflecting on these moments when she was at the beach or referring to her life as a loving dream fails to articulate challenges she confronted. She and Peter Maurin had founded *The Catholic Worker* in 1933, publishing the first issue of the newspaper (1952, 182).<sup>46</sup> Her struggles then suggests the severity of the challenges that followed.

Earlier in the 1950s, “facing the perils of the cold war, she embarked on a new style of activism, courting arrest several times (and several jail sentences of up to thirty days) for her protests against civil-defense drills in New York City” (Ellsberg 2011, 15). She was a radical political activist and unwavering pacifist that held tight to the principles of Catholic social teaching taught to her by Peter Maurin. Author of the work “The Wisdom of Dorothy Day,” Walter G. Moss describes Day during this time (2011).

During the Cold War she continued to speak out against wars. She decried war preparations and the development of new weapons like the H-bomb. Beginning in

---

<sup>45</sup> Day reflects on this time when she writes, “This was the time of the “flu” epidemic and the wards were filled and the halls too. Many of the nurses became ill and we were very short-handed. Every night before going off duty there were bodies wrapped in sheets and wheeled away to the morgue. When we came on duty in the morning, the night nurse was performing the same grim task” (1952, 91).

<sup>46</sup> Day writes in her autobiography, “Within three or four months the circulation bounded to 25,000, and it was cheaper to bring it out as an eight-page tabloid on newsprint rather than smaller-sized editions on better paper we had started with. By the end of the year we had a circulation of 100,000 and by 1936 it was 150,000” (Day 1952, 182).

June 1955 she was arrested every year for the rest of the 1950s for her annual refusal to take part in air raid mandated by the city of New York. Her actions leading to her first arrest for this offense were typical. She and her fellow resisters went to a park and sat on benches shortly before the sirens sounded. After the sirens went off and they refused to move, they were loaded into a police van and taken to jail. In 1958 she received a suspended sentence, but in the other three years she spends days or weeks in jail, the most being in 1957 when she was sentenced to 30 days in the city's Women's House of Detention (Moss 2011, 37).

Spending time in jail for protesting was nothing new to Day. In 1955, Day was "arrested with twenty-nine other pacifists" (2011, 51). Shortly thereafter, Day was arrested and jailed in 1957 with actress Judith Malina for 30 days and had somewhat of a "girlish" time together (2011, 52). Judith Malina provides a vivid reflection of this time with Day:

I think she unified the concepts of idea and practices better than anyone... better than anyone. Her ideas extended all the way to the pacifist idea, all the way to the anarchist idea, and all the way to poverty. Dorothy's human generosity could include the most pitiful person and the finest in the same embrace, and so I finally learned what she had been trying to teach me, that anarchism is holiness. It's a holiness here and now that consists of treating every person as a holy being. No dividing into good ones and bad ones (Riegle 2003, 57).

With a new Pope (Pope John XXII) in Rome, Day continued to respond to the political and social challenges of 1958. Her approach however continued to be more through a theological lens than the political lens that dominated her approach in the years

before her conversion. She prioritized Catholic beliefs over politics; whatever was political came from her beliefs and daily practices that re-affirmed those beliefs. When reflecting on his experiences with Day in the early 1950s, Michael Harrington would write that “Dorothy was basically not political at all” (Riegle 2003, 58).<sup>47</sup> She was closely connected to the political challenges, even deterring many of her followers with her pacifistic stance (Riegle 2003). Day’s radical stance against violence and war would not change, however. Fifty houses of hospitality closed following the years the U.S. went to war because of “lack of workers” according to Jim Forest (2011, 161).

Dorothy was critiquing socialism (any big government, really) and yearning to return to organic farming as a means to feed the poor (Riegle 2003, 59-64). Her anarchism was her holiness that “consisted of treating every person as a holy being” (Riegle 2003). Day spent her days during this year writing, cleaning, preparing meals for the poor, answering mail, and talking on the telephone with friends and family. When not at the New York Worker, Day was visiting cities, such as Chicago, and speaking to students, such as those at Saint Louis University (1958, 13).<sup>48</sup> She participated in a “pilgrimage” to Mexico where she visited families in poorer sections of the country and local churches such as Our Lady of Guadalupe, as mentioned in her 1958 diaries (1958, 5-6).

Whether or not Day is referred to as a political activist and social radical, Day favors theology more than her political convictions after her conversion in 1927. What is

---

<sup>47</sup> Harrington continues, “She (Dorothy) called it anarchism, but what she wanted was for everybody to perform the works of mercy” and “to transform their lives in a Christian way” (Riegle 2003, 58).

<sup>48</sup> On February 5, Day wrote: “Spoke at St Louis U. to students, at 12:30 after Mass until 2” (1958, 13).

perhaps more interesting for scholars is the way in which this preference was developed over time and the complexities that it entails. Sandra Yocum Mize reflects on Day's reasons for her commitment to the Church: "Day then uses her justification of baptizing her daughter to explain further her own attraction to the Church. On the one hand, they are very conventional. 'I felt that belonging to a Church would bring that order into her life which I felt my own had lacked'" (1995, 141). On the other hand, she identifies her decision with her rather unconventional concerns and commitments. She insists that 'it was my joy at having given birth to a child that made me do something definite' (141).

Yocum Mize also highlights the significance of religious practices within this discussion of Day.

She also admits that inadequacy of communism as 'the answer to her desire for a cause...The answer comes only through death in Christ' whose Sermon on the mount answers all the questions as to how to love God and one's brother' (141).

Where or not her reasons at the time of her decision were as clearly articulated as suggested in her narration, their articulation is central to the apologetic's effectiveness. The confession is also persuasion. Christianity supersedes the communist vision of a classless society through concrete practices. Christianity, not communism, answers the 'how to' questions concerning loving not only God but also one's brother. Religions practice, not Marxist slogans, provides the impetus for revolution (1995, 205).

Faith, then, took precedent in Day's life, especially over her political convictions. In light of Yocum's reflection, Day's practices provide an opportunity to identify concrete ways in which Day demonstrated love for self, God, the Church and others,

especially the poor and those deemed as outcasts of society. They act as windows providing important glimpses of Day's relationships, emotions, and feelings capturing the joys and struggles of her daily life.

### **A Year in the Life: Dorothy Day in 1958**

The diaries of 1958 reveal a busy year. The diaries for that year are full of entries on an almost daily basis. What follows is an account of each month of 1958 as found in her diary entries.

**January 1958.** In the first month of the year, Day began her entries with a focus on daily activities such as making sure her publications are ready for the Catholic Worker, going to the market for food supplies, and visiting her sister, Della (Day 1958, 1).<sup>49</sup> She indicates on January 2 that Charlie, a close companion, was leaving the Catholic Worker (Day 1958, 1).<sup>50</sup> She also indicates that she is preparing for her pilgrimage to Mexico when she writes, "a very tiring day, what with mail, copy to be read, clothes to get ready and ticket" (Day 1958, 1). On January 7, Day indicates that there were "many stops" on her way to Mexico (Day 1958, 3). She stays at Our Lady Queen of the World hospital in Kansas City, which was a "95 bed well equipped, beautifully decorated hospital in a Negro section" (Day 1958, 3).<sup>51</sup> She arrives in Mexico by January 12 when she writes, "this morning to Our Lady Guadalupe – out to the hill of Tepeyac [Mexico] and the crowds were so great it was all but impossible to get to communion" (Day 1958, 13).

---

<sup>49</sup> For this month, Day includes thirty-one entries, found on pages 1-12 of Day's original typed diary entries as found in the St. Thomas University archives (Day 1958).

<sup>50</sup> On January 2, 1958, Day writes, "This morning Charlie called me into his room to tell me he was leaving. A great shock. It was easier to see the others go – they had some definite plan. These situation are heartbreaking. There is no one to take his place" (Day 1958, 1).

<sup>51</sup> On January 6, 1958, Day writes, "It is an integrated hospital but because of the neighborhood serves mostly Negroes" (Day 1958, 3).

**February 1958.** In this month, Day is traveling by “bus” on the “Raton Pass” making stops at places such as Saint Louis University (Day 1958, 12).<sup>52</sup> Other places she stops on this includes the Central Bureau with David Dunn and the Hermon Delouge to see Father Kerwen (Day 13, 1958). She also stops to see Betty Cuda who is dying (Day 1958, 14). She listened to tapes from Catherine Lahey and Jeanette Calvin (Day 1958, 16-17). She arrives in Pittsburgh where she meets a man named Mitchell, who is the organizer for Master Maits and Pilots and Anarchist Hall (Day 1958, 19). She refers to nature seven times during this month.<sup>53</sup> She carefully notes speaking with others during her travels.<sup>54</sup>

**March 1958.** In this month, Day concentrates more on her ordinary and daily worries. She is concerned how she will pay for the rent. She is thinking about getting a beach house for her and the other workers on March 13 and 14 (Day 1958, 23).<sup>55</sup> She discusses weaving as a hobby and even attends a weaving exhibit on March 5.<sup>56</sup> She ends March with a statement regarding the lack of privacy when she writes, “I am parting slowly but surely with my privacy” (Day 1958, 28).<sup>57</sup>

**April 1958.** Day begins this month by referencing her lawyer, Tully, who she hopes will help with eviction notices against the New York Catholic Worker (Day 1958,

---

<sup>52</sup> There are twenty-eight entries in the month of February (Day 1958, 12-20).

<sup>53</sup> She is stuck in a blizzard and writes, “all ye ice and snow bless the Lord” (Day 1958, 17). On February 19, which was Ash Wednesday in 1958, she also writes, “beautiful scenic along the river everything cold and dead” (Day 1959, 17). She also quotes Ecclesiastes on February 19 when she writes “on this road is not to go forward but to go back.”

<sup>54</sup> On February 6 she indicates that she had her four different stories concerning the travels of others from places such as Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Haiti, and China. She also mentions an African doctor studying in New York, and a person’s story from Germany (Day 1958, 13-17).

<sup>55</sup> There are thirty-one entries in March. See pages 20-28.

<sup>56</sup> In the month of March, “weaving” is mentioned three times.

<sup>57</sup> On March 31, Day writes “On the island I sleep with Agnus...in town with Veronica” (Day 1958, 28).

29).<sup>58</sup> She continues to engage with people at the New York Worker. One man by the name of Fritz tells Dorothy that “everyone he knows is, including his two oldest sons, are under the care of psychiatrists” (Day 1958, 29).<sup>59</sup> Day travels to Boston on April 10 where she “visited got interviewed for May Day issue” and had a “very good meeting” at Boston University (Day 1958, 31).<sup>60</sup> She also attends the “Brothers Karamazov” at the “Gate” (Day 1958, 33). After watching this film, day reflects on her past experiences with Gene O’Neill, a multi-awarded nominated writer, when she states, “So it is time to write an article about that period – 4 month of my life, 40 years ago, when I walked the streets of N. Y. with Gene O’Neill and sat out the night in taverns - Jimmy Wallace’s, nicknamed Hell Hole and Waterfront backrooms” (Day 1958, 33).<sup>61</sup> Day seems to seek credit for guiding O’Neill’s work when she writes on April 22, “There are so many books being written about Gene – and that winter figures in them too – and so many articles – Malcom’s among them, though he was a student at Harvard that winter and so knew nothing of my capacities as Gene’s philosopher” (Day 1958, 33).

**May 1958.** Day begins this month with a focus on meeting with students at Iona College at New Rochelle. She also meets with Fr. Mulley, the chaplain at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, where she had conversations with electrical engineers wanting to do

---

<sup>58</sup> On Tuesday, April 1, Day writes, “Dorothy Tully our lawyer says we probably have till Christmas to move and then not to get our till we are forced.” She indicates that “the city is broke, asking a billion dollars” and that “taxes on real estate are going up 1/5” (Day 1958, 29). Here it is important to note that in this month, Day includes thirty entries. See pages 29-35.

<sup>59</sup> Day reflects on her trust in the Lord in light of comment from Fritz on April 2 when she writes, “It is not enough to love or perish. Everyone wants to love. But willingness to heal discomfort (Recovery) to suffer is the need. There is no love without it. Silence –suffering. God does the rest” (Day 1958, 29).

<sup>60</sup> Day reflects on this meeting and her return home to New York when she asserts, “Questions till 4. Train at 5. N.Y. by 9:15. Got to bed early but not to sleep. NY house is too hot” (Day 1958, 31).

<sup>61</sup> Day writes a reminiscence of Gene O’Neill and how he brought out her religious leanings as indicated Robert M. Dowling in the text, “Told in Context: Dorothy Day’s Previously Unpublished Reminiscence of Eugene O’Neill (Dowling 2017, 1-12).

works of mercy.<sup>62</sup> Day indicates on May 6 that she and other Workers, for instance, Kieran, who had stayed up all night “making signs” (Day 1958, 37). As a response to being arrested for protesting on this day, Judge Kenneth Phipps gave her and the Workers “thirty days and suspended the sentence” (Day 1958, 37). She indicates that she and some of the other Workers were held in the cell and read Thoreau’s essay on Civil Disobedience” (Day 1958, 39). The physical hardships did not stop for Day since she also indicates that she had to go the clinic on May 9 since she smashed her thumb in the door of a cab” (Day 1958, 37). Day reflects on the atomic bomb and Russian-American relations (Day 1958, 38). Hoping to find a new home for the Catholic Worker soon, she “makes her first payment on the beach place” (Day 1958, 39). When it comes to her entertainment pleasures, she attends the movies with Ammon and continues her enjoyable walks on the beach (Day 1958, 39-43).

**June 1958.** During this month, Day remained at the Catholic Worker House in New York, working out how to move forward in light of the eviction notices. She continued her daily practices of writing, cooking, and attending Mass. She spent time with her daughter Tamar, who is “most depressed, always on the verge of tears” (Day 1958, 50).<sup>63</sup> Day writes the lengthiest entry of the month on June 21 when she reflects on the significance of loving and helping each other, especially those who resided at the Catholic Worker (Day 1958, 49).<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> In May, Day includes thirty-one entries. See pages 35-43.

<sup>63</sup> In June, Day includes thirty-one entries. A double entry is included on June 21. See pages 43-50.

<sup>64</sup> On June 21, Day writes, “Beth, Stanley, Bob, Ammon, and I who now make up staff must love each other and help each other by prayers. Much can be written about poverty, work and we have done that. Must read Gospels regularly, prayerfully. I read the Seeds of the Desert or Imitation before Mass” (Day 1958, 49).

**July 1958.** In the beginning of the month, Day spends time at the beach with her grandchildren and visitors who are “all for the farming communes” (Day 1958, 52).<sup>65</sup> At the beach, Day spends time going on short swims, drinking, and cooking (Day 1958, 52). She takes care of her grandchildren at the farm who “play ball” and go to Confession with her (Day 1958, 52).<sup>66</sup> She describes a few of the people at the Catholic Worker who seem to be unhappy, such as Isadore and Tony (Day 1958, 53).<sup>67</sup> Even Veronica, a woman living and working alongside Day at the time, was getting drunk and uncontrollable, according to the July 16 diary entry (Day 1958, 55).<sup>68</sup> By mid-July, Day is visiting her sister, Della, by boat ride and reflects on the unpleasantness of pollution when she writes, “An extremely humid day, full of smog, the smell of gasoline – the fumes of the engines from the boats, the exhaust from cars, hanging over the water” (Day 1958, 54).

**August 1958.** In the first few days of August, Day goes to the grave yard to “weed the graves” of her late friends, Charles Smith, Mr. Stokes, Philip Millions, and Catherine Odlirak (Day 1958, 59).<sup>69</sup> She also visits the beach where she enjoys swimming in the “clear water” (Day, 1958, 59). She receives a letter from her daughter Tamar, which indicates that Tamar is very unhappy. This, in return, makes Day unhappy and states that the only solution is to “work even if it only housework, cooking, etc., but

---

<sup>65</sup> In the month of July, Day includes thirty-one entries. See pages 50-59.

<sup>66</sup> On July 7, Day writes, “Called Tamar. She is starting to freeze chicken for winter and seems glad to have the children here. It is rest for her” (Day 1958, 52).

<sup>67</sup> On July 10, Day writes, “Isadore says she is unhappy and Tony says that though he is unhappy he has supernatural joy” (Day 1958, 53). After this comment, Day demonstrates her sense of humor when she writes, “Dear God, send us a little wine. Dearest Mary, tell Him we have no wine” (Day 1958, 53).

<sup>68</sup> On July 16, Day writes, Stanley stayed to care for the children and I went into town after lunch and found Veronica very drunk indeed. She is getting so uncontrolled that I had to talk to her about it” (Day 1958, 55). Day’s ability to talk to others about their alcoholism suggests an ability to think objectively regarding others drinking alcohol and her courage to help people with their mental illnesses and struggles.

<sup>69</sup> There are thirty-one entries in August. See pages 59-69.

work for others” (Day 1958, 59). She continues to work through the financial stresses indicating that she and the other Workers “can borrow  $\frac{3}{4}$  of assessed valuation at 6% interest, from city – to relocate” (Day 1958, 60). On August 6, Day reflects on a particular dream she has of being a “novice in a religious order in which there were all children” and indicates that this dream represented a “happy communal life” (Day 1958, 60).

She continues writing on topics and people, for instance, Gene O’Neill and a “Mexico article” (Day 1958, 62). She indicates that there are many “distractions” that make it difficult for her to write, for instance, there were “many deaths and weddings” as well as “noisy children” (Day 1958, 69). Despite the distractions, she makes daily Mass a priority during this month.<sup>70</sup> On August 28, Day spends that day at the beach despite threats from hurricane Daisy (Day 1958, 68). Day celebrates the wedding of Kieran and Shelia, who were married on August 30 (Day 1958, 68). After a night of sleeping at the farm toward the end of the month, Day returns to New York where Marge, a woman staying at the Catholic Worker, gave birth to “twins after 24 hours of labor” (Day 1958, 69).

**September 1958.** Day begins the month by indicated that she is “hunting for house” in “very hot” weather (Day 1958, 69).<sup>71</sup> She is interested in an “old bathhouse on Allen Street” where “tramps sleep” and the “street is being torn up” (Day 1958, 69). She sees Forester, her ex-lover, who was living close to her for a month (Day 1958, 71). She reflects on God for help during a stressful context when she writes on September 10,

---

<sup>70</sup> There are 31 entries for this month and the word “Mass” is mentioned ten times in August. She may well have attended Mass on more than ten occasions. On August 31 and August 10 since she writes that she attended a Ukrainian Church where the service was in Russian (Day 1958, 62-69).

<sup>71</sup> There are twenty-eight entries in September. See pages 69-76.

“both Russia and the U.S. threatening...God help us” (Day 1958, 70). She continues to travel to the farm and attends daily Mass. Unfortunately, Day has trouble sleeping and is concerned that there is “too much food in the house” (Day 1958, 73). Her physical ailments continue as well when she writes on September 18, “Also I’m lame in ankles and the stairs too much” (Day 1958 73).

**October 1958.** Day continues “house hunting” on the beach for a new home because of fear that she and the others would be evicted by December (Day 1958, 80).<sup>72</sup> Some of the other Catholic Workers suggest that owning a house is impossible (Day 1958, 80). Day responds with this claim that “If our Lord wants us to have a house he will send it” (Day 1958, 78). She is suffering from “conjunctivitis” and infection of the lids, which she indicates is “most miserable” (Day 1958, 80). She continues opening the door for those that need food. Two visitors this year came from Florida, only 24 and 14 years of age, were apple pickers and wheat ranch hands” (Day 1958, 80). She returns to the farm on October 15 and indicates that there is a “real sense of joy coming back to the farm” (Day 1958, 82).<sup>73</sup>

**November 1958.** Day receives a new update that she and the other Workers will have to be out of the N.Y. Chrystie location by December 15 (Day 1958, 89).<sup>74</sup> She continues to have health issues that associate with her bladder, and elaborates on different

---

<sup>72</sup> Thirty entries are included in October. See pages 77-85.

<sup>73</sup> On October 15, Day reflects on hope and her love for returning to the farm when she writes, “Called Tully [her lawyer]. She said we had probably until January. Much hope. Much can happen before January. A real sense of joy coming back to the farm” (Day 1958, 82). She ends the entry with reflecting on God’s care for people when she writes, “He hath care for us” (Day 1958, 82).

<sup>74</sup> On November 15, Day writes, “In the afternoon I took a little walk and telephoned N.Y. to find we had to be out December 15 at the latest, or the marshal would put us on the street” (Day 1958, 89). There are twenty-nine entries in this month. During this month, Day writes the same date twice on two different entries (Day 1958, 86-95).

types of folk medicine to help with chronic fatigue (Day 1958, 92).<sup>75</sup> Traveling to Yale, Day “spoke to lawyers seminar and to John Dewey club on November 4, 1958 (Day 1958, 86). She travels to Francis Xavier chapel, which she indicates was a “pleasant trip” (Day 1958, 87). She has Brothers from Holy Cross staying at the Worker on November 12 (Day 1958, 88). She indicates that she cleaned, admired the children playing, and spoke to a “good student group and priests” on November 11 (Day 1958, 88). Unfortunately, she was suffering from a “bad cold” during this month but made time to “pick some mushrooms in the woods” on a particular day in the middle of the month (Day 1958, 88). Her reading of choice during this month was Nickolas Nickleby and spent one day shopping for “big kettles and kitchen cabinet” (Day 1958, 88). On her birthday, November 8, Day visits a bookshop and attends Mass (Day 1958, 87). On November 20, Day spends the day at Louisville having lunch with friends and the following day she writes a letter to her daughter, Tamar (Day 1958, 92). On November 29, the International Volunteer Service spoke at the Worker, visitors from Earlham College in Antioch, Vermont. On Thanksgiving, Day “invited people to housewarming in loft and attending Mass that afternoon” (Day 1958, 94).

**December 1958.** Day continues to visit her sister, Della, and reaches out to her daughter Tamar, who “said they were without water and have to carry from the spring and melt snow for animals” (Day 1958, 96).<sup>76</sup> Despite that fact that Day indicates her tooth is getting better on December 8, she indicates that she is feeling pain and lack of

---

<sup>75</sup> On November 17, Day reflects on “cider hand baths” and the way in which she takes “two teaspoons of cider and honey before bed” (Day 1958, 92). She ends the entry by stating, “a person who suffering from fatigue should live out of the ocean” (Day 1958, 92). Perhaps this final statement is palpable with her love for the beach and farm as locations that help relieve her stress and anxiety.

<sup>76</sup> There are thirty-one entries in December. See pages 95-105. This completes the 1958 diary entries, which indicates that there were a total of 362 entries overall. There are two pages at the two pages at the end of the diaries that indicate numbers and lists of things to buy. See pages 106-107

sleep from “arthritis” (Day 1958, 96). She attends Confession on December 4 and observes the day of obligation on December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Her read of choice on December 5 is Leviticus (Day 1958 96).<sup>77</sup> She makes the decision that buying a house is “now off” and is “too precarious” (Day 1958, 97). Day keeps up with the cleaning duties at the Worker and welcomes a visitor from California, Frida, who has cared for disturbed children” (Day 1958, 98).<sup>78</sup> She reflects on the troubles that Tamar who not only has a miscarriage in December, but is also facing troubles with her husband who “has done damage to all of her loom things and books than all the rest” (Day 1958, 98-99).<sup>79</sup> On Wednesday December 24, Christmas Eve, Day writes that it was “very cold” when she was “serenading jail” (Day 1958, 102).

### **Dorothy Day’s 1958 Diary in Dialogue with Joseph Conrad’s ‘The Congo Diary’**

An initial question of the research asked, what was Day’s reason for writing these diaries? Day had been writing since she was a little girl and continued the practice throughout her life. She does, however, become more “detached” from the practice of writing in the last five years of her life (Riegle 2003, 172). Perhaps it is safe to say that Day demonstrates variations of writing during this time in her life. For example, she is writing articles for the *Catholic Worker* in the year 1958. She writes in such a way that resembles a letter. There is also a call to action in some respects and connections made to

---

<sup>77</sup> The word “Confession” is indicated seven times in the 1958 diaries. See pages 8-84. Most of the entries in relation to Confession indicate that she was participating in this Sacrament. On September 28, however, she writes, “Good sermon on Confession – marking it on calendar, picking flowers, walking on a little beach beautiful, but ours is more so” (Day 1958, 76).

<sup>78</sup> Day writes, “While she typed I mopped bath rooms and Dolores and Alive helped Veronica, who was very drunk again” (Day 1958, 98).

<sup>79</sup> Regarding Tamar’s miscarriage, Day writes on December 14, “Tamar had miscarriage. In hospital for two days. Doctors would not come” (Day 1958, 99)!

saints and Scripture. Day's autobiography highlights lengthy depictions of events and characters that helped shape her life prior to the publication in 1952.

The diaries, however, are rather different than the first two forms described above. Here it should be also noted that in the 1958 diaries Day would write nearly every day, which is different from other years when she wrote diary entries. With lack of complete sentences and more of a focus on the daily experiences, the diaries resemble more of Joseph Conrad's Congo diary rather than *The Heart of Darkness* (1902). This was also influenced by the understanding that if one were to explore Day's practices in her diaries, one should also understand that Day's writing the diaries is a practice in itself. This provided a more objective lens to the initial exploration, which was quite useful indicating patterns in the diaries of 1958 that would eventually be paralleled with Joseph Conrad's Congo diary.

This connection merits further exploration since it provides insights into the concrete struggles and challenges of Day's life in 1958. To begin, it should be brought to light that Day was an admirer of Conrad and was perhaps even comforted by his work as indicated in her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*. During an early jail experience with her friend Lucy, Day writes, "In spite of our exhaustion, we could not sleep, but lay there talking of Conrad's novels for some time" (Day 1952, 76).

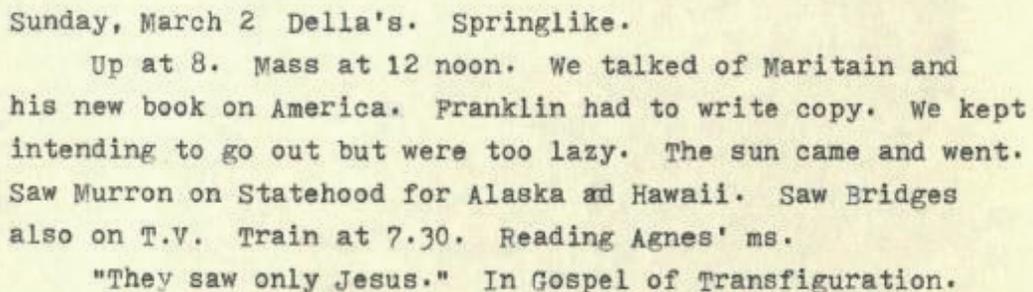
Previous knowledge of this connection aided in observing connections between her methods of writing the entries with the method of Conrad. In addition, research on the word counts and patterns associated with the word counts helped develop this connection.

Owen Knowles, author of *A Conrad Chronology* (1992) and the *Oxford's Reader Companion to Conrad* (2000), wrote an introduction to Joseph Conrad's Congo diaries

explaining that the diary “revealed little about Conrad’s responses, its jottings and sketches nevertheless show where he went, what he was doing, who he met, and some of the things he saw and experienced during the first part of his six-month stay in Africa” (Conrad 2007, xxxv). Conrad’s method of indicating specific times, events, and people is similar to the way in which Day makes references specifics in her diaries. In a brief excerpt, Joseph Conrad writes:

Up till noon, the sky clouded and strong NW wind was very chilling. From 1 pm to 4 pm sky clear and very hot day. Expect lots of battles with carriers to-morrow – Had them all called and made a speech which they did not understand. They promised good behavior (Conrad 2007, 107).

Day’s 1958 diaries seem to share a few similarities.



Sunday, March 2 Della's. Springlike.  
Up at 8. Mass at 12 noon. We talked of Maritain and his new book on America. Franklin had to write copy. We kept intending to go out but were too lazy. The sun came and went. Saw Murrion on Statehood for Alaska and Hawaii. Saw Bridges also on T.V. Train at 7.30. Reading Agnes' ms.  
"They saw only Jesus." In Gospel of Transfiguration.

The indications of date, time, descriptions of weather, and even Day addressing the time she woke that morning, resembles Joseph Conrad (Conrad 2007, xxviii).<sup>80</sup> This connection has yet to be made in other publications. This suggests other conversations with regard to Day’s engagement with literature, adding a new depth of knowledge and

---

<sup>80</sup> Owen asserts, “The Diary (The Congo Diary) is full of references to specific times, places, and named people, the later story dissolves strict clock time, occupies an unspecified geography (with the Congo only implicitly identified as its setting) and names most individuals according to their professional or symbolic functions (2007, xxxvii).

appreciation of Dorothy Day and her sources. Thus, these diaries, as yet unpublished, offer an opportunity for fresh explorations. This does not necessarily promote a wholly new exploration of the diaries. Rather, it offers a “re-entry” into Day’s 1958 past experiences in order for practices of her life to be brought to light.

The initial focus on practices made clear connections on the way in which Conrad and Day share similarities in their diaries. Of course, practical theologians understand that such practices are themselves contextual. In other words, they are tied to a context, history, interpretation, and are dynamic by nature. This focus, then, helps make deeper connections between the contexts of Conrad with the context of Day. Was also trying to capture the daily characteristics of her life in the midst of venturing down her own dangerous “river”? Was she also in survival mode? Was she attempting to create structure during these later years of her life? Life at the Catholic Worker was not necessarily for the faint-hearted. Her reflexivity through daily prayer and writing may have been a way in which Day developed structure to her extra-ordinary and perhaps lonely life, similar to the way in which Conrad wrote of his daily encounters while exploring Africa. Perhaps she too was scared of the unknown not only for herself, but for her family and friends who brought joy in her life.

Day had been living in poverty for quite some time up to this point, developing health concerns along the way. For example, Day indicates toothache and a bladder pain in her 1958 diaries (Day 1958, 59). In the 1950’s, Day was “facing the perils of the cold war, she embarked on a new style of activism, courting arrest several times (and several jail sentences of up to thirty days) for her protests against civil-defense drills in New York City” (Ellsberg 2011, 15).

The various organizations and governments that were associated with Day at this time illustrate her social activism. She would engage with church organizations, students, and pacifist groups. Quite often she would be asked to guest speak during this time. These conversations were part of Day's work and were considered a form of evangelizing for her. In 1958, New York was forcing people to participate in drills. Day and others from the Catholic Worker would protest during these days. They would understand before attending the protest that there was a chance of arrest. Day would most likely hope for an arrest and be proud of those at the Catholic Worker who would be willing to go to jail for a just cause, though she would not want anyone to get hurt.

The main organization with which Day, the anarchist, was engaged, then, was the Catholic Worker. The CW was a location but so much more. It was a newspaper but also a movement, one that still functions today. Day would make writing articles for *The Catholic Worker* newspaper a priority in the midst of traveling to convents, churches, back and forth from the farm outside New York City, elsewhere in the United States, and even outside the country as she visited local communities. One of the young college students that worked with Day during the later years of her life, Michael Harank, stated that she loved to travel and that "she was a woman with a winged foot" (Riegle 2003, 175). Day enjoyed traveling and found that it gave her a sense of success, but it also became tiresome for her. Perhaps Day's admiration for traveling had to do with the conditions of the CW, especially since there were rats, other rodents, and rotten smells through the walls as well as all the personality struggles of an organization perpetually in crisis. In 1958, Day is saddened by the loss of a friend who leaves the Worker, moving to a new location because of financial issues, having an ongoing tooth ache (Day 1958 97),

and publishing over seventeen letters, many of which were fundraising appeals. Perhaps the most significant of these hardships were when people of the Catholic Worker were evicted (1957-1958). As Riegle states, “it was a very, very, difficult time, one of the real low points in Catholic Worker history” (64).<sup>81</sup>

Nevertheless, Day would keep giving back to those in need by making sure food was on the table and the poor had a place to sleep. In Day’s March 18 diary entry, she writes, “we sent 100 dollars to Arthur...paid Laura’s deposit. Rent for two Puerto Rican families. Wrote appeal” (Day 1958, 25). This demonstrates her practices of charity during this time. Perhaps these acts should be given more credit since the more difficult part of the Catholic Worker was perhaps not the financial stresses, but actually living with people that included men, women, children, travelers, drunks, and so on. Jim Forest describes this experience and Day’s ability to be flexible:

The problems of finding and maintaining a house of hospitality were huge, with the financial considerations not the hardest part. The most demanding aspect was the frustration and exhaustion of living with people, both guests and co-workers, whose needs were overwhelming – nor, for them, was Dorothy the easiest person to work with (2011, 219).

Carving out hours in the day for writing was important for Day. *The Catholic Worker* published 17 letters written by Dorothy in 1958. In one letter, Day is refuting the rumor that the New York CW was closing and addressing the issues on why there was a need for financial support. Day makes her plea by not forgetting the others who have no

---

<sup>81</sup> Riegle continues, “It looked as if *The Catholic Worker* might even die. Money just wasn’t coming in. The subscriptions had not gone up much from the post-World War II period. Couldn’t pay the grocer, the printing bills” (2003, 64).

homes and closes by reflecting on a quote from Saint Paul, “Lord, what will you have my do” (Acts 9:6). Writing was part of her vocation and her means to express herself. She had always been an avid reader since she was little and truly enjoyed writing and leading a newspaper. Perhaps this is partially because she did not always have the time for writing and reflection. In *The Long Loneliness*, Day reflects on a time when working long hours for *The Call*, a Socialist newspaper, and writes, “You are carried along in a world of events, writing, reporting, with no time at all for thought or reflection” (1952, 65). When Day was not writing in her life, she asserts that she was not following her vocation. This is perhaps the clearest when she leaves nursing after the Spanish Flu pandemic in the United States (91-93). Regardless of the challenges of her environment coupled with her exhaustion and declining energy, Day would find the time to write and reflect daily in this particular year.

The empirical conversation in practical theology of this study continues since there is a link between diary writing and psychology, particularly in work and organizational research (Ohly 2010). Researchers examine relationships and seek to “gather data in peoples’ natural life contexts” (80). In addition, scholars in psychology are exploring the ways in which “expressive writing” can be used as a treatment for those who are suffering from depression” (Krpan 2013).

Day had to confront many aspects of suffering in her daily life during this time. Day made it a habit to write daily, however. This time was important for Day since it was in the quiet time where she would most find the Lord. Writing was known as a form of prayer for Day. The practice of writing the diary itself needs further exploration as a means to heal through written reflection.

Day would associate writing with her prayer life and oftentimes see it as a form of prayer. Perhaps the diaries were a way for Day to deal with the stresses that came with her life at this time.

This is not to suggest that this was the only reason for the diary. Perhaps Day's writing in a diary was associated with memory, especially since Day would get frustrated when she would forget people, names, and events (Riegle 2003, 175). Perhaps it helped to build structure in her daily life. According to the Introduction of *The Congo Diary* and *Heart of Darkness*, "in conditions of extreme loneliness and stress, the act of keeping a diary can be a form of consoling self-communication, as well as a way of establishing a familiar routine and of using written language to bring a modicum of structure to confusing and chaotic experiences" (2007, xxxvi).

Dealing with the financial stresses of this year was a major concern as well as her daughter's struggles. She also has her own health issues, pilgrimages to attend, guest speaking events, and all of the other responsibilities of the CW's leader that included the daily chores. According to her diaries, Day would even experience nightmares. On January 26, Day states, "Dreamt of accident last night, being pinned under a car" (1958, 10).

The financial concerns can be confirmed through her publication in the *Catholic Worker* newspaper in 1958 where she pleads for money donations to keep the CW up and running. Putting out an appeal for money was not a practice that Day would be in favor of unless it came down to extreme hardships (Riegle 2003, 65). The CW needed financial support. They would first "ask God for it" through means of "prayer, fasting, and setting

up continuous prayer vigils at the local church” (Riegle 2003, 63). Nevertheless, it was a tough year.

This was not necessarily new for Day since she grew up during the Great Depression, experienced two World Wars, and an epidemic. It had been decades since she protested in front of the White House with other women suffragists where boys would throw stones at her (1952 72). Day shares insights into the way in which she answered her loneliness in her autobiography. She states that the answer is community.

Christians have a personal responsibility to act in light of the Gospel, but they also have an obligation to be in community with others. This community for Day includes all. In 1952 she writes, “Community – that was the social answer to the long loneliness...That was one of the attractions of religious life and why couldn’t lay people share in it” (1952, 224).<sup>82</sup> Though, the community was not always at its best and Day would get frustrated just as any person would (Riegle 2003, 153).

### **People in Day’s Life during 1958**

Some people had a close relationship with Day during this time. These diaries highlight a few important figures, but are not limited to, Tamar, Della, Forster Batterham, and Ammon Hennacy. This is not to say that these were the only relationships in her life at this time. Nonetheless, the diaries certainly indicate some persons to be present more than others. For example, Tamar is mentioned numerous times in the diaries of 1958. Because of this repetition in her diaries, the Dorothy-Tamar relationship is of particular interest. First, Day’s relationship with her daughter will be explored. Unfortunately, her

---

<sup>82</sup> Day continues, “Not just the basic community of the family, but also a community of families, with a combination of private and communal property.” She asserts that “this could be a farming commune, a continuation of the agronomic university Peter spoke of as part of the program we were to work for” (1952, 224).

daughter was experiencing many challenges during this time. Second, Della, Day's sister, and Day's grandchildren are highlighted. Third, Ammon Hennacy was an admired friend of Day's who had trouble embracing the priests and authority of the Catholic Church. This is not to suggest that there were the only people mentioned in the diaries. In addition, this is not to suggest that because they are mentioned on more than one occasion that other people were unimportant. Forester, the father of Tamar, makes an appearance in the diaries that will be briefly explored to help indicate Day's practices of love and forgiveness.

First, Day's relationship with her family offer critically important insight. Tamar, her daughter, and her sister, Della, are indicated on more than one occasion in the diaries. Day would regularly indicate a concern for Tamar in her diaries. Patrick Jordan, author of *Dorothy Day: Love in Action* and the editor of *Hold Nothing Back: Writings by Dorothy Day*, asserts that "Tamar's birth was the reason for Day's first conversion" (Jordan 2017, 32) in his article "Dorothy Day's Second Conversion?" Tamar's struggles are also indicated in the diaries when Day writes on December 4, 1958 that her daughter was out of water (Day 1958, 96). Unfortunately, the challenges did not stop for Tamar. On December 14, Day writes in her diary that Tamar had a miscarriage (Day, 1958, 99).<sup>83</sup>

Though Tamar was an important figure in the CW growing up, especially as the daughter of its leaders and founder, the CW was not necessarily a place that housed Day's family members. However, she did spend quite a bit of time with her sister, Della, during this year. Day's nursing background perhaps was of help in this year she tended to her sick sister. On December 13, Day wrote the following.

---

<sup>83</sup> On Saturday, December 13, Day writes, "Tamar had miscarriage. In hospital for two days. Doctors would not come" (Day 1958, 99).

Sunday December 21

Spent today at Della's. Della sick in bed with cold. Florence Kaslow drove me home from church. Television in evening. Really resting all day. Reading Huguet, on Societies, (...?...) etc.

Not part of her immediate family, Ammon Hennacy was another important person in Day's life at this time, especially since he was mentioned quite frequently in the diaries of 1958. As the "most ascetic, the most hard-working, the most devoted to the poor and oppressed" according to Day (Day 1970), Ammon came to live at the New York House of Hospitality in 1952 where he stayed for eight years (Moss 2011, 37). Many years before this move, Ammon was "more critical and suspicious of Catholic authorities than was Dorothy" (38).<sup>84</sup> In her diaries, Day addresses this when she writes on Friday December 26, 1958:

Thought--Ammon sees only good in his former radical friends and ignores rest, but sees ill in clergy--their omissions and commissions. I shall try to see only good in them and write book on them.

Here one can observe that Day does not always agree with her friends and other Catholic Workers. In addition, this entry shows how Day was loyal to the institutional leadership of the Catholic Church. It is well known that Day was critical of the Church, but she critiques the Church in such a way that "strengthens rather than compromises her loyalty" (Riegler 2003, 103). For instance, Cardinal Spellman did not support Day when

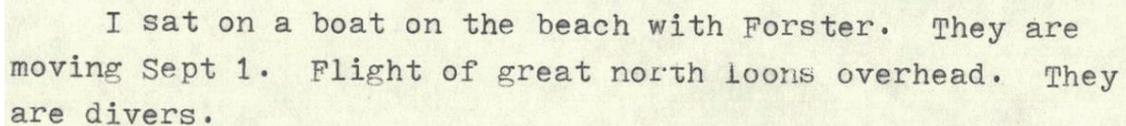
---

<sup>84</sup> Moss continues, "He finally answered her prayers by converting to Catholicism in late 1952. It was he who organized the CW protest against the civil defense drill" (2011, 38).

she was being evicted. She was critical of him, but she would actually “stand up for him” if anyone else would speak ill of him (Riegle 2003, 95).

Ammon eventually left New York to establish a House of Hospitality in Salt Lake City. He would later depart from the Catholic Church in the 1960s. His leaving the Church after departing from Day is also foreshadowed in the diaries. On December 25, Day wrote in one of her lengthiest diary entries of that year, “Ammon said he felt not at all peaceful as he sang in front of the jail – he wanted to break down the walls” (Day 1958, 103). Despite his departure from the Catholic Church, Ammon remained an activist deeply touched by the tradition of the Catholic Worker until his death in 1970.

The fourth person who has a strong impact on Day’s life at this time is the father of her daughter, Forster. Though Forster was with another woman at this time, Day would still spend time with him. On July 29, Day writes:



I sat on a boat on the beach with Forster. They are moving Sept 1. Flight of great north loons overhead. They are divers.

Here when Day mentions “they” she is referring to Forester and his new wife. Forester was going to leave with his new wife and move to Florida. Unfortunately, she becomes ill the following year and Day nurses her until her death.

Other personalities central to Day’s life at this time were much more oppositional, representing the powers and principalities. Robert Moses was a powerful business broker who sought to build a ten-lane expressway through lower Manhattan. The plans for the Lower Manhattan Expressway (LOMEX) neglected the people and community located in

this area, which was to house many immigrants and the poorer people of the city.<sup>85</sup> The expressway was never built, but there is a possibility that the area around the Catholic Worker located at 223 Chrystie Street was a target for demolition. Moses was known for his disdain for the poor and impoverished and this project emphasized that. A *New York Time's* article describes the cost of the major project and highlights the way in which it was going to impact people and families in the area.

The Federal Government would pay \$90,000,000 of the cost, and the states \$10,000,000. The city's cost is estimated at \$220,000. The project would require the relocation of 1,972 families living along the route, and 804 business establishments would have to be moved. (Hunt 1962, 32)

Moses was casting people, business, and families aside, using them as a means to an end to push his own projects.

An assumption brought to this research relates to Robert Moses. He had the approval to create the LOMEX in 1941, which would displace "100,000" people who lived in the slums, as indicated in a 1999 documentary on New York City by film maker Ric Burns (Burns 1999). With his history of building superhighways in New York, it is not impossible to assume that the creation of this above-ground ten lane highway would displace hundreds of businesses and families. Day's Catholic Worker house was three blocks north of Little Italy where most of the demolition would take place. Such devastation would impact the area and people living in it. In addition, this area was known as the home for immigrants, African Americans, and the poor. Day's home, the

---

<sup>85</sup> The map of the LOMEX is depicted on the following website:  
[http://www.vanshnookenraggen.com/\\_index/2009/02/unbuilt-robert-moses-highway-maps/](http://www.vanshnookenraggen.com/_index/2009/02/unbuilt-robert-moses-highway-maps/)

New York Catholic Worker, would have been similarly under a condemnation process to clear the ground for this massive project of “poor people removal.”

### **Reflecting on the Good Neighbor**

Following the practical theological framework from which this project is grounded in, a modern reading of the “good neighbor” recognizes the importance of engaging Scripture. Yet, this connection does not intend to simply apply Scripture to the diaries of Day. Rather the engagement of Scripture coincides with John Howard Yoder’s (1972) process in making connections to the witness of Christ in the Gospels. As Yoder points out in *The Politics of Jesus*, “No one can deny that numerous genres of witness that are present in the Old and New Testament” (Yoder 1972, 16).

These connections help recognize and hope that “God the Spirit might guide us toward another, also different ethic, based on the further revelations received since Pentecost, during the history of the church” (Yoder 1972, 17). This reading of the neighbor does not restrict itself to one particular passage in Scripture.

A modern reading of the Good Samaritan indicates similarities between this parable and Day’s life at this time. Day immerses herself within the work and life of the CW, which included the Friday night meetings, publications, pilgrimages, making sure food was on the table, and so on. She not only works with the poor; she lives with them. One may argue that Day also dives into the ditch with the poor. She understands that it is a choice to care for the poor. She could have easily walked by and continued her life as a writer. She saw the urgency in the need to care for the impoverished and she did so because she knew that the Lord would want her to do so. It is almost as if she had a direct

channel to the Lord and made active efforts to help those in need despite the power-laden practices of the greedy.

Clearly, Day's Catholic faith was more important to her than political convictions or any sort of naïve culture-bound American ideology. These variations of Day's identity would connect when she would take political action in forms of protest and writing. The parable of the Good Samaritan encourages action in order to humanize the outcasts of our world, to "go and do likewise" (v. 37). Day warned against the capitalistic structures that destroy human dignity asking, who is my neighbor not only tomorrow, but today and in this moment. She loved people and called other Christians to do the same.

Day was flexing her theological muscle not only for the poor, but also for the Catholic Church. Though one may want to ask if the Catholic Church supporting Day at this time, especially with the previous eviction notices and financial stresses were increasing. Day stay committed to the Church despite the differences and "frequent criticizing of the church not living up to the gospel." She begs to ask how one can be faithful and love the Church despite differences. Jeannette Noel, a supporter of the CW and anti-nuclear war demonstrator, reflects on Day's commitment to the Church:

She was very, very, faithful to the church in a time when others were full of criticism. But instead of leaving the church, she gave to the church by her example. She made the church accept conscientious objection and (did this) without throwing stones. And it's amazing how many churches here in New York now have soup lines or places for the poor to sleep. Absolutely because of the influence of Dorothy and the Catholic Worker (Riegle 2003, 103).

Though Day would speak freely about pacifism and in part lost followers because of it, she was making a major impact on the Church. In addition, she would even criticize the Church but she drew followers and influenced developments of Houses of Hospitality, a notable showing for a woman who in the past did not want anything to do with the Catholic Church as stated in her autobiography *The Long Loneliness* (Day, 1952).

Those who worked for the CW were perhaps influenced by her loving practices of and for those with whom she came in contact. The result is that today Day's practices can influence other meaningful commitments to people and the Church. With the diaries, Day is once again an exemplar of prayer, pilgrimage, and even sharing meals with others all while taking action for the poor, attending Mass, and visiting the sick.

### **Conclusion and Implications for the Church**

How can people be inspired by Day's activism and commitment to her faith and Church? How does she handle the stresses of the Catholic Worker? In what ways does this information provide insights into Day's spirituality? Day's spirituality is grounded in Jesus Christ and is represented by her (everyday) spiritual practices rooted in her family, economic, and household lifestyle. This coincides with broader definitions of spirituality that "encompasses a wide scope of everyday practices naming spiritual practices rooted in work, family life, politics, art, household economics, childcare, and care of the body. In addition, she employs flexibility and openness. As Pope Francis articulates, one should refrain from developing a burdensome religion of servitude. Instead, Pope Francis encourages an openness to God's grace. Originally published on April 9, 2018, in the encyclical, *Gaudete Et Exultate*, Pope Francis (2018) writes that:

Once we believe that everything depends on human effort as channel by ecclesial rules and structures, we unconsciously complicate the Gospel and become enslaved to a blueprint that leaves few openings for the working of grace. Saint Thomas Aquinas reminds us that the precepts added to the Gospel by the Church should be imposed with moderation: “lest the conduct of the faithful become burdensome,” for then or religion would come a form of servitude (34).

Pope Francis says the focus of Christians should be on employing theological virtues such as charity and love. He writes:

To avoid this, we do well to keep reminding ourselves that there is a hierarchy of virtues that bids us seek what is essential. The primacy given to the theological virtues, which have God as their object and motive. At the center is charity. Saint Paul says that what truly counts is “faith working through love” (Gal 5:6). We are called to make every effort to preserve charity: “The one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For love is the fulfillment of the law” (Rom 13:8-10). “For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself (Gal 5:14) (2018, 34).

The experiences and practices of Day relate these insights of Pope Francis. Her spirituality aimed at embracing her family, the poor, and the sick as response to her love for Jesus and Jesus’ love for her. While carving out time in her day to write and attend Mass, Day embraced Christians and non-Christians alike, a theme that will be later explored in the Vatican II document, *Nostra Aetate*, a few years later. As a woman ahead of her time, she trained herself to remember that all people are made ‘in the image and likeness of God’ while demonstrating empathy and charity.

In this moment of embracing, Day felt a sense of individual accountability as a Catholic to help those in need, especially after meeting Peter Maurin. She felt and acted on a responsibility to act the way she did despite physical and cultural challenges. In addition, one may be inclined to ask, where was the Church when Day and the workers needed funds to support her soup kitchen? She hoped others would feel the same regarding accountability, a trait she had learned from Peter Maurin. In her diaries on February 8 she encourages a re-publishing of “one of the best essays on the CW” on personal responsibility” (1958, 14).

Despite the challenges, Day continues to take time to write, cook, read, talk on the telephone, and read her mail. She worries about her daughter but continues with her mission that entails making sure the soup bowls were full for those who were hungry. This does not mean she absolutely liked everyone (Day 1958, 14), though the CW door was open for those that needed food or a bed despite race, gender, or religion. She even made an effort to reach out to those in different communities. In addition, she trusted in the Lord, but understood the significance of action in the present moment. Her mind was on the farming communes, her next trip to the beach, and spending time with her grandchildren. She attended Mass daily and made prayer a priority. She cooked, cleaned, watched over her grandchildren, and reflected on her own practices and experiences prioritizing the human person. She saw air-raid drills as opportunities to protest the injustices of war, the draft, and perhaps also the freedom to practice one’s faith, pushing for the Catholic Church to recognize conscientious objection.

Day’s theology resonates with Pope Francis' definition of what it means to be and act as a Christian. In the book *Meeting Jesus in the Sacraments*, Pope Francis (2015) calls

Christians to be open to Christ's love and highlights the significance of daily commitment:

Being Christian is not just obeying orders, but means being in Christ, thinking like him, acting like him, loving like him; it means letting him take possession of our life and change it, transform it, and free it from the darkness of evil and sin.

Let us point out the Risen Christ to those who ask us to account for the hope that is in us (cf. 1 Peter 3:15). Let us point him out with the proclamation of the word, but above all with our lives as people who have been raised. Let us show the joy of being children of God, the freedom that living in Christ gives us, which is true freedom, the freedom that saves us from the slavery of evil, of sin, and of death!

Looking at the heavenly homeland, we shall receive new light and fresh strength, both in our commitment and in our daily lives" (2015, 59-60).

How can Day be a witness to care for those who are vulnerable in our own context? How can she be an inspiration, especially for women and the laity, when developing practices for ministry and the current Catholic community? Here her writing as a daily practice or the way she makes efforts to reach out to other Catholic communities should be noted. Through her reflection, she is writing down her experiences and memories providing glimpses into the practices relationships that energize her faith life. Perhaps, then, these practices are "spiritual practices" since they help "pattern people into faithful living and enable people to come to know something of the holy" (Wolfteich 2014, 334).

Preserved in her love of Christ, Day demonstrates a very unique relationship between Day's faith and her political activism. In one particular way, Day indicates that a

person can be both Catholic and participate in civic engagement (radically), a perhaps needed practice in our current context. According to Mark Chaves, religious participation and civic engagement are both decreasing, yet there seems to be some hope:

Religious participation increases with age, and so the projected aging of the American population over the coming decades is good news for congregations. Whether the bump in overall participation produced by an aging population will offset the downward pressure exerted by the inexorable replacement of older people by their less civically engaged children and grandchildren remains to be seen. (2004, 35)

Chaves also indicates that although there is research that may indicate an increase in church participation over the decades (Finke and Stark 1992), the trends point that the United States is heading in a direction that may have less participation in the future. This resonates with a needed area of study; the relationship between religion and politics in light of Roman Catholicism (Chaves 2004, 117). How can Day be an inspiration that US Catholics in particular can be committed to the Church despite differences?

Day practiced a radical love for the poor with the hopes to transcend more love in the name of Jesus Christ. This radical love favored reflection and embracing neighbors in the here and now moments of her daily life despite the hardships and challenges. At the time of her death there were over 80 houses listed in *The Catholic Worker* and now there are over 180 Catholic Worker communities stretching globally (Riegler, 2003, 7).

### CHAPTER THREE

Many scholars have spent long hours researching and writing on Dorothy Day (1897-1980), capturing the intimate and powerful moments of her life. Day, who is known to be “a difficult figure to encompass” (Loughery and Randolph 2020, 1), is a popular woman to research. Recent scholars have focused on her pacifism (Rakoczy 2019) and her deep love for the poor (Brady 2010). Pope Francis described her as “one of the four morally exemplary Americans – along with Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., and the Trappist monk and contemplative Thomas Merton” when he addressed the U.S. Congress in 2015 (Loughery and Randolph 2020, 5). Indeed, Day’s life will continue to be a topic of research because once one begins to explore Day, it is very difficult to get her out of one’s mind.

While Dorothy’s practices have been explored by many, there is a need for more research, especially when it comes to her diaries.<sup>86</sup> Practices, according to Colleen M. Griffith, are “those intentionally chosen embodied modes of action that engage immediate world, culture, religious tradition, community, and self of the practitioner” (2014, 53). This work claims that the dairies are rich resources in learning more about Day’s life and practices in relation to not only her context, but the current U.S. landscape as well, which includes Church practices and processes. Different from this view is the understanding that this research is limited and only provides glimpses of Day’s life. Indeed the authors of the magnificently detailed biography, *Dorothy Day: Dissenting Voice of the American Century*, were correct in asserting that “in the end, no category of common experience will neatly and precisely define this woman” (Loughery and

---

<sup>86</sup> This work is based on researched in the archives of Saint Thomas University from 2017-2020 where copies of her diaries are kept. The originals are in the archives of Marquette University.

Randolph 2020, 5).<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, attempts must be made and her complexities remind us why.

The scholar who has done the most research on the diaries of Day is Robert Ellsberg. His extensive study of the diaries and other aspects of Day's life are extensive and profound. Such research opened space for further exploration on some of the published and unpublished diary entries of Day, who wrote diaries most of her life. Though some seem to have gone missing, as in the case of her diaries from 1942 to 1944, Kate Hennessy notes the centrality of this mode of writing in her text *Dorothy Day: The World Will Be Saved by Beauty* (Hennessy 2017, 134). Thankfully the 1958 diaries are intact, held together all these years by a rusty paperclip, and thus present a unique opportunity to explore her daily life. This is because in this year, in particular, Day wrote almost daily in her diaries providing a closer look into fluctuations, emotions, and attitudes. Hidden within boxes of material at Saint Thomas University, the 1958 diaries are unlike any other collection of diaries of Day. There is still more to learn from this woman who risked everything to stand and sit against greed, corruption, racism, violence, and more in light of the simple call of the Gospel.

The diaries reveal not only a woman who was leading the Catholic Worker movement (Loughery and Randolph 2020, 1), but also a friend, mother, and grandmother. Biographers John Loughery and Blythe Randolph describe Day's agenda and define the Catholic Worker movement.

---

<sup>87</sup> John Loughery and Blythe Randolph continue, "She was dismayed by the Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, but was never willing to condemn those women as beyond redemption who had committed that grievous sin and would have been distressed by Cardinal John O'Connor's attempts to enlist her as a posthumous leader, a "poster child," of the prolife movement" (2020, 5).

A convert to Catholicism in her twenties, Day was the cofounder of the Catholic Worker movement, a group of autonomous communities across the country (numbering over a hundred today) that provide food and shelter to the homeless and a platform from which to remind Americans that the American Dream has not been an attainable reality for all its citizens. Day was more than the sum of her charitable endeavors, though – her corporal works of mercy, as the Church terms efforts at aiding the downtrodden. She was also a woman with an uncompromising political agenda (Loughery and Randolph 2020, 1).

At this point in her life, Day’s agenda, though complicated, was more than “political” (Loughery and Randolph 2020). She was also concerned with her daughter’s health, her grandchildren, and her friends. This is an important aspect of her life that is overlooked by some scholars. This is the root of Day’s identity during this year coupled with her continuing struggle to stop war and care for those characterized as outcasts of society. She was energized by the corporal works of mercy, but also understood that the works of mercy are to be practiced purposefully for the Lord and others. Here it should be noted that mercy, for Day, can also be observed in the daily practices of cooking, writing, praying, and so on. At this point in her life, her conversion seems long ago, and she has done things in her life for reasons that seem moral in a context fueled by fear, violence, and hope. Yet, the diaries provide an intimate window that demonstrates other agendas were just as important to her.

Gaps in research as well as initial findings of this work were presented in the previous chapters to reinforce the notion that her diaries are rich resources for understanding events, emotions, people, practices, and so on. In addition, the

contextualization of the dairies of 1958 provides insights into the enormous challenges and joys that Day was experiencing during this year.

Continuing the engagement with the Circle Method of practical theology, this chapter reflects on how Day's life at this time can be a source of transformation. This step, or the third theological step in the Circle Method, is reflected on by Christine Bodewes when she reminisces on her experiences with the Kibera community in Nairobi, Kenya.

What I learned in that brief moment in a darkened tin chapel nestled in the midst of some of the worst urban poverty on the continent was what may be one of the most important lessons I have ever received. What people really desire is our time. They don't want our ideas or solutions nearly as much as they need our time. Taking time to be with someone, prioritizing a simple act of communion to sit with someone and listen, to talk and laugh, to be together in a moment of care and concern, is perhaps the greatest mercy we can show to our neighbor (2019, 1).

This chapter seeks to provide just such a theological reflection. This work is from a practical theological lens, which means this research seeks to be theological throughout the entire process. One way in which this point should be emphasized is to reflect on Day's life at this time in light of the Good Samaritan. Though different from the research conducted by Bodewes (2019, 1), a focus on this particular year in light of this parable provides a uniqueness to the research. Here this uniqueness represents not a mere biographical account of her life, though biographical aspects are included. This work and step in the method is open to the workings of the Holy Spirit in order to learn from and

extend Day's treatment of others, herself, and God for conversations regarding church practices.

## **Reflecting on a Practical and Contextual Theological**

### **Approach to Day's Diaries of 1958**

This work is grounded in practical theology, which is the “critical, theological reflection on the practices of the church as they interact with the practices of the world” (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 6).<sup>88</sup> A practical theological approach, or perhaps a contextual theological approach, seeks to analyze the historical and cultural context from which the dairies were developed as well as highlight the role of the researcher in relation to the data collection and analyzation process. In addition, such an approach seeks to relate the data of the dairies to current Catholic practices and conversations.

Consequently, one may hopefully begin to ask who we should be calling our neighbors in the world today. Who and what are being ignored and cast aside? What questions should be asked and what practices should be cultivated in light of the data? How can one draw on the data from these dairies in order for more inclusive practices to be shaped that may, in fact, counter racism, violence, and greed? What does power have to do with this? These questions direct the dissertation as a whole.

Similar to the way in which theologians are called to “read and interpret scripture and tradition within our own context,” the past experiences of Day will be read and interpreted in light of the present context (Bevans 2002, loc. 241). Bevans writes further on this notion when he explores contextual theology.

---

<sup>88</sup> Understanding that practical theology is an ongoing journey is palpable for this work. That said, practical theology “is a view to ensure and enable faithful participation in God's redemptive practices, to and for the world” (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 6).

We can say, then, that doing theology contextually means doing theology in a way that takes into account two things. First, it takes into account the faith experiences of the past that is recorded in scriptures and kept alive, preserved, defended – and perhaps even neglected or suppressed – in tradition. A major part of the theological process, insists, Douglas John Hall, “is simply finding out about the Christian theological past.” Second, contextual theology takes into account the experience of the present, the context. While theology needs to be faithful to the full experience and contexts of the past, it is authentic theology only when what has been received is appropriated, made our own. For that to happen, the received tradition must of course pass through the sieve of our own individual and contemporary-collective experience: we cannot give it, profess it as ours, unless such a process occurs (2002, loc. 241).

In light of these words, as well as keeping in line with the Circle Method proposed in previous chapters, the context of 1958 will be reviewed first in this chapter. Not only is this a unique year for Day, the content is unique in its daily consistencies, or patterns, creating a measurable micro-sample of Day’s life.

It is important to highlight that practical theologians are called to focus on the particulars while also keeping in mind the micro domains (Schilderman 2014, 125). The micro-level studies material objects, for instance, texts and practices. Practical theologians are now focusing on practices in their own right, for instance, suffering, eating, and loving (Schilderman 2014, 125). This domain includes “the grassroots level of local churches where the faithful assemble, share beliefs, and organize their mission” (Schilderman 2014, 125). The third level, the macro-domains, reflects on “economic

facilities and political institutions” while taking into consideration the “cultural context” (Schilderman 2014, 125). Interestingly Hans Schilderman argues that this last level is perhaps what “researchers often fail to account for” (Schilderman 2014, 125). Nevertheless, Schilderman brings to light that this level is just as important, if not more important, especially because “institutions, cultural, and societal practices need to be included because they represent political and cultural environments as influential forces” (Schilderman 2014, 125).<sup>89</sup> When each of these domains are reflected on in light of Day’s life in 1958, interesting data begins to emerge that is not published in other places as well as contributes to conversations regarding the implications of the diaries. This dissertation, however, focuses on the micro domains of Day’s life to help understand her daily life and the way in which she responded to the challenges of poverty and leading the Catholic Worker.

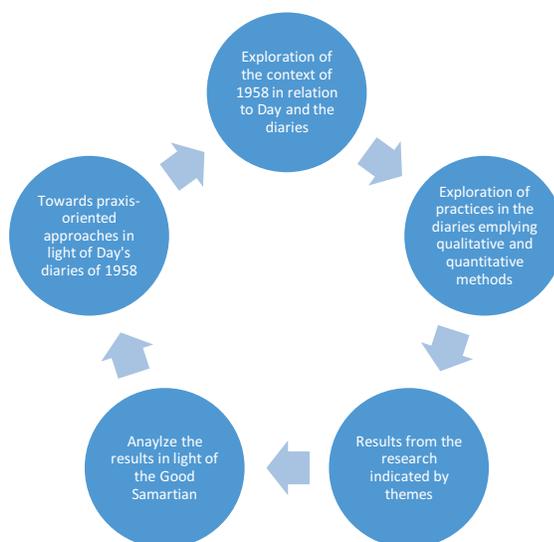
First, Day’s life in 1958 will be highlighted. This includes descriptions and insights of her personal and public life, for instance, particular experiences of motherhood, stressors associated with leading the Catholic Worker, the joys of grandchildren, and so forth. Particularly how the data was collected and organized is also discussed. In fact, certain data will be explored in light of blind spots, or unexpected data retrieved from the diaries of 1958. This chapter differs from the previous chapter since it focuses on particular methods that were used during the study, demonstrates glimpses of data through a bar chart in order to represent earlier research, and draws on particular quotes and passages of the diaries that have yet to be presented in the dissertation.

---

<sup>89</sup> Schilderman continues, “If we disregard this macro level of texts, beliefs, and practices as an object of practical theology, we would lose sight of highly relevant academic discussions about issues like secularism, human rights, and autonomy (Schilderman 2014, 125).

Second, the practices of Day and the way in which they were organized, coded, and analyzed will be highlighted. In other words, methodology will be emphasized. In order to explore the implications of her diaries of 1958, a practical theological methodological approach was used in the research process. This allowed the research to consider the social context of 1958, different methods from the social sciences, and a focus on a particular year of Day's life. This helps uncover areas of uncharted information of Day's life in one year for persons of the twentieth-first century to learn from Day and to respond to similar people, events and, circumstances with analogous hope and optimism.

Third, themes are brought to light that were developed from the quantitative, for instance, counting of particular practices and instances that appear in the diaries of 1958 as well as qualitative research that included contextuality, thematic, and categorical understandings of the diary entries. These themes include Day's practice of reflexivity, stressors in her life, power dynamics, Day as a hopeful and optimistic thinker, and her appreciation for the land. This does not mean to suggest that these are the only themes that may be present in the 1958 diaries. Yet, the themes were developed on how the research was worked out by means of the methods and methodology of the work. The figure below demonstrates the overall methodology that includes the contextualization, methods employed, and the objectives of the research. In addition, the figure displays the hermeneutical approach to the work, which is worked out in Chapter Four. Here it should be noted that that methodology also includes the assumptions and biases brought to the research that may not be displayed in this figure, but are present throughout the dissertation.



*Figure 1. Overview of Methodology and Methods Employed*

Finally, theological implications of the diaries will be brought to light in order to connect the data with the current context. It would be too difficult to draw on every aspect of the current United States context and this aspect of the work is worked out more thoroughly in Chapter Five. It is important to note here that context is dynamic in its very nature. The entire dissertation promotes contextuality. Nevertheless, the contextualization of the diaries keeps in mind church practices, particularly in the current U.S. context. Sara Kendzior describes it best referring to the nationwide crises as “rising political paranoia, opportunity hoarding by wealthy elites, a “post-employment economy” of side hustles and unpaid labor, the weaponization of digital media by dictators and extremists, and the catastrophic consequences of unchecked corruption” (2020, 3). Indeed, Day’s 1958 life and practices act as helpful guides for empathy, compassion, and Catholic activism in light of social justice issues and other powerful forces.

## The Context of 1958

The setting of the United States in 1958 necessitates particular attention to the rise of weaponization and civil rights struggles. In 1958, responses to the Cold War were shaping political tension among the global superpowers, especially in light of fears of nuclear weapons and national defense strategies. On January 1, 1958, an article on the cover of the *New York Times* titled “New Weapons Peril U.S. Life, Rabbi Says” argues that “modern scientific weapons are threatening our national existence” (Plumb 1958, 1). Interestingly, the cover of the last day of 1958, December 31, included an article that stated, “Premier Charles de Gaulle reorganized French defense today with a view to the threat of nuclear or subversive war” (Doty 1958, 1). The Great Depression, tensions in the Middle East, and the invasion of North Korea in South Korea less than a decade before did not help calm the socio-political intensity. In addition, the civil rights movement in the U.S. lasted from 1946-1968 that included violent and non-violent methods and approaches to activism and social justice. In fact, non-violent protests, lobbying the federal government, and even lawsuits in court were included in the tactics. Many people of New York during this time were facing poverty, unemployment, and even fires. One day in late March of 1958, Day writes of a fire in her diaries.

Thursday, March 20. blizzard.

Terrible fire in N.Y. last night. On lower Brdwy, a section of small industries, a textile loft explosion started the fire and spread to 4th flr where there was an undergarment factory. 24 lost. 14 injured jumping from windows.

Am trying to write an article, "visited by poets."

The title of an article in the *Democrat Chronicle* on March 20 stated, “24 Perish in New York Loft Fire as Panic Grips Clothing Workers.”

### **A Glimpse into a Particular Social Context of 1958**

Fads of the fifties included dancing, Davy Crockett, and even the Hula Hoop, which represented the “emptiness of American culture” according to the Soviet Union (Bondi, McConnell, and Tompkins 1994). Television and western movies influence many Americans to “buy toy guns, spurs, and holsters resulting in \$283 million in sales” (1994). Almost thirty decades since the crash of the New York Stock exchange, unhealthy working conditions, fears of violence, and growing political tensions were widespread.

Some Americans were ready for active social justice. Blacks in the South and all over the nation were rightfully advocating for equality, racism to cease, and their human rights to be recognized. Keeping in line with themes of social justice, other Americans were concerned with nuclear weapons in the world. Horrified by the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many Americans would protest the involvement of the United States in war.

Despite their efforts, threats of communism and fear of dangerous leaders continued in the country reinforcing that indeed activism and the ideas of those who opposed war from the beginning were perhaps correct in their assumptions. Professor of Sociology Sharon Erickson Nepstad argues that many U.S. Catholics during this time were critical of war. She states her in recently published text *Catholic Social Activism: Progressive Movements in the United States* that “even those who were critical of the war wondered whether acts of property destruction were going too far” (2019, 64).

## **Day's Life in 1958**

This focus of this section is to provide glimpses into Day's life in 1958. This contextualization, which is a continuous and dynamic process, provides deeper insights into her life, which demonstrate more of who she was and what it was that she wanted – not that anyone could ever fully know these aspects of her life. In 1958, Day was skilled in her craft of protest, running a soup kitchen, and writing. She was speaking to student-driven communities, traveling to Mexico, and purposefully prayed and attended Mass daily. It has been a little over one hundred years since Day's first arrest as a women's suffrage protest outside the White House (Loughery and Randolph 2020, 9). The days of living in Oakland, California and even departing from college to move to New York were decades away.

Dorothy Day's father, John Day, was a writer as well. When he was not writing, John would seek the pleasures of gambling and would refrain from having his children associate with organized religion (Loughery and Randolph 2020). Day's mother, Grace, was perhaps more patient and gentler than her husband. In 1958, some of Day's family members were still active in her life, for instance, her younger sister, Della, and above all her daughter, Tamar.

Likewise, Day's grandchildren played an important role in her life. Here it should be noted that this was a blind spot in the research. Day's relationship with her grandchildren is largely absent in other research. Yet the number of times these two women were mentioned in the diaries was far more than other people. The repetition of the word 'children' in the diaries paved a path for more research on this relationship. In between worrying over eviction notices, jail time, and painful health issues, Day seemed

to demonstrate a deep love and appreciation for her family, especially her grandchildren. Adding to the complexity of her life, Day experiences joy when her grandchildren are around and the acknowledgement of them in the diaries advocates that her family was a priority during this year.

Day was writing letters for the CW newspaper and sending mail to her friends. In addition, Day was working on the biography of Thérèse of Lisieux. Day references this not only in the diaries of 1958, but also in her other diaries. Day was highly influenced by this woman, as Robert Ellsberg writes.

Day might have offered a window into her own struggles to live Thérèse's message in the context of her life. However, that understanding of this book awaited the publication of Day's diaries. There we find numerous references to her work on Thérèse interspersed among accounts of her arrests and imprisonment for resisting compulsory civil defense drills; threats by the city to close down her house of hospitality; and the constant stress of sustaining a community among "the poor, the abandoned, the sick, the crazed, and the solitary human beings whom Christ so loved (Day 2016, ix).

According to the diaries, Day would "clean for weaving" and practiced "knitting socks" while at the farm outside of New York (Day 1958, 17-19). Catholic Worker farms developed in the 1930s and were referred to by Day as "houses of hospitality on the land" (Anderson 2002, 1).

Here Day would spend time with her family, other Catholic Workers, and her grandchildren (Day 1958). By the end of the 1950's, the farm not only had its first Mass, but also held retreats organized by Day herself, a practice she enjoyed (Loughery and

Randolph 2020, 248). These retreats were not as popular with the younger people, especially since they “did not want to be chided for their barhopping, their sexual urges, and their failure to fast” (248). Perhaps the farm was more of a retreat for Day than for others. Nevertheless, there are Catholic Worker farms that still exist today. Associate editor of the Jesuit review *America*, Anderson, revisited the Peter Maurin farm and came to the conclusion that “whether in the city or on one of the farms, the works of mercy continue to be carried out in Catholic Worker communities, and Gospel nonviolence continues to be promoted in a way that would have met with Dorothy Day’s approval” (Anderson 2002, 1).

Leading the Catholic Worker movement, “Day was an absolute pacifist and a Roman Catholic activist” during this time (Mehltretter 2006, 165). She led the radical movement “advocating the complete renunciation of war” until her death in 1980 (165). This was not a new aspect of the way in which she would think and act. The Catholic Worker movement stayed committed to a pacifist stance during the Great Depression and World War II (170). Indeed, this strong stance influenced many to unfortunately leave the Catholic Worker (Riegle 2003). During this time, Day reinforced pacifistic notions that sought to “oppose war and refuse to buy war bonds” and did “refuse to participate in civil defense drills during the Cold War” (Mehltretter 2006, 166). It is important to note here that she did not want people to get hurt physically or mentally, especially ones new to the Worker. Likewise, she did not want violence to escalate to more or unintended violence. In the text *Catholic Social Activism*, author Sharon Erickson Nepstad reflects on Day’s approach to unintended violence.

Catholic Worker lay people had mixed responses. Dorothy Day, for instance, initially approved of the actions, describing the [protests of the] raids as a “very strong and imaginative witness.” Soon thereafter, her opinion shifts due to concern that unintended violence could occur, especially with young radicals who were less disciplined. Day also feared that draft board raiders were unprepared for the psychological toll of a person. One draft board raider, Jim Forest, summarized her stance: “In the end, she didn’t agree with what we had done, but she treasured us and supported us, wrote about us, published our things in the newspaper...But she also made it clear that this was not her idea of the best way to bring the change that we wanted (Nepstad 2019, 65).

This description highlights her love and admiration for the other Workers, her friends, for they too maintained the sustainability of their beloved Catholic community. Day influenced a way of thinking that suggested doing and activism for and with the sake of others.

She recognized the significance of community in the middle of a war-torn context and raised questions regarding power structures that easily write-off perhaps the hardest and most loving of workers. Here one can think of the city of New York who was trying to evict throughout most of this year. In addition, one may think of the Archdiocese of New York and the lack of support for Day and the Catholic Workers. They were sacrificing aspects of their lives (health, family relationships, and job prospects) to help the poor and those not socially accepted in society. Mercy was one of their many virtues. Yet, Day and the workers, especially those in New York, felt neglected and abandoned by the end of this year. One wonders how many others doing the Lord’s work lack such

empathy. Who is being neglected by the institutional Church and what can Christians do about it?

### **The Diaries in Relation to the Context**

Why explore the diaries in relation to the context? There are many reasons for this. Exploring the diary entries as a text perhaps can help answer this question in some regard. As Paul Ricoeur asserts, “writing preserves discourse and makes it an archive available for individual and collective memory” (1998, 146). As we know, the diary entries of Day are a form of discourse. Each sentence intends to say something in a simple form, yet perhaps they reference something more. The diaries, or text, provide certain insights into Day’s daily routines, experiences, and relationships with others. Her own history and experiences also play a role in what she writes and how she writes.<sup>90</sup>

A text is much more than the diaries *per se*. As such, it includes layers of impact shaped by historical circumstances. Relationships between the work and the interpreter of the author is also important in this project. In practical theology, self-reflection is key in research, all of life. In keeping in line with this approach, the question arises: “How do the researcher’s biases relate to the interpretation of the diaries, or text?” In order to understand the meaning of the diaries, then, one should take into consideration the world in which the interaction takes place and these relationships described. This is because they influence each other, creating opportunities for deeper meaning surrounding Day’s life in this year to be revealed.

---

<sup>90</sup> One may think of the connection made to Joseph Conrad in the previous chapter.

## Data Collection

The data collection of this research occurred in three phases. The first phase included exploring the collection houses in baby blue boxes within the Saint Thomas University archives in Miami Gardens, Florida. It was in these boxes that the 1958 diaries were uncovered. The papers and boxes were difficult to navigate. Most of the diaries are not in chronological order and are mixed with private letters, prayer cards, newspaper articles, and so on. This resembled an image William Miller paints in his biography of Day when he recounts the messiness of Day's books and "scattered papers" on her desk (1982, 176).

The diaries offer a unique opportunity to not only engage other documents but to explore Day in unfamiliar directions. In addition, it provided an opportunity to capture a unique time period in the history of Day. Because context is important to practical theology focusing on one year provided an opportunity to make connections to the world in which she was writing and living.

The second phase of the data collection focused on scanning the documents. In this phase the archivist of the university guided the researcher through the process on how to properly scan the documents and save them to a USB drive. Copyright laws had to be respected since there was scanning of documents from the library's archives. This process took an extensive period in the small archival room of the library. The 1958 and 1962 diaries were scanned along with a letter from Day written to a priest in the same year.

The third phase focused on the word-frequency count. The initial research indicated patterns of practices that associate with Mass, cooking, eating, praying,

worshipping, and writing. The figure that follows indicates initial findings based on word frequency.

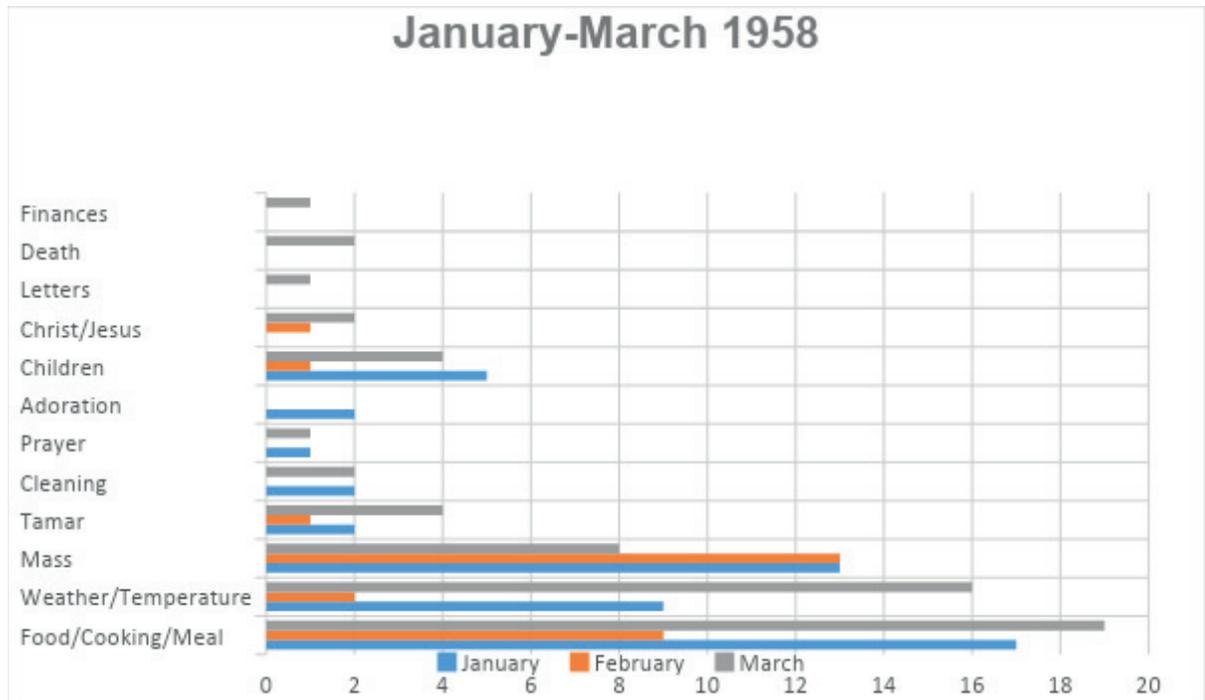


Figure 2. January – March 1958 Work Frequency

Interestingly the patterns specified in this graph, which were researched employing a pen and paper approach at this time, shared similar characteristics throughout the entire year. In other words, food, Mass, Tamar, cleaning, prayer, children, Christ, and so forth were all words that were mentioned frequently and consistently through her diaries of 1958. The three most frequently used words fell under the categories of food/cooking/meal, weather/temperature, and Mass.

This is not to suggest, however, that because certain words presented in the diaries are more frequent than others that they have the same meaning. Scholars should refrain from such a simple assumption that could take away the validity of Day’s writing and what she means when she uses certain words. The word letter, for example, could

have multiple meanings in the text. Letters could reference Day writing a publication for the *Catholic Worker* or it could mean a letter written to a friend. It can also indicate that she may have received a letter from someone, for instance, she indicates on August 2 that she received a letter from her daughter, Tamar (Day 1958, 59). It is the contextualization of the words that helps develop the meaning, not necessarily the words themselves.

Coding helps in this process. The said, the words that do appear more often than others will be explored (or coded) along with their context. Nevertheless, the patterns or words (or practices) are important in this research and can provide insight into the daily life of Day, which exemplifies where she found joy while on the river of many challenges.

### **Data Coding**

The data coding process is one of particular importance. Coding enables the frequent words and phrases to be engaged with each other based on commonalities as well as differences. The word “letters” appears twelve times in Day’s 1958 diaries.<sup>91</sup> This word could indicate that she was writing letters or that Day was receiving them. There are multiple meanings attached to the words. In addition, it should be taken into account that the diaries of 1958 holistically indicate Day would write daily entries for a year (and more). This is one main a reason why coding is important. It challenges the notion that because a word is used frequently (or not frequently) does not necessarily indicate the full meaning. Nevertheless, frequent word counts can indicate a major concern and insight into her daily life as well as the context from which the diaries were written. As for another example, word “Mass” appears fifty-one times throughout the entire diaries.

---

<sup>91</sup> See pages 6-81. On January 16, Day refers to receiving a “letter from Agnes” rather than her writing letters for other and the *Catholic Worker*. On August 2, Day indicates that she received a letter from her daughter, Tamar. (Day 1958, 6-81). All other appearances of the word “letters” refers to her own writing.

When this word is grouped together with the context, then one can have a deeper understanding of how and when Day practiced her faith life in this year. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are then used. Moreover, when the context is threaded with such grouping, then a deeper understanding of the emotions and feelings of the practices come to light. The figure below indicates the initial coding of particular words that appeared more than once.

Food (i.e. pizza) 001	Prayer 009	Finances 017	hotel 025
Preparing Food 002	Tamar 010	Farm 018	Mexico 026
Weather 003	Cleaning 011	Sisters 019	tiredness 027
Temperature 004	Children 012	Women 020	rodents 028
Mass 005	Christ 013	Bus 021	Darwinism 029
Priest 006	Jesus 014	Train 022	Thoreau 030
Adoration 007	Writing 015	Ferry 023	Opera 031
Confession 008	Death 016	Cuba 024	Movies 032
Health issues 033			

*Figure 3.* Overview of Codes Developed from the Research

These codes were then combined and reflected on in light of not only the word frequency, but also the context from which they were written and certain issues that have been associated with Day, for instance, love, peace, hope, mercy, politics, a more social and proactive role, struggles of her life, disagreements, and her ability to inspire others to name a few. These issues were brought to light from previous research on her life and work. In addition, the codes were reflected on in light of the researcher's biases, which includes an appreciation for Day and her work as well as blind spots of the research that was not necessarily expected. For example, Day was constantly writing about the

weather, attending the farm, and spending time on the beach, which was new information to the researcher.

### **What do the Diary Entries Reveal about Day?**

The data drawn from the diaries indicate many facets of Day's life in 1958. There are five main themes that the diary entries reveal. This is not to suggest that others are not present. Yet, these themes developed from the research while employing methods to help with reliability and validity. These are explored under the themes of reflexivity, stressors, and conversations in light of power, hopeful and optimistic thinking, and an appreciation for the natural world.

#### **Reflexivity**

The diaries indicate that Day's practices include reflexivity, which encourages reflection on the reasons why we act a certain way and the outcomes of situations and experiences. Reflexivity is the process of engaging with the data, interpretations and literature that leads to theological reflection and effective propositions for action. Moreover, reflectivity encourages the exploration of assumptions, passions, and is, at times, self-critical. Day demonstrates critique of her writing when she reflects on her writing for the *Catholic Worker* ("CW") on March 24:

Monday, March 24

Father could not say Mass so we want to Tottenville. The Church was crowded. Corned beef hash for lunch. Wrote my copy for CW. Not very good. But explaining our desperate plight.

Thus, this practice encourages personal reflection. Though, it is important to note here that reflexivity relates to hope and can lead to deeper understanding of self, others, and God.

Perhaps ontological in its very nature, reflexivity creates and requires opportunities to critically engage with aspects of the Christian faith tradition. One may consider prayer a reflective practice and even perhaps writing itself. The diaries indicate that Day was writing almost every day during this time. Though one can never be certain if Day missed a day of writing, it is clear that writing was very much part of her everyday life. Day's diaries in this sense evoke Paul Ricoeur's (1998) understanding of text. A word, according to Paul Ricoeur, comprises not only written documents but also all "cultural productions" (that is, actions).<sup>92</sup> Consequently, Day's writing is a practice in and of itself. Did this writing and prayer life help in the midst of the challenges? For Day, prayer, Mass, and writing helped shape her happiness, providing meaning in her life. In addition, the 1958 diaries indicate consistent daily entries, which may also suggest that Day's is practicing reflexivity within this year perhaps more than others.

### **Revisiting Assumptions Brought to the Research**

One may ask, what role does reflexivity play in practical theology? Clearly, such a practice is critical in allowing people to be aware of their own assumptions and biases. In order to care for others, people need to be aware of their own social position and the context from which their problems emerge (Swinton and Mowat, 1996). As John Creswell (2014) brings to light, assumptions are always present when researchers collect, analyze, and interpret their data. It is important to be honest and open regarding such

---

<sup>92</sup> Ricoeur states, "a text is any discourse fixed by writing" (1981, 145).

lenses rather than to naively ignore them. Readers should understand that this approach to the diaries of Day, although an attempt to look at things objectively, is, in fact, subjective. The unsaid aspects of research remain: for example, this particular research project started with already established themes based on practical theological publications and research, for instance, loving, eating, playing, and suffering.

To help with reliability, the researcher also employed note taking throughout the three years of exploring the diaries of Day. This reflective process encouraged critical thinking of the dairies in relation to the researcher's own vocation as a Catholic educator in the United States. The following is a passage from the journal writing conducted by the author of this dissertation during the research pertaining to the objectives of this chapter.

As I continued exploring Day's diaries, especially realizing that identifying weather conditions was an important focus point of her dairy writing, I began to pay particular attention to weather while teaching. Should I open the blinds so that the students would be greeted cheerfully with sunlight? Should I take them outside and read passages of Genesis and reflect on Pope Francis' *Laudato Si*? Would this help them reflect on the Word in light of the weather when the students are changing classes? Few people think much about the importance of weather in our daily lives, especially in light of daily Catholic school lives, but perhaps we should.

Writing and reflexivity were not necessarily new practices of Day. In her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, Dorothy writes the following.

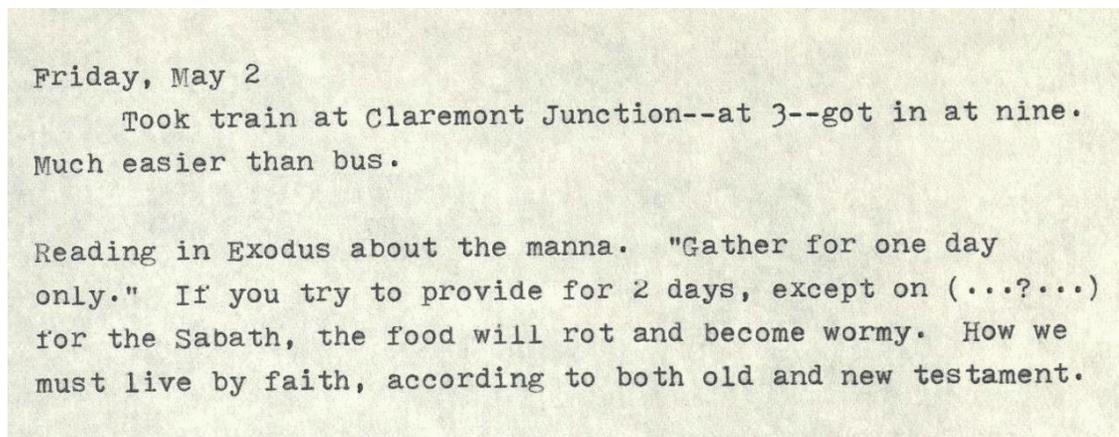
Whenever I felt beauty of the world in song or story, in the material universe around me, or glimpses of it in human love, I wanted to cry out with joy...The

Psalms were an outlet for this enthusiasm for joy or greed – I suppose my writing was also an outlet. After all one must communicate ideas. I always dealt with the community unity of our humanity; the longing of the human heart is for this communion. (1952, 29)

In 1958, as in most of her life, Day and the Workers adopted ideas and methods grounded in the Beatitudes proposed by Jesus at the Sermon on the Mount.

Using the principles of Catholic social teaching, Day would reflect on scripture throughout the diaries, a principle task of any theologian. This, indeed, mirrors the words of many scholars, for instance, David Tracy, when he writes: “The principle task of the theologian will be to find appropriate interpretations of the major motifs of the scriptures and of the relationships of those interpretations to the confessional, doctrinal, symbolic, theological and praxis expressions of the various Christian traditions” (1996, 44).<sup>93</sup>

On Friday, May 2nd, Day recorded her thoughts on engaging both the New and Old Testament.



Friday, May 2  
Took train at Claremont Junction--at 3--got in at nine.  
Much easier than bus.

Reading in Exodus about the manna. "Gather for one day only." If you try to provide for 2 days, except on (...?...) for the Sabbath, the food will rot and become wormy. How we must live by faith, according to both old and new testament.

---

<sup>93</sup> David Tracy continues, “Except for those few theologians who would maintain that theology is without remainder a philosophical reflection upon our contemporary experience and language, this commitment to determining the ability of contemporary formations to state the meanings of Christian texts remains an obvious, albeit difficult task” (1996, 44).

Given the fact that Day is indicating the significance of both the Old and New Testament, an opportunity presents itself to connect this with statements made by Pope Francis (2013) in *Evangelii Gaudium*. He too argues that there is a need to reflect on both the Old and New Testament in our current society. He suggests to approach people with love and empathy, especially since “the great danger in today’s world, pervaded as it is consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasure, and a blunted conscience” (2013, 2). Dorothy is offering a reflection here that seemingly resonates through the ages.

### **Stressors**

Day may have found writing, praying, and other particular reflective practices as ways to deal with the stressors that came with her life in 1958. These include, but are not limited to, concerns over traveling, finances, homelessness, physical and mental health, and even in her personal relationships. In her daily life, she indicates car troubles throughout the diaries (1958, 19-59).<sup>94</sup> Gerard A. Vanderhaar explores the stresses of car troubles in the text *Active Non-Violence: A Way of Personal Peace*. He writes:

I also feel stress from some of the machines allegedly designed to make life easier. An automobile provides convenient transportation. But it also breaks down. I don’t want a flat tire, a dead battery, or an overheated engine when I’m on my way to teach or to give a talk or catch a plane. I can’t avoid these unforeseen irritants altogether, but I try to reduce their likelihood by a few modest measures of preventive maintenance. When the car doesn’t break down it contributes to stress in another way. It’s out there waiting to be used, posing the

---

<sup>94</sup> On August 3, Day writes, “Flat tire and a Mr. Sloan brought us home” (Day 1958, 59).

possibility of running more errands, seeing more people, fulfilling more obligations. Sometimes it makes me feel that I should be using it to do something better than what I'm not doing at the moment (1990, 44).

Although many would perhaps suggest that car troubles as not a major grievance, car troubles contributed to Day's daily stresses, which is important since this is where she would find meaning in her life.

Day writes the following on February 25.

Tuesday, February 25 Farm.

Letters all morning with Sheila until 2. Ann Marie came down. To Peggy's. She has been ill. Howard frinking. Jeanette not too well. She typed all of Fr Brown's 2nd retreat. Difficulties with Magda. Called Tamar--car broken down again. Arthur S. called about moving Peter's body to St Jos. cemetery--Rossville.

One can see that in one day, Day was dealing with not only other Workers and friends being sick, but also her daughter, Tamar, is having car troubles as well. She finishes the entry with a phone call regarding the dead body of one of her closest friends and perhaps her most significant mentor, Peter Maurin, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement.

In addition, Day deals with stressors from traveling, which was a reoccurring practice for Day during this year. During this year Day would make visits to New York, Chicago, Boston, and even Mexico City. She continued this practice of international traveling even later in her life when she ventured to Cuba in 1962. On October 17, Day writes, "Feel generally low, as I usually do when about to set on a trip tho I won't leave till Nov. 5" (1958, 82). On Tuesday July 22, Day writes that she feels "headachy and

depressed” (56). This depression may be linked to the diary entry a few days before when she indicates that she is in the last days with the children and “will miss them so” (56).

Here it should be noted that the children Day is referring to are most likely her grandchildren and reinforce the claim earlier that Day enjoyed spending time with them.

Day was also experiencing physical health issues as indicated in the dairies. She writes of headaches and bladder infections. On October 10 Day writes, “Eyes bad all day, sick of them, until evening when it let up” (1958, 80). The day before she went into town regarding her eyes. The doctor informed her that Day had “conjunctivitis and infection of lids too” (80). On November 17, she writes that she is suffering from “sore feet” (Day 1958, 92). She also describes a “bad cold” on November 10 (Day 1958, 88) and has trouble sleeping on September 8, which may have been influenced from the threats of eviction as well as the living conditions of the Worker (Day 1958, 73).<sup>95</sup> On July 28, Day writes that she was in anguish from a bladder infection that kept her in bed (Day 1958, 58).<sup>96</sup> The Exact health records of Day would be perhaps impossible to receive and review at this time. Yet, other sources account for Day’s health issues, especially as she was getting older (Loughery and Randolph 2020). Day was not the only one dealing with health issues. As she writes on July 22, Hans was sent to the hospital for pneumonia (day 1958, 56).

Perhaps the biggest challenges of this time was not only the eviction and her health, but the fact that she “had to discontinue the breadline after 22 years of continuous

---

<sup>95</sup> On September 8, Day writes, “Stayed in bed to write appeal today. Cleaned house – too many cockroaches. Veronica very angry. Too much food in the house. Hard sleeping. Also I’m lame in the ankles and the stairs too much” (Day 1958 73).

<sup>96</sup> On July 28, Day writes, “Bladder very painful, kept me in bed” (Day 1958, ,58).

service” (Day 1958, 105).<sup>97</sup> In addition, she would get frustrated with churches that “did not do enough” to help the poor and suffering (Day 1958, 28). Such revelations are important because they provide information on the context from which Day was writing these diaries. Regardless of the pain and history of medical concerns, she continues to write, travel, attend Mass, and so forth. Though her work demonstrates courage and passion, perhaps one should ask if this lack of care for her physical ailments was a form of violence against herself. Here one may even empathize with her daughter, Tamar, who also had to grow up in harsh conditions of the Worker. Perhaps she too was more prone to health concerns than others at a young age. Of course, Day would attend the doctor if needed, but she also practiced trusting in the Lord and relied on prayer for safety and even nourishment. Day was not necessarily at a level of extraordinary joy at this point in her life, nor were her earlier moments without joy.

Third, Day deals with financial stressors that led her and other Workers to being evicted. In 1958, the Catholic Worker was being forced to move by the City of New York, which caused Day to plead for money in the *Catholic Worker* newspaper that year. On Tuesday, April 1, Day writes, “Dorothy Tully our lawyer says we probably have till Christmas to move and then not to get out till we are forced” (1958, 29). On Saturday, November 15, Day writes, “In the afternoon I took a little walk and telephoned N.Y. to find out we had to be out Dec. 15th at the latest, or the marshal would put us on the street” (1958, 89). As she indicates on August 24, “Housing was an extreme problem” (Day 1958, 67).

---

<sup>97</sup> On December 29, Day continues, “The bricks falling to the street were a continuous hazard from the house next door” (Day 1958, 105).

## Power Dynamics

By 1958, Day had spent most of her adult life dealing with powerful structures of society and culture. She was female and the hierarchy of the Church and the political power structures of the City of New York were mostly, if not all, male.<sup>98</sup> In addition, the power of foreign countries and their threats of nuclear war were a concern for Day (Day 1958, 70).<sup>99</sup> Day also highlights that the “great powers” should focus more on the issues at “home” rather than space exploration (Day 1958, 38).<sup>100</sup> These concerns resonate or emphasize Day’s praxis in that she was more focused on thinking and acting for people in need.

Day is very ordinary in the sense that she attends Mass daily, cooks, and enjoys listening to music. At the same time, she demonstrates a worldly charisma and wisdom while being grounded in her Catholic faith. Though in her early sixties in 1958, Day still demonstrates pockets of energy in between the moments rattled with exhaustion, taking care of the sick and her family, making sure her publications for the newspaper were turned on time, and so on. She protests and when she does those in the jail want to meet her, influencing others regardless of their faith. Day reminds us of the power that comes with protest. Her experiences up to this time of her life assisted in developing her maturity, which helped her deal with domestic and international concerns.

The Worker’s conditions in New York constituted exploration by the city, but an eviction acknowledges that saving Day and the Worker was not a concern of the Church

---

<sup>98</sup> Day makes a general critique of men on December 19 when she writes, “Men are so obtuse in their singlemindedness” (Day 1958, 101). This statement is written after she reflects on Ammon who was “arguing about will of God and obedience” (Day 1958, 1010).

<sup>99</sup> On September 10, Day writes, “Both Russia and U.S. threatening...God help us” (Day 1958, 70).

<sup>100</sup> On May 10, Day writes, “Both great powers [Russia and the U.S.] should not commit on Summit conferences or space control, but take care of home problems first” (Day 1958, 38).

nor the New York City officials. There is also some indication that the CW was the target of city officials. Powerful people during this time, for instance, Robert Moses encouraged the building of New York by means of bridges, roads, subways, and so on, to the benefit of white upper and middle-class families. One may argue that Moses' methods and intent destroyed communities such as the Worker if they were in the way of his plans. In short, the power structures in place either directly or indirectly challenged Day and her work in 1958.

Robert Moses is the focal point of the text *The Power Broker* by Pulitzer Prize winning author Robert A. Caro (1974). Praised at the time of his early developments, Caro calls into question Moses' use of power to threaten and remove communities. Yet there is no evidence of Moses being directly part of the Housing Authority. His power was more often enacted indirectly and ideologically. Caro reflects on his work (or damage) in New York around the same time Day and some of the Workers were receiving eviction notices at the Worker located on 223 Chrystie Street.

The eastern edge of Manhattan Island, heart of the metropolis, was completely altered between 1945 and 1958. Northward from the bulge of Corlears Hook looms a long line of apartment houses devoid of splashes of color, hulking buildings, utilitarian, drab, unadorned, not block after block of them but mile after mile, appearing from across the East River like an endless wall of dull brick against the sky. Almost all of them—ninety-five looming over the river in the first two miles north of Corlears Hook—are public housing. They—and hundreds of similar structures huddled alongside the expressways or set in rows beside the Rockaway surf—contain 148,000 apartments and 555,000 tenants, a population

that is in itself a city bigger than Minneapolis. These buildings were constructed by the New York City Housing Authority, 1,082 of them between 1945 and 1958. Robert Moses was never a member of the Housing Authority and his relationship with it was only hinted at in the press. But between 1945 and 1958 no site for public housing was selected and no brick of a public housing project laid without his approval (1974, 6-7).

The experience of Day and the eviction leads one to enquire as to what other pressures communities undertake in the twenty-first century. How are the laity and ordinary lives of Catholics being supported? One may begin to ask as well, are other Catholic communities that write, speak, and act like Day, such as Pax Christi. How are they being formed or deformed by power structures? It is difficult to establish what types of pressures local churches and shelters face. Nevertheless, the experience that is revealed in the diaries demonstrates the stresses and challenges that came along with her life. Likewise, the data helps suggest transcending the content of the diaries to hopefully further and engage important conversations of today's context.

### **A Hopeful and Optimistic Thinker**

Despite the seemingly noticeable stressors, Day seems to indicate moments of hope, which was perhaps one of Thomas Aquinas' most favorite concepts to explore. In the *Encyclopedia of Theology*, edited by Karl Rahner, hope is defined and connected to love.

Hope is directed to a future good which is hard but not impossible to attain. It is elevation of the will, made possible by grace, by which man expects eternal life and the means to attain it, confident of the omnipotent aid of God. Hope is the

great virtue of man in his *status viatoris*. It comes after faith, from which it receives its object. It is akin to the love of desire (*amor concupiscentiae*) and precedes perfect love. Man can hope only for himself and for those whom he loves (1975, 650).

Perhaps one may argue that Day's life was full of hope, especially after her conversion. Indeed, the diaries of 1958 indicate Day would think and reflect with a hopeful outlook, especially in light of the eviction threats and finding a new home for the CW (Day 1958, 92).<sup>101</sup>

First, on July 22, Day reflects on the misfortunes of Pope Pius X and states, "Nevertheless, we must try to reflect the happiness God intends for us" (1958, 56). She tried her best to see the good in the clergy as well (Day 1958, 104).<sup>102</sup> She continues the entry by stating that she "misses the children" and "cannot reach Tamar because phone is out of order there" (56). It is important to note here that Day would find hope in her daughter. On September 26, she writes, "Telephoned Tamar who is cheerful and well" (Day 1958, 76). Day clearly loves her daughter and is happy when she finds out that her daughter is cheerful. Despite the struggles, then, Day was hopeful in light of what she knows and believes about God's action in her life. In addition, one may argue that her worshipping practices, especially the one indicated by high frequency counts, demonstrate her hope and even faith in the Lord.

---

<sup>101</sup> On November 21, Day writes, "Home to good news about another house 16 spring, which sounds very good, but we will need the loft for some months to come" (Day 1958, 92).

<sup>102</sup> On December 26, Day writes, "Ammon sees only good in his former radical friends and ignores the rest, but sees ill in clergy – their omissions and commissions. I shall try to see only good in them and write book on them" (Day 1958, 104).

Second, Day indicates hopeful thinking when she writes “on this road not to go forward is to turn back” (Day 1958). She indicates that she is quoting the words of John of the Cross. Day was highly influenced by John of the Cross and quoted him often according to Jim Forest (2011, 1). Similar to her admiration for him, Day was heavily influenced by St. Thérèse who demonstrated to her the significance of the finding hope and joy in the daily, or little, life. She would pray to St. Thérèse on May 10 asking that the saint to help “send them a home” (Day 1958, 38).

At times, or perhaps her entire life, suffering and joy would be experienced through the same practice for Day, as in food-related practices. This includes preparing food, cooking food, and the people involved with this daily process at the Worker, when she traveled to Mexico, and indeed in every context. This theme is not a new concern for practical theologians to explore. Dorothy Bass, for example, focuses on the practice of eating, highlighting the ways in which “practical theology requires stereoscopic attention to both the specific moves of a personal and communal living and the all-encompassing horizon of faith” (2011, 52). Eating and food, however, were not always a joyful time for Day, but could also be tied to suffering. Day would fast quite often in her life, especially when she would go to jail for protesting. Fasting demonstrated her “spiritual commitment and created “spiritual connections” with those who were hungry” (Riegle 2003, 35). Though the word fasting is not often indicated in her diaries, one may argue that eating helped fuel her body to protest, continue feeding and supporting others, and was a process in which she would connect with her faith and others.

In addition, Day demonstrates optimistic tendencies and practices. One may even argue that Day’s writing itself exemplifies optimism since she is able to voice her

concerns and calls for others to help take part in social justice issues. Through her publications and private letters, Day reminds those who are reading that they are not alone. According to Gerard A. Vanderhaar (1990), as people concentrate and reflect on being an optimist, which Day indicates in her diaries, then the people are actually demonstrating a non-violence approach toward themselves. In the section titled “Healthy Self-Love,” Vanderhaar states:

It’s not that everyone automatically becomes an optimist just by wanting to be one. But as we concentrate on life-affirming ways to deal with the stress around us, taking prudent care of ourselves, affirming our good qualities, and worrying creatively, we find we are moving more in the direction of optimism and gaining inner strength. We are becoming more nonviolent toward ourselves (1990, 54).

Day’s pacifist approach, then, reaches beyond protesting war. Indeed, her love for others and her beliefs of nonviolence may, in fact, extend to her love of self. How else can non-violent approaches to life extend to areas that we may not be necessarily thinking about?

### **An Appreciation for the Natural World**

Perhaps an initial question in early observations was why did Day put so much effort into writing about the weather? Day’s love of nature, spending time outdoors, and even gardening were important to her before her conversion in 1927. According to initial research, words that indicated the weather were observed on every page of the diaries during this year. “The sun came and went” she writes on March 2 after visiting her sister, Della. On Tamar’s birthday, Day writes that it was “clear and cold” outside (1958, 21). In addition, Day would pay careful attention to the temperature. Another revelation from the

research suggests that during the later years of her life Day develops a deep commitment to farming. This practice exemplified or attempted to exemplify the work of Peter Maurin. There are deeper connections to be made between Day's admirations for nature or God's creation.

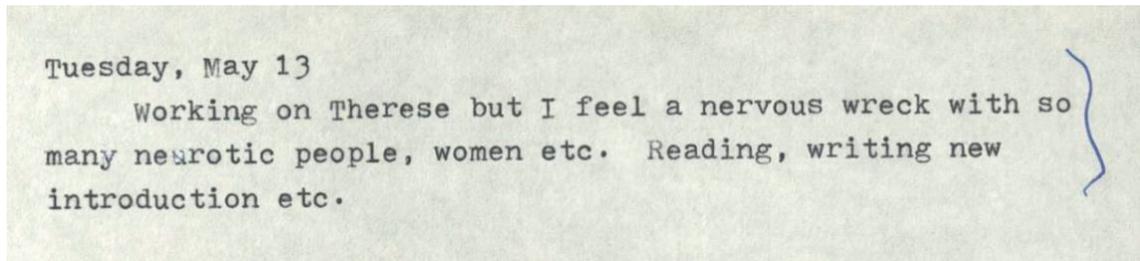
These are not necessarily new connections. Others have indicated Day's admiration for the land. In a 1960 letter to the editor of *The New York Times*, Phillip Hochstein (1980) asserts that Day came to him years after the 1920's and asked to write a gardening article for his local newspaper. Hochstein approves Day to write the Sunday garden page for *The Staten Island Advance* newspaper. Despite her reputation of being pro-Communist (or far left), Hochstein takes Day on and even suggests that this time of gardening played a role in her conversion (Hochstein 1980). Hochstein asserts that Day, when writing these gardening articles, was stressed for her daughter because of the growing concerns of weekly "traces of liquor and tobacco" from her Bohemian friends, which "rather disturbed her, especially when she thought of her infant child" (1). Thus, on Thursday, December 4, 1980, Hochstein writes, "Her transition from a radical Bohemian to a crusading religionist and champion of the Catholic labor was taking place while she was earning bread money helping staid Staten Islanders cultivate their gardens" (1).

The diaries specify that Day wanted to extend Maurin's processes of thinking and forms of action regarding the Catholic Worker farms. The 1958 diaries indicate Day's love for the land when she writes about the farm (Day 1958, 82).<sup>103</sup>This location may

---

<sup>103</sup> On October 15, Day writes, "A real sense of joy coming back to the farm...He hath care for us" (Day 1958, 82). Here it should be noted that the word "farm" is mentioned forty-one times throughout the 1958 diaries. See pages 3-105.

have provided Day with some inner peace since it allowed her to relax and evict  
acquired quiet time. Working and living at the CW in New York was not an easy life.  
There she would experience travelers who were obnoxious, drunks, and perhaps even  
mentally ill. On May 13, Day writes:



Tuesday, May 13  
Working on Therese but I feel a nervous wreck with so  
many neurotic people, women etc. Reading, writing new  
introduction etc.

When she would travel to the farm, Day could perhaps escape from the hustle of  
the city life. On Wednesday, October 15, Day writes, “a real sense of joy coming back to  
the farm” and ends the entry with the scripture passage “He hath care for us” (1958, 82).  
Truly her love and admiration for being on the farm was connected to her faith and  
admiration for the Lord.

Is Day’s love and admiration for the land and outdoors connected to her pacifistic  
stance? Onwards to a new age of farming and connecting violence as well as poverty  
with environmental issues, Day comes in handy. According to the World Wildlife Fund  
(WWF), the Latino/a community is hit harder by environmental concerns. A WWF article  
by Annika Darling states, “It is often the case, the most vulnerable communities feel the  
greatest impacts” (2019, para. 7). In addition, she writes, “the Center for Disease Control  
reports that Latino/a children have higher levels of mercury in their bodies and are more  
likely to die from asthma” (para. 7). In 2015, Pope Francis makes connections to abortion  
and the protection of nature in his encyclical *Laudato Si’*.

Since everything is interrelated, concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion. How can we genuinely teach the importance of concern for other vulnerable beings, however troublesome or inconvenient they may be, if we fail to protect a human embryo, even when its presence is uncomfortable and creates difficulties? If personal and social sensitivity towards the acceptance of the new life is lost, the other forms of acceptance that are valuable for society also wither away (2015c, 89-90).

To sum up, the diaries indicate and suggest Day's admiration for nature can be connected to her faith. All of her practices are interrelated in this way in some form or another.

Dorothy Day's ability to make connections and to act on these connections provides insight into her thought processes, which are grounded in her love of Christ and meaning she attaches to the Catholic Church.

### **Attending to the Theological Implications of Particular Events and Day's Diary Entries**

It is clear that practical theologians analyze texts in relation to the context. This is perhaps because practical theologians "often ask what is hurting or what is not working, and how people should respond (Miller-McLemore 2014, 7). This is to help practical theologians, particularly Catholic practical theologians, gain a deeper understanding "of the signs of the times in light of the Gospel" (Wolfteich 2014, 2). That said, the theological implications of the particular events and Day's diaries will be explored for Church practices and communities of the current context. This is not to suggest that other implications do not exist. Rather, it is to highlight a few particular implications that are developing from the current research.

Many have written and acted on behalf of the oppressed and marginalized. This work and interest in embracing the outcasts of society, the need to listen to the emotions and feelings of people who feel marginalized, and the dissatisfaction of the ways of treating people less than what they deserve are all part of this. Day reminds us that joy is found in the everyday practices of solidarity with others in her community. Her 1958 diaries are access points on how she thought about and practiced her faith and daily love of others at the time. She embraces Christian traditions and forms of worship such as participating in Mass, Confession, and Adoration. She respects these forms of worship while not only responding to political and societal demands that land her in jail on several occasions. At the same time, Day also responds to her faith by living an ordinary life of cleaning, cooking, reading, and writing. The theological implications that will be highlighted keep in mind the complexities of her life.

### **Exemplifying an Engaged Spirituality**

According to Janet Parachin (2000) there are two aspects of spirituality that she describes in her article “Educating for an Engaged Spirituality.” These two aspects are spiritual nurture and actions for justice. First, Day’s spiritual nurture includes, but is not limited to, Mass attendance, participating in the Sacraments and Adoration, practicing the works of mercy, and praying. The diaries indicate that Day attends Mass frequently. The first ten pages of the 1958 diaries feature the word “mass” no fewer than twelve times, more than once a page. Certainly, she may have attended Mass more than indicated in these pages, since on January 17, she writes that she “cleans the chapel, participates in the Sacrament of Confession” (1958, 37). She likely also attended mass that day. Similar to Catherine of Siena, Day prays fervently, and her diaries indicate that she would turn to

sources in the Christian tradition, reinforcing the spiritual nurture to which Parachin (2000) refers.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of her spiritual nurture is how she treats the poor, sick, and marginalized in her life, including Day herself. Likewise, Jesus approached people with compassion and empathy, especially the poor and sick. His love for others should form the basis for how Christians are to embrace others, especially the poor, Blacks, Latino/a, children, people of other religions, the sick, and so forth. But is one supposed to love every person even if there is a chance that violence and health could be at risk? How did prayer, writing, family, attending Mass, and living faith daily accomplish this important task for Day? To ask and explore these questions means that the complexities of Day's life are being recognized and her faith life may have the ability to transcend conversations and people even after her death. Perhaps God's action is seen when this fusion occurs – when people come together to discuss and further learning. If this is the case, then God's redemptive work is not necessarily only associated with the so-called “last things,” but is intimately incorporated within the ambiguities of situations and conversations, similar to the way in which Day finds and experiences joy and love.

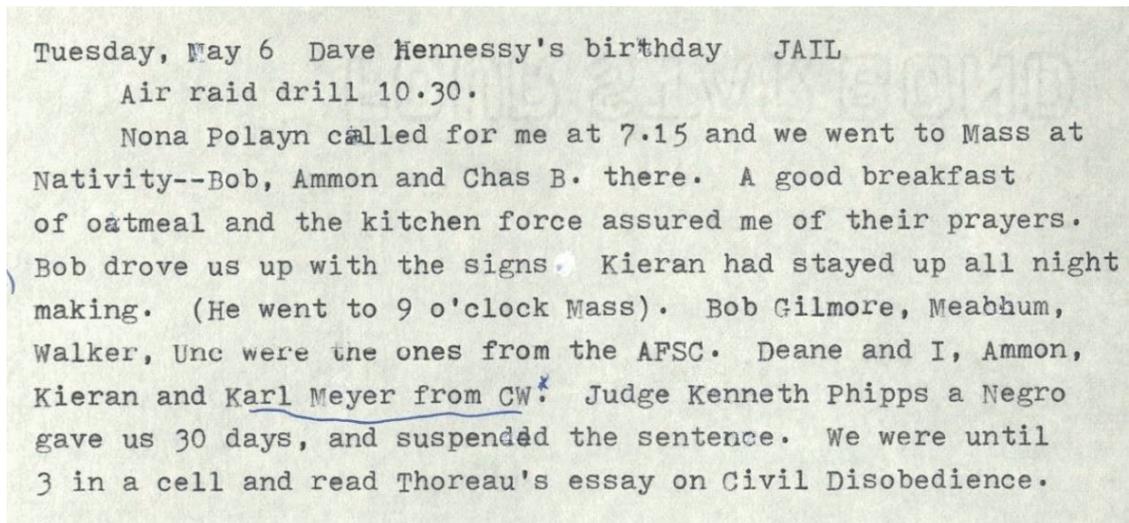
Second, Day exemplifies an “engaged spirituality” through her Catholic activism, which, of course, is partially influenced and furthered by her spiritual nurture described above. This is indicated in the diaries when she protests the civil defense drills in New York and her commitment to feed and care for the sick at this time. Perhaps even her writing, especially when calling for others to join the Catholic stance on mercy and justice, was a form of activism. Certainly, Day, a leader and veteran of decades of social

protest, was well aware that she and other Catholic Workers may be arrested, just as she had been numerous times before.

Parachin describes the way in which the activism and spiritual nurture relates in light of Day. She writes as follows.

Day's life exemplified dual commitment to social action on behalf of the poor and disciplines participation in practices which nurture spirituality: on the one hand, her activism shapes the issues she addressed through prayer, Bible reading, retreat, and so on; on the other hand, the spiritual nurture she received and cultivated gave shape and moral efficacy to her urgent activism. (2000, 254-255)

An example of this in the diaries is when Day protests the civil defense drill in 1958. On May 6, Day writes:



Tuesday, May 6 Dave Hennessy's birthday JAIL  
Air raid drill 10.30.  
Nona Polayn called for me at 7.15 and we went to Mass at Nativity--Bob, Ammon and Chas B. there. A good breakfast of oatmeal and the kitchen force assured me of their prayers. Bob drove us up with the signs. Kieran had stayed up all night making. (He went to 9 o'clock Mass). Bob Gilmore, Meabhum, Walker, Unc were the ones from the AFSC. Deane and I, Ammon, Kieran and Karl Meyer from CW\* Judge Kenneth Phipps a Negro gave us 30 days, and suspended the sentence. We were until 3 in a cell and read Thoreau's essay on Civil Disobedience.

It may seem interesting to some that Day indicates her reading Thoreau's essay *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*. Yet in scholarly works, Day's admiration for literature, Russian novelists, and philosophical thinkers has been a popular topic. Her combination of these scholars with her faith life leaves room to believe that Day's own approach was literary and deeply reflective. While this is true, there is a certain

ordinariness. The main focus here is that Day shows her willingness to go to jail, the commitment by others to join her, and the way in which faith played a role. Day made the effort to attend Mass in the morning before engaging in the public demonstration. Thus, the diaries give evidence to a very unique understanding of spirituality.

### **A Brief Glimpse into Day's Everyday Theology**

Day's diaries offer an opportunity to engage a theology of everyday life. She notes everyday moments and seemingly disparate practices, for instance, cooking, picking up groceries, listening to the radio, attending the movies, visiting family, reading her daily mail, and so forth. As the same time, the diaries reveal Day's leadership qualities in how she handled stressful circumstances and provide insights of her self-understanding. On the one hand, we see the never-ending challenges of the Catholic Worker and personal challenges in her life, all seamlessly integrated in her struggles against power structures flowing from her understanding of the Gospel and social teachings of the Catholic Church. On the other, we see that Day is evidently drawing life and vitality from attending daily Mass, writing, travel on pilgrimage and travelling to speak, and spending time on the farm with her friends and grandchildren. In all this, the work conclude that Day, one of the most significant figures in Catholicism in the twentieth century United States, offers great practical theological insight for the value and promise of everyday theology (Vanhoozer 2007, 16).

Everyday theology, as defined by Kevin J. Vanhoozer, is "simply faith seeking everyday understanding: a grasp of what is going on in ordinary situations (and perhaps why is it going on), as an attempt to make sense of one's surroundings" (2007, 16). As previously mentioned, this project employs a word-frequency count. This process helps

develop an understanding of Day's everyday theology, or the way in which she reflected on God's action in her daily life. One way to help understand Day's everyday theology is to reflect on her daily practices.

An important element that is worth noting here regarding problems associated with such research draws on the understanding that a word may, in fact, have multiple meanings. For example, the word writing as well as phrases such as "How does one come to know that a word can have more than one meaning? Which words and phrases should be explored together in order to have a deeper understanding of certain patterns? Certainly, the meanings of words are dynamic and change with context. The word writing in today's teenage culture could be writing a text message rather than a letter or diary. Exploring the words (or repeated words) based on the context from which they were written will help develop understanding of who Day was and her processes. Writing letters for Day meant writing letters to and from friends and family. They also indicate her publications for the Catholic Worker during this year. Similar to her daily practice of prayer, writing was a form of reflexivity in her life and day, and of course, the Lord.

Similar to daily writing and prayer, her eating practices also provide windows of her everyday theology. "The ritual of eating and drinking with Jesus, focuses on God's self-giving" writes theologian Mary Costen (Costen1993, 54) God's self-giving weaves through the universe on twisted paths and trajectories but is instantaneously always present. In addition, eating as practice has been explored by other practical theologians. "Those that invite the poor to dinner...share a meal with social outcasts of any age and culture," Mary Costen writes (Costen 1993, 54). In other words, when people mirror the impacts of sharing food, not only do they reach out to those that are being fed, but they

also connect with people through time and space. Day constantly indicates words associated with food and eating in the dairies, even when he is visting families in Mexico (Day, 1958). She is making sure those around her are fed and enjoys sharing meals with those around her because Day so deeply imbibed and lived the faith understanding that all people are in the image and likeness of God. This certainly reinforces the importance to Day of helping others, especially the less fortunate.

These connections center perhaps on Day's Christian personalism, which has been a fresh topic of some scholars (Cook 2018, 88; Downey 2013, 35). Jack Downey (2013) explores Day's personalism and refers to it as her "non-Utilitarianism form of Christian witness" in the article "Tiny Drops: Henri de Lubac, S.J., Dorothy Day, and Anti-Triumphalism as Radical Praxis." Downey asserts that Dorothy Day "embodied Christian personalism," which serves as "one alternative to utopianism that avoids the post-millennial apocalyptic pessimism" and the "dog-eat-dog moral casuistry" (2013, 35). He continues stating that Henri de Lubac's Catholic realism "opened a space for Dorothy Day's own incarnational spirituality – an anarchist to take on the "Little Way" of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, which is interesting especially since she was researching and writing on this woman in 1958.

The consistent daily practices, then, such as attending Mass, writing letters, reading mail, knitting, and praying, capture a piece of Day's employment of the "Little Way." This is not far from a life that includes everyday moments of joy with family and friends – of being in community and living within the dialogue of challenges and love. Is this not the Christian way to live and understand the ambiguities that make up the world

around us while reminding ourselves daily of Christ's love and action in our lives? The theology here is ultimately the lived reading of doing and being in communion.

When reflecting on the (spiritual) practices of Dorothy Day, a few classic experiences that come to mind. Day was a traveler, farmer, writer, and a protester. Day was a converted Catholic, mother, grandmother, published author, and adamant Church-attende. In addition, she also managed finances, wrestled with health issues, and had car troubles. Day cleaned, wrote daily, read books and articles, cooked and prepared food with others, prayed, and was particularly consistent in writing down the daily weather conditions during certain times of her life. In addition, Day not only worked with the poor, but more importantly, lived with the poor, exemplifying what it means to love one's neighbor in daily life.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, Day's life at this time was quite complex. Part of this work is to explore how all of this fits together. In one way, Day's life is ordinary with her everyday practices, for instance, cooking, picking up groceries, listening to the radio, attending the movies, visiting family, reading her daily mail, and so forth. But in another way, the diaries reveal Day's leadership qualities in how she handled stressful circumstances and provide insights of her political and Catholic identity. Despite the challenges and struggles against power structures, Day finds solace in attending Mass, writing, and spending time on the farm with her friends and grandchildren. The diaries indicate, then, that Day, who is one of the most complex and influential female American Catholics of the twenty-first century, promotes the notion and insight that our daily walk also matters in terms of doing theology (Vanhoozer 2007, 16). This is why, as Kevin Vanhoozer

points out, learning and reflecting on how one is to do theology should not be taught by only the professionals (2007, 16).

Through a practical theological perspective, one may find that Day's life was grounded in love for God, love for others, and self-love. She even demonstrates an appreciation for the land, embracing the techniques taught by the other co-founder of the Catholic Worker, Peter Maurin. Perhaps her love for the land was a way in which she could show her love and appreciation for God's creation and others while simultaneously exemplifying her radical, pacifistic approach to life. Indeed, Day would not consider the two mutually exclusive. This totality of love helps create new insights into Day's life in one particular year. The late 1950s provided power structures and barriers that played a major role in Day's life. But Day's courage and perseverance continued, without deserting others in the Worker.

While taking into consideration the historical and societal contexts, the data reveals insights into her daily practices that make up an interesting daily life for a woman who was creating a movement that will later have Pope Francis referencing her to the United States Congress (Francis 2015c). Nevertheless, her daily practices relate to her spirituality and faith convictions. How can one actually measure the spiritual meaning within practices? The short answer is that spirituality is too complex to think this is possible. One may argue that this is the case for Day and her spirituality as well. Yet this practical theological exploration of her daily practices of spiritual meaning offers an opportunity for insight. This not only paves a path to capture part of Day's experiences during a particular year, it creates opportunities for others to reflect on their own daily practices.

## CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter explores the concept of neighbor and its associations with the 1958 diaries of Dorothy Day, which have been the primary resource of this dissertation. Based on previous research, various themes and insights drawn from the diaries in many respects parallel with themes in the Good Samaritan. For instance, insight from the diaries is that Day's approach to people was not necessarily concerned with who were neighbors were, but the way in which she responded. In other words, Day would focus more so on "going and doing likewise" (Luke 10:37). Day was also open to the ways in which she can learn from her neighbors since she insists on the interaction of Jesus in others. A practical theological response to such research suggests the necessity of acts of mercy and compassion in understanding both Day as well as the concept of neighbor for relevant conversations. This research thus helps demonstrate the ways in which Day is a significant conversation partner in light of this concept.

First, the biblical concept of the good neighbor will be briefly examined. In addition, the lens from which the research developed will be addressed. Attending to the theological concept of love of neighbor as evident in theological works of the twentieth and twenty-first century will, then, be examined. Third, explicating the parable of the Good Samaritan through an engagement with exegetical sources will be highlighted. The research will, then, attend to the diaries in relation to the biblical narrative and theological concept of love of neighbor. To sum up, a question will be proposed: how do Day's 1958 diaries expand an understanding of the love of neighbor? Here brief insights will be examined that pertain to the research and the content presented for purposes to inspire

practices and to explore other implications of the diaries in relation to a particular characteristics, people, and events of the current context.

Following the Circle Method proposed in previous chapters, as well as the praxis oriented approaches of practical theologians (Cahalan and Mikoski 2014), this chapter focuses on the response part of the method (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijssen 2005, 20). For instance, how can the Church as a whole support and develop practices that mirror those of the Samaritan, or Day, for instance, practices of resistance and love? Especially those practiced by women, the poor, and the laity? How do the diaries of Day in 1958 in dialogue with Luke's Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 29- 37) help provide deeper insights on the life of Day? How does this relation provide new insights on the parable? What does this say about the significance of the parable of the Good Samaritan? This movement is significant in the Circle Method since "a faith reflection, a theological reflection, helps group members identify values that should be central to their own understanding and reaction to the issue of poverty they have contact and analyzed" (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijssen 2005, 18).

This is not an easy task. In the article, "Who Is My Neighbor?" *Recontextualizing Luke's Good Samaritan*," Mark Proctor (2019) reflects on the celebrated parable.

Although an example story might encourage Jesus' conversation partner (and by extension (also Luke's audience) to behave in "neighborly" ways, it neglects to identify the proper beneficiary of such activity and as a result breaks with the flow of Luke's narrative. As a consequence, scholars have felt justified abstracting the parable from its context and treating it as an independent bit of tradition so as to

restore what Luke's redaction supposedly compromised, namely the story's parabolic potential (2019, 205-206).

Indeed, Proctor recontextualizes the Good Samaritan, even while noting the hesitancy one should have when recontextualizing this parable. Yet, the parables are meant to be expressed and learned from across time and space. In other words, Jesus did not intend that the parable only be reflected on during the times of the His life. This chapter seeks to expand on this "parabolic potential" and to explore other areas in relation to this concept, such as the relationship between God and neighbor.

### **The Biblical Concept of the Good Neighbor**

According to John W. Welch, the parable is "one of the most influential stories told by Jesus" (1999, 51). Since the early Christian church, the biblical concept of neighbor has been historically significant among saints. Here one can think of Saint Augustine of Hippo and Saint Ambrose in Milan (55). Nearly all of "the early Christian Fathers read this story as an impressive and expansive allegory" and even "into late antiquity and the Middle Ages, other clerics continued to expound on the meaning of the Good Samaritan" (54-55). Many may have little or no knowledge of the parable, but there seems no reason to deny the significance of the parable, in its fullest sense, and the historical value it has accumulated over time. Though significant, the main purpose of this chapter is not to focus on the historical features of the concept. Rather, this section concentrates more so on words, phrases, and allegorically aspects of the parable while also ascribing to Day's diaries and insights from scholars. This is to help answer the conclusive question, which relates to the expanding on the concept in light of the diaries of Day. In the twenty-first century today, the concept of neighbor is still a popular topic

and perhaps very much needed, for instance, pastoral counseling, which “often appeals to the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself in support of their contention that self-love or a positive self-image is biblical and therefore Christian” (Young 1983, 265).

Andy Crouch asserts that a neighbor is “not an abstract collective noun, but a real person in a real place” (2016, 34). This helps highlight some of the different characteristics associated with the complex concept. Nevertheless, when exploring the ideas that relate to the concept of the neighbor, in particular, it is important to point out characteristics and boundaries for “without boundaries there would be no discrete identities, and without discrete identities there could be no relation to the other” (67). Generalizing from particular people to the concept of “people” has had negative implications in the past. Such generalizing has caused violence, dehumanizing practices, systematic racism, and other profoundly destructive and distorting phenomena.

### **Interpretive Lens for this Research Project**

For practical theologians, ideas and practices on how to embrace neighbors should be developed (Volf 1996). Practices, according to Ted A. Smith, are “activities like medicine, agriculture, prayer and the care of the souls” and are “tied to concrete situations as well as internal goods” (Smith 2014, 247).<sup>104</sup> These practices include traits such as empathy, compassion, and accountability, all working towards needed acts of justice. Many theologians, some Catholic and some not, understand that loving neighbors has its limitations and challenges. As Albert Nolan writes “Jesus extended one’s neighbor

---

<sup>104</sup> Moreover, Ted A. Smith asserts that “practical theology becomes theological reflection on and for the sake of practice (2014, 250).

to include one's enemies" (2001, 75).<sup>105</sup> This, then, can be a very difficult practice, depending on the context.

Indeed, scripture acts as a guide for practical theologians (and others) to help nurture these practices and ideas in light of the concept. Hans W. Frei highlights the limitations of scripture and the need for love towards one's neighbor.

The real subject matter of biblical narratives is not the events they narrate but the quite separable religious lessons they convey, a separation in principle made all the clearer by the fact that the manner of conveying the lesson is as important as the lesson itself. To move their minds is an easier task, for in principle men know universal and right religion from their own nature and from general ideas, and not merely from scripture, which agrees with this faith. The universal religion, identical with the Divine Law, is "universal and common to all men" and deductible from universal human nature and therefore "does not depend on the truth of any doctrine only: "that there exists a God, that is, a Supreme Being, Who loves justice and charity, and Who must be obeyed by whosoever would be saved; that they worship of this Being consists in the practice of justice and love towards one's neighbor (1974, 43).

This research project draws on the concept of the good neighbor in light of Luke's parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37). Practical theologians focus on the particular situations and in terms of accountability and many agree that humans have a particular obligation to embrace those who are poor, marginalized, oppressed, and so on.

---

<sup>105</sup> Nolan continues, "He could not have found a more effective way of shocking his audience into the realization that he wished to include all people in this solidarity of love" (2001, 75).

Grace Jin-Sun Kim (2015) brings to light one reason for this in the text, *Embracing the Other: A Transformative Spirit of Love*.

Jesus' teaching revealed a new order in which the poor and the marginalized are welcomed and loved. Jesus lived and proclaimed God's identification with the people at the margins: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matt. 25:40). Jesus teaches his disciples to search for him with the poor, the outcast, and the marginalized. When we reach out and stand with them, we stand with Jesus. The teaching and example of Jesus invites and challenges us to broaden our understanding and reimagine God, as God on the margins (2015, 124).

In relation to Day during 1958, she had been standing with Jesus for quite some time up to 1958, searching for the marginalized and those casted out on the side of the road.

Despite the harsh conditions, she was standing with the sick, the poor, her family, and perhaps even the Catholic Worker itself. She was standing up for needed acts of justice during a time of war, controlling economics markets that dehumanized people, leaders in governments that control with nuclear force, and so on. In many ways she was also on "the margins" because she was going through a transitional time that included searching and even begging for help with the eviction of the New York Catholic Worker in 1958. Though it all, she never gave up her faith in the Lord or the alternativity of the Gospel.

In addition, practical theologians understand the significance of relating scripture to community. In the text *Unfolding Sacred Scripture*, author Michael Cameron writes:

A Catholic reading of Scripture, even in the privacy of personal prayer, reads with a spiritual community. Scripture belongs to the entire Church, past and present, and we read texts with all believers, implicitly and explicitly, while relying on the same Holy Spirit and believing in the same Lord. Thus, the whole Communion of Saints plays a role in the work of reading Scripture well. That's why a Catholic reading of Scripture tends to back away from the outlook of the great Harvard scholar of psychology and religion, William James (1842-1910), who defined religion as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude" (Cameron 2015, 26).

Here it should be noted that the community of Day and the community from which the research is developed is taken seriously while reflecting on the third Gospel's Good Samaritan. To be clear, this work is developed from the lens of a white, privileged female practical theologian from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Moreover, it should be noted here that this is written with a particular culture, time, and space in mind: that of the contemporary United States.

### **Explicating the Parable through a Brief Engagement with Exegetical Sources**

Some of the most important exegetical sources on the parable of the Good Samaritan have focused on the structure, imagery, and on particular words and phrases of the parable. Most, if not all, practical theologians pay particular attention to the context from which stories and parables develop. This should not, however, overlook other important aspects of the story or parable. What this section offers is an engagement of the parable with exegetical sources that relate to the content from the diaries and data from the research proposed in the previous chapters.

The reading from the third Gospel begins with the lawyer asking his first of two questions regarding the ways in which one is to inherit eternal life. Jesus answers the lawyer's question with another question, assuming that he should somewhat know what is "written in the law." Jesus responds to him by highlighting passages from the Torah describing the single commandment that is grounded in love. The story, however, does not end at this point. Jesus adds, "Do this and you will live." In other words, awareness or theory is perhaps not enough. What is needed, then, is action, especially if one has the self-consciousness and health to do so. The lawyer, still inquisitive as ever, asks Jesus to identify neighbors. He then answers with a parable.

First, a priest who was going down the road saw the traveler, but then decided to "pass by on the opposite side" (Luke 10:31). The priest, who should clearly be the one to stop based on his vows and commitments to those in need, continues on his path and ignores the traveler. Disappointment is directed at the priest because he does not stop to help the traveler, which is expected of a man with such a vocation. Nevertheless, the explanations for the priest continuing on his way are indeterminate.

Second, a Levite priest, meaning a kind of "lower class priest" who did more house cleaning than going near the altar (Welch 1999, 78), also passes the beaten traveler "on the opposite side" (Luke 10: 32). Similar to the priest, the Levite's reasons for passing the victim is uncertain. John W. Welch argues that the Levite does more than the first priest and suggests that the Levite perhaps "did not think of himself good enough" to help the victim of the robbers (Welch 1999, 78). This is an important part of the parable since it implies that Jesus calls people to not only act, but also that the action itself may create some distance between the person and their understandings of the sacred. This

parallels with Rosenzweig's notion that "divine love by itself does not adequately defend against the threat of isolation" and that because of this "the self depends for full individuation not only on God's revelation but on the human neighbor" (Moyn 2004, 152). In other words, although the act is in part performed on the basis of one's free will, the very response of that act opens a window for relations between neighbors to develop and foster. This is not to suggest that this only happens during these experiences. Nevertheless, it is an important aspect of the concept of neighbor that seems to be popular in both theological as well as philosophical works.

Third, the Samaritan, "moved with compassion at the site" (Luke 10:33), sees the traveler and stops to help him with his wounds. Here it should be noted that "in all cases, the early Christians say the Good Samaritan is Christ himself (Irenaeus), "the keeper of souls" (Chrysostom), "the guardian (Origen), and "the good shepherd" (Augustine), or "the Lord and Savior" (Eligius)" (Welch 1999, 70). Perhaps one may think that it was acceptable for such an interaction between a Samaritan and a Jew. Historically, it was not; such interactions were rare because "Samaritans were implacable enemies of the Jews" (Baca 2011, 24). As Norman Young writes, "The bitter feud between the Samaritans and the Jews was basically a religious quarrel about priestly succession, hence hatred was most intense between Sadducees and the Samaritans" (1983, 276). Nevertheless, "the Samaritan's compassion thus hammers home the lesson that to love your neighbor as if you were loving yourself demands even the placing of oneself in the enemy's lot before acting towards him" (272).<sup>106</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> According to Norman Young, "Jesus' patient Socratic questioning leads the lawyer himself to declare, even if somewhat indirectly, that a hated enemy is his neighbor" (1983, 270).

This text remains one of the most complex and popular parables of all the Gospels. There is a surplus of meaning here that remains to be fully appreciated. Practical theologians will surely continue to write and reflect on the meaning of this parable of the Good Samaritan and to explore new directions.

### **Attending to the Concept of Love of Neighbor as Evident in Works of the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries**

The concept of love of neighbor corresponds to popular topics in theological works of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The concept of love of neighbor, however, is not restricted to theological works. Here one may think of Halas Matus's (2019) work titled "Love Your Neighbor: Nazi Soldiers and Femmes Fatales in Czech Cinema." It is not for nothing that in 2015 the *American Journal of Bioethics* published "Thy Neighbor: Replacing Paternalistic Protection as the Grounds for Research Ethics." The concept also has even been applied to science documentaries, for instance, in a *One Strange Rock* episode, director Alice Jones (2017) brings to light the concept of neighbors in space. The narrator, Will Smith, states, "To find out if we have any neighbors, you need a telescope and I'm talking big, really big!" (Episode 10).<sup>107</sup>

Because this research is developed from a practical theological perspective, theological works around this concept will also be highlighted. First, love of neighbor corresponds with differing faith communities, for instance, the topic of Christian-Muslim relations has been a primary subject for some scholars, especially in religious studies (D'Agustino 2017, Kimball 2009, Thomas 1994). And perhaps rightfully so. Thomas D'Agustino makes it very clear from the beginning of this article titled "Reclaiming

---

<sup>107</sup> The narrator states, "The Arecibo Observatory is an impressive machine... It is located in the center of Puerto Rico surrounded by forests, listening to radio waves coming from deep space (2017).

Islam: A Lived Religion Approach to Muslim Youth Experience” that “the current political discourse in the United States surrounding Islam identifies the Muslim community as one to be feared and suspected by society” (2017, 39).<sup>108</sup> In addition, Margaret O. Thomas writes, “the relationship of Christians and Muslims must be rooted in neighborly love” (1994, 3). Charles A. Kimbell writes that “love of neighbor in Christian scripture is a basis for Christian-Muslim dialogue and cooperation” (2009, 1).

This also resonates in relationships between Americans and Mexicans and other communities, for instance, the Latino/a community in and outside of the United States. Natalie Mendoza (2016), University of California, Berkeley doctoral graduate, recalls the history of the relationship in light of the brilliant work “The Good Neighbor Comes Home.” Mendoza asserts that Americans and Mexicans have had a dynamic relationship in the past and reflects on “how a Mexican American and European American network of professionals, university administrators and faculty, and academics in California, New Mexico, and Texas advocated on behalf of Mexicans and Mexican Americans by defining the population as a regional interest group with needs that required federal attention” (2016, 3).

Other publications in light of neighbor correspond with non-fiction literature in the twenty-first century. A recent book review of the text *Called For Life: How Loving Our Neighbor Led Us into the Heart of the Ebola Epidemic*, raises several questions in relation to neighbor, inquiring, for instance, as to why the mortality rate for African

---

<sup>108</sup> D’Agustino continues, “Literature on the subject suggest that this distinction has made the lives of Arab and Muslim Americans increasingly difficult, as many have become more fearful for their safety and for their ability to succeed in the United States. These difficulties stem from viewing all Arabs and Muslims as violent, a threat to national security and distinctly “other,” in the eyes of many people in the United States (2017, 39).

Americans is higher and what compassion means in relation to God (Brantly and Brantly 2015, 56). Third, theologians explore the historical connotations of love of neighbor. Joshua M. Greever (2019), for instance, studies the concept of love of neighbor in ancient Judaism. Though there are important works, it does not offer a comprehensive collection or analysis of the work that is published on this concept.

### **Attending to the Diaries in Relation to the Biblical Narrative and Theological Concept of Love of Neighbor**

Paul D. Molnar writes, “One does not automatically love one’s neighbor” since this “act is sent to man only through the experienced and suffered wholeness of life and still remains even then, indeed especially, then, a nameless mystery” (2004, 578). A few years before the struggles and challenges that met her life in 1958, Day reflected on her early love for one’s neighbor, or brother, in her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*. She writes (1952) as follows.

Ivan, in *The Brothers Karamazov*, protested that it was quite impossible to love man as he was, with his cruel instincts, his lust for power, his greed, and his instincts of self-preservation. It was not a natural thing to think in terms of laying down one’s fellows. In the same book however, Father Zossima spoke glowingly of that love for God which resulted in a love for one’s brother. The story of his conversion to love is moving, and that book, with its picture of religion, had a lot to do with my later life (1952, 87).

Eventually this love of neighbor fosters into extraordinary practices of mercy and compassion, for instance, caring for the sick, cleaning for the next person who needs a

place to stay, working in the soup kitchen, and so on. On December 21, 1959, Day even cares for her friend and sister, Della, when she is sick.

Sunday December 21

Spent today at Della's. Della sick in bed with cold. Florence Kaslow drove me home from church. Television in evening. Really resting all day. Reading Huguet, on Societies, (...?...) etc.

The next day, Day cares for another woman who is sick:

Monday, December 22

VISIT to Anne Marie for supper. She has been ill. Reading Claudel's meditations on the last words of Christ.

---

Indeed, this practice of caring for the sick, a “Corporal Work of Mercy,” was important to Day. Here it should be noted that Day was a nurse in the earlier years of her life during a flu outbreak in the United States in 1918 (Day 1952). Despite the history of caring for the sick, the diaries suggest that she did not see this practice as absent or distant from Christ in her life at this time.

This practice of caring for the sick, as well as others, were as extraordinary as the woman who went from condemning the Church in the early years of her life to transforming into a leader and co-creator of the Catholic Worker alongside Peter Maurin many years earlier, which forced even popes to respond to her. The Catholic Worker was more than a few Houses of Hospitalities in different cities across the United States. The Worker had a lasting impact on most, if not all of those who were involved. The Worker

perhaps mirrors the essence of hope, carrying stories and transformations throughout the years.

From one point of view, the Worker, and perhaps even the farm Day mentions quite often in the diaries, share similarities with the Inn in Luke's Good Samaritan. For early Christians, the Inn "readily symbolized the church, the holy church, or the universal church" and was described as "not the heavenly destination, but a necessary aid in helping travelers reach their eternal home" (Welch 1999, 83). In the New York Catholic Worker, most of the workers had no problem opening the doors for those who were passing by; the location on Chrystie Street was likely to take in any one that needed a place to rest and eat if they had the room. Thus, a place where the poor were treated with mercy and compassion. One could make the argument that more rules and regulations were needed at the Worker because of the challenging physical conditions in which they lived and worked. Yet a bowl of soup and a bed to sleep in, even though mice and rats were present, is nonetheless better than the available alternatives. During one experience with her friend and co-worker, Ammon Hennacy, Day writes that he "gave up his bed" on December 18, 1958 (Day 1958, 101).

One could also make the argument that the conditions of the Worker were in some way unhealthy for those living there because of the lack of regulation with drinking, mentally ill, and so on. Day herself was dealing with health issues, for instance, on December 3, 1958, she indicated that she was hurting from arthritis (Day 1958, 96). Nevertheless, those who needed her help connect to the victim of the robbers in the parable. For Day, keeping in mind the controlling structures that are in place for sustainability and further development of poverty, marginalization, oppression, and so on

is important. Who is she to judge people and their stories? Are they not children of God regardless, deserving of respect and empowerment? Perhaps even the Samaritan mirrors the neighbors that Day embraces, which includes her family and all, including those who are neither Christian nor American. They too provide meaning and purpose in her life for she was also very interested in people and building the Community of Saints by means of her daily practices of love, compassion, and mercy. This very connection is not only at the heart of the concept of the good neighbor, but also, and perhaps more importantly to the entire theological enterprise.

In addition, the Worker and the farm was the temporary home for those not only traveling physically, but perhaps spiritually as well. The Worker was more of a location of bodily nourishment for those considered outcasts of society, for instance, the poor, mentally ill, sickly, and so on, whereas the farm was a space for spiritual nourishment for Day. Here she would read, write articles, cook, play with her grandchildren, garden, and care for the land through farming practices influenced by Peter Maurin. For Day, the natural environment was a neighbor in some respects since she understood the earth as God's creation and appreciated life and all of its fullness. In many ways, she inspires people today to reflect on the ways in which people are treating and loving the natural world or God's creation.

Those who were also working alongside her this year, for instance, Ammon Hennacy, resemble characters in the parable. Those around Day at this time were part of the community she was developing and for which she felt responsible. Day had deep respect for those who would work alongside her, especially those that would be willing to go to jail in the various protests of the day. Throughout all this, however, she gave all

their freedom to make their own choices as to whether to leave or stay (Day, 1958, 1). The Workers thus resembled more of a friendship, a relationship or *comunio*, than anything else. Though the conditions from which they had to work were quite harsh, the friends of the Catholic Worker also took on responsibilities of writing articles, which gave them opportunities to write what is on their minds. In addition, many of them cleaned, cooked, and shared meals together all while keeping in mind those who needed a place to stay off the streets. More importantly, they would give up food for others. On March 29, Day wrote the following in her diary (1958, 28).

Saturday, March 29. Get Psalms.  
When we got the soup yesterday from the school there was just enough for humans, so we put off getting our pig until next Monday on Tuesday. Went to visit Peggy who feels pretty low. Very cold and dreary weather.

Day was their leader and they looked to her for advice and care. Yet, this diary entry, which reaffirms the harsh conditions perhaps, seems that those who worked alongside Day also made sacrifices for the Catholic community. When she traveled to Mexico, Day trusted her friends to lead the New York community. Indeed, Day and those alongside her during this time share similarities with the innkeepers in the Good Samaritan “who takes responsibility for the nurturing and retaining of any rescued and redeemed soul” (1999, 85).

An important concept in relation to this concept of neighbor seems to focus on the assumption that the traveler even wants help from the Samaritan. R W. Funk writes, “The Samaritan is he who the victim does not, could not, expect would help, indeed does not want help from” (1974, 213). Not everyone at the Worker was the biggest fan of Day.

Part of the Catholic Worker movement was to work, protest violence, publish articles, clean, cook, and so on. It was difficult to deal with those abusing alcohol, who were elderly, and who suffered from others forms of addiction or mental illness. Some of her friends, such as Charlie, leaves the Worker during this year as indicated in her diaries on January 2, 1958 (Day, 1958, 1):

Thursday, January 2    copy to printer.    Vaccination.    Cecil Boulton.

          This morning Charlie called me into his room to tell me he was leaving. A great shock. It was easier to see the others go--they had some definite plan. These situations are heartbreaking. There is no one to take his place.

For Day, each person had value, especially her friends and family. Because they were her friends, she wanted them to be happy even if they meant that they would no longer be working and living near her. Nevertheless, the door was open if they wanted to return.

### **Dorothy Day as the Samaritan**

Day had a deep sense of faith during this time and even is described as the Samaritan in a 1956 *New York Times* article titled, “Poet and Judge Aid Samaritan Who Runs a Firestop Hostel.” This article provides glimpses into Day’s faith at this time in her life when she was given \$250 in front of the courthouse in 1956. Day was in need of “\$30,000 to update four story brick building at 223 Chrystie Street. This was to “finish fire-proofing the building” (Lissner 1956, 1). When she was rushing up the stairs of the courthouse, the poet W. H. Auden handed her \$250 on the steps of the courthouse. Day

admitted later that she had no idea it was the famous poet at the time. In fact, she had thought at the time that the man said he handed her only \$2.50! In any case, without knowing the identity of the giver or the amount, Day was apparently “elated” even over the \$2.50. According to the article, Auden had heard of her struggles and wanted to help her with the financial burdens she was facing. Later, Day realized that the British-born poet had given her \$250, which was the exact amount of money that she needed to meet the requirements from the court. The judge was then willing to work with Day since she now had the needed money (1). Finally, the author ends the article by reflecting on “Miss Day” and her profound belief that “providence works in mysterious ways” (1). In her mind and heart, Day had faith that the Lord would come through and provide her and the other Workers with the means necessary to continue doing their work of helping those in need. This conviction of the Lord being active in her life was part of her life and clearly evident in 1958.

### **223 Chrystie Street and the Inn from the Good Samaritan**

From one point of view, the Worker, and even the farm Day mentions quite often in the diaries, share similarities with the Inn in Luke’s Good Samaritan. For early Christians, the Inn “readily symbolized the church, the holy church, or the universal church” and was described as “not the heavenly destination, but a necessary aid in helping travelers reach their eternal home” (Welch 1999, 83). In the New York Catholic Worker, most of the workers had no problem opening the doors for those who were passing by: the location on Chrystie Street was likely to take in any one that needed a place to rest and eat if they had the room. It was a place where the poor were treated with mercy and compassion. Privacy was impossible.

In addition, the Worker and the farm were the temporary homes for those not only traveling physically, but spiritually as well. The Worker and farm were places of bodily nourishment for those considered outcasts of society, for instance, the poor, mentally ill, sick. At the farm during 1958, Day would read, listen to the ocean, write articles, shop, cook, play with children, garden, and care for the land through farming practices influenced by Peter Maurin. For Day, the natural environment was also neighbor in some respects since she understood the earth as God's creation and appreciated life and all its fullness. This does not suggest that Day equated aspects of the natural world with persons. Yet, she understood their powerful connection not only to each other, but also to the Lord. In many ways, she is an inspiration for people today to reflect on the natural world as well as people in such ways as to see and understand them as gifts from God.

### **A Dangerous Road for Day and the Catholic Workers**

The dangers that Day had to face during this time resembles the dangers of the traveler on the road to Jericho in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Martin Luther King describes this road in his speech on April 3, 1968.

You start out in Jerusalem, which is about 1200 miles — or rather 1200 feet above sea level. And by the time you get down to Jericho, fifteen or twenty minutes later, you're about 2200 feet below sea level. That's a dangerous road. In the days of Jesus it came to be known as the "Bloody Pass." (King 2005, 83)

The conditions of the Worker were in some way unhealthy for those living there because of the lack of regulation with drinking, mentally ill, despite the love that was shared. Day herself was dealing with health issues, for instance, on December 3, 1958, she indicates that she was hurting from arthritis (Day 1958, 96).

She may also have been suffering from alcoholism. This is somewhat uncertain since the diaries have a white out stain on the entry when she is discussing her own issues with alcohol. Nevertheless, Day explores this more on April 23 when she writes, “When Dirght Macdonald asked me seriously whether I drank longshoremen under the table – I can only confess that yes, I did ‘fling roses riotously with the throng’” (Day 1958, 33).<sup>109</sup> For Day, handling her own sufferings and keeping in mind the controlling structures that are in place for sustainability and further development of poverty, marginalization, oppression, and so on is important. This is because some powerful people in the city during 1958 had the capability to threaten her with eviction, which they did. Fears not finding a new home for the Worker and anxiety tied to financial concerns escalated anxiety. She was also dealing with daily struggles, such as car troubles and family problems. The diaries indicate that this year was difficult and perhaps even one of the lowest times of her entire post-conversion life. In this year, even her physical health issues contribute to this conversation since the lack of self-love demonstrates a deeper challenge for Day. It is much more difficult to work in the soup-kitchen with a bladder infection and a toothache.

### **Neglecting Those in Need**

In addition, the city officials of New York were not interested in helping Day’s community enough to save them from eviction. She writes of this sad time on December 30.

---

<sup>109</sup> Here Day is quoting Ernest Dowson’s poem. She does not claim to be an alcohol, but she indicates that she does drink alcohol.

Tuesday, December 30

We discontinued the bread line after 22 years of continuous service. The bricks falling to the street were a continuous hazard from the house next door. Ramon, big and little, have found rooms, also Dante. Bill Burns and Ellen Higgins had to go to Bellevue psychiatric ward. Mrs Steele had tried to care for Bill.

Transitions are so hard.

In the article “On Pilgrimage” Day argues and stands her ground that Worker was helping the city rather than hurting it (1968, 3-5). Day’s published articles written in this year can be found on the Catholic Worker’s website called “The Catholic Worker Movement” ([www.catholicworker.org](http://www.catholicworker.org)). The legacy of Day runs deep throughout the Catholic community of the twentieth and twenty-first century because of many reasons, but of course because of her perseverance and love to help those in need despite their thanklessness or decisions to part ways from Day.

### **How Do Day’s Diaries Expand an Understanding of the Love of Neighbor?**

Many researchers recognize the importance of studying Day’s life in relation to the concept of neighbor. In this section, there are four particular parts that relate to the diaries expanding an understanding of love of neighbor. First, Day’s self-consciousness and love of neighbor will be highlighted. Here the term self-consciousness is used to identify her reflection not only on particular topics, but the writing itself as a form of reflection. In addition, the term self-consciousness is used to emphasize that the responses of Day, for instance, Day’s love of God, is contextual to Day’s experiences and life up to and in 1958. This helps prevent a universal notion of love of neighbor, which has been criticized by scholars (Moyn 2004, 154). On a final note, the term is also used to

emphasize that Day's reflection and actions associated with neighbors, God, and self is a practice that is to be nurtured.

First, a way to nurture this is through an understanding of how the three different aspects connect. This reflects the findings of this research and this flow from the biases and assumptions brought to the research. If one were to put as much effort into understanding and gaining knowledge of their neighbors, a deeper understanding might result of one's identity and relationship with Jesus. Second, Day's self-consciousness and love of God is evident. The diaries make clear that Day has a profound respect for the Lord as well as ecclesial practices. Third, Day's self-consciousness and love of self is briefly examined. Practices of resistance are examined at the end not only to provide a practice-oriented approach to this work, but also for inspiration and to highlight their connections to love and solidarity.

### **Day's Self-Consciousness and Love of Neighbor**

In the biography *All is Grace*, author Jim Forest (2011) reflects on Day's experiences after leaving her long-time love, Forster. This was a time that Day spent with her neighbors of who she was quite fond of. As Forest explained:

Dorothy loved her neighbors, among whom were Italians, Belgians, families of Russian and Romanian Jews, bootleggers and fishermen. For all their differences of temperament, ethnic origins and ways of life, they got on well with each other. Events and misunderstandings that might have ignited undying enmity were excused on the grounds of nationality (Forest 2011, 70).

In 1958, Day was caring for the sick, her daughter, grandchildren, the poor, and so on. She would take in and listen to those that were perhaps neglected. On January 1, Day

even recognized some “visitors from Texas” in her diaries (1958, 1). Day never indicates their names, one can assume from the diary entry that they were staying or visiting the Catholic Worker, a place open to all those who needed it.

Day travels as a pilgrim to Mexico where she visits with those near the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe as well as local families. She makes an effort to get to know them by watching their rituals, including their dances and music, when she is visiting with them. In the diaries, Day also demonstrates an appreciation for the landscape of the country when she arrives (Day, 1958). In short, Day shows mercy. Day thus resembles the Samaritan in Luke’s parable, especially since Samaritans are “those who have shown mercy” (Proctor 2019, 206).

In addition, Day’s practices and way of life seem to indicate that she was building a sense of community or at least was hoping for it. Though she did not know the names of every traveler she met or stayed in the New York Catholic Worker or perhaps even the farm, Day understood that each person had purpose, value, and was part of a larger community of Christians. Her response is perhaps the inverse of depersonalization. This concept is explored in the text *Modern Christian Thought: The Twentieth Century*:

Depersonalization, when it becomes a social condition, is characterized by certain features. It is the society of “das Man” of mass man – no longer a community but what Kierkegaard calls a “public” or “crowd” – a collection of other-directed automatons/ It is human life leveled down to the average, cliché. Life in such a society has no firm position; it is in a state of ceaseless flux, of everywhere and nowhere (Livingston and Fiorenza 2006, 136).

What the authors point out is what Day was desperately trying to avoid and likely even feared. Day had faith in people and acted on the belief that all persons, though distinct, are connected and loved by God. This includes the women and men of the Our Lady of Guadalupe community in Mexico, her grandchildren, friends, and even those who put her in jail.

She not only believed or tried to believe that each person was a gift and was part of Christ, she acted on it. This thread seems to be a bond throughout her diary, uniting all her routine action in everyday life. Here the elegant writings of Julian of Norwich describe this loving relationship.

These virtues and gifts are treasured up for us in Jesus Christ: for at the same time that God bound himself to our body in the Virgin's womb, he took on our sensory soul with our essential being, a union in which he was perfect man; for Christ, having bound into himself each man who shall be saved, is perfect man (1998, 136).<sup>110</sup>

This is similar to the Samaritan's actions, which "show us the transcendence of the human heart when it opens itself to human suffering and lets itself be moved by the inhumanity of others" (Baca 2011, 51). Day's writing of her diaries of 1958 demonstrate her determination, mercy, and compassion for those that she came in contact with. Again, this included her family, friends, and those she would meet on pilgrimage. Even the police that she would protest in front of would be included in this conversation. For Day, the police and those that put her in jail she approached with empathy and concern rather

---

<sup>110</sup> Julian of Norwich continues this passage by bringing to light the element of Christ as Mother: Thus our Lady is our mother in whom we are all enclosed and we are born from her in Christ; for she who is mother of our Savior is mother of all who will be saved in our Savior. And our Savior is our true mother in whom we are eternally born and by whom we shall always be enclosed (1998, 136).

than violence and hatred. Indeed, she mirrored the actions of the Samaritan, which were “in favor of the mugged man to show that salvation is a possibility” (20).

### **Day’s Self-Consciousness and Love of God**

The diaries of 1958 indicate that Day is conscious of her relationship with God, which fosters and develops her love for the Lord. Day repeatedly acknowledged her commitment to Church teachings throughout the diaries of this year. She frequently participates in prayer, Adoration, Confession, Mass, and so on. Day thinks and reflects on God before she makes deliberate acts. For instance, on the day of the civil rights drill that Day was planning on protesting, Day attended church in the morning and even had a good breakfast. The diaries are also full of indications of saints, reflections on Christ, and even local priests. Day seems to write and pray as if the Lord is listening and asserts that the Lord is active in her daily life as well as the lives of others. Not a day goes by without her referencing either God’s creation or a person of God. One can even make the argument that her constant reflection on the weather were daily reminders of God’s creation, which she adored and admired like many of the saints before her. Thus, the complete 1958 diaries can be a collective reflection on her relationship with God. It is important to note here that this does not mean to suggest that such a relationship can be reduced to a collective noun. Nevertheless, the diaries in relation to the Good Samaritan raises questions for instance, how are listening to the Lord in our daily life? In addition, Day understood that her love of God could also be practiced in her daily life, just as Saint Thérèse’s “little way.” This too, Day explains, is important in showing love for God, which is perhaps also realized through daily practices that include, but are not limited to, cooking, cleaning, writing letters, and even telephone calls, especially when in

community with the poor. One may, then, also want to ask, “How are we consciously including God, or better yet our love of God and neighbor, in our daily decision-making processes and actions?”

Gwendolyn Jackson’s (2017) award-winning article mirrors this notion she examines God’s activity in scripture. She writes “Scripture is full of these self-reflective moments in which God makes plans before acting” (Jackson 2017, 31). She asserts that particular passages of scripture indicates that God “is describing a potentiality and not just pure activity, that God is talking to the divine self as if there were a speaker and a listener” and that because of this “God is interacting with the human race as if we were on the same plane” (Jackson 2017, 31). According to Karl Rahner, “our love of our neighbor not only leads to knowledge of God and of Christ, but it has the ability to move us toward God in this very activity” (Molnar 2004, 575). Some of the most important practices of Day in 1958, such as the practices of Church participation, praying, visiting the sick as well as her friends and family, and pilgrimage to Mexico, as well as protesting civil defense drills, flowed from and were energized by her love of God. Day loved because she knew the Lord loved her and wanted to express that love through acts of mercy and compassion towards others. The people, scripture, and even God’s action in relation (in relation to each other) brought joy in her life. Yet Day is aware that her activism is an important part of demonstrating this love as well as the gift of freewill. She and the other Workers are aware that being a leader of the Catholic Worker was sacrificial work, which apparently branched into political and social dimensions.

### **Day’s Self-Consciousness and Love of Self**

Day's love for self is perhaps more complex than one may think. Mary Louise Bozza explores Day's self-love, as well as Day's love for others and God in her work, when she writes the following.

As may be inferred, "self-love" as Day describes it is very different from popular definitions of self-love as appreciation and admiration for oneself, and the desire for self-preservation. While her definition does leave room for appreciation of the mystery within oneself as a sign of God's presence in one's life, it does not seem to include physical beauty, nor does it advocate the quest for physical comfort (2003, 49).

She concludes that "Loving oneself, then, certainly does not mean prizing one's existence, or indulging oneself but rather being content with one's existence insofar as it is part of God's will and plan, and having control over sinful desires" (Bozza 2003, 50). The diaries indicate, however, that Day did "feel better" when she would write to particular people, for instance, Sister Irene on Monday, June 30 (Day 1958, 50).<sup>111</sup> In addition, Day would demonstrate love for herself when she would do her hair in specific styles (Day 1958, 41).<sup>112</sup> Nevertheless, her many physical ailments challenges one to consider that Day may not have been taking care of her health the best way that she could have.

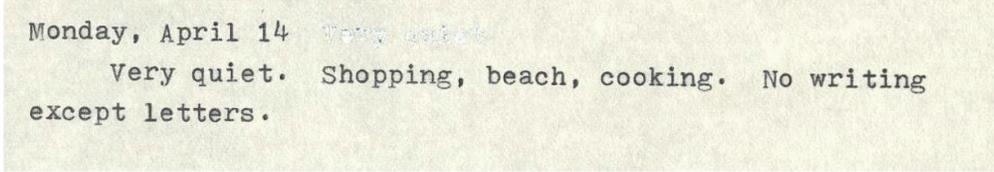
Perhaps there is more to extend on in relation to this topic, especially in light of the diaries since they demonstrate Day's self-love practices. These practices included the things and people that Day enjoyed the most, for instance, writing, going to the movies,

---

<sup>111</sup> On June 30, Day writes, "Felt better myself as soon as I had written Sister Irene at Maryknoll Cloister" (Day 1958, 50).

<sup>112</sup> On May 24, Day writes, "Hair done, curled! On side only, to appear rejoicing, cheerful, not bedraggled" (Day 1958, 41).

taking comfort in a hot bath when traveling. On certain days, she even enjoyed shopping, which is surprising perhaps for a woman who critiqued controlling economic markets. On Monday April 14, Day writes (1958, 32):



Monday, April 14 ~~Very quiet~~  
Very quiet. Shopping, beach, cooking. No writing  
except letters.

It is important to note here that one may argue Day showed little self-love for herself. She had health issues, and the conditions of the Worker were harsh on an older woman. She seems to be anxious about a number of things, and for very good reasons. These may have affected her mental health, but it is not possible to draw conclusions from the diaries as to the state of her mental health. Yet, demonstrating her sacrificial nature, showing love to others was more important than showing love to herself. She nonetheless found time to go shopping, go to the beach, and do weaving. She cooked and cleaned and, of course, wrote these diary entries almost every single evening. Such practices perhaps gave her some peace of mind, but ultimately her happiness and love of self were derived from spending time with her grandchildren and her religious sensibility. As she states on June 4, “there is nothing more beautiful than the crown of thorns” (Day 1958, 44). If her praxis was furthered by the notion that all people are deserving of God’s love, then surely she would include herself.

She seems to have enjoyed traveling, in part because it allowed her to escape the conditions of the Worker. In many respects, this escapism that Day enjoyed reflected that of the farm in which she spent much of her time this year (as well as others). Perhaps Day is providing a lesson that it is okay to take breaks from the harsh conditions of life, including the homeless and poor. In doing so, it seems as if Day finds other ways to

experience Christ, for instance, in playing with her grandchildren and visiting the sick, which in turn deepen a sense of health and happiness.

### **Practices of Love, Solidarity, and Resistance**

The 1958 diaries indicate and inspire practices of love, solidarity, and resistance. Julie Hanlon Rubio defines practices of resistance and describes their connections with love and solidarity.

Practices of resistance are much more common in Christian communities other than families. Monks, priests, and nuns are more likely to embrace regular prayer and service. Radical communities associated with the Catholic Worker movement typically practice radical simplicity and just eating. Most families, whether poor, middle-class, or upper-middle class, are consumed in simply making sure that all members receive the care and attention they need. I am arguing for much more intentionally in a family's practice of faith as a community and much more resistance to standard cultural ideas. This proposal is not without difficulties, including swimming against the tide of mainstream culture and respecting diversity among family members (Rubio 2014, 223).

Day maintained that though practices may be interpreted as dangerous or even radical, they were still connected to love and solidarity. For example, Day develops this notion when she is protesting civil rights drills. Not only does the practice of protesting entail resistance against city officials and cultural structures, the practice of protesting is developed from her understanding of and love for others through Christ. In addition, the Catholic Worker seemed to be a location of resistance against the cultural norms of society that restrict and hinder love for the poor and marginalized. This location or even

the Worker itself, though resisting the rules of the city, was a place grounded in love and development for others and Christ. Not all practices against powerful structures, then, should be refuted. Better yet, they should be supported if they speak truth to the love of others, God, mercy, compassion, and so on.

It is almost as if Day takes these practices one step further with her writing, for instance, when she writes that New York City officials are forcing her and others to “relocate” (Day 1958, 3). In other words, her writing can be understood as a practice since it helps publish and share acts and thoughts of justice. In the diaries on December 26, Day also indicates that when it comes to the clergy, she will make an active effort to see the good in them (Day 1958, 104):

Thought--Ammon sees only good in his former radical friends and ignores rest, but sees ill in clergy--their omissions and commissions. I shall try to see only good in them and write book on them.

It is common knowledge that Day had her differences with clergy. Yet the content of the diaries suggest that Day consciously seeks to make an effort to understand the goodness of their souls, a practice that is perhaps very much needed for many in the current context. Here one can reflect on many examples why this practice is needed, for example, clerical sexual abuse and even the fact that all U.S. adults who were raised Catholic have left the church at some point in their lives, a figure as high as 52%, according to a *Pew Research* article (Murphy 2015, 1).<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>113</sup> Murphy continues, “A significant minority of them returned, but most (four-in-ten of all those raised Catholic) have not” (2015, 1).

Catholic social teaching informs people to serve the poor and to seek the common good for others. Thus, a dialogue of empowering the individuals as well as the community. When it comes to providing shelter for those that need it, Day not only gave them clothes, but also engaged with them at the table. Day's emphases food, cooking, and other practices of eating, for instance, going to the market, which strengthens this argument. What does she, then, teach us about loving the neighbor? That it can be both contextual and universal? Nevertheless, Day reaffirms the argument that loving the neighbor is a process which takes time, mercy, and reflection.

How can people learn from Day and be inspired by her? The Church calls Catholics to shelter the homeless, feed the hungry, and give alms to those in need. The Hail Mary prayer gently reminds us that we too are sinners and need to be prayed for. How can we engage with neighbors in our own daily life? How will this both be informed by and inspired by practices of love and solidarity? Day reminds us that we too are called to be one "Communion of Saints" as indicated in this chapter. She demonstrates how we are to practice this in our daily lives, which may, in return, challenge powerful cultural forces. And that is okay. This does not mean, however, that such practices are distant from the love of Christ. Yet, they should be fostered by our own consciousness and love for the Lord, others, and ourselves. In addition, though complex, the diaries as well as the Good Samaritan demonstrate that people connect and have the ability to be transformed through compassion, mercy, and perhaps even acting out of the box so to speak when justice is necessary.

## Conclusion

Michael Cameron asserts that “The Gospels accounts, then, are not mere descriptions or historical accounts; these narratives aim to persuade you to answer authentically Jesus’ urgent question, “Who do you say that I am” (2015, 93). Similar to the Gospels, the 1958 diaries of Day are not mere “descriptions of historical accounts” (93). They inform us on ways to answer the more important question according to Baca, which is “To whom I am a neighbor?” rather than “Who is my neighbor?” (44). The latter question is still significant, however, since attempting to answer this question reveals characteristics, practices, and terms associated with the parable, for instance, neighbor and Samaritan. This chapter does not make a case for a systematic and universal understanding of the love of neighbor *per se*. Rather, it seeks to expand on the diaries of Day in her everyday life and practice, correlating and confronting it with this parable.

Recent work pushes the concept of neighbor and the ways in which people are called to embrace (and perhaps even sometimes exclude) people and structures in particular situations. Day’s diaries suggest points of connection with this growing conversation and act as a resource for the practices to be embraced when loving our neighbors, the Lord, and even our own bodies and souls. These three aspects are interconnected, influencing each other in ways that help people rely on loving and respecting each.

The parable, other scholarly sources, and Day’s diaries point out that loving one’s neighbor has its limitations and challenges. Even those who evict us, who cause harm to our bodies and souls, with or without cause or warrant, would be considered a neighbor by Day. This does not mean that she would necessarily embrace each person with whom

she came in contact. She had her doubts about many, even those in the hierarchical church.

Nevertheless, a reflection on the parable and the content from the diaries suggests that not only do mercy, love, solidarity, and even practices of resistance help nurture and answer important, relevant questions and concerns, but so do both the life of Day in 1958 as well as Scripture. The question, “How can the diaries of Day expand on the concept of love of neighbor” is significant and must be answered on an ongoing basis.

Both the parable and Day inspire people to “Go and do likewise” (Luke 10: 37), an action that relates to the gift of freewill and love for the Lord. She reflects on this Christian responsibility on November 23, 1958 when she writes, “God creates occasions when Christians should speak and act.” Indeed, Day indicates the significance of not only speaking, but also of action. Likewise, the action that Day describes in her diaries is still very much helpful in empowering those in need, but also helpful when reflecting on deep philosophical and theological questions pertaining to the concepts of love of God and love of neighbor.

This analysis suggests that the parable is still relevant to conversation in the present context. This is especially true when explored in light of the diaries of Day. In other words, the third Gospel’s parable, as well as the diaries of Day, are resources for inspiration and reminders on the ways in which we are called to build community. How are we called to practice mercy to those who are poor and ostracized? In what ways is the hierarchical Church neglecting those who share experiences of Day and her friends, who worked tirelessly and in poor conditions for those in need yet lacked support especially in

a time of transition. Why is it important to take care of our own health in light of our love for others and Christ?

To sum up, the diaries of Day widen the understanding of the “Jew” in Luke’s parable to include immigrants, people of different faiths, Muslims, women, foster children, those suffering from poverty, Blacks and African Americans, teachers, the sick, those who identify as homosexual or transgender, and so on. In addition, this practical theological exploration widens the concept of neighbor to include ourselves and our relationship with the Lord. The contemporary United States is certainly a materialistic and capitalistic society joined with political tensions that cause division and lack of trust in the media. The presence of weapons is ubiquitous and racism is everywhere. Yet the Gospel demands inclusive practices even as the Church fails in empowering young people, teachers, and others who may identify as homosexual, bisexual, transgender, and so on.

Thus, one must ask, how can one learn more from Day? It may be that she is just as complex as the concept of loving the neighbor itself. Yet both the everyday lived reality of Day and her thought, as well as the tradition and teaching of the Church itself, are well worth the continued respect and exploration.

## CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter highlights aspects of Day's life in 1958, her everyday theologizing, and her theology associated with neighborliness. This suggests important directions for future research, more adequate understandings of Day, implications for practical theology, correlations between everyday theology and Day, and finally, a more adequate theology of neighbor. Day's 1958 diaries speak to the challenges that people face in 2020, such as collective anxiety, strife, and discord with regard to the contemporary issues such as protest, poverty, pandemic, and politics.<sup>114</sup> Here it should be noted that this chapter continues to draw on the Circle Method asking the question: "What do we do"? (Mejia, Henriot, and Wijzen 2005, 18). This chapter "moves toward action" in response to not only the data that was collected and analyzed, but also the theological reflection that was developed in Chapter Four.

Day was a noteworthy voice for and with the poor during this time of her life. Disciplined in her Catholic faith, she invoked a strong stance against violence and injustices despite the challenging conditions that were part of her life at this time. The diaries of 1958 demonstrate certain similarities to Joseph Conrad's *The Congo Diary*, underlining the argument that Day was living and working in severe conditions. I conclude that Dorothy Day found that diary writing provided structure in an unstructured world. Her writing was not only part of her job as the leader of the Catholic Worker, but the practice was an outlet in order to help her work through the daily challenges. Day strongly advocated protesting public air raid drills and fully understood that

---

<sup>114</sup> According to a Pew Research article, author Amina Dunn asserts that "Republicans and Democrats largely disagree over the seriousness of several major problems currently facing the country, even as the United States grapples with issues including a surge in new coronavirus cases and an economic recession (Dunn 2020, 1).

imprisonment would be the result of such protests. She encouraged others to challenge the system and power structures that led to the violence of which the drills were but one aspect. She asked the deeper question: Why is so much money, time and effort going into a potential violent practice when there are people who need to be fed, clothed, and comforted?

Day's daily life consisted of writing, preparing meals for those in need, cleaning, attending meetings, speaking with students, visiting the sick, and swimming at the beach (Day 1958, 59). Her sources of joy were those of everyday life: her grandchildren, her daughter, attending Mass, participating in the Sacraments, and the time spent on the farm or beach. In addition, the diaries indicate Day's admiration for the natural world. Travel and pilgrimage offered the joys of the occasional hot bath, meeting new people, and privacy. Despite the joys, she also dealt with many struggles, for instance, she claims that when her daughter, Tamar, was unhappy, she was also unhappy (Day 1958, 59).<sup>115</sup>

Theologizing with Dorothy Day is theologizing from the everyday. It is in her daily life that she embraces people and seeks to learn how to respond. She does this while also keeping up with her faith life through Mass, participating in Confession, and through prayer. These findings of Day are important for theories and practices relating to issues of 2020. What follows are five key points that not only summarize the findings of the research, but also, and perhaps more importantly, bring to light practical implications that encourage individuals and groups to respond to the challenges that they are confronted with in 2020.

---

<sup>115</sup> On August 2, Day writes, "Letter from Tamar – very unhappy, which makes me unhappy, which does not help. The only solution is to work for others" (Day 1958, 59).

### **Day and Her 1958 Diary: Sustaining a Healthy Attitude of Hope and Action**

Day's diaries of 1958, a clear account of a woman persevering through the massive challenges, were written at a time when Day was already in her early sixties. Her diaries demonstrate consistent concerns. They offer some structure amid the chaotic life in which she was embedded. She was living with the mentally ill and poor. She suffered from toothaches, bladder infections, and had difficulty sleeping (Day 1958, 48-73).

Housing was also an "extreme" problem, according to her diaries on August 24, 1958 (Day 1958, 67). Yet, Day never stopped the search to find a new house to replace the N.Y. Catholic Worker even in light of the power brokers of the city, for instance, Robert Moses, who were more inclined to get rid of people in the immigrant neighborhoods. She continued to have hope that she would find a place for those in need, especially since her efforts to find a new location were identified throughout the 1958 diaries. She can be an inspiration for those who are suffering from eviction today because of the pandemic. According to a Pew Research article, "As the coronavirus began to shut down large swaths of the U.S. economy in March, spiraling millions of Americans into unemployment, a patchwork of state and federal eviction bans were enacted to keep people in their homes...now those protections are vanishing" (Conlin 2020, 1).<sup>116</sup> Reading about Day and her experiences in 1958, landlords need to be compassionate and empathetic to the people and families during these difficult times with the pandemic. The community that Day was living in and building on began with and was furthered by strong housing. Where are the people to go if they have no home? American Catholics, in particular, are called to reach out to those in need, especially the poor and those victim to

---

<sup>116</sup> Conlin asserts, "as many as 28 million people could be evicted in coming months" (Conlin 2020, 1).

greedy robbers. Making sure that communities like the Catholic Worker are well funded is significant in our contemporary society. Hope is powerful, but action is necessary along with hope. People should be anti-eviction, which indicates that they are willing to take action for those who are facing homelessness, especially if research is suggesting that evictions may lead to more coronavirus cases” (Conlin 2020, 1).

The diaries are a record or a “ship’s log” on what to expect, how to sustain a healthy attitude of hope, and what the details are to take care of these people despite the powerful structures influencing the disregard of human lives. Day had to be the accountant and the head broom sweeper. She was the leader when it came to protesting, writing articles for the Catholic Worker, and finding a new home because of the eviction of 1958. If someone wanted to learn more about the how to sustain, maintain, and develop a home or program to assist the impoverished, the diary should be read, especially in 1958. The diaries function like a record or a ship’s log, providing a point of reference for people who want to be in this type of work. They are a powerful testimony of ordinariness in the midst of an extraordinary life. Because if they are not doing what she was doing, they should do more self-examination on their vocation.

From the perspective of a life of faith, or social work, or protest, these diaries provide much insight and guidance. So many might benefit from this text that has been the basis of this study: social service workers, teachers, members of Pax Christi, farm worker advocates, Catholic Workers, those in drug and rehabilitation centers, those serving victims of domestic violence, and so many more. The diaries provide clues as to how to manage the stresses of such work and vocations. They give detailed accounts of Day and how she responded to the hardships that came with her special vocation. She

worked day in and day out cooking meals for those in need, reaching out to students across the country, and finding time to relocate the CW because of the eviction threats.

Guidance is needed, especially insights on the daily lives of those working with the oppressed, poor, and impoverished. The diaries help develop a deeper understanding of what this work looks and feels like. They give insights on how to respond to the major concerns of homelessness, poverty, and the impoverished who are stuck in between powerful people and structures that are influenced by greed at the expense of the poor. This is very much needed since a writer for the *Washington Post* points to perhaps one reason why these practices are needed: “Although the United States remains the wealthiest large industrialized nation, it devotes less of its income to welfare” (Lipset 1996). It is time to spread out the wealth to make sure those who are suffering are able to be supported and protected. This is because Day demonstrates that the best way to show God your love, is to care and empower those in need. This does not make the lives of those who are dedicated to the poor any easier. Yet, the diaries are potential channels of hope that provide insights on ways to help and aid the suffering.

### **Day in 1958: Praxis-Oriented Approaches Regarding Protest**

A convert to Catholicism since 1927, Day was also mother, grandmother, sister, and friend in 1958. In addition to her many roles, she was still an active journalist who published at least seventeen articles for the *Catholic Worker* during this year, writing in her diary daily, and even working on an autobiography and other projects. In addition, she wrestled with health issues, for instance, toothaches and bladder issues, and dealt with car troubles. She cleaned, wrote daily, read books and articles, cooked and prepared food with others, prayed, and was particularly consistent in writing down the daily

weather conditions. As the city was changing and threats of eviction increasing, Day continued to stay faithful to the Catholic Church and the Catholic Worker.

Day is strongly committed to her faith. The diaries demonstrate that others, including those at the Catholic Worker and her family were walking with her on this journey. Her work and life at this time was in relation to those who were writing, publishing, cooking, protesting, and so forth alongside her this year. Here one may think of Ammon, Della, Tamar, Beth, Agnus, Veronica, and Hans. Peter Maurin, co-founder of the Catholic Worker, had died in 1949, but he was still very much with her in spirit. The people in Day's life at this time provided her with emotional and spiritual support, which was very much needed given the state of the United States in 1958. Her relationships with others and empathy for the poor and marginalized helped her stay on this path.

In the year of these diaries, newspapers were dispatching headlines that provoked daily, collective fear of nuclear attacks because of the Cold War situation. The civil defense drills that required mandatory participation from Americans were stressful, loud, and intimidating. Day and Catholic Workers who joined her protested these drills and ended up in jail. These protests were influenced from the understanding that the Catholic way is to save lives, not deteriorate them or support a system or structure that does such things. She challenged the norms that these drills reflected. She upturned the understanding that being obsessed with potential forms of violence was more important than the immediate concern of the poor. Moreover, participation in the drills implicated them in the fear and the system that propels such violence.

Day's efforts to protest air-raid drills reveal her effort to challenge the U.S. government that was more concerned with fighting violence than caring for the poor and

marginalized. In 2020, one can make a connection between Day's protesting air raid drills and the protesting of drills in secondary schools. According to a Pew Research article, "in the aftermath of the deadly shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida, a majority of American teens say they are very or somewhat worried about the possibility of a school shooting" (Graf 2018, 1). Because of this fear, drills are increasing around the nation that include teachers barricading their doors, children hiding under desks, and demonstrations on how to stop the blood flow of an injured person. Day's diaries of 1958 provoke one to reflect on these drills in such a way that recognizes that the drills themselves are focusing more on violent responses rather than focusing on ways to help students who are suffering from anxiety and mental illness. As Day brings to light, the focus should be on embracing and loving those who are suffering rather than on practices that propel heightened concern and fear associated with violence.

### **Day's Everyday Theologizing: Finding God in the Everyday**

As Robert Ellsberg asserts, Day would seek to "find God in all things – the sorrows of daily life and the moments of joy, both of which she experienced in abundance" (Ellsberg 2011, xxv). The diaries emphasize this notion made by Ellsberg. For example, Day writes about the weather almost daily and seems to thoroughly enjoy spending time outdoors, especially on the farm. One may not necessarily think that she understood God to be involved with these practices, but the diaries and contextualization aspect of this research indicate otherwise. This practice of indicating the weather daily is not necessarily new information since Robert Ellsberg published some of the diaries in his text *Duty and Delight*. Yet, this pattern had not been analyzed in such a way that draws on her conversion as well as her influence of Joseph Conrad's method

demonstrated in *The Congo Diary*. The constant weather and temperatures indicates something important about Day and her everyday theologizing. She is paying close attention to context. She is reflecting on her environment and surroundings. Day is inspiring others to take off the blinders and to see the people as gifts from God which, for Day, were especially the poor and minorities, the mentally ill and unemployed, the fringe and abandoned, living in the slums of New York.

How did Day find God in the daily life? This notion of praxis is key to a robust theological response. Katherine Turpin highlights Miroslav Volf's understanding of the term when she writes, "Miroslav Volf notes that the insight that "theologizing which is true to its task should be done out of a particular praxis and for a particular praxis" (Turpin 2014, 163). Day's praxis is drawn from her history, the struggles she has encountered, and of course, her faith (Riegle 2003, 104).<sup>117</sup> Her praxis is developed and furthered by the daily moments of joy as well. She finds joy when spending time with her grandchildren and when she is on the farm. She finds joy when attending Mass and when "little" miracles would come through for her, such as when she received the exact money needed to pay the government for needed expenses. She found joy in prayer, listening to the opera, and writing. Day's praxis was an everyday theologizing grounded in joy amidst the challenges.

The diaries indicate that Day enjoyed cooking and sharing food with others. This indicates that it feeds her not only her body but also her soul. Shared meals helped develop connections to people.

---

<sup>117</sup> For Day, she "always put God first" (Riegle 2003, 104). In 1958, one would not be able to separate her daily life practices and her experiences from her faith.

Shared meal helped her keep her finger on the pulse of the Catholic Worker community. It helped her engage the mood of others and deal with chaos around her. This breaking of bread with family and friends became a joyous occasion, a familiarity. The simplicity of catching up and learning more about each other gave purpose to those living and working in the Worker – they were part of something, a community, together. In addition, Day was fully committed to serving the poor, but she also needed time for herself. When she would need break from the Worker, she would spend time at the farm or travel. She would recharge her spirituality and peace of mind. The diaries demonstrate healthy ways to escape the chaos and struggles of life. With the anxiety and fear surrounded by the pandemic, nuclear war, and concern over political agendas, Day indicates ways in which one is to overcome the feeling of being trapped. At times, she demonstrated unhealthy forms of escapism, for instance, drinking alcohol. At one time or another, however, she inspires people that it is important to take breaks, break bread with friends and family, and to focus on individual passions. The diaries influence people to think about sobriety and self-discipline even in the way in she was writing in her diaries daily.

The impact of Day's day to day life is clear. She knew people in their basic needs. She made efforts to meet people where they are at and responded with love and commitment. Here one can think of her pilgrimage to Mexico, the meetings she would help lead for university students, and her visiting the sick and poor throughout 1958. She addressed their humility in hers. The Catholic Worker provided assistance through food, shelter, and clothing, but also through love and genuine community. Her time spent on the farm offers a kind of parallel with the Inn in the parable of the Good Samaritan. In this case, she herself is the one left on the roadside: it is important, after all, that one

place oneself in various roles within the parables. Thus, not only was the Inn a place of refuge for the poor. The “Inn” can be applied to her sabbatical moments, those she needed for mental and physical rest. These “sabbatical moments” allowed her to regroup and listen to the spirit of God. It is hard to hear the voice of God when one is suffering, with pain drowning out everything else. How does one find that voice when the din of suffering is so loud? Day’s daily documentation indicate that Day found a way to channel the voice of God through daily prayer, Mass, Sacraments, and springtime with her family. Gardening and farming also played a major role in this part of this journey since it helped connect her to God’s natural world and her own peace of mind. The diaries give insights on how to get over the falls and see that the Lord is near at every moment, even the most ordinary. Holistically, this aided in her ability to maintain peace and tranquility on the “inside” in order to continue her mission on the “outside.”

Finally, Day’s everyday life offers a bridge between her public and private image. Her daily activities of chopping, cooking, cleaning underline that Day was ordinary and relatable to people in their everyday lives. Her diaries remind people that their daily actions are part of the same everyday theologizing. They too can be and act like the saints that have walked and lived before the current times. As Joshua R. Sweeden writes, “In every context, Christians wrestle with integrating faith and everyday life” (2014, 78). In addition, he asserts that “Christians generally experience a disconnect between their everyday lives and corporate worship” (78). This disconnect is important for practical theologians as well. If practical theologians are to continue to explore, discern, advice, and so on, they are in need to keep up with the everyday life of people to understand their faith life. In addition, it is of particular importance to highlight women in the Catholic

Church who are influencers and role models for those developing, questioning, and feeling locked in their faith.

### **Day as a Voice for Ecological Conversations**

Day's appreciation for the land and the natural world is evident throughout the 1958 diaries. Her continuous indications of the weather and temperature, her love for the farm, and her peaceful visits to the beach reiterate that she had a connection to the land and natural world. Caring for the environment is of the utmost importance in our society today. Each and every person can modify their lives to take seriously moderation and self-control to care for the land. This discipline is not just for the land or the natural world, but also connects to the responsibility that Catholics and others have to care for others. It is well known that the poor are most affected by environmental problems. Day understands the natural world as created by a Creator. Because of this, the natural world is good and is deserving of protection and love. So too are the poor. Persons should carry with them a gratefulness to the Lord for what has been created and understand that a connection to the natural world connects each and every person to the Lord. In other words, the natural world, as well as the poor, are gifts from God that require a continuous appreciation. As Day brings to light, that people can demonstrate their appreciation for this gift through making an effort to connect to the ocean and farm life, using public transportation, reducing wasted food and water, and being mindful of pollution.

### **Directions for Future Research**

This research on Day's 1958 diaries opens up venues for future research in three distinct ways. First, practical theology focuses on the particulars. This research is new in the sense that the focus was on one particular year of Day's life in order to highlight any

fluctuations or patterns pointed to further insights on not only Day herself, but the way in which she should practice her faith, leadership skills, motherhood, and so on. This brings one to a particular focus on practices. There are many different types of practices and the diaries seem to reinforce the notions of particular scholars in relation to practices of love, solidarity, and resistance. In addition, this work may add to conversations in theology and in practical theology through the way it combines both qualitative research methods attentive to context and themes together with quantitative ones, an approach encouraged by contemporary practical theologians (Schilderman 2014, 125).

The research on the diaries initially included both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This project has shown the value of careful analysis within a broad focus. Future research will surely do well by focusing on very specific dimensions. Such focused quantitative and qualitative methods, used within an overall frame of a practical theological method such as the Circle Method, can and should be embraced to explore the daily lives of major Catholic figures and saints such as Dorothy Day. This can help advance the scholarship on Day and practical theology. There is much to be gained from focuses in on the daily life of Day not only for individual understanding, but for the discipline of practical theology itself.

This research opens up venues for future research on how to explore the lives of major female Catholic figures by focusing on the particularities of their lives in relation to not only the historical context, but also the context from which their lives are being analyzed. Day is a shoulder we can stand on because people then can see further and do

more. There are Day diaries as yet unexplored. The diaries of 1958 are but a glimpse of the documents still waiting to be examined in depth.<sup>118</sup>

The 1958 diaries reveal an everyday theology of care for the poor and underprivileged in a space of massive social evil such as the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) of the military-industrial complex. Without voices like hers, progress on nuclear abolishment may not have been possible. Her everyday theologizing brought a plausibility to non-violent protest that drew attention to systems that provoke violence and disregard the poor, racial minorities, and immigrants.

### **Implications for Practical Theology**

In practical theology, scholars are accustomed to focusing on the particulars of situations and experiences, collecting and analyzing data, and employing many different types of methods, including methods drawn from the social sciences, for instance, qualitative and quantitative methods. This work is inspired by the shift reflected in practical theology toward “fundamental and interdisciplinary research” that examines particular practices and situations at multiples levels, theological and otherwise (Schilderman 2014, 125). It also builds on the contextuality of practical theology. Both practices and the context from which they develop are grist for the mill of practical theologians (Schilderman 2014, 125).

This research contributes to the conversation that practical theology is and should be contextual. As noted in previous chapters, exploring practices and the context from which they develop is significant for practical theologians (Schilderman 2014, 125). The

---

<sup>118</sup> Indeed, still other writings await to be examined along with the diaries. These include the so-called “gardening articles” that have only been insufficiently studied. She apparently wrote the articles because she wanted to pull away from the Bohemian lifeway and create more stability for her daughter. This is a largely unexplored yet crucial transitional time in her life.

1958 context was therefore critical to understanding her everyday theology, in turn generating new knowledge of Day's life and voice with regard to practical theological understanding.

In some ways, Day herself may be seen as a practical theologian. Though not an academic, neither were some of the other great doctors of the Church, especially women. Day did not need a degree to take the human person and human experience and needs seriously, nor did she need academic degrees to theologize from the place of the poor even as she engages major figures in philosophy, literature, and other fields. Her time in jail in 1958 is self-reflective and practice oriented. Her life and witness surely "emphasizes the importance of understanding and proposing specifically religious practices for individuals and communities" (Cahalan and Mikoski 2014, 2-7).

### **Everyday Theology and Dorothy Day**

Everyday theology is "faith seeking understanding of everyday life" (Vanhoozer 2007, 17). The concept or practice typically refers to finding and understanding God's action in people's daily lives. Understanding God's action in everyday life is intended to help people make connections to their own faith development and spiritual nature. In everyday life, as indicated by Day and her diaries of 1958, one should not overlook the poor and suffering. Each and every persons can demonstrate work of mercy and charity towards and for others in daily life, which are indispensable practices. These works and practices can also be relate to the notion of "property" since Day reminds us that when it comes to the homes of people who are suffering, power brokers, in particular, needs to think of people themselves and not just the physical goods. As Day reminds people through her faith, the CW belongs not to the state, but to God. Humans cannot grow and

live without physical good, but they also need love, compassion, and empathy, especially in times of need and suffering. Day reminds people to remember that God is fully present in the past, present, future moments. One way people can deal with anxiety and stressors of politics is to acknowledge God in the everyday through prayer, kindness, and keeping an open mind and heart despite differences. In addition, Catholic Americans, in particular, can look past political differences and find solace in the fact that all goodness and love comes from Christ.

These connections are not easily made. As Kevin Vanhoozer suggests, “what is most familiar to us, however, is often the hardest thing to understand” (Vanhoozer 2007, 17). This includes those parts of Day’s daily life that may seem to have little connections to her faith practices. For instance, the 1958 diaries reveal that eating, listening to music, cleaning, and playing with her grandchildren are patterned practices of her life. Yet Day does not separate these practices from her love and devotion to Jesus. In so doing, her work suggests a level of integration akin to that advocated by much of contemporary practical theology.

### **Day’s Theology of the Neighbor**

The diaries present detailed, embodied accounts on the way in which Day spoke and responded in her daily life to powerful systems as well as people. Despite the challenges of everyday life, Day welcomed strangers into her life. The diaries do not indicate that Day demanded anything of anyone when they needed a place to stay or a hot bowl of soup from the kitchen at the New York Worker. Day did not ask the people at the Worker if they were mentally ill or sick. Instead, the diaries indicate that Day was concerned if people were hungry and if they needed a bed to sleep in.

She was open to those in need and lived the corporal works of mercy. Her willingness to accommodate those who were impoverished is at the heart of the Catholic Worker. She would move her bed and give up her privacy while dealing with her own health concerns. People and their needs came first. She and the Catholic Workers made a conscious choice to “go and do likewise” every day in their everyday theologizing.

Likewise, the Samaritan made the decision to choose to help the suffering traveler. Both Day and the Samaritan made the choice and commitment to help those in need when other would walk right past them, like the Levite, priest, or the 1950s power broker, Robert Moses. One of the most powerful aspects of Day during this time is that she never expected sacrifice and mercy from everyone else to the extent that she was giving, whether the Catholic Church in general or the Archdiocese of New York in particular. She simply showed mercy not only to the people that she knew personally, for instance the CW workers and family members, but also to those she did not know individually such as the visitors that would come in and out of the Worker and even the people that she would meet on pilgrimage. She inspires people to attend to those who are strangers beaten on the side of the road, which pays our debt to justice. She also encourages people to understand that when people serve neighbors, bringing in Christ is of the utmost importance. This is not to suggest that only Catholics or people of faith can help their neighbors. Rather it is to compel people to understand that they are called by God to show love to those in need. Christ, the Saints, and the Holy Spirit can be leaned on to help drive the practices of love that are very much needed. All love ultimately comes from Christ.

Day's diary of her life in 1958 is valuable because her life mirrors the Good Samaritan. She reached out to those in need, regardless if they are poor, mentally ill, sick, immigrants, or battered on the side of the road. The diaries indicate that Day did not have a bias against those who were not Catholic since she would visit people who were not Catholic and spoke highly of those who were Jewish. She did, however, have a profound commitment to her faith and thought of herself not as political but first and foremost as a Catholic. Yet then as now many would argue that Day was in fact very political. Still, her own self-understanding had shifted dramatically from the political identity of her earlier years to the ensuing decades when she thought and acted on her love of God and all people as prior to any "political" convictions. The diaries help people discern what it looks like on a daily basis to embrace and practice neighborliness and what it means to be both political and Catholic.

### **Towards a More Adequate Theology of the Neighbor: Embracing the Messiness**

The 1958 diaries of Day indicate implications for a more adequate theology of neighbor. Day does not look past the people's religious convictions, ethnicities, whether or not they were poor or mentally ill. Instead, she recognizes and embraces people for who they were and where they were. She understood and was convinced that poor, immigrant-driven, and marginalized neighborhoods of Manhattan were deserving of Christian virtues such as love, protection, compassion, and mercy.

Day would not only open the door for those that needed rest and food, but she also made efforts to form relationships with people outside of the United States. Here one may think of her pilgrimage to Mexico in the beginning of the year 1958. The purpose or the intent is unclear in the diaries. Yet, what is clear is that Day would become a

spectator when watching Mexican dances, visit the local shrine, and have dinner with families connected to the communities that she visited. She was about bridge-building, not wall-building (Gramlich and Desilver 2018, 1). She was concerned with understanding that all people are loved by God. Moreover, because of this understanding she felt as if she had an obligation to act on this love. This was not easy, however. In contemporary society, more understandings and practical methods should be employed to help others see Jesus-in-people. When this happens, then more people will come to understand what Day was about, especially during this year of her life.

Through her pilgrimage to Mexico and her efforts to get to encounter people of the Guadalupe shrine in Mexico and the community gathered around it, Day is emphasizing meaning-making efforts. Neighbors are not only those who are close physically, but also those who cross borders. They are also people that she may not be particularly fond of. Here one can think of her relationship with certain priests in the diaries. Nevertheless, she makes the effort to relate to people and understand them, which in return helps develop empathy for those around her (Day 1958, 43).<sup>119</sup> She made an intentional effort to engage with people outside of her own community.

Day was about bridge-building, not wall-building (Gramlich and Desilver 2018, 1). Whether she was on pilgrimage or travelling for speaking engagements, she made an effort to engage people and communities, seeing catholicity in place of nationality (Zeitz 2008, 1)?<sup>120</sup> Human dignity was central to her everyday theologizing: in this, she

---

<sup>119</sup> On May 29, Day writes, “Worked all day –reading after supper and walked on the beach. It was beautiful and warm. Collected shells. Asked Stanley to be on paper and write Farm column. We will try harder to understand each other” (Day 1958, 43).

<sup>120</sup> There is “a growing rejection of science and evidentiary fact, extreme political tribalism, the rise of conservative nationalist movements around the world, a popular reaction to immigration and free trade” as explored by Joshua Zeitz in the article “How Trump is Making Us Rethink American Exceptionalism” (Zeitz 2018, 1).

instinctively reflected what would later be formally proclaimed as the foundation of Catholic social teaching: all people are “made in the image and likeness of the Lord” (Gen 1:27). This was at the heart of her move from socialist politics to a profound Catholic sensibility: creation is good and God’s image is in all humanity without exception, demanding our embrace of the poor, the immigrant, the other, and the suffering. Day encouraged people to speak truth to power but always acted holistically within the witness of the corporal works of mercy and the joy of life

In addition to the increase of violence in the U.S., poverty is a major contemporary concern. Poverty “is a social, psychological, and spiritual captivity” (Norris and Speers 2016, 103).<sup>121</sup> As Gustavo Gutiérrez asserts, poverty is “often vested in other issues of marginalization like racism and sexism, which destroys families, individuals, and cultures” (1988, xxi). Catholic Christians must not forget the foundation of Catholic social teaching in human dignity: all people are “made in the image and likeness of the Lord” (Gen 1:27). This includes all humanity without exception: demanding the embrace of the poor, the immigrant, the other, and the suffering.

A close read and reflection might even suggest that the priest and Levite are not only be metaphors for different kinds of people but also metaphors for different moments in people’s lives and in Day’s. Similar to the priest, the first one to walk on the other side after seeing the beaten traveler, Day’s early encounter when she was a nurse and a suffragette only took her so far. The Levite, who passes by second, might suggest Day’s second stage when she was working for a socialist political agenda but without the

---

<sup>121</sup> The authors draw on Gustavo Gutiérrez notion of poverty who asserts, “Poverty is all encompassing: it’s a way of living, thinking, loving, praying, believing, and hoping, spending leisure time, and struggling for livelihood” (Norris and Speers 2016, 103). There is still more work that needs to be done and people such as Day to be spotlighted for inspirational purposes and practices.

profound faith that was intimately tied to her encounter with the other. It is only in the latter part of her life when she is a living as a profoundly committed Catholic that she finds the joy and completeness in her life. When she finally meets the Samaritan – in this reading, Christ – and accepts the fullness of love in the everyday of a life fully committed, does she find ultimate fulfillment that she in turn shares with others without price, without demand.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, both the priest and Levite walk past the suffering traveler. Only the Samaritan who makes the time to stop and take care of the traveler sees the neighbor. The diaries suggest a more adequate theology of neighbor since they integrate a recognition of the struggles and hardships that come along with helping those in need. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is a long, winding, dangerous road. In many ways, this is the simple and uncomplicated story of Day's life in 1958 with all its challenges and unexpected hardships. She inspires people to get through the challenges of daily life.

In this way, the diaries suggest the potential outlines of a more adequate theology of neighbor since it embraces contextuality when exploring Day's connections to others. As Vanhoozer points out, "If I am to love my neighbor as myself and thus fulfill what Jesus call this second greatest commandment (Matt. 22:39), then I will have to work hard to understand him... For I cannot love my neighbor unless I understand him and the cultural world he inhabits" (Vanhoozer 2007, 19). Day not only calls people to empower the poor and those who are subjected to power brokers that care more about money and greed than poor and impoverished. She also encourages us to explore the system or powerful structures that cause such suffering to people.

## **Conclusion**

Dorothy Day, a socialist journalist who became – and remains – one of the most influential of all U.S. Catholics ever, offers an important source of theological insight. Her 1958 diaries do not mention tears or anger, nor are they filled with profound spiritual experiences. Yet her spiritual depth is nonetheless written in between the words on the pages, evident from everyday life and struggle. These same pages indicate her strength and perseverance to continue loving, praying, and reflecting, day in and day out, with support or without. Her love for God and others was part of her history, suffering, and happiness, shaping new directions and depths of faithful practices by 1958. The diaries had become a simple and beautiful outlet by which she expressed her ordinary theology. As Day writes, “Whenever I felt the beauty of the world in song or story, in the material universe around me, or glimpsed it into human love, I wanted to cry for joy or grief – and I suppose my writing was also an outlet” (Day 1952, 29). It surely was.

Day reminds people that everyday Christian theology starts, and finally ends, with love for the neighbor. It is in this that individuals and communities encounter Christ and through which God transforms the world.

## Bibliography

- Ammerman, Nancy T., Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney. 1998. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*. Nashville, Abingdon Press.
- Anderson, George M. "Visiting a Catholic Worker Farm." 2002. *The Jesuit Review*, August 12, 2002. <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/398/article/visiting-catholic-worker-farm>.
- Baca, Miguel Angel Carbajal. 2011. "Virtue Ethics in the Parable of the Good Samaritan: Shaping Christian Character." STL thesis, Boston College.
- Bakker, Arnold, Ana Sanz Vergel, and Jeroen Kuntze. 2015. "Student Engagement and Performance: A Weekly Diary Study on the Role of Openness." *Motivation & Emotion* 39, no. 1 (February): 49-62. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-014-9422-5>.
- Bass, Dorothy C. 2011. "Eating." In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bevans, Stephen. 1992. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Bevans, Stephen. 2002. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis. Kindle.
- Bialik, Kristen. 2017. "American Deepest in Poverty Lost More Ground in 2016." *Pew Research*. October 6, 2017. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/10/06/americans-deepest-in-poverty-lost-more-ground-in-2016/>.
- Bodewes, Christine. 2019. "Who is my neighbor?" July 13, 2019. <https://mklm.org/who-is-my-neighbor>.
- Bondi, Victor, Tandy McConnell, and Vincent Tompkins, eds. 1994. "Fads of the 1950s." *American Decades: 1950-1959*. Detroit: Gale.

- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1997. *Outline of a Theory or Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bozza, Mary Louise. 2003. "Dorothy Day on Love for God, Neighbor, and Self." Senior thesis. Boston College.
- Brady, J. A. 2010. "Dorothy Day: A Love of Fiction and her Love of the Poor." *Religious Education*, 105 (5): 476-490. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2010.516213>.
- Brantly, Kent, and Amber Brantly. 2015. *Called for Life: How Loving Our Neighbor Led Us into the Heart of the Ebola Epidemic*. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press.
- Burns, Ric, dir. 1999. *New York: A Documentary Film*. New York: PBS. DVD.
- Cahalan, Kathleen A., and Bryan Froehle. 2014. "Developing a Discipline: The Catholic Voices in Practical Theology." In *Invitation to Practical Theology: Catholic Voices and Vision*, edited by Claire E. Wolfteich, 27-51. Mahwah: Paulist Press.
- Cahalan, Kathleen A., and Gordon S. Mikoski. 2014. *Opening the Field of Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Cahalan, Kathleen A., Carol Lakey Hess, and Bonnie Miller-McLemore. 2009. "Teaching Practical Theology: Introducing Six Perspectives." *International Journal of Practical Theology* 12 (1): 35-87. <https://doi.org/10.1515/IJPT.2008.4>.
- Cameron, Michael. 2015. *Unfolding Sacred Scripture*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.
- Caro, Robert A. 1974. *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*. New York: Alfred A. Knopp.
- Catechism of the Catholic Church*. 1997. Second edition. Washington D.C.: United States Catholic Conference.

- Chaves, Mark. 2004. *Congregations in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Conlin, Michelle. "U.S. Eviction Bans are ending that Could Worsen the Spread of the Coronavirus." *Pew Research Center*, July 23, 2020.  
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-evictions-insight/u-s-eviction-bans-are-ending-that-could-worsen-the-spread-of-coronavirus-idUSKCN24O1EK>
- Conrad, Joseph. 2007. *The Heart of Darkness*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Cook, Vanessa. 2018. "The Unaffiliated Revolution of Dorothy Day." *Raritan* 37, no. 4 (Spring): 70-96.
- Costen, Melva Wilson. 1993. *African American Christian Worship*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Creswell, John. 2014. *Research and Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Fourth edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Crouch, Andy. 2016. "The Myth of 'Engaging the Culture': Our Central Call Is Instead to Love Our Neighbor." *Christianity Today* 60, no. 6 (July/August): 33–34.
- D'Agustino, Thomas. 2017. "Reclaiming Islam: A Lived Religion Approach to Muslim Youth Experience." *Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa* 41, no. 1 (Spring): 39-54.
- Darling, Annika. 2019. "Latinos Care about the Environment." *CT Latino News*. April 23, 2019. <https://ctlatinonews.com/latinos-care-about-the-environment/>.
- Day, Dorothy. 1970. "Ammon Hennacy: 'Non-Church' Christian." *The Catholic Worker*, February 1970.
- Day, Dorothy. 1958. *The Diaries of Dorothy Day, 1958*. Miami Gardens, St. Thomas University. Unpublished archival material.

- Day, Dorothy. 1952. *The Long Loneliness*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Day, Dorothy. 1968. "On Pilgrimage." *The Catholic Worker* 1 (6): 1-5.
- Day, Dorothy. 2016. *Thérèse*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria.
- Day, Dorothy, with Frank J. Sicius. 2004. *Peter Maurin: Apostle to Our World*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln. 2001. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*: London: SAGE Publications.
- Donoso, Juan Carlos. 2014. "On religion, Mexicans are more Catholic and often more traditional than Mexican Americans." *Pew Research Center*, December 8, 2014. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/12/08/on-religion-mexicans-are-more-catholic-and-often-more-traditional-than-mexican-americans>.
- Doty, Robert C. 1958. "De Gaulle Widens Powers to Meet Threat of Attack." *New York Times*, December 31, 1958.
- Dowling, Robert M. 2017. "Told in Context: Dorothy Day's Previously Unpublished Reminiscence of Eugene O'Neill." *Eugene O'Neill Review*, 38 (1): 1-12.
- Downey, Jack. 2013. "Tiny Drops: Henri de Lubac, S.J., Dorothy Day, & Anti-Triumphalism as Radical Praxis." *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 64 (2-3): 33-43.
- Dunn, Amina. 2020. "As the U.S. Copes with Multiple Crises, Partisans Disagree Sharply on Severity of Problems Facing the Nation." *Pew Research Center*, July 14, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/14/as-the-u-s-cope-with-multiple-crises-partisans-disagree-sharply-on-severity-of-problems-facing-the-nation/>

- Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library. n.d. "Sputnik and the Space Race." Accessed April 7, 2020. <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/research/online-documents/sputnik-and-space-race>
- Ellsberg, Robert, ed. 2011. *The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day*. New York: Image Books.
- Ellsberg, Robert. 1983. *Dorothy Day: Selected Writings*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- Engel, Leonard. 1958. "Frozen Key to Our Climate: The World's Ice Masses may be Ushering in a Fifth Ice Age." *New York Times*, December 7, 1958.
- Finke, Roger, and Rodney Stark. *The Churching of America 1776–1990: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Forest, Jim. 2011. *All is Grace: A Biography of Dorothy Day*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Fox, Zeni. 2006. "Overview of Lay Ecclesial Ministry: Development and Practice." *Liturgical Ministry* 15 (Fall): 185–89.
- Francis. 2013. *Evangelii Gaudium*. November 24, 2013. Vatican: Editrice Libreria Vaticana.
- Francis. 2018. *Gaudete Et Exsultate*. March 19, 2018. Vatican: Editrice Libreria Vaticana.
- Francis. 2015a. *Laudato Si'*. May 24, 2015. Vatican: Editrice Libreria Vaticana.
- Francis. 2015b. *Meeting Jesus in the Sacraments*. Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor.
- Francis. 2015c. "Transcript: Pope Francis's speech to Congress." *Washington Post*, September 24, 2015. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/transcript-pope-franciss-speech-to-congress/2015/09/24/6d7d7ac8-62bf-11e5-8e9e-dce8a2a2a679\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/transcript-pope-franciss-speech-to-congress/2015/09/24/6d7d7ac8-62bf-11e5-8e9e-dce8a2a2a679_story.html).

- Frei, Hans W. 1974. *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Funk, Robert W. 1974. "Good Samaritan as Metaphor." *Semeia* 2: 74–81.
- Graf, Nikki. 2018. "A Majority of U.S. Teens Fear a Shooting Could Happen at Their School, and Most Parents Share Their Concern." Pew Research Center, April 18, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/18/a-majority-of-u-s-teens-fear-a-shooting-could-happen-at-their-school-and-most-parents-share-their-concern>.
- Gramlich, John, and Drew Desilver. 2018. "Despite Recent Violence, Chicago is Far From the U.S. 'Murder Capital.'" *Pew Research Center*, November 13, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/11/13/despite-recent-violence-chicago-far-from-u-s-murder-capital>.
- Greene, Dana. 2008. "Inside the World of Dorothy Day." *National Catholic Reporter* 44 (18): 1.
- Greever, Joshua M. 2019. "The Love of Neighbor in Ancient Judaism: The Reception of Leviticus 19:18 in the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, the Book of Jubilees, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the New Testament." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 62, no. 3 (September): 619–22.
- Griffith, Colleen M. 2014. "Practices as Emptied Knowing." In *The Invitation to Practical Theology: Catholic Voices and Vision*, edited by Claire E. Wolfeich, 52-69. Mahwah: Paulist.
- Grun, Bernard. 1991. *The Timetables of History: A Horizontal Linkage of People and Events*. 3rd ed. New York: Simon & Schuster.

- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. 1988. *A Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Halas, Matus. 2019. "Love Your Neighbor: Nazi Soldiers and Femmes Fatales in Czech Cinema." *Social & Cultural Geography* 20, no. 2 (August): 242-264.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2017.1356363>
- Harrington, Michael. 1997. *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*. New York: Touchstone.
- Hennessy, Kate. 2017. *Dorothy Day: The World Will Be Saved by Beauty*. New York: Scribner.
- Hochstein, Phillip. 1980. "Letter to the Editor." *Democrat and Chronicle*, March 20, 1958. <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/135627370/>.  
<https://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/articles/252.pdf>.
- Hunt, Richard P. 1962. "Expressway Vote Delayed by City." *New York Times*, December 7, 1962.
- Idler, Ellen L, George H. Grant, Tammie Quest, Zachary Binney, and Molly M. Perkins. 2015. "Practical Matters and Ultimate Concerns, 'Doing,' and 'Being': A Diary Study of the Chaplain's Role in the Care of the Seriously Ill in an Urban Acute Care Hospital." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 54, no. 4 (December): 722–38. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12235>.
- Jackson, Gwendolen. 2017. "Maimonides and Meister Eckhart on God as Absolute Unity." *Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa* 41, no. 1 (Spring): 22-38.
- Jin-Sun, Kim. 2015. *Embracing the Other: A Transformative Spirit of Love*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

- Jordan, Patrick. 2017. "Dorothy Day's 'Second Conversion'?" *Commonweal*, 144 (11): 31–32.
- Kemp, Charles F. 1973. "Use of Free Writing as a Supplement to Pastoral Counseling." *The Journal of Pastoral Care* 27 (1): 26-29.
- Kenzior, Sarah. 2020. *Hiding in Plain Sight: The Invention of Donald Trump and the Erosion of America*. New York: Flatiron.
- Kimball, Charles. 2009. "Love of Neighbor in Christian Scripture as a Basis for Christian Muslim Dialogue and Cooperation." *American Baptist Quarterly* 28 (1): 76–91.
- King, Martin Luther, Jr. 2005. "I've Been to the Mountaintop." In *Say It Plain: A Century of Great African American Speeches*, edited by Catherine Ellis and Stephen Drury Smith, 75–86. New York: New Press.
- Konrath, Sara H., Edward H. O'Brien, and Courtney Hsing. 2010. "Changes in Dispositional Empathy in American College Students Over Time: A Meta-Analysis." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 15 (2): 180–98.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868310377395>.
- Krpan, Katherine M., Ethan Kross, Marc G. Berman, Patricia J. Deldin, Mary K. Askren, and John Jonides. "An Everyday Activity as A Treatment for Depression: The Benefits of Expressive Writing For People Diagnosed With Major Depressive Disorder." *Journal Affect Discord* 150 (3): 1148-1151.
- Labelle, Maurice, Jr. 2019. "Empathy and the Lebanese Civil War of 1958 in the USA." *Arab Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (Spring): 172–193.
- Laurie, Bruce, and Ronald Story. 2008. *The Rise of Conservatism in America, 1945-2000: A Brief History with Documents*. New York: Bedford.

- Lekarenko, Oksana. 2018. "The United States–EURATOM Agreement of 1958: The Cold War Impact." *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 29 (3): 432–54.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1996. "American Exceptionalism: A Double Edged Sword." *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/style/longterm/books/chap1/americanexceptionalism.htm>
- Lissner, Will. 1956. "Poet and Judge Aid Samaritan Who Runs a Firetrap Hostel" *New York Times*, March 2, 1956.
- Livingston, James C., and Francis S. Fiorenza. 2006. *Modern Christian Thought: The Twentieth Century*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Long, Heather. 2020. "US Now Has 22 Million Unemployed, Wiping Out A Decade of Job Gains." *Washington Post*, April 16, 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/04/16/unemployment-claims-coronavirus/>.
- Loughery, John, and Blythe Randolph. 2020. *Dorothy Day: Dissenting Voice of the American Century*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- MacArthur. 1951. "Most Americans Supported the Cold War Against Communism and Feared Nuclear War." *Congressional Record*.
- Martin, J. 2008. "The Duty of Delight: Book Review." *America* 199 (15): 35.
- Masci, David, and Gregory Smith. 2008. "7 Facts about American Catholics." *Pew Research Center*, October 10, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/10/10/7-facts-about-american-catholics/>
- McHale, Nicola, David Clark, and Lucia Tramonte. 2015. "Does Optimism Moderate Mood Repair? A Daily Diary Study." *Motivation & Emotion* 39 (3): 409–

- Mehltretter, Sara Ann. 2006. "Dorothy Day, Union Square Speech." *Voices*
- Mejia, Rodrigo, Peter Henriot, and Frans Wijssen. 2005. *The Pastoral Critical Revisited: A Critical Quest for Truth Transformation*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Mendoza, Natalie. 2016. "The Good Neighbor Comes Home: The State, Mexicans and Mexican Americans, and Regional Consciousness in the U.S. Southwest During World War II." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.
- Mescher, Alexis. 2013. "Doing Likewise: A Theology and Pedagogy of Neighbor-Formation." Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University.
- Miller, William. 1982. *Dorothy Day: A Biography*. San Francisco: Harper and Row.
- Miller-McLemore, Bonnie J., ed. 2014. *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. New York: Blackwell.
- Mize, Sandra Yocum. 1995. "Dorothy Day Apologia for Faith after Marx." *Religious Studies Faculty Publications*, 22 (2): 198-213.
- Molnar, Paul D. 2004. "Love of God and Love of Neighbor in the Theology of Karl Rahner and Karl Barth." *Modern Theology* 20 (4): 567-99.
- Moss, Walter G. 2011. "The Wisdom of Dorothy Day."  
<http://www.wisdompage.com/DorothyDayWisdom.pdf>
- Moyn, Samuel. 2004. *Origins of the Other: Emmanuel Levinas Between Revelation and Ethics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Murphy, Carlyle. 2015. "Half of U.S. Adults Raised Catholic Have Left the Church at Some Point." *Pew Research Center*, September 15, 2015.  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/09/15/half-of-u-s-adults-raised-catholic-have-left-the-church-at-some-point/>

- Nepstad, Sharon, 2019. *Catholic Social Activism: Progressive Movements in the United States*. New York: New York University Press.
- Nolan, Albert. 2001. *Jesus Before Christianity*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Norris, Kristopher, and Samuel Hand Speers. 2016. “The Hope of the Poor: Ecclesial Practices of Politics, Hope, and Transformation.” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 43 (1): 103–14.
- Norwich, Julian. 1998. *Revelations of the Divine*. New York: Penguin Classics.
- Ohly, Sandra. Sabine Sonnentag, Cornelia Niessen, and Dieter Zapf. 2010. “Diary Studies in Organizational Research: An Introduction and Some Practical Recommendations.” *Journal of Personal Psychology* 9 (2): 79-93.
- One Strange Rock*. Episode 10. 2017. “Home.” Directed by Alice Jones. National Geographic.
- Parachin, Janet W. 2000. “Educating for an Engaged Spirituality: Dorothy Day and Spiritual Exemplars.” *Religious Education* 95 (3): 250–68.
- Phillips, Jacob. 2013. “Being Scorned by One’s Own Is Perfect Joy: The Strange Case of Dorothy Day.” *The Journal of Religious History* 37 (4): 528-40.
- Piehl, Mel. 2006. *Breaking Bread: The Catholic Worker and the Origin of Catholic Radicalism in America*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Piehl, Mel. 2008. “Quiet Terrors, Quiet Joy.” *Commonweal* 135, no. 19 (November 3): 23–24.
- Pius XII. 1958a. *Ad Apostolorum Principis*. June 29, 1958. Vatican: Editrice Libreria Vaticana.
- Pius XII. 1958b. *Meminisse Iuvat*. July 14, 1958. Vatican: Editrice Libreria. Vaticana.

- Plumb, Robert K. 1958. "New Weapons Peril U.S. Life, Rabi Says." *New York Times*, January 1, 1958. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1958/01/01/83384912.html?pageNumber=1>
- Proctor, Mark A. 2019. "'Who Is My Neighbor?' Recontextualizing Luke's Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 138 (1): 203–19.
- Rahner, Karl. 1975. *Encyclopedia of Theology*. New York: Seabury.
- Rainie, Lee, and Kathryn Zickuhr. 2015. "Americans' Views on Mobile Ethics." Pew Research Center, August 26, 2015. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2015/08/26/americans-views-on-mobile-etiquette/>.
- Rakoczy, Susan. 2019. "Dorothy Day: Pacifist Prophet." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 164 (July): 80-96.
- Ranz, Rebecca. 2019. "More than Knowledge: Using Reading Diaries and Case Studies in an International Social Work Cause." *Social Work Education* 38 (3): 302-313. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2018.1504912>.
- Religion & Ethics Newsweekly. 2014. "The Life of Dorothy Day." PBS. Video, 8:06. <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/2014/03/14/february-8-2013-the-life-of-dorothy-day/14669>.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1998. *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Riegle, G. Rosalie. 2003. *Dorothy Day: Portraits of Those Who Knew Her*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

- Rubio, Julie Handlon. 2014. "Practices of Love and Solidarity: Family Ethics." In *The Invitation to Practical Theology: Catholic Voices and Vision*, edited by Claire E. Wolfteich, 215-233. Mahwah: Paulist.
- Schilderman, Hans. 2014. "Quantitative Method." In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, edited by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, 123-132. Malden: Wiley Blackwell.
- Schreiter, Robert J. 1985. *Constructing Local Theologians*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Seasoltz, Robert Kevin. 2008. "The Duty and Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day." *Worship* 82 (5): 472-74.
- Smith, Ted. 2014. "Theories of Practice." In *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, edited by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, 244-43. Malden: Wiley Blackwell.
- Stirewalt, Luther, M. 2003. *Paul, the Letter Writer*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. 2018. "Global Military Spending Remains High at 1.7 Trillion."  
<https://www.sipri.org/media/pressrelease/2018/global-military-spending-remains-high-17-trillion>.
- Sweedeen, Joshua R. 2014. "Ordinary Practice as Ecclesial Holiness: Intersections of Work, Sacrament, and Liturgy." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 49 (1): 78-92.
- Swinton, John, and Harriet Mowat. 2006. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. London: SCM.
- Thomas, Margaret O. 1994. "You Shall Love Your Neighbor: Christians and Muslims in a Time of Fear." *Church Society* 84 (3): 1-5.

- Tracy, David. 1975. *Blessed Rage for Order*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Tracy, David. 1996. *Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Turpin, Katherine. "Liberationist Practical Theology." *In Opening the Field of Practical Theology: An Introduction*, edited by Kathleen Cahalan and Gordon S. Mikoski, 153-168. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.
- van der Ven, Johannes A. 1993. *Ecclesiology in Context*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Vanderhaar, Gerard A. 1990. *Active Non-Violence: A Way of Personal Peace*. Mystic: Twenty-Third Publications.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin K. 2007. *Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Texts and Interpret Trends*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Volf, Miroslav. 1996. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Welch, John J. 1999. "The Good Samaritan" A Type and Shadow of the Plan of Salvation." *BYU Studies Quarterly* 38 (4): 51-115.
- Wolfteich, Claire. 2017. *Mothering Public Leadership, and Women's Life Writing: Explorations in Spirituality Studies and Practical Theology*. Vol. 3. Leiden: Brill.
- Wolfteich, Claire. 2014. "Spirituality." In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, edited by Bonnie Miller McLemore, 328-36. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Yoder, John Howard. 1972. *The Politics of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Young, Norman H. 1983. "The Commandment to Love Your Neighbor as Yourself and the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)." *Andrews University Seminar Studies* 21 (3): 265-72.

Zeitz, Joshua. 2018. "How Trump Is Making Us Rethink American Exceptionalism."

*Politico*, January 7, 2018.

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/07/trump-american-exceptionalism-history-216253>