

# The Guild for Dorothy Day

*A Woman of The Gospel, Prayer, The Church, Works of Mercy, Justice, and Peace*



## NEWSLETTER

### Memories of My Grandmother by Martha Hennessy

*Martha Hennessy is the granddaughter of Dorothy Day. In recent years, Martha has become a very active speaker on the life and work of her grandmother.*



Dorothy with her grandchildren.

I wake up early in the quiet of the morning at Maryhouse, our Catholic Worker house of hospitality in the East Village of New York City. Today, November 29th, 2010 is the 30th anniversary of the death of my grandmother, Dorothy Day, who lived and died in this house. On that day, my mother Tamar was at her side and it was the beginning of Advent.

I remember when Granny (as we called her) had the occasional chance to be with us at our home in Vermont for Christmas. Her presence was such

an integral part of our lives. She made Christmas possible for us, and added her spiritual richness to the season. With so many grandchildren she would help my mother give gifts for each of us, recruiting my grandfather Forster in the effort as well. Fishing poles for my older brothers, books, socks, paint sets, and particular toys of interest were somehow obtained. What a grand mess it all was with so many kids opening presents lined up beneath each stocking. The fruitcake from the Gethsemani Trappist monks was a favorite for me.

Granny's generosity and joy was also accompanied by a small admonition of not asking for "too much," a reminder for us to not want more when others were forced to go without enough. I think this lesson irritated some of us grandchildren while it slid off the backs of others of us! For me this was another hidden lesson about our variable personalities and how each of us responds to the best of our abilities to living and sharing in community.

Sharing Christmas with Granny always included going to Mass of course. I remember loving the sight of candles and greenery, and the smell of incense. A child is very impressed with these sensory experiences, and the mystery of ritual. Seeing Granny labor over her genuflection with her arthritic knees made me both worry and wonder about her. I thought that it must be hard for her but she did it with such unassuming devotion. At the time my child's mind grasped the difficulty of my grandmother bending down on her knees but not the joyful obedience that came with such an act. I wasn't to understand this for many years.

So here it is 30 years later, and I return to Maryhouse after Thanksgiving in Vermont, to begin this sacred Advent season anew. My son dropped me off on Third Street after the car ride down where I sat in the back seat next to my five-month-old granddaughter. I give thanks and rejoice in the beautiful face of my grandchild. I pray for consolation in the lives of children who are growing up with

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### Guild News

- The Guild's membership is now over 360.
- We are grateful for your dedication and enthusiasm for the Cause for Dorothy's canonization, and for your willingness to pray on behalf of the

over 180 prayer requests The Guild has received.

- If you believe you have received a favor through the intercession of Dorothy Day, please notify The Guild so that it can be documented. We can be reached at The Guild for Dorothy Day, 1011 First Avenue, 12th floor, New

York, NY 10022 or e-mail us at [lourdes.ferrer@archny.org](mailto:lourdes.ferrer@archny.org).

- We are in the process of scheduling the 2011 Masses for the intentions of The Guild for Dorothy Day at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Notification will be mailed to our members as soon as the dates are secured.

Volume 1, Issue 7

December 2010

*Postulator of the Cause for the Canonization of Dorothy Day*

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If you would like information regarding The Guild for Dorothy Day or would like to become a member, please contact us at:

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**We're on the Web!**  
[dorothydayguild.org](http://dorothydayguild.org)

