

# GLASGOW CATHOLIC WORKER

'Faith, Works, Love, Mercy'

## Violence is too often rooted in our ability to dehumanize each other.

For me, the best way to overcome suspicion and fear is to learn all you can about your neighbours, strangers or alien cultures and even your enemies, whoever they maybe. Eventually, you'll find something you can relate to, something you admire, something you have in common. You'll find that distrust and ill will then become difficult things to maintain.

For me as a Catholic I've been lucky enough to travel in Europe and meet other Christians, and study the works of the great German reformed theologians. This is because 15 years ago I was sent a very old book by a distant Ahlfeld relation in

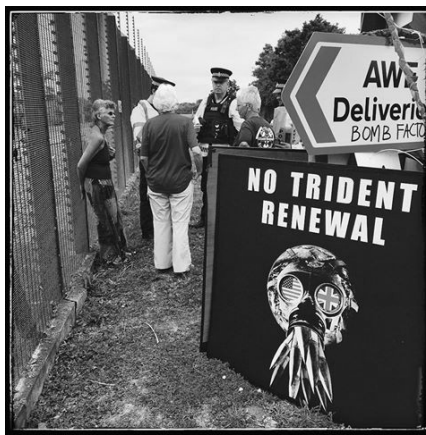
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## Join the fast –fast for a day

Every year, an International fast is held in France, Britain, Germany, the US and Japan between Hiroshima and Nagasaki days (6th-9th August). Initiated over thirty years ago in France, the fast takes place in commemoration of the 300,000 deaths at the atomic bombings of Japan.

We Catholic Workers will participate in this witness as a sign of repentance for the killing of so many innocent lives (an act for which we have yet to apologise) and for the

*(continued on back page)*



## June 2016- a month of non-violent direct action at AWE Burghfield disrupting the work of war .

The Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Burghfield, a former World War 2 munitions factory, occupies a 225 acre site between Aldermaston and Reading.

Burghfield is where nuclear warheads are assembled and maintained and from where they are sent to the Trident submarine base at Faslane, Scotland. The site is owned by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) but operation and management of the site is contracted out to AWE Management Ltd, a consortium of Serco, Jacobs Engineering, and Lockheed Martin.

A major programme of construction work is under way at AWE Burghfield to ensure it remains able to manufacture nuclear weapons for the long term future, and will be able to design and develop a new

UK Trident warhead. For instance, 'Project Mensa' is a £734 million scheme to build a new warhead assembly /disassembly facility. This is a serious breach of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and undermines international efforts for global nuclear disarmament.

## From Scotland with Love.....

*(by Brian Quail who took part in the AWE Burghfield action)*

I am ashamed to confess it, but in all my many long years of peace activism, I have never participated in any event in England - until this month. I say ashamed, because I am well aware and appreciative of the substantial support our actions at Faslane and Coulport have received from so many good friends from England. However, my failure has finally been rectified.

On Saturday 4th June I travelled south to Burghfield, near Reading in Berkshire, where the British H Bombs (Trident warheads) are assembled before being transported by road to Coulport, on Loch Long. In all there were eight people from Scotland participating in the month long protest at AWE Burghfield, organized by Trident Ploughshares (<http://tridentploughshares.org>.)

A long but pleasant drive south with my good friends David McKenzie and Janet Fenton ended when with

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## The Gentle Saint and what He teaches us for today

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“Nothing is so strong as gentleness, nothing so gentle as real strength.”  
*Saint Frances De Sales*

We are living in a time of upheaval. In recent weeks the UK has had a very contentious vote to leave the EU; the conservative leader has resigned and it is unclear who will run



the country; the Scottish leader is talking about another referendum for Scottish independence; there is rhetoric about immigrants and their status within our country; the stock market has plummeted. People are scared and they do not know what comes next. Simultaneously, the 100 year anniversary of the Somme has just taken place, reminding us of what happens when countries disintegrate into war and violence – 30,000 plus British, French and German young men – hardly out of childhood – killed in one day. Truly “a whole generation that was butchered and damned”.

Back in my “other home” – America – the situation is dire. Two politicians are running for President – one who seems to be running a campaign based on fear, violence, racism and misogyny, with a country entirely unclear if he believes all he says or is just trying to play into the fear of the populace. The other candidate has a list of possible scandals behind her name, making the public question her integrity and honesty. For we as Catholic Workers, both candidates appear to be fully entrenched in the culture of war. Even more alarming – race relations in the US are at a crisis point. As I type this I am grieving at the heart-wrenching news this morning of 5 policemen killed during what was meant to be a peaceful protest. On almost a daily basis we hear about police shooting young black men. African American mothers live in constant fear for their son’s lives, as institutional racism is completely ignored. Hardly a day goes by when I am not mortified by the news from my birth nation.

It is difficult to not despair. I (and others) often ask ourselves – where is God in this? Who are “we” in this? How do we respond when we are feeling anger and fear? We feel the need to intervene, to state our point of view, and want so badly to bring some stability, peace, and God’s love back into this world. Yet those of us on social media are bombarded with hatred, sarcasm, and irrational discourse minute by minute. How can we go about changing this world when we can hardly bring a kind and gentle word into the discourse? How can we state our point of view in a way that does not water down our beliefs

and yet doesn’t alienate others? It is a daily struggle.

Often, when I start to despair, I turn to “the gentle saint” – Saint Frances De sales – a man who managed to persuade through rational and loving discourse thousands of people to embrace the Church. Born in 1567 Francis was the Bishop of Geneva and he was a man with plenty to teach us about how to exist, live, and love in a world full of tension and brutality.

De Sales lived in a time of violence and animosity. The tension between Catholics and Protestants was at a high point, and murder between the two groups not uncommon. De Sales was an extremely devout



*Saint Frances De Sales*

Catholic, convinced of the love of God for each individual, and felt a calling to go into entrenched Calvinist areas to bring people back to what he believed was the Truth. He was told by others that he was crazy; putting his life at risk; attempting the impossible - but he would not be swayed. He went into Calvinist territory, survived a number of assassination attempts, and lived among people suspicious of him at best and angry to the point of

trying to kill him, at worst. On a day to day basis he interacted with those who were his supposed “enemy” and he loved them with a love that must have been sent from God.

It is clear to me that what makes De Sales a Saint is not only what he was trying to teach – the love of God for all people and the truths of the Catholic faith – but more so “how” he went about teaching. He truly loved all the people – even his enemies. He believed in rational discourse, and wrote tracts out for the Calvinist population explaining his point of view. He did not believe in arguing – instead he wanted to show love to every individual he came across in daily life. He

is known to have said “I love my enemy so much I do not believe I could obey even God if he told me to stop loving them”. In a time when suspicion and hostility was at its highest, he approached the whole matter in a truly counter cultural way.

Francis De Sales never watered down the truth – he never compromised with what he believed – but he also never shouted, never condemned, never put down others. He looked for common ground and built upon this common ground. And within this way of working he won the respect and love of all the people – as one Calvinist said (paraphrased) “If I were to believe in saints – Francis De Sales would be the saint I believed in.” Significantly, he stayed in the region of his so-called enemies, and lived among them – thus being able to give them loving service every day. Between his “staying power”, his loving deeds, and his rational discourse – so many people who once hated him came to love him.

What Francis De Sales teaches us is we do not have to compromise our beliefs, we do not have to be silent – we can state clearly our political and religious views. We can explain to people why we believe that the UK should stay with the EU – or indeed why we might believe that the UK shouldn’t. We can go onto Facebook, or Twitter and say with honesty that we believe the racism and violence against young black men in America are “sins that cry out to heaven”. We can state our views about the sacredness of life without fear. And we can do so with love in our hearts, compassion for those against us, and a great deal of patience for those who come back to us with angry words and accusa-

*“True progress quietly and persistently moves along without notice”.*

tions. Unlike Francis De Sales, most of us do not have to worry about assassination attempts on our lives – only assassination of our characters and/or beliefs by those who oppose our views. But like Francis De Sales, we can accept these attempts, work with them, love people through them, and pray for the holy-spirit to be with all of us.

As Christians we can also remember that change often comes without us visibly noting it – our efforts to love and to proclaim the truth can have benefits that will occur long after we are (hopefully) with our saviour. As Francis De Sales put it “True progress quietly and persistently moves along without notice”. Additionally, the need to stay at peace with one’s self, and at one with the Lord is ever present. De Sales advises us to “retire at various times, into the solitude of your own heart, even while outwardly engaged in discussion or transaction with others, and talk to God.”

Of course none of this is or will ever be easy – but we are mandated to

preach the word of God, treat others as we want to be treated, and be as wise as serpents and as gentle as doves. By falling back on the saints, on the gospels and on the example of our current Pope we can make this our life course. And we can be, like someone described Saint Francis De Sales, “devout and learned – and also a gentleman (gentlewoman) – a rare combination.” Let that be our goal in this world. Let us state the truth proudly and clearly – but also with humility, kindness, and gentleness. Let us never answer back with hostility and anger. Let us carry our crosses, even if it means being on the unpopular side of a debate. And always pray to our Lord for guidance and strength. “By your love they will know you are my disciples”.

*Tamara Horsburgh*

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## BAE Systems

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*BAE Systems South St Glasgow*

BAE Systems is the world's third largest arms producer. Its portfolio includes fighter aircraft, warships, tanks, armoured vehicles, artillery, missiles and small arms ammunition.

94% of its sales are military, and sold indiscriminately around the world. The company has military customers in over 100 countries.

Tens of thousands of highly skilled people work for the war. Can we not set our talents to work that will help mankind, that will bring good rather than evil?

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some difficulty - there are two Church streets in Reading - we arrived at the Quaker meeting-house. Here we renewed long acquaintance with many Ploughshares stalwarts, including the redoubtable Angie Zelter.

Angie is well worthy of note - do Google her! In 1996 she was part of a group that disarmed a BAE Hawk Jet, causing £1.5million damage and preventing it from being exported to Indonesia, where it would have

been used to attack East Timor. She was acquitted for this action in a victory which forced the issue of arms control onto the mainstream agenda.

In 1999, along with Ellen Moxley and Ulla Roder - the "Trident Three" - she succeeded in entering Maytime, a floating Trident sonar testing station in Loch Goil. The women damaged computers, and tipped logbooks, files, computer hardware, and papers overboard. In October 1999, they were tried in Greenock Sheriff Court. Internationally renowned experts (including Joseph Rotblatt, a pupil of Albert Einstein, and last living survivor of the Manhattan Project) gave testimony, and the three were acquitted by Sheriff Margaret Gimblett, who recognised that their actions were justified to prevent the committing of a war crime. This caused a sensation.

We planned to make Tuesday a day of action for the Scottish contingent. There are two gates to Burghfield, and, assuming that they would not allow us to approach either, we decided to blockade the roads leading to the Construction gate. We came from either side, and halted on the



*Trident Ploughshares at AWE Burghfield during the June month of action*

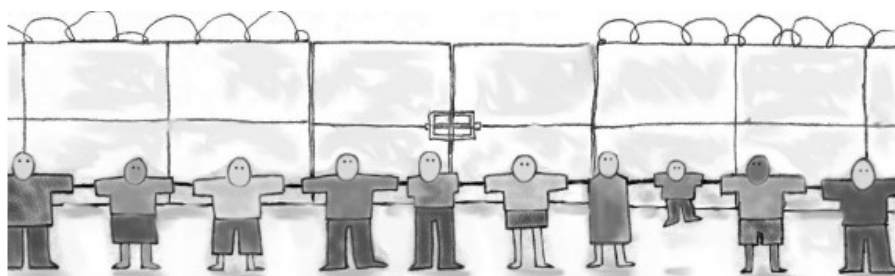
road several hundred yards from the entrance. Some folk locked-on, putting their arms into tubes and linking hands with a neighbour.

After several hours stand-off with the police, it was decided that the two groups should move forward and block the actual gate. This we did. We also heard that somebody else had blocked the other gate with a car. So, the base was now completely closed! We decided there and then to make the blockade continuous, by staying at the gate all night. At first I was a bit apprehensive having no sleeping bag, but somebody lent me one, and we lay down at the gate. In spite of the fact that it had been a blazing hot day, my thin indoor sleeping bag was little protection against the sharp cold at night, and I got very little sleep. So I spent the time gazing at the stars.

The next day, we heard that four of the activists at the other gate had been arrested, and were convinced that we would be next. So we waited, locked-on and in a state of tension. But we were not arrested, presumably because the MoD didn't want the publicity. Having spent the day locked-on, we set off that evening to drive back home overnight, leaving others to carry on the blockade. So that was a second night I got no real sleep!

This was the longest ever blockade of a British nuclear weapon base. The blockade of the gate to the base began on Monday 5th, with people sleeping there overnight and being cared for by relays of supporters. While some protesters maintained the blocking of the gateway with their arms locked together in tubing, others set up a camp on the verges opposite. The whole area was decorated with banners, placards and red streamers. The police removed the banners and other stuff including shelter from the weather, and told the protesters they will be arrested for sleeping, but so far there was no animosity.

On Monday 13, Angie Zelter told us that while she was having a sleep and only one other person was there at the gate the police swooped in and stole all the lock-ons. She was surprised it took them this long but has said they are hers, so might



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*The London Catholic Worker at Burghfield for No Faith in Trident day as part of the June month of action to disrupt the work of war.*

get them back eventually. She is going to stay camping with whoever turns up but intends to go home with the Welsh group after their block on Wed 15, so its questionable whether the continuous blockade/camp will keep going after that.

So that's it then. What did it achieve? - you may ask. To this I can only reply, I don't know. We did what we did because it was the right thing to do. The results are in God's hands. What do you do with a train carrying Jews to the concentration camp? You stop it, because that is the only ethical thing to do. Non-cooperation with everything degrading is the first principle of non-violent direct action.

We must concentrate on the rightness of our actions, not the outcomes. I commend to you the words of the late Daniel Berrigan, SJ (see aside). He was arrested hundreds of times, consistently, non-violently protesting US wars, bombing, and torture. His way with words coupled with dramatic action propelled him to fame.

Thy Kingdom come. Let love and peace prevail.

*Brian Quail*

## Woman to be allowed to kill just like men



David Cameron announced he will remove the ban on women in close ground fighting roles in the British military. He said in doing so that "It will ensure the Armed Forces can make the most of all their talent and increase opportunities for women to serve in the full range of roles."

Is killing a talent? Do we not talk about God given talents? Can God give the talent to be violent, to kill other human beings, the pinnacle of his creation and also give to Moses the commandment that 'Thou shalt not kill?'

Equality in killing is not equality but enslavement. Brothers and sisters lets work for peace not for war.

## SOME

Some stood up once, and sat down

Some walked a mile, and walked away

Some stood up twice, then sat down, "I've had it" they said,

Some walked two miles, then walked away. "It's too much," they cried.

Some stood and stood and stood.

They were taken for fools,

They were taken for being taken in.

Some walked and walked and walked.

They walked the earth,

They walked the waters,

They walked the air.

"Why do you stand," they were asked, "and why do you walk?"

"Because of the children," they said,

"And because of the heart,

"And because of the bread,"

"Because the cause is the heart's beat,

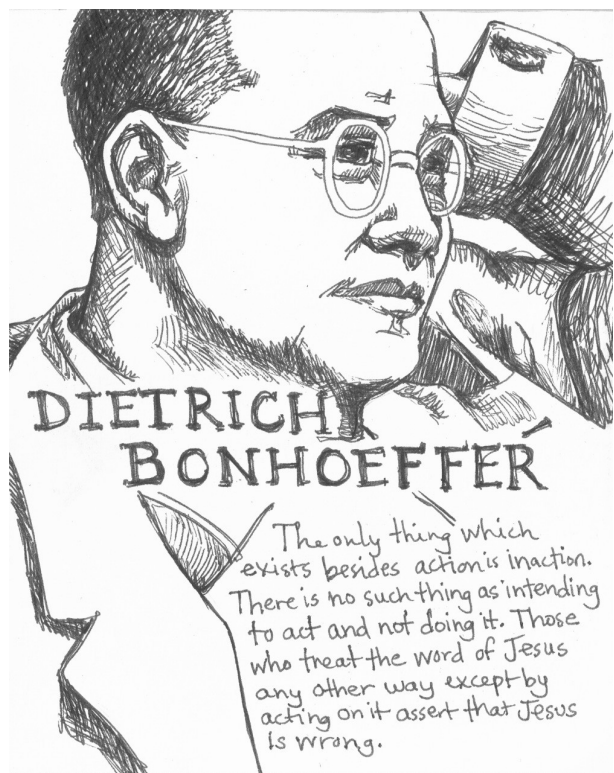
And the children born

And the risen bread."

*Daniel Berrigan*



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the US. The book was called "Das Leben im Licht des Wortes Gottes". This a book of sermons was written in 1886 by an even more distant relation called Pastor Friedrich Ahlfeld. Pastor Ahlfeld was a Lutheran Minister at the famous St.Nikolai Church in Leipzig.

Yet, despite being a Catholic, this book introduced me to the Protestant faith of my North German ancestors. Which in turn introduced me to the works of Bonhoeffer, Moltmann, Barth and so on. More importantly, it introduced me to the history of St Nikolai Church in Leipzig, a Church strongly associated with non-violent protests against the Government during the Communist era in East Germany. In 1989 St. Nikolai's was at the centre of peaceful revolt against communist rule since it was the meeting place for the "Monday Demonstrations" (Montagsdemonstrationen)

Furthermore, learning all about this eventually left me with a deep interest in the idea of radical Christian peace activism as a positive force

for social change. So, today the gift of a book has had a profound effect on my faith by moving me away from a safe, unthinking, cultural Christianity towards a more demanding, active Catholicism. It made me take seriously the idea of "a people set apart" and it left me with a special devotion to Friedensgebet (Friday prayers for peace)

More so, as Catholics we can say that there's much too disagree with when we read the works of Barth and Moltmann. But yet there is far more to admire, far more to agree with and far more to love. Therefore, the Scottish Presbyterian, the German Lutheran, the Dutch Calvinist can never be an enemy. Rather, these are our brothers and sisters and their goodness and our shared points of unity are known to me, not just our differences.

However, such joyful encounters need not take place through study and learning but are better experi-

ence through real human encounters of meeting and sharing. For example, when our Muslim friends come to our Place of Welcome where they will share a meal with us, laugh with us, learn English and then take time to pray.

Yes many of our Muslim friends are refugees from places like Syria, Sudan and North Africa, they are displaced and poor. Our friends may not have the best clothes; they may be living in shelters and in need if a good meal. And so we can try and meet some of those material needs by providing hospitality and trying to build community and friendship.

Yet when our friends remove their shoes, turn to Mecca and kneel, letting their head gently touch the earth, then they are suddenly imbued with a renewed dignity and their true identity as children of God is revealed to us. They are no longer homeless, hungry or lost they are, as we all are: The beloved sons and daughters of God!

To let ourselves be moved by watching our brothers and sisters answer the call to prayer is to embrace Thomas Merton's vision were he describes being "Suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I



loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. ... Merton then goes on to say..."Then it was as if I suddenly saw the secret beauty of their hearts, the depths of their hearts,



*St. Pieterskerk, Leiden, Netherlands*

where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in God's eyes. If only we could see each other that way all the time."

And so despite our religious differences, how can we fail to be moved by the beauty, peace tranquility that the call to prayer brings to them? What heart cannot be moved by such faithfulness to God in the face of being forced to endure such hardship and misery?

Finally, when we see our Muslim brothers and sisters at prayer, we are reminded that we too are strangers in a strange land, we too are sojourners. Again, I am reminded of my time in Leiden in the Netherlands, a place where so many Scots refugees settled to escape persecution. On the wall of the Piet-

erskerk in Leiden there is written a quote from the Pilgrim Fathers who also spent time there. It reads, reads, "BUT NOW WE ARE ALL, IN ALL PLACES, STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS, TRAVELERS AND SOJOURNERS". For me this statement captures the very essence of no longer belonging, a Christianity which challenges the social order and can find no home in the Nation-State. A Church community which is called to be a people set apart wherever it finds itself in the world. This we share with all refugees and so we are grateful that God has given us the gift of sharing community with our Muslim friends.

*Ross Ahlfeld*

## Catholic Worker Annual outing 9th July 2016



*Scott looks on in wonder at Muna's Eritrean masterclass*



This year for our outing Catholic Workers with many of our friends who come to our Place of Welcome

on a Saturday, 45 in total, went to Aberfoyle in Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. We walked in the woods and some even dipped their toes in the icy waters. It didn't rain while we had our picnic which consisted of some excellent Eritrean food of Rice and Chicken cooked by Muna.

Although it was too wet to play football which some of the guys had been looking forward to we did go and see Loch Katrine and saw the steamship the Sir Walter Scott berthing. An excellent day out all told.

## Daniel Berrigan in Glasgow

In February 1974 Daniel Berrigan gave a talk in Glasgow as guest of the Scottish Renewal Movement. According to the Glasgow Herald 'A small group of Roman Catholics led a protest outside the McLellan Galleries at the start of the meeting. They handed out leaflets describing Father Berrigan's behaviour towards the Church as "monstrous"'. Inside there was a panel of critics 'consisting of the Rev. Dr George Balls, Mr Alastair Warren, Editor of the Glasgow Herald and Mr Robert Kernohan, Editor of Life and Work'.

Commenting on his actions in burning draft papers some five years earlier and for which he was sentenced to three years in prison the Scottish Catholic Observer reported, "The horrified American reaction to the burning of draft files by a group of war resisters showed that there had been a reversal of the right order of relationships between people and property. The structural violence under which ordinary people lived was making property into idols and making persons into non-persons. If the burning of children in Vietnam was intolerable, said Father Berrigan, perhaps the burning of papers which legitimised this burning of children would be a virtuous act."



Fr. Daniel Berrigan SJ

(continued from front cover)

## Get involved Join the fast

JOIN THE FAST 6-9th August 2016



continued possession of these weapons of mass destruction.

We ask as many people as possible to sign up to fast for a day. Some may like to fast for more than a day.

Fasting consists in abandoning all types of food for a period of time, with water as the only liquid absorbed.

Please enter your name and email address on our website.

We will email you with ways you can get further involved in this witness should you wish to.

We will not supply your email to anyone else and you will appear only as a number.

( [www.catholicworker.org.uk](http://www.catholicworker.org.uk) )

## (To all Catholic Worker houses, Dec. 1941)

Our manifesto is the Sermon on the Mount, which means that we will try to be peacemakers. Speaking for many of our conscientious objectors, we will not participate in armed warfare or in making weapons... We will try daily, hourly, to pray for an end to the war.

Let us add that unless we combine

## Get involved:

### Round Table Discussions

On the 3rd Tuesday of every month we meet to discuss a topic and help us together to clarify our thoughts. We meet at 6:15. Please email us for details of where we'll be meeting.

### Soup Kitchen

Help out at our weekly Soup Kitchen in Cadogan Street, Glasgow City Centre

### Place of Welcome for Refugees: Saturdays 9am-1pm

Help teach English at Garnethill Multi-cultural Centre (Basement) 21 Rose Street Glasgow or just socialise.

### Monthly Witness at Faslane Nuclear Submarine Base

Join us on the first Saturday of each month at 2:30pm outside the North Gate.

**Website:** [www.catholicworker.org.uk](http://www.catholicworker.org.uk)

**Email:** [glw@catholicworker.org.uk](mailto:glw@catholicworker.org.uk)

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### Donating to the Catholic Worker

We exclusively depend on donations from people who support our aims and vision. We do not pay anyone for the work they do and do not in principle register as a charity. Any money donated helps us to pay rent and costs we need cash for. If you would like to contribute money to our work you can transfer donations to us using your bank's phone or online service:

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this prayer with almsgiving, in giving to the least of God's children, and fasting in order that we may help feed the hungry, and penance in recognition of our share in the guilty, our prayer may become empty words.

*Dorothy Day*