

GLASGOW CATHOLIC WORKER

'Faith, Works, Love, Mercy'

SCOTLAND'S FUTURE

OTRO MUNDO ES POSIBLE

With the referendum on Scottish independence fast approaching it's probably advisable to stop and ask ourselves "What sort of society do we actually want?"

The existing capitalist system under which we all live seems to be the only game in town, a game which we must all take part in. As Margaret Thatcher would say because 'There is No Alternative' (TINA). How though can we accept a system which can never work for the com-



mon good because it puts profits before people. Even IMF managing director Christine Lagarde, not perhaps the fiercest critic of capitalism, complains of the growing inequality in the world, where the wealthiest 85 individuals (a bus load) have more than the poorest half of the world's population, (has the IMF may have contributed to the problem?). Or as Mark Carney governor of the Bank of England puts it, "Now is the time to be famous or fortunate". But then maybe to a

greater or lesser degree that has always been the case.

Peter Maurin co-founder of the Catholic Worker talking decades

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Where is home?



Washington DC Catholic Worker House
The Table is set for guests

In March of 2014 my husband, children and I flew to America for a great big family reunion. As an American who has lived in Scotland for more than a decade these "every -other-year" trips to the States are always meaningful - a chance to spend time with parents, siblings, nieces, nephews and old friends, and to re connect with the culture and the people. As always, questions come up for me - where do I belong? Which country is my true home? What would it be like to live in America again, culturally? I came back to Scotland with a sense of both displacement and of home - or as someone who truly has two homes, and multiple families.

However, this trip back to America had layered meanings for me because for the first time since becoming a Roman Catholic and a Glasgow Catholic Worker I was going to ex-

plore Catholic Worker Communities in America.

Our vacation started in Washington DC so I simply picked up the phone and called their house. I was phoned back by a vibrant, wonderful woman named Kathy Boylan who immediately invited me both to the CW House and to the Ash Wednesday peace vigil the next day. The peace vigil was taking place

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Scotland - The Moment of Truth

Brian Quail Catholic Worker and long time anti-nuclear campaigner tells us how he will vote.



If nationally we were faced with a choice between parties that supported slavery, and ones which wanted to abolish it, we would expect and welcome clear moral leadership from the pulpit, and certainly be guided by it.

But the truth is that in Scotland, we

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My Soup Kitchen Experience

By Frances Nixon

When asked to write something about the Soup Kitchen I was daunted! What could I possibly have to write; I have not had the honour of doing it for very long? I say honour, which is what it is, an honour to be given a chance to serve and to enjoy the company of those who have need: whether it is for food or just the company of others. How often in life are we given the honour to act out our Christian duty?



When I mentioned I was going to help out at the Soup Kitchen there was a pause, a look and then "Oh you're brave." That remark astounded me, gave me pause for thought. When I asked why they should think that no one actually came up with a reply.

Failure to understand why someone is homeless or what their physical or mental need is can create fear and discomfort; we can feel society is threatened, ironic as society is the cause of many problems. Perhaps it is simply that we realise that those in need could so easily be any one of us. Giving such a person a second thought can frighten or can prick our conscience, an uncomfortable situation to be in! We tend to push

the sick, the lonely, and the homeless out of our minds. If not then we would have to take some action. Ignore them and they will go away.

I think everyone should help out on a soup kitchen or a place of refuge once in his or her lifetime. It would open their eyes as the men and women who come to the Soup Kitchen are a mixture of all humanity they are simply us. They have good and bad days and have to deal with issues relating to health, wealth and happiness. They are kind, courteous, caring and sharing. Despite the traumas that many will have endured I have witnessed the best of humanity shining through.

All wait patiently to be served assisting in setting up tables. They help each other even giving up food to someone who has missed out. Anyone who is "out of sorts" is given a few words of comfort or gentle chastisement and is soon in a brighter spirit. I have witnessed nothing but kindness and courtesy, something fading from our modern society. Good manners may seem unimportant but it shows gratitude and more importantly self-respect and recognition of fellow beings. Conversations range from politics to football, some too deep for me to share in! All take time to share a joke and enquire about each other's well being.

The men and women who come to the Soup Kitchen can teach all of us a thing or two about "a caring society". They are acting out the Christian message we hope that we are acting out.

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you". Luke 6:31

My limited experience has left me humbled, educated, and most of all rewarded by the company of men and women who are friendly, kind

and courteous, people that some in society would like to ignore. I do very little for a big return; I have been welcomed into a new community, enjoy the camaraderie and feel humbled by the experience. Thank you.



Support Us:

Non-perishable food donations welcome. We are particularly looking for tea, coffee, hot chocolate, sugar, fruit juice, tinned meat, tuna and black bags. You can also set up a standing order to make a donation to us—see the back page.

Join Us:

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 in the Place of Welcome and share some food. Please come along or get in touch.

Soup Kitchen Fridays 9-10pm

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 Multicultural Centre (Basement) 21 Rose Street Glasgow

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

Email: glw@catholicworker.org.uk



Twitter: @CatholicWorkerG

Facebook: www.facebook.com/glasgowcatholicworker

An American in New York

By **Tamara Horsburgh**

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outside of the White House. With my husband Stephen and the boys, we bundled up to brace the snow and showed up on a crisp, cold, but sunny day to vigil for Peace.

The Ash Wednesday service was ecumenical and beautiful, with speeches, prayers, and fellowship.

I was struck by the signs that were being carried by various people which highlighted the fact that while we were all there to advocate for a more peaceful world, we also had differences of opinions about politics, and world events. For example, one participant wore a sign that said "9/11 – an American government conspiracy" which made me feel uncomfortable. Imagine my surprise when it turned out the woman wearing this sign was the same Kathy – one of the leaders of the DC House, and a warmer more wonderful woman you will never meet. (I never did ask her about the sign – that conversation can be had another day!)

The next day we headed out to the DC House to meet with Kathy. The house is big, spacious, and beautiful. It had been donated by Priests to the Catholic Workers in the early 1980s. The living area is covered with pictures of historic figures who are precious to the Catholic Worker movement and to creating a peaceful world. Kathy was welcoming, offering cups of tea and muffins, a playroom for the children, and making us feel at home immediately. We learned that the House is called to help single mothers who are struggling for various reasons. Mothers and children move in and stay until

they are able, ready, and wanting to move on. Meals are shared, children are played with, the mothers go to school or volunteer or work 10 hours a week. Those who are moved to prayer do so together. Kathy was absolutely delighted when she heard that we in Glasgow had been visited by her old friend Bix, the Catholic Priest and peace activist who we had the privilege of meeting on his last trip to the UK. She went to the phone to call him, so I could fill him in on news from



Scotland – talking to Bix again was a blessing of course!

The bus ride back to the center of DC was part of our experience. It is seldom that the average tourist ventures out to what I would call the “real” DC. We rode through communities full of store front churches, and outdoor markets selling ethnic food. We rode past Howard University, the most famous of the historic African American universities. There was something actually poignant, maybe

sad, about our bus reaching our destination – the touristy, political section of DC with the Smithsonian museums and monuments. DC had brought us many blessings and connecting with the DC Catholic Workers was a highlight for me.

Flash forward a few weeks to New York City – my childhood home. I, like Dorothy Day, was born in Brooklyn New York. (a fact that makes me strangely happy). Our trip into Manhattan to visit the Mary House was exciting on so many different levels. My friend Nina Reznick, who lives in the village, was meeting us as well, heightening my excitement. Experiencing the last home of Dorothy Day – a place she lived, worked and loved – and sharing it with Nina who is a “fan” of the Catholic Workers was a very exciting prospect.

When we showed up at the Catholic Worker House, there seemed to be a mix up. Although I had been invited for lunch, the man who answered the door had not been informed we were coming and told me my husband and sons would not be allowed in – lunch was for women only. It seems he thought I was there for

the daily lunch for vulnerable women in New York, and he was being clear men were not allowed. However, we had been invited to an earlier lunch, with the staff. It took

some time for this to be sorted out, but sorted out it was.

The kitchen was full of volunteers, folks who live in the Mary house,

“interns” from Europe, and young people who come weekly to help. We were told we would have to hurry so that they could start the
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“Kathy was absolutely delighted when she heard that we in Glasgow had been visited by her old friend Bix..”

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next shift for the women who come for their daily lunch – there ensued a bit of confusion where we were told to leave the dining area as the tables were needed, but then told by another worker to sit down and finish our soup. A very funny comment was made - “this is why they call us the House of IN-hospitality!” How did we see this confusion? As just an example of dedicated, loving, but real people trying their best to serve the vulnerable women of New York while trying to deal with overseas visitors. It was inspiring to watch the dedication of those working in the kitchen, and also to meet some of the women who came for their lunch. I could imagine Dorothy Day herself in that room, with a different generation of women, serving soup, engaging in conversation, and praying for



With Jane Sammon at Maryhouse

the needs of all the men and women who live on the streets of New York. After lunch we went up to the “auditorium” where speakers throughout the years have come to share their thoughts, where there were toys for the kids, and where a gentleman was folding copies of a newsletter. Jane Sammon sat with us, and what a privilege that was. Jane – a woman who knew and worked with Dorothy Day and counted her as a friend; a woman who clearly had an interest in our views of the world, of religion, of charity – she and Nina engaged in a very interesting discus-

sion of the role of baptism and inter-faith beliefs. Jane gave me a piece of advice that I believe will be food for thought for a good long time. I bragged to her about how my sons were regulars at the Glasgow Catholic Workers events and have taken part in peace vigils. Instead of the accolades I expected she looked me square in the eye and said “you must always remember – your path might not be their path. I’ve seen far too many parents who don’t understand that.” Very strong words to ponder.

After we left Mary House we had a day out in Manhattan, walking for hours, showing my sons the beautiful architecture, and ending the day at Toys R Us at Times Square – the long promised trip for my patient little boys. I think I literally bribed them into good behavior – behave at Mary House, you will get a toy! It was not lost on me how UN Catholic Worker-ish this is – bribing my children with a toy from a multi-national company. I still have no idea if, at the end of the day, I offer the right balance to my kids – do I buy them too much? Do they understand the needs of others? I know for a fact they do not understand the international market place and the dangers of capitalism. And what is more – I myself truly enjoyed being in Toy-R-Us! I loved the masses of toys, the people-dressed-as-characters, the colors, and music, and hustle of Times Square, all based on the capitalist system. Am I supposed to enjoy this? I don’t know the answer to this question. My own commitment to voluntary poverty is very questionable.



So this ends my account of the trip to two Catholic Worker Houses in America. On a vacation which was designed to spend time with family, I discovered something important – as well as my own very loved biological family, and my in-laws who I adore, and as well as Stephen and my boys – the Catholic Worker is now “family”.

It offers a whole new set of possibilities in how to look to the future. Whether in Scotland or in America I can count on this other layer of “family” where I feel the most at home. My visits to the Houses in America gave me a chance to reflect on my own values, and the values of my birth country. I still have many questions about my own relationship to America, to Scotland, to the ethos of the Catholic Workers and to voluntary poverty. But I’m left with a sense that I am blessed to have layers of those I call “family”. God is good!

On hearing I had cancer



When I first found out I had cancer, I didn't know what to

pray for. I didn't know if I should pray for healing or life or death. Then I found peace in praying for what my folks call "God's perfect will". As it evolved my prayer has become, "Lord, let me live until I die." By that I mean I want to live, love, and serve fully until death comes. If that prayer is answered... how long really doesn't matter. Whether it's just a few months or a few years is really immaterial.

Sister Thea Bowman

Scotland - The Moment of Truth

By Brian Quail

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are facing a stark moral choice that is even more momentous than slavery. All parties opposing independence support the present deployment of Trident, the UK's nuclear WMD. The threat of mass murder of enemy civilians is manifestly criminal and illegal, and flagrantly immoral. Hence, nuclear weapons were outlawed by the International Court of Justice in the Hague in 1996, and condemned by both the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Bishops.

In their deliverance of 20th May 1982, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland affirmed "That the Church of Scotland, as a church of Christ the Prince of Peace, now renounce the use of nuclear power for war-like purposes. The Church joins with the rapidly growing millions in other countries and in other faiths, who equally renounce the use of nuclear power for war-like purposes. The Church demands the immediate cessation of the further manufacture of such armaments."

Likewise, the Catholic Bishops of Scotland issued a statement in January 1982, in which they said "We are convinced, however, that if it is immoral to use these weapons, it is immoral to threaten their use.... We must totally reject any "arms race",

any policy of revengeful slaughter, all greed and self-preservation at the cost of others".

In doing this, the Scottish Bishops were simply upholding the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, whose document "Gaudium et Spes" proclaimed in 1965 "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and Man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation".

Since all Unionist parties support the present deployment of Trident, and its replacement in 2025, a no vote means one is saying yes to Trident, which clearly violates the Deliverance of the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Bishops statement, and the solemn teaching of the Catholic Church.

This is a unique and historic chance for the Churches to realize their vision of ending the UK's utterly immoral deployment of a nuclear WMD, and not just in Scotland. As John Ainslie's expert report "Trident - Nowhere to go" proves, the Coulport/Faslane complex is the only place in the UK Trident can operate from. A nuclear-free Scotland therefore means the end of Trident throughout the UK.

To be consistent with their fundamental moral stance, the Scottish Churches, along with all people of good will, must acknowledge that there is only one choice they can logically support in the referendum. And because Trident is an issue that morally dwarfs all others, it must be given absolute priority.

An independent Scotland need do

nothing dramatic with Trident, but simply keep it berthed inert at Faslane, pending negotiations about its physical removal. The firing pins can be removed from the missiles in a matter of months. This renders the missiles inoperable from Scottish waters, and honours the Scottish constitution, which all parties supporting independence agree, will have a clause banning nuclear weapons from Scottish land and waters.



We will no longer be complicit in major war crimes by threatening the use weapons of mass destruction. "Better together With Trident" must be seen as the unprincipled con trick it is. Scotland can, and must, make a principled stand. We must stop deploying Trident, and turn our effort and energies towards promoting a treaty banning all nuclear weapons worldwide. This is not Utopian; there are already international treaties banning Chemical and Biological weapons, treaties from which there is no derogation. Why not nuclear weapons also?

A no vote means saying yes to the world's most powerful machine for the mass killing of human beings. Why are the Churches so reluctant to be consistent and call publically for rejection of the pro-Trident Unionist parties?

Trident is a sin crying to heaven for vengeance. What else can we do but reject it, and its supporters?



OTRO MUNDO ES POSIBLE

By Michael Sutherland

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earlier considered capitalism a completely corrupting way of life that trained man to prey on his fellows through economic competition. On the abuse of labour Maurin says:

“And capitalists succeed in accumulating labour,
by treating labour, not as a gift,
but as a commodity, buying it as
any other commodity
at the lowest possible price”

But is there an alternative or are we stuck with Capitalism? I spoke to a recent Strathclyde University graduate who had now become an accountant and asked if he had been taught about worker cooperatives about alternatives to the current system. He was not sure he had been but perhaps in passing. Yet a cooperative like Mondragon is one of the top ten companies in Spain where “the co-
o p m e m b e r s

(averaging 80-85% of all workers per enterprise) collectively own and direct the enterprise. Through an annual general assembly the workers choose and employ a managing director and retain the power to make all the basic decisions of the enterprise (what, how and where to produce and what to do with the profits).” There are better alternatives to the corporate model which gives more power to the workers and shares wealth better. The problem however is that it would involve many of those with the power and wealth sharing their power and wealth.

In the 1970's in Andalusia in south-

ern Spain in a poor village called Marinaleda lived a farming community with no land and 60% unemployment. Since then and against all odds the people have managed to create a new social order based on cooperation and collectivism where people are put before profit. They set about getting land and through protest and demonstrations were given/demanded 1,200 hectare from the Duke of Infantado. “The Duke's property was just one of many instances in Spain of vast estates with arable land fenced off from the area's surrounding, usually starving, population.” (Scotland today has the most inequitable land ownership in the west).

In this new community everyone who wants to work can work, everyone receives the same wages. Houses are built and owned by the

cooperative and things are so organised that people cannot speculate on or profit from housing. The crops grown have been chosen because they required the most labour. Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo the

mayor explains that “food was a right and not a business; that agriculture should be out of the World Trade Organisation; that natural resources should be at the service of the communities that work them, and who use them”. Decisions are taken communally at the assemblies with simple hands-up voting.

Marinaleda is a good example of an alternative society. The Catholic Worker has a vision of an alternative society. The community would at its heart have the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It would be inspired by the Saints, Christian Social Teaching and the example of Dorothy Day and

Peter Maurin. It would be organised on the basis of “from each according to his or her ability to each according to his or her needs”. It would involve as far as possible communal living where the more communal the property ownership the more holy it would be (St Gertrude). It would have a connection with the soil and round table discussion to help us understand.



Juan Manuel Sanchez Gordillo

Perhaps the size of the community would be more village than town, decisions would be taken by consensus as far as possible. Such decisions would be judged on how they further the common good and not how profitable they were, how they helped the poor not the rich. There would be no directors on boards, leadership when required would be by invitation and example.

As the Lord gathered a community around him which was inclusive so to our community would be inclusive and all would be welcome in the name of Christ. Work is sacred and would be available to all. There would be time in the day for learning and prayer. The works of Mercy would be performed which includes non-violent resistance to war and social injustice. Like St Francis and his followers it would be non-violent. “Men and woman would – even in a broken world – be afforded opportunity to know themselves, to fulfil their destiny, to live more authentic and more joyful

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lives, and , by doing so, to gladden the heart of the God who made them”.



The Catholic Worker Farm

The wonderful thing is that many Catholic Worker communities put these ideals into practise. There are Houses of Hospitality and Catholic Worker Farms where shelter is given to the homeless, the poor and the outcasts, where the Works of Mercy are performed. Most communities hold round table discussions, reflecting on their community and beliefs. Many communities practise voluntary poverty. Many Catholic Workers have been arrested for their non-violent acts of resistance against the war machine. Daily prayer is normal.

We to in the Glasgow Catholic Worker community try to live out

“We sincerely believe that there is no future that is not built in the present.”

this vision through our Friday Soup Kitchen, our Place of Welcome on a Saturday, our round table discussions and our witnesses for Peace at Faslane nuclear submarine base and other acts of resistance.

So to get back to the question, “What sort of society do we actually want?” Well not the current one as defined by Capitalism. An alternative is available but lets not wait until politicians and political parties define it in their manifesto. We could be waiting for a long time. Brothers and sisters lets start now, as Peter Maurin used to say, “See what there is to do ,fit yourself to do

it , then do it”. And Sanchez Gordillo: “We have learned that it is not enough to define utopia, nor is it enough to fight against the reactionary forces. One must build it here and now, brick by brick, patiently but steadily, until we can make the old dreams a reality: that there will be bread for all, freedom among citizens, and culture; and to be able to read with respect the word ‘peace’. We sincerely believe that there is no future that is not built in the present.”

A Place of Welcome

By Mary Shield

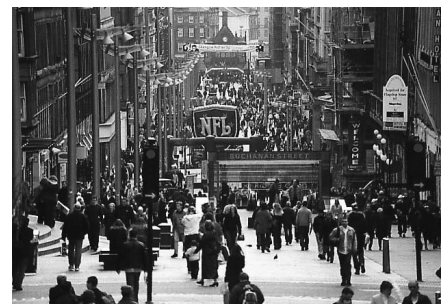
I must confess when I first arrived at the Place of Welcome in the Multicultural Centre, Rose Street, in December 2013, I could not tell those helping from those being helped. It was only afterwards that I realised what an accolade that was the Catholic Workers attending. It was not a case of ‘them and us’ but more a case of ‘all of us together’.

I started to come along not long after the start of the Saturday morning Place of Welcome and those first couple of months were characterised by drinking a lot of tea, chatting and then meandering down Sauchiehall Street with our flasks to continue the tea drinking (although hot chocolate was always the favourite) with those on the streets. We also brought biscuits and sandwiches but often felt that the thing that was most appreciated was a friendly face and someone who stopped and chatted. We start and end each morning with communal prayer and through our talking to those on the street, we remember Dorothy Day, the founder of the Catholic Worker movement who

“If I have achieved anything in my life, it is because I have not been embarrassed to talk about God.”

said “If I have achieved anything in my life, it is because I have not been embarrassed to talk about God.”

After a couple of months, and because of the need we saw on the street, we decided to open the Saturday morning to people who would like to learn English – mainly asylum seekers in our country, having escaped often brutal and dangerous regimes in their home country. It was something of an act of faith as none of us had any training in teaching English, however God again provided, and a fully qualified



Sauchiehall Street

teacher of English as a foreign language, joined us. With Shona’s help and advice, we now cater for 20 - 30 people in the Place of Welcome. We start by drinking tea (this seems to be compulsory with Catholic Workers!) and chatting about our week.

Our foreign friends have often put me to shame by the way they individually welcome everyone in the

room – each person gets a handshake and a smile. Over the months we have learned more of the heartache of leaving family and the un-

certainty of what is going on in their home countries – and yet when they come in they are full of gratitude and joyful smiles, they teach us as much as we teach them. We spend a hour or so on English lessons, which often dissolve into laughter as we practice role playing situations on

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one another. At the end of the morning, we again drink tea and have some sandwiches to share.

This week, to celebrate Eritrean Independence Day, some of the women prepared delicious Eritrean food for us all – they served us with great dignity, generosity and warmth – it was a privilege to be part of it and again there is confusion in my mind about who is serving who.....

Means or Ends ?

by Martyn Sabell

Here at the Glasgow Catholic Worker we have just held another of our now monthly roundtable discussions. These are a revered Catholic Worker tradition and we say they are for 'clarification of thought'. That is code for learning to sing from the same hymn sheet, not that we always succeed but we do enjoy the attempt.

Well this time we have started to grapple with a book by Ched Meyers called 'Binding the Strong Man'. This is a radical interpretation of St. Mark's gospel. I'm not going to try to summarise it. You would need to come along to our next roundtable discussion for his take on Jesus' dramatic entry into history. (See

our website for details.)

No, the reason I mention it is that at one point in our discussion we tried to pin down exactly what Jesus means when he says the Kingdom of God is at hand. Has it arrived? Are we still looking for it two thousand years later? Must we wait until Christ's second coming?

Now St. Matthew's gospel doesn't talk about the Kingdom of God. In-



Saint Catherine of Siena

stead he's all about the Kingdom of Heaven. Same thing. This kingdom isn't a place, such as the United Kingdom. Nor is it a nation like Scotland. It's wherever God's creatures give him their full allegiance. The trouble is that presently we are all subject to an assortment of flawed, if not overtly demonic, spiritual powers. These include not just

our own personal demons. Amongst others, we are also talking about our power-hungry political system, a rapacious free-market economy, the fetish for material goods, the cult of personality, a spirit of xenophobia, an urge for environmental destruction and most pernicious of all, the all-powerful global war industry.

Opposing these wild beasts is the Lamb of God, supported by ourselves his servants and followers. The Book of Revelation names our weapons as the Blood of the Lamb and the Word of our testimony. (Think sacrificial love and our proclamation of truth.) We are promised these are sufficient to prevail. In confronting the brute powers we can encounter the Kingdom of Heaven, here in part but also still to come.

Some advocate force to achieve their imagined utopia. Their problem is that the ends hoped for are fatally undermined by the coercive means employed. We instead can welcome the coming of the Kingdom as we consolidate Christ's victory in our daily lives. St. Catherine of Siena said it first, though often quoted by Dorothy Day. 'All the way to Heaven is Heaven, for he is the Way.'

Donating to the Glasgow 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. Most of our food and clothes are donated. If you would like to donate food or warm/waterproof clothing please get in touch.

Any money donated helps us to pay Rent and costs we need cash for.

If you would like to contribute money to our work:

To transfer donations to us using your bank's phone or online service, please use these details:

- **Bank:** Triodos Bank
- **Account name:** Catholic Worker Glasgow
- **Account number:** 20467753