

BOOK DISCUSSION: *MY LIFE WITH THE SAINTS*

- DOROTHY DAY: Chapter 10 – “Living in Her World”

- Saint Aloysius Gonzaga: Thursday, October 24, 2013

1. Father Martin begins his reflection on the life of Dorothy Day with the words: “When I first saw the photo on the cover of her autobiography, I knew I had to learn more about her.” (page 209) How would you *personally* describe the “Dorothy Day” you met as you read Father Martin’s description of her life?
2. Father Martin quotes many times from Dorothy Day’s autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*. What was the “long loneliness” that Dorothy day wrote about and experienced? More importantly: identify the “long loneliness” in your own life. What is it? Name it! And are you able to share this with the group – yet?
3. In the course of this chapter, Father Martin “compares” Dorothy Day with other Saints we have reflected upon – Thomas Merton, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, Therese of Lisieux, even, Francis of Assisi. How was Dorothy Day similar to or different than these Saints? Do you notice any common threads or patterns beginning to emerge in the spiritual lives of these “saints” as we finish the first half of Father Martin’s book? Have you made an effort to incorporate any of these insights into your own spiritual journey? Successful? Unsuccessful? Difficult or easy?
4. On page 210, Father Martin makes statements like: “I felt I wanted to follow this woman.” And “I wanted to be like Dorothy Day.” And “I wanted a sense of resolve about my direction in life.” What do you think Father Martin “saw” in Dorothy Day that he wanted to live in his life? What do YOU see?

5. “The Catholic Church bound together Dorothy’s love for the poor, her desire to be in communion with God, her search for moral clarity, and her hope for a life of humility and obedience.” (page 215) Describe Dorothy Day’s journey into the Catholic Church. How does the Catholic Church help or assist you on your personal journey to intimacy with Jesus and an awareness of God?

6. “She was the bearer of what Robert Ellsberg called a political kind of holiness, which makes even some devout Catholics uncomfortable.” (page 22&) Does Dorothy Day make you “uncomfortable” in any way?

7. What was your reaction to these words: “At the end of her presentation she spoke about Dorothy’s past. ‘Imagine,’ she said, ‘if Dorothy Day had thought to herself: *I had an abortion. What could God do with me?* Imagine all the wonderful things that would never have gotten done.’” (page 222)

8. Was she a “saint”? Why does Father Martin include her story in his book? She herself said: “Don’t call me a saint...I don’t want to be dismissed that easily.” (page 226) “I think she is a saint.” (page 228) “Go to church today and see the funeral of a saint.” (page 228) “On the one hand, Dorothy day is a traditional brand of saint...But she is more likely a nontraditional one.” (pages 226-227) In your heart, is she a Saint?

9. The BIG Question: How – if at all – does Dorothy Day help YOU on that great and wonderful journey towards becoming a “dynamic Catholic”?