Fall 1996

Dorothy Day and Friends

La Salle University Art Museum

Brother Daniel Burke FSC

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The installation of a new, wood-carved portrait of Dorothy Day in the La Salle Museum is a good occasion to recall a particular network of the University's friends. First, of course, there is Dorothy herself who visited us several times in the '60s and early 70's—and packed the theater with students drawn to her challenging and encouraging message.

There is also her long-term friend Fritz Eichenberg, who illustrated her autobiography and many issues of the Worker. There are her committed followers, the staff of Houses of Hospitality here in Philadelphia, with whom a number of our students work—Martha Baltzell as well, one of the Houses major helpers and one of our own "art angels."

And most important for this occasion are Dennis and Judy O'Brien, the commissioners and donors of the sculpture in honor of Br. Daniel Burke's 50th Anniversary as a Christian Brother. Dennis is past president of Bucknell and Rochester Universities and a long-term trustee of La Salle. Judy is a follower of Dorothy in her own work with the poor of inner-cities as well as rural areas.

Finally, there is the artist of the day (in several senses), Charles Wells. The Museum acquired some of his fine prints very early for its collection—and is now honored to receive a major sculpture.

To one and all, our deepest, deepest gratitude.
Some time before she died, Dorothy Day was disturbed to hear that many thought of her as a saint. Her pointed and ironic reply: “Don’t call me a saint. I don’t want to be dismissed so easily.” For she was, indeed, the great challenger of American Catholics in our century, unwavering in her mission “to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.”

Dorothy’s early years were often turbulent—a family move in 1903 from Brooklyn...
to Berkeley and Oakland when she was six, the loss of all the family's possessions in the San Francisco earthquake, another move to a tenement in Chicago thereafter. She was graduated from high school at sixteen, but, after two years at the University of Illinois, where she had joined the Socialist party and began to shed the religious impulses of her youth, she moved back to New York. Her journalist father had a new job with the *Morning Telegraph* there, and Dorothy got a job with the Socialist paper, *Call*.

In the years that followed she became an activist for women's suffrage, an ardent pacifist during the First World War, was married, separated, had a daughter, Tamar, and finally, in 1927 became a Catholic. However, it was only in the depths of the Great Depression that she met the collaborator in what was to be her life's work. He was Peter Maurin, a former Christian Brother.

First came their small newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*, priced (still) at one cent and soon with 100,000 readers. It trumpeted the social doctrine of the papal encyclicals and of Christian love of the neighbor. Then came the Houses of Hospitality and co-op farms for the unemployed drifters and homeless of the cities. As helpers and disciples gathered around, there were soon forty such
establishments across the country. And there were non-violent programs and demonstrations for Christian pacifism, the anti-nuclear movement, civil rights for blacks, unions for migrant workers—all pursued with unswerving conviction and occasional stints in jail.

Dorothy had a heart attack in 1975. She died five years later, worn out after forty-five years of soup-kitchens, breadlines, and picket-lines, of writing, discussing, and praying about the demands of Christian charity in the modern city.

Her cause for sainthood is being promoted.
Charles Wells

Charles Wells, who lives near Philadelphia, is a well-known sculptor and etcher. Educated at the George School in Newtown, Pa. and Amherst College, he was apprenticed to Leonard Baskin, won the Prix de Rome (1964), and spent more than ten years in Italy where he lived and worked in Pietrasanta, one of three "marble towns" in Tuscany.

His works are in many important public collections such as the National Museum of
American Art in Washington, the Library of Congress, the Whitney Museum, MIT, and La Salle. He participated in many group exhibitions in the United States and Europe, and had five one-man exhibitions at FAR Gallery in New York, as well as solo shows in numerous galleries in the United States, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark and Israel.

Charles has done a number of religious works, including a large standing angel for the O'Briens. He has had commissions from several Catholic churches, and is about to begin a project for several saints and a set of stations of the cross.
Fritz Eichenberg

Fritz first met Dorothy in 1949, at Pendle Hill, the Quaker retreat house near Philadelphia. He was much impressed with her work for the poor, her conscientious pacifism and commitment to civil rights. So he joined Ade Bethune, Rita Corbin and others in providing illustrations for *The Catholic Worker*—and continued his collaboration until his death in 1989.

Fritz had been born in Cologne, Germany. He studied at the State Academy of Graphic
Arts in Leipzig and, while still a student, began to illustrate his first books with original prints: *Till Eulenspiegel, Gulliver's Travels*, and *Crime and Punishment*. He left Europe in 1933 after Hitler came to power and moved to New York. His first important commissions came with *Crime and Punishment* and *Gulliver's Travels* for the Limited Editions Club, followed by many Russian classics of Dostoevsky, Pushkin, and Tolstoy, the stories of Edgar Allan Poe, and the Brontes' *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*.

In 1956 Fritz became chairman of the art department at Pratt Institute and later at the University of Rhode Island. He also started a journal devoted to contemporary printmaking called *Artist's Proof*. As a master of the woodcut with few peers, he was one of America's most important artists of the book.
Case I

1. Fritz Eichenberg
   *The Christ of the Breadlines* 1955
   Reproduction of original wood engraving illustration for *The Catholic Worker*.

2. *By Little and By Little*
   *The Selected Writings of Dorothy Day*

   Edited and with an introduction by Robert Ellsberg
   (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983)

3. *The Long Loneliness*
   An Autobiography

   Introduction by Daniel Berrigan
   Illustrated by Fritz Eichenberg

4. *Loaves and Fishes*
   by Dorothy Day

   Introduction by Daniel Berrigan
   Illustrated by Fritz Eichenberg

5. *The Wood and the Engraver*
   The work of Fritz Eichenberg

   (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1977)
Case II

6. Fritz Eichenberg
   *The Manual Laborers’*

   Reproduction of original wood engraving illustration
   for *The Catholic Worker*

7. *A Spectacle Unto the World*
   The Catholic Worker Movement

   Text by Robert Coles
   Photographs by Jon Erikson
   (New York: The Viking Press, 1973)

8. *A Harsh and Dreadful Love*
   Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement

   by William D. Miller
   (New York: Liveright, 1973)

9. Fritz Eichenberg
   *Gandhi* 1942

   wood engraving

10. Fritz Eichenberg
    *Hope and Faith for 1984* (Christmas Card)

    wood engraving
Case III

11. Fritz Eichenberg
   *The Lord's Supper*

   Reproduction of original wood engraving illustration for *The Catholic Worker*

12. *The Moral Vision of Dorothy Day*
    A Feminist Perspective by June O'Connor


13. *Dorothy Day: A Biography*
    by William D. Miller

    (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982)

14. *Resurrection*
    by Leo Tolstoy

    Illustrated with wood engravings by Fritz Eichenberg
    (New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1963)

15. *Crime and Punishment*
    by Fyodor Dostoevsky

    Illustrated with wood-engravings by Fritz Eichenberg
    (Aron, Conn.: The Heritage Press, 1938)
Case IV

16. Fritz Eichenberg
   *The Migrant Labor Cross*

   Reproduction of original wood engraving illustration
   for *The Catholic Worker*

17. *Dorothy Day*
   A Radical Devotion (Radcliffe Biography Series)
   by Robert Coles, M.D.

   (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1987)

18. *Dorothy Day and The Catholic Worker*
    by Nancy L. Roberts

    (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984)

19. *The Idiot*
    by Fyodor Dostoevsky

    Illustrated with wood-engravings by Fritz Eichenberg
    (New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1956)

20. *Childhood Boyhood Youth*
    by Leo Tolstoy

    Illustrated with wood engravings by Fritz Eichenberg
    (New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1972)

21. Ade Bethune
    *House of Hospitality, Dorothy Day*

    Reproduction of dust jacket, 1939