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Bishops kill statement on economy, vote in favor of St. Dorothy Day

Tom Gallagher | Nov. 14, 2012 NCR Today

U.S. bishops approve statement on economy: vote in favor of Dorothy Day's cause for sainthood

The U.S. bishops -- in a moment of inspiration, thank God -- killed an amateurishly written statement on the state of the economy, "The Hope of the Gospel in Difficult Economic Times." The document failed to get the required two-thirds needed for passage. The vote was 134 yes, 84 no, with nine abstentions. A stunning defeat. My colleague, Jerry Filteau, has been covering this story [1].

Dorothy Day is a wonderful example of faithful citizenship and hope of the Gospel in difficult economic times. She is an important example for all Catholics who aspire to change public policy to reflect the Church's core teachings. Dorothy Day is a superb role model for all of us as the newly re-elected President Barack Obama, with the majority of Catholics voting for him, and Congress begin to face important budgetary, tax and significant public policy decisions.

In another act of inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Catholic News Service, the U.S. bishops' in-house wire service, reports [2]:

> The U.S. bishops, on a voice vote, endorsed the sainthood cause of Dorothy Day, the co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, who was famously quoted as saying, "Don't call me a saint. I don't want to be dismissed so easily."

Given the extraordinary trouncing the Republican U.S. bishops took on Election Day, one wishes Dorothy Day would have quipped: "Don't call me a bishop. I don't want to be dismissed so easily."

Not surprising, Cardinal Timothy Dolan's comments focus on just Day's sex life:

> Cardinal Dolan called Day's journey "Augustinian," saying that "she was the first to admit it: sexual immorality, there was a religious search, there was a pregnancy out of wedlock, and an abortion. Like Saul on the way to Damascus, she was radically changed" and has become "a saint for our time."

Meanwhile, retired Cardinal Theodore McCarrick focused on Day's heroic work in caring for the desperately poor, as the CNS story continues:

> Of all the people we need to reach out to, all the people that are hard to get at, the street people, the ones who are on drugs, the ones who have had abortions, she was one of them," Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick said of Day. The retired archbishop of Washington is a native New Yorker.
>
> "What a tremendous opportunity to say to them you can not only be brought back into society, you can not only be brought back into the church, you can be a saint!" he added.

"She was a very great personal friend to me when I was a young priest," said Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, N.Y. "To be able to stand here and say yes to this means a great deal to me."

The work of the Catholic Worker movement is still active 80 years after Day co-founded the movement with Peter Maurin.

Note to U.S. bishops: There are many Dorothy Days of our times, living the Gospel of hope in difficult economic times right in front of our noses. To break open their stories, click here [3].

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