



**DOROTHY DAY
TAMPA**

Q&A
Frequently Asked Questions

Mission

Recruit and train volunteers in the Catholic Worker tradition, which recognizes the dignity of each person, provides relief, hospitality and housing assistance to homeless men and women in the Tampa area.

WHO IS DOROTHY DAY?

From Wikipedia:

Dorothy Day (11/8/1897 – 11/29/1980) an American journalist and social activist, who, after a bohemian youth, became a Catholic without abandoning her social and anarchist activism. She was perhaps the best-known political radical among American Catholics.

Day's conversion is described in her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*. Day was a journalist and described her social activism in her writings. In the 1930s, Day worked closely with fellow activist Peter Maurin to establish the Catholic Worker Movement, a pacifist movement that combines direct aid for the poor and homeless with nonviolent, direct action.

As part of the Catholic Worker Movement, Day co-founded the Catholic Worker newspaper in 1933, and served as its editor from 1933 until her death in 1980. In this newspaper, Day advocated the Catholic economic theory of distributism, a third option between capitalism and socialism.

Pope Benedict XVI used her conversion story in an address before the U.S. Congress; Pope Francis included her in a list of four exemplary Americans who "buil[t] a better future."

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WHAT IS DOROTHY DAY TAMPA (DD TAMPA)?

DD Tampa will begin as a "house of hospitality" homeless drop-in center, inspired by the Catholic Worker Movement that began simply enough on May 1, 1933, by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin.

Grounded in a firm belief in the God-given dignity of every human person, the movement was committed to nonviolence, voluntary poverty and the Works of Mercy. Before long, Dorothy and Peter opened a "house of hospitality," a community, where the homeless, the hungry and the forsaken always would be welcome.

Today there are 187 Catholic Worker communities in the United States and around the world.

Need for DD Tampa?

Metropolitan Tampa recently reported 1,452 people experiencing homelessness; 160 were veterans, according to a Tampa Hillsborough Homeless Initiative point-in-time count taken Jan. 24, 2022. Serving this homeless population is a single Seminole Heights homeless drop-in center, The Coffee Shop (aka "The Shop"), operated by Gracepoint Wellness. The Shop offers its guests coffee, showers, bathrooms, laundry, internet, P.O. Box service, internet, and links to a variety of community resources. While a valued resource in our community, we believe Tampa's need is greater, and more geographically dispersed, than a lone center.

How will the DD Tampa drop-in center be different? DD Tampa will be different by design from other Tampa agencies and ministries. Rather than reduce guests to their physical needs, we will seek to meet their spiritual, social, and emotional needs, as well – in recognition, as Dorothy Day wrote, "[t]hat they are Jesus."

- **The Need** – offering a safe refuge from the chaos and dehumanization of life on the streets.
- **The Work** – focusing on the person vs. the need is the start of affirming our common humanity.
- **The Result** – fulfilling guests' social, emotional, spiritual, and physical needs.

Why will DD Tampa work?

DD Tampa does not require guests to answer invasive questions. Instead, accepting people where they are.

Who will benefit from DD Tampa?

- **Guests** will be honored as human beings, having value and worth.
- **Churches** model the unity of the One Body as they work together to love thy neighbor.
- **Volunteers** receive opportunities to use their unique gifts and talents to serve others.
- **Community ministries and agencies** help fill gaps in services.