

MANNA *in the wilderness*

March 2026

The Newsletter of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker

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Abundance Abounds

by Julia Occhiogrosso

In February we had a young couple spend a week with us. Rozella and Robert are taking a year to visit Catholic Worker houses and other communities to explore different expressions and models in the hopes of starting one themselves.

I met Tensie, Rozella's Mom in 1986 while I was still living at the Los Angeles Catholic Worker. It was Holy Week and she had come to downtown Los Angeles with her Catholic school youth group to distribute bread to the poor. As they were finishing, she happened upon the Los Angeles Catholic Worker's Stations of the Cross service in front of the Federal Building. At the end of the service one of our house guests, Eugene, approached her and asked if she knew "Miss Julie." Eugene was a simple man who became homeless when both of his parents died in a car accident. Now he lived at the Catholic Worker Hospitality House on Los Angeles' Skid Row; he had been living at the Catholic Worker long enough to feel quite comfortable inviting strangers to the house.

When they arrived at the Hospitality House, I smiled to myself, imagining Eugene, a gentle, unassuming, older man, escorting Tensie in her Catholic School uniform through the streets of downtown Skid Row to Zedakah House where we lived. I invited Tensie to dinner and at first she declined because it was Good Friday and she was fasting. She tells me I convinced her to join us for dinner by asking her if Jesus would want her to decline an offer to sit down to a meal with the poor? We shared a meal that evening and this was the beginning of Tensie's journey into Catholic Worker life.

That summer she signed up for a summer internship program with the Los Angeles Catholic Worker community (LACW). It was the same summer in which I was commissioned by the LACW to found a Catholic Worker in Las Vegas and Tensie would be my driver.

Tensie married and she and her husband Dennis founded a Catholic Worker in Guadalupe, CA. After thirty years, they still run a free clinic and provide services for the migrant farmworker community in Guadalupe.

During our recent visit, Rozella expressed appreciation for the many forma-

tive relationships and experiences she remembers from growing up at the Catholic Worker. She reminds me of the truism that people often perceive Catholic Worker life



Left: Julia and Tensie in the first Las Vegas Catholic Worker (LVCW) house in 1986. **Right:** Rozella and Julia in the current LVCW kitchen in 2026.



Pope Leo talks about Dorothy Day

(Excerpted from *Pope Leo's Jubilee Audience, Catechesis 9. To hope is to take a stand. Dorothy Day, Nov. 22, 2025, Vatican.VA. Celebrating the co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement.*)

Pope Leo spoke to the assembled pilgrims in St. Peter's Square, "The peace Jesus brings to us is like a fire, and it asks a lot of us. It asks us, first of all, to take a stand. [...] I would like to recall a small but great American woman, Dorothy Day, who lived in the last century. She had fire within. Dorothy Day took a stand. She saw that the development model of her country did not create the same opportunities for everyone; she understood that the dream was a nightmare for too many of them, that as a Christian she had to become involved with workers, migrants, those discarded by a deadly economy. She wrote and she served: it is important to unite the mind, the heart and the hands. This is what taking a stand is. She wrote as a journalist; that is, she thought and she made others think. Writing is important. And so is reading, today more than ever. And then Dorothy served meals, gave clothes, dressed and ate like those she served: she united mind, heart and hands. In this way, to hope is to take a stand.

as one of sacrifice and austerity but in actuality we are surrounded by abundance. From the many gifts in kind that arrive at our doorstep to share with the poor to the tapestry of enduring generous relationships that bring joy and sustenance to our lives and work, plentitude abounds.

Dorothy Day got thousands of people involved. She opened up houses in many cities, in many neighbourhoods: not large service centres, but places of charity and justice where people could call each other by name, get to know each other one by one, and transform indignation into communion and action. This is how peacemakers are: they take a stand and bear the consequences, but they move forward."

Donation Information: Thanks for your support!

Checks: Please make checks payable and send to:

Las Vegas Catholic Worker
500 W. Van Buren Ave.

Las Vegas, NV 89106-3039

Zelle: mail@lvcw.org (no fee)

Venmo: mail@lvcw.org

PayPal Giving Fund:

(no fees taken out)

<http://lvcw.org/giving>

Credit / Debit Card:

<http://lvcw.org/donate>

Click the "Donate" button above the credit card icons, click on the \$0 and type amount, then click the bottom "Donate with a Debit or Credit Card" button.



Forty Years Ago, 1986 - Above: Members of the Los Angeles Catholic Worker community gather for the dedication of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker. **Right:** Julia Occhiogrosso and Rickey Chun begin by serving cold water to day laborers.

Save the Date
40th Anniversary
Celebration
Oct. 17, 2026



Two Reflections on the “Morality” of U.S. Foreign Policy

In our time, the weakness of multilateralism is a particular cause for concern at the international level. A diplomacy that promotes dialogue and seeks consensus among all parties is being replaced by a diplomacy based on force, by either individuals or groups of allies. War is back in vogue and a zeal for war is spreading. The principle established after the Second World War, which prohibited nations from using force to violate the borders of others, has been completely undermined. Peace is no longer sought as a gift and desirable good in itself, or in pursuit of “the establishment of the ordered universe willed by God with a more perfect form of justice among men and women.” Instead, peace is sought through weapons as a condition for asserting one’s own dominion.

Signed,

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, *Archbishop of Chicago*

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, *Archbishop of Washington*

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., *Archbishop of Newark*

– from *Charting A Moral Vision of American Foreign Policy*, Jan. 19, 2026

“We fight to win. We unleash overwhelming and punishing violence on the enemy. We don’t fight with stupid rules of engagement. We untie the hands of our warfighters to intimidate, demoralize, hunt and kill the enemies of our country.”

– Pete Hegseth, Secretary of Defense, now Secretary of War, from a speech at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Sep. 30, 2025

We will be Closed
June 17 - 20
July 15 - 25

Nuclear Stations of the Cross

April 3, Good Friday, noon
At the Mercury Gate of the NNSS (Nevada Nuclear Weapons Test Site) presented by the Las Vegas Catholic Worker, call (702) 647-0728 for more info and directions.

Volunteer Scheduling
(702) 647-0728
or mail@lvcw.org

Thurs.-Sat., 6:00 a.m.

Morning prayer at the Catholic Worker
Thurs.-Sat., 6:15 a.m. Over 300 “To-go” hot meals served to the poor and homeless (6:15 a.m.: meal assembly, 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.: meal distribution)

Wed.-Fri., 8-10 a.m. Kitchen crew prepares for the next morning’s meal
Thursday, 11:30 a.m.

50 lunches taken to the homeless prepared by Our Lady of Wisdom Italo-Greek Byzantine Catholic Church

Friday, 8-10 a.m. Clean the World Foundation shower trailer in our empty lot, up to 40 showers given. We provide clean clothing and hygiene supplies, Touro University students offer a monthly medical clinic.

Second Sat. of the month

Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast for the homeless

We are a Participating Member of Nevadans for the Common Good
(for info, contact Julia@lvcw.org)

100% RECYCLED PAPER, CHLORINE FREE, FSC CERTIFIED

A Benefit for Nevadans for the Common Good (NCG) FOURTH ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF

Sample Ten Chilis! Dine on a bowl of Chili plus toppings, corn bread, drinks and desserts.

Saturday, May 2, 2026

1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Admission: Adults: \$25 (\$30 at door)

Children: \$15 (12 and under)

Cast your Vote for your favorite Chili!

Christ the King Catholic Church

4925 S. Torrey Pines Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89118

We will have an entrant in the Chili Cook-off, last year’s Third Place winner, Frank, our Friday morning volunteer, will be entering the contest for the Catholic Worker. For tickets: nevadansforthecommongood.org/chili-2026

