

Foreword

“I have long since come to believe that people never mean half of what they say, and that it is best to disregard their talk and judge only their actions.”

—DOROTHY DAY, *THE LONG LONELINESS*

DOROTHY DAY’S BLUNT SUMMARY ILLUMINES not only her own life, but also the life of Darrin Snyder Belousek. A growing number of people are paying attention to St. Dorothy, but it may be less clear why they should be interested in Darrin. This special book will show them why. Darrin is a Christian whom Dorothy Day would respect. He is tenacious yet teachable, rigorous yet humble. Above all he acts as well as talks; he is a disciple walking on the road with Jesus. Throughout this book he recounts his “pilgrimage to the gospel of peace in a time of war.” He begins the book with questions:

How much of myself (and my stuff) must I give up to follow Jesus?
How does belonging to a faith community shape being a Christian?
How do I walk in faith with friends whose faith is unclear or uncertain?
What gives Christians hope in the face of power politics?
Can I be pro-life and decry war, too?
How do I make peace amidst the wrongs of the world?

By the end of the book’s thirteen chapters his readers have learned to know Darrin. We have watched him as he answers not only by thinking but also by taking risky steps. A street beggar, a mentally tormented woman, a stranger in a foreign city—these have become Darrin’s life-teachers. As he follows Jesus he has learned that he must change not only his mind but also

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his priorities and behavior. Choosing against the security of an academic career, Darrin has discovered that sessional employment and geographic moves have offered unexpected opportunities in his pilgrimage of faith.

The theology that results from his life is scrupulous, thoughtful, and earthy. Darrin offers his theology in several media. Poetry expresses his response to the obliteration bombing of Dresden; testimony grows out of his experience of community in inner-city South Bend, Indiana; meditation on scripture (the Gospel of John) illuminates the politics of Jesus in conflict with empire; philosophical rigor flashes out in his engagement with the doctrine of the Just War. Undergirding all these approaches are Darrin's bedrock convictions—that God is with us, that Jesus reveals God to us, and that Jesus offers his way to all who seek to live in harmony with God. Jesus has challenged Darrin to trust God, and to put his trust to the test in everyday life. And Darrin challenges his readers to walk with him on the road where, as Dorothy Day said, our lives will demonstrate the way we really think. In Jesus' words, his followers will be known not by their words but by their fruits (Matt 7:20).

This type of theology differs from academic theology. In these chapters we encounter not only a formidable, disciplined intellect but also heartfelt passion and moral courage. We see Darrin's different facets as he wrestles with classical issues (e.g., what does it mean that Christ assumed our nature?) and with his own life questions (e.g., fear, death, innocent suffering). We also encounter a deeply ecumenical Christian spirit. Darrin came to faith among Catholics, and has found his home among Mennonites. In company with both he works out his deeply biblical and orthodox faith that invites us to walk with him on the pilgrimage of discipleship. For many years we have known Darrin as a friend, and we have found him to be the person who emerges in this book—an engaging, vulnerable, and sympathetic companion on the road.

Alan and Eleanor Kreider