



DISCERNMENT @ THE MOVIES

Entertaining Angels: The Dorothy Day Story

Entertaining Angels: The Dorothy Day Story is the moving true story of a woman who wanted to change the world for the better and thirsted for a lifelong love. Throughout her life, she was known as a radical, an activist, a journalist, a feminist, a single mother, a convert to Catholicism, and the co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement. Dorothy's early years were spent in searching for "something more," which led her to journalism, working for social justice on behalf of those who were poor, failed love affairs, and even an abortion. In the film, we witness the transformation of this spirited and passionate young woman into a Catholic mystic whose witness to Christ in and for the poor continues to challenge the conscience of the Church today.

Entertaining Angels dramatizes Dorothy's journey to conversion, and how she discovers God's mission for her and perseveres in that mission through several crises. This inspiring, well-crafted film offers many insights into the spiritual art of discernment.

Discernment Key to Watching the Film

After converting to Catholicism, Dorothy generously seeks God's will, and finds God's voice and face in surprising places. As you watch the film, pay attention to the themes of discernment and looking for/listening for God.

After Watching the Film

Questions to reflect, talk about with others, and bring to prayer:

1. What is your favorite moment of the film? How did it touch you and why?
2. How does God work in Dorothy's life and reveal himself to her? How does Dorothy recognize God's presence and mission in her life?
3. In the film, what was Dorothy's greatest crisis? Does God answer her prayers? How?
4. How does Dorothy's experience of God as portrayed in this film help you to understand how God might be speaking to you or working in your life?

Prayer & Reflection

1. Read and pray with Hebrews 3:1-8

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." So we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?" Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God

to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.¹

2. Reflect/Journal the Following Questions

- * Perhaps you are thirsting for “Something More” in your life. What have you done, and what can you do, to continue to seek true fulfillment—the fullness of life in Christ, expressed in love for your brothers and sisters?

- * God reveals himself to Dorothy in surprising ways. How does God answer your prayers? How does God reveal himself and his desires for you?

- * God is all-faithful, but there are times when each of us feel abandoned by God. What is our response when we feel that God hasn’t answered our prayers, or it seems that God *has* abandoned us?

- * How would you describe the mission that God has entrusted to you? If that is not yet clear to you, how can you continue to discern God’s invitation to love?

- * What is the next step you can take to move towards greater discernment and surrender to God’s will?

3. Conclude with a prayer asking God for these two gifts: that of seeing his face in others, and that of loving others with the heart of Christ.

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life. Amen.

¹ New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition, copyright © 1989, 1993 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Entertaining Angels: The Dorothy Day Story (1996), directed by Michael Ray Rhodes, screenplay by John Wells.

Discernment at the Movies Guide: Entertaining Angels by Marie Paul Curley, FSP. Copyright 2016 Daughters of St. Paul.