

# “WE GO BACK”: ANTIMODERNISM IN THE EARLY CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

The Catholic Worker Movement, founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933, is generally thought of as peace and social justice movement. While this has been the case since the founding of movement in 1933, the early Workers also exhibited a prominent antimodernism. Maurin provided much of the basis for their antimodernism by way of his notion of history, which exalted the medieval and condemned the modern. By examining the Workers until approximately the 1950s, the study demonstrates that key aspects of the movement—namely, charity, poverty, and views on community—were influenced by this ethos. Acknowledging their antimodernism offers a means to a deeper analysis and an alternate perspective of the history of the movement, as well as an opportunity to reassess the Catholic Workers’ place in American religious history.