

Love in the Ruins: Walking Through Loss with Caryll Houselander And Dorothy Day

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At some point, it has touched the life of almost every woman: rejection from a man one loved. Whether it happened to her personally, or to someone to whom she was close, every woman knows the pain that abandonment can cause, and the scars it leaves behind. It's one of the hallmarks of the "sexual revolution" – women who commit themselves to man without the "formality" of marriage later find themselves the victims of that decision and are left alone to deal with its consequences.

Two Catholic women contemporaries – artists, authors and activists – who suffered from rejection and abandonment and whose life and work were profoundly shaped by it – are Caryll Houselander and Dorothy Day. How did Day and Houselander seek solace amidst the ruins of their lives? How did they pick up the pieces and live with dignity and meaning, without being weighed down with discouragement and self-pity – even as their former lovers went on to form relationships and families with other women?

How Houselander and Day responded to the betrayal they experienced, how they looked to the Church for guidance and how they responded to their suffering with love and how it brought them closer to God (even as they questioned Him), will be explored in this lecture.