

Mother Teresa of Calcutta



Mother Teresa

Purpose

To learn about the life, work, prayers and beatification of Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Entrance of Pupils

A thought provoking slideshow introducing the theme of 'Mother Teresa' for the pupils to enter assembly to (10 minutes).

Introduction

It is very rare to be able to say that we have had a Saint living amongst us, but then Mother Teresa of Calcutta was indeed a very, very rare person. She mixed with nobility, politicians and popes in just the same way that she mixed with the poorest of people and treated all completely equally.

She lives on through her wise sayings and daily example.

Life and Work

Agnes Bojaxhui (Anjeze Gonxhe Bojaxhiu) was born in Macedonia (formerly Albania) on 26th August 1910. Very little is known about the early life of Mother Teresa. Her father died when she was 8 and at the age of 12 , she decided that her calling was to work for the poor and began her training for missionary work. At 18 she joined a group of Catholic, Irish nuns, the Sisters of Loretto and trained for months in Dublin before setting out with them to work in India. She chose the name Teresa after the Patron Saint of Missionaries, St Therese of Lisieux.



From 1930 to 1948 Teresa worked in a school teaching Geography and Catechism, later becoming Principal, however she felt that she had a very strong calling to work amongst the poor and in 1948 Pope Pius XII granted her permission to become an independent nun to start the Missionaries of Charity.

A number of her pupils followed her and she established her first home in a former Hindu temple. There she cared for those who had no one to care for them including the disabled, ill, blind, the elderly and those rejected by society. By 1952 she had established the first 'Home of the Dying' in Calcutta. This was designed to give a chance for people to have a dignified death no matter what the person's religion or background. Soon after this followed the opening of a hospice for lepers.



In 1955 Mother Teresa saw the need to help the thousands of abandoned and orphaned children on the streets of Calcutta and opened her first Children's Home of the Immaculate Heart.

By 1965, Pope Paul VI had given permission for the order to expand outside India and the work of the Missionaries expanded to parts of Asia , Africa, North America and Latin America and any areas suffering from natural disasters and war.

Her first home in the Bronx, New York opened in 1971.

In the same year she won the Pope John XXI Peace Prize. So outstanding was



her contribution to the poor, that in 1979 she won the Nobel Peace Prize followed in 1985 by the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Wherever she saw suffering, Mother Teresa responded in practical ways including a hospital to care for those suffering radiation sickness from the Chernobyl disaster in the Ukraine to a home for Aids victims in New York. Eventually she founded over 600 homes in 123 countries not including all of the homes in Calcutta.

In 1997 on 5th September Mother Teresa died after years of ill health. The Indian government held a day of mourning for her and she was buried at the Mother House of the Missionary of Charity in Calcutta. Many millions from a wide variety of religions mourned her passing.

Some have criticised Mother Teresa for spending donations in expanding the number of homes rather than investing more money into better care and facilities for fewer homes.

Others argue that she was staunchly Catholic in her views and often spoke against such matters as abortion.

She has certainly split opinion about her beliefs and choice of actions, however she has left behind a legacy of incredible words and service through action for generations to ponder and learn by.



Suffering

Amazingly, Mother Teresa underwent a good deal of suffering herself.

Spiritually, she was later to reveal that for nearly 50 years she struggled with her religious beliefs and rarely felt the presence of God. This caused her incredible pain, emptiness and loneliness.

Mother Teresa also experienced physical ill health including two heart attacks, bouts of pneumonia and malaria.

'Revolution of Love' Video Clip

Perhaps her speech on a 'Revolution of Love' best summarises her beliefs.

'Let us begin the revolution of love. The joy of loving is in the joy of sharing. When my good people are hungry for bread, I give them the piece of bread and I have found that difficult.

But when they are hungry for love; lonely, unwanted, unloved, it takes very, very compassionate understanding and love especially the suffering, the hungry, the naked, the homeless. They are all over the world.

Like one man I picked up from the streets said:

'I have lived like an animal but I am going to die like an angel' and he died with the most beautiful smile on his face because he was loved at the end.

I think that this love begins in our own family and there is something so beautiful that love begins at home and that can spread like a burning fire from house to house and by loving one another, it will spread throughout the world—peace, joy, unity and love.

A real revolution, I call it the 'Revolution of Love'.

Mother Teresa



First Miracle

The first miracle attributed to Mother Teresa is said to be the healing of cancer in an Indian woman called Monica Besra. This was followed by at least two further accounts of miracles that were researched by the Vatican.

Beatification

Mother Teresa was beatified on 19th October 2003 by Pope John Paul II and named Blessed Mother Teresa.

Beatification is the first step to sainthood.

Canonization

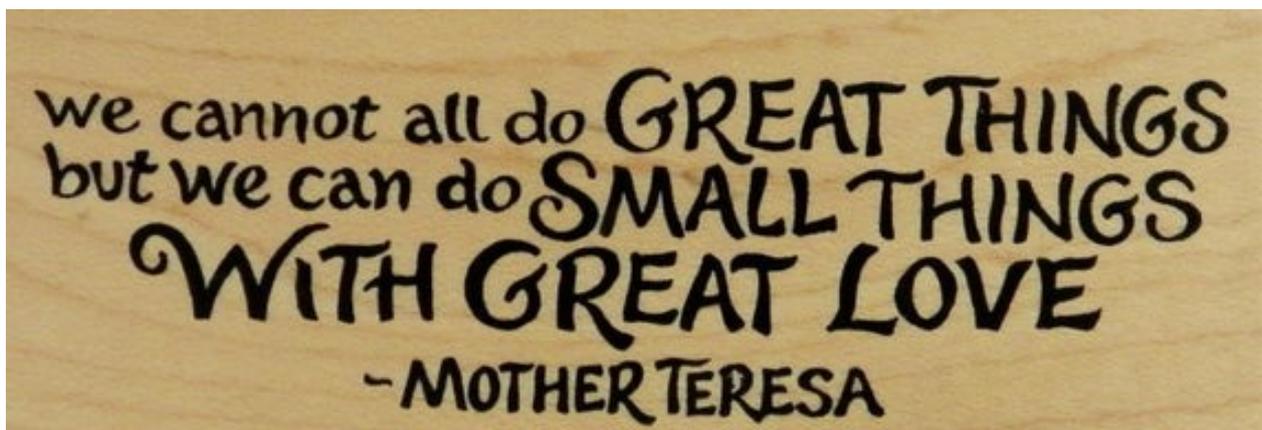
On 4th September 2016, she was canonized (meaning declared a saint) by Pope Francis.

Listen to this personal memory of Mother Teresa

[Memories of Mother Teresa Video Clip](#)

'You get the trucks, I'll get the approvals'

Catholic Relief Services.



Key Quotation

**“People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.
Forgive them anyway.**

**If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.
Be kind anyway.**

**If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some
genuine enemies.
Succeed anyway.**

**If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.
Be honest and sincere anyway.**

**What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.
Create anyway.**

**If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.
Be happy anyway.**

**The good you do today, will often be forgotten.
Do good anyway.**

**Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.
Give your best anyway.**

**In the final analysis, it is between you and God.
It was never between you and them anyway.”**

Mother Teresa



The Bible Says

The Story of the Good Samaritan

²⁵ A teacher of the Law came up and tried to trap Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to receive eternal life?”

²⁶ Jesus answered him, “What do the Scriptures say? How do you interpret them?”

²⁷ The man answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind’; and ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’”

²⁸ “You are right,” Jesus replied; “do this and you will live.”

²⁹ But the teacher of the Law wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ Jesus answered, “There was once a man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when robbers attacked him, stripped him, and beat him up, leaving him half dead. ³¹ It so happened that a priest was going down that road; but when he saw the man, he walked on by on the other side. ³² In the same way a Levite also came there, went over and looked at the man, and then walked on by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan who was traveling that way came upon the man, and when he saw him, his heart was filled with pity. ³⁴ He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Take care of him,’ he told the innkeeper, ‘and when I come back this way, I will pay you whatever else you spend on him.’”

³⁶ And Jesus concluded, “In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a neighbor toward the man attacked by the robbers?”

³⁷ The teacher of the Law answered, “The one who was kind to him.”

Jesus replied, “You go, then, and do the same.”

Luke 10 25:37



Let's Pray

Dear God

As Mother Teresa taught us:

'God does not create poverty; we do, because we do not share.

If you cannot feed a hundred people, then feed just one.'

Help us to make a difference by sharing our good fortune and ourselves.

Amen

Putting it Into Practice

Mother Teresa started her work by doing very simple , small things. She taught :

'Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love.'

Today, think about how you can support people locally by either fund raising or by starting or adding to a food bank collection in your area.

Exit of Pupils

A thought provoking slideshow introducing the theme of 'Mother Teresa' for the pupils to exit assembly to (10 minutes).



Day 2

Dear God

Mother Teresa teaches:

'I always say I am a little pencil in God's hands. He does the thinking. He does the writing.

He does everything and sometimes it is really hard because it is a broken pencil and He has to sharpen it a little more.

Help me be a little instrument in His hands so that He can use me any time, anywhere. We only have to say 'yes' to God.'

Amen

What small acts of kindness can you do today, quietly and without fanfare, that will make differences to others?

Day 3

Dear God

Mother Teresa said:

'Some people come in your life as blessings.

Some come in your life as lessons.'

Help us to appreciate those who add love, peace and joy to us and remind us to learn from those who may be more difficult to cope with.

Amen

Today, rather than getting cross at people who irritate us or are unkind to us, try to think about the lesson that we can learn from them.



Day 4

Dear God

Mother Teresa tells us:

'If peace and love are not allowed to take their rightful place at the table of negotiation, then hatred and anger will produce a conflict that may continue for years to come.'

We pray for peace at home, at school and in the wider world.

Amen

Think about people who you have fallen out with or that you don't get along with.

Today, go and make peace with just one of those people.

Day 5

Dear God,

Mother Teresa teaches:

'Let us remember that Jesus has said:

'Whatever you do to the least of your brothers, you do it to me.'

Just think—that little smile that you give to a lonely person; that hand that you give a blind person to cross the road; that little bit of food (or money) that you sacrifice for someone who is hungry, you do it for God.'

Amen

Today, keep a special look out for those people who tend to get left out of things; who might be sad, lonely and isolated.

Make a special attempt to quietly include them in your activities.

