

Mother Teresa

by Kathryn Spink (1997)

Agnes was born 26 Aug 1910 in Skopje, Serbia (aka Yugoslavia). She was the youngest of three children born to Nikola & Dranfile Bojaxhiu. Her dad died in 1919 at age 45. Her mom struggled, but still fed the poor & took in orphans.

She encourages & gives her whole attention to the person she encounters. She is petite, frail, strong-willed, determined & fearless. Her secret is prayer & centrality of Christ. She felt if there were still poor in the world, she did not give enough. She found an old woman near death & crying. She wasn't afraid to die, but was hurt that her family abandoned her.

At first, she was teaching in the Loretta schools, but was so concerned for the poor she went out to the slums. In absence of material things, she found that just her concern alone for the poor brought them joy. It made her sad when she was sick & could not do God's work, but then realized the importance of prayer.

She had a calling to work with the poor, but had no money. She was dependent on God & others. She met with several Popes over the years. For every Christian that helped in India there were ten non-Christians. They even created a Hindu Order of nuns. Every act of love brings people closer to God. When she was in pain, she offered her suffering to God.

When she requested to help the poor in China, she was told they have no poor, but they let her bring hope to the discouraged. She took a plate of rice to a hungry Hindu family. The wife left immediately to share half the rice with her Muslim neighbors. Know your shortcomings & give them to God. She hated to see waste. **The breakdown of family life was at the root of many evils.**

She took no government aid so there were no strings attached & she was totally dependent on God. She made fund raisers pay for the administrative costs out of their own pockets. She died 5 Sep 1997.

God's providence:

1. They were out of food & a knock on the door brought just enough rice for dinner
2. She gave away her last rupee, then a letter came with 100 more
3. They needed a new mattress & a knock at the door brought one since he was leaving
4. They were short on food to feed 7000, the govt closed school & sent them bread
5. A new children's home would cost 50,000 rupees, just as they were given that much
6. The ideal home was selling for 9000 £, but she was given 6k; they lowered the price

The fruit if silence is prayer.

The fruit if prayer is faith.

The fruit if faith is love.

The fruit if love is service.

The fruit if service is peace.

1928 she became Sister Mary Teresa & set sail for Calcutta, India
1937 she took her final vows of poverty & became Mother Teresa
1943 famine compounded by WWII demands & war babies created more starving people
1944 Father Celeste Van Exem became her advisor for 45 yrs
1948 she left the convent to start the Missionaries of Charity & became a citizen of India
1948 Jacqueline de Decker & friends had one person praying for each missionary
1949 the 1st ten girls to help were past students & they moved into their new home rent free
1950 their congregation became official
1953 they moved into a larger home & given a building for people to die in dignity
1955 opened several children's homes
1957 her 1st mobile leprosy clinic
1959 they extended their activities in other cities in India
1963 Congregation of brothers started
1965 she sent 5 sisters to Venezuela & soon other countries
1969 laymen formed Co-Workers to pray for Missionaries of Charity
1977 they helped victims of a flood
1979 158 foundations scattered around the world with 1187 sisters & 800,000 Co-Workers
1979 she won the Nobel Peace Prize
1980 she was given the "Jewel of India" & only 1 of 3 who were invited into the Red Fort
1982 the Pope sent her to help the victims of war in Beirut
1983 Queen Elizabeth presented her with the Honorary Order of Merit
1984 Missionaries of Charity Fathers & Medical Co-Workers began
1984 Four million lepers treated to date & she went to help famine in Ethiopia
1985 President Reagan presented her with the Medal of Freedom
1985 she opened a center in China
1986 she opened a center in Cuba
1986 started a center for dying AIDS patients in the US
1988 she went to Russia to comfort those who lost family in an earthquake
1990 she resigned as the head of Missionaries of Charity with 3000 sisters in 90 countries
1990 three million Co-Workers were doing small things of love
1991 she opened a center in Albania
1992 she went to Iraq to help the war victims
1996 she was 1 of only 3 who received an honorary US citizenship
1997 she received a Congressional Medal of Honor from the US

Theresa Quotes: "Every person is Christ for me & since there is only one Jesus, the person I am meeting is the one person in the world at that moment." "It is better to make mistakes in kindness than to work miracles in unkindness." "Being unwanted is the greatest disease of all." "When a gardener comes to pluck the flowers, he plucks the best." "Let us then use the occasion to do something beautiful for God." "Jesus comes to you & me and often, very often, we pass him by." "If we really want to pray, we must first learn to listen, for in the silence of the heart God speaks." "Abortion is nothing but the fear of the child." "It is the joy of giving; the joy of bringing love into people's lives that keeps us all going." "Beautiful are the ways of God if we allow Him to use us as He wants."

Quotes: "Fill yourself first & then only will you be able to give to others." (St Augustine)

Books: Something Beautiful for God (Malcolm Muggeridge)