St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

**BACKGROUND**


*Order of sisters she started:* **The Missionaries of Charity**

**DVD NOTES**

1. Mother Teresa’s original name was **Agnes**. When she was **12** years old she felt the first stirrings of a being called to be a religious sister, even though she had never seen a **nun** before. She joined the Irish Loreto Sisters in **India** when she was **18**.

2. She took the name St. Mary Teresa of the Child Jesus after **The Little Flower** (Thérèse of Lisieux).

3. After teaching geography and English at a nice school, Sister Teresa switched to a different grade school where she came face to face with dreadful **poverty**. At this new school, Sister Teresa worked so hard that she had a sort of **breakdown**. She was sent on a train to another town to recuperate. While on this dusty train she experienced a call to be a "**Missionary of Charity**".

4. When Sister Teresa went back to Calcutta she persistently asked to start a new order of sisters that would serve the **poorest** of the **poor**. Many of the first Missionaries of Charity were her **former students**.

5. All the first sisters could possess were: a cotton, **blue** and **white** sari (habit/robe), pair of **sandals**, crucifix, a **rosary**, a metal bucket for washing, and a very thin mattress that served as a bed. The sisters had to **beg** for their food.

6. The sisters would wake up at **4:40 am**, brush their teeth with ash from the stove, scrub their bodies with a small bar of soap that had been divided into **6** pieces, and then meditate, **pray**, and attend Mass for an hour and a half before eating a small breakfast and heading out to care for the poor in the slums.

7. The Missionaries of Charity began in Calcutta, **India**, but now there are over **500** communities on **6** continents. Mother Teresa has famously said, “If there are poor on the **moon**, we will go there too.”

8. In 1979 Mother Teresa won the Nobel Peace Prize. She surprised a lot of people when she used her acceptance speech as an occasion to courageously speak out against **abortion** and call it the greatest enemy of peace.
For much of her adult life (about a 50-year period!), Mother Teresa did not experience the presence and love of God in her heart. She came to see her sufferings in connection with Jesus’ own abandonment from the Father.

Mother Teresa died on September 5, 1997. When her body was displayed she was wearing her blue and white sari, but was also shoeless, showing her gnarled feet, which spoke most eloquently of her service to the poorest of the poor.

MATTHEW 25

A passage of the Bible that Mother Teresa often quoted comes from Matthew 25: 31-46, during which Jesus says, “When I was hungry, you gave me food. When I was thirsty, you gave me drink. When I was a stranger, you welcomed me. When I was naked, you clothed me. When I was ill or in prison, you visited me.” Jesus followers ask, “But when did we see you hungry, thirsty, as a stranger, naked, ill, or in prison?” To which Jesus responds, “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers or sisters of mine, you did it to me.” Mother Teresa lived her life as if every person she encountered were Jesus.

TRUE POVERTY

Mother Teresa often said America was the poorest country in the world because it suffers most from the poverty of loneliness.

THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL

Mother Teresa experienced what many saints refer to as “The Dark Night of the Soul”, during which she did not feel the love and presence of God anywhere in her life.

Question: By why would God allow this to happen???
Answer: God oftentimes draws us close to Him by allowing us to experience all kinds of wonderful feelings of joy and excitement (i.e. Christian camps, retreats, etc.). But sometimes God allows these amazing feelings to partially or completely fade away. God does this so that we learn not to fall in love with the good feelings, but with Him.

This experience is common within marriages and friendships. It helps us remember that we are called to love other people, not just the good feelings we get from them.

Since many people in our culture don’t understand this (either in regards to God, a dating/marriage relationship, or friendship), they think when the feelings start to fade away, love is also fading away. This why it is SO important to remember the true definition of love: That it is primarily a choice, not just a feeling.