

“Turning Possibilities into Realities”

## Building a Global Movement for Change [UNSG]: The Promise (part 80)



### "Working Hard at Working Smart" (part C)

## Spiritual Values: Tribute to Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta



**“Let us praise the Lord for this diminutive woman in love with God, a humble Gospel messenger and a tireless benefactor of humanity. In her we honour one of the most important figures of our time. Let us welcome her message and follow her example.”**

St Jean-Paul II

**The future we want: The Promise: The Force Beyond**

## The Making of a Saint

**BEATIFICATION OF MOTHER THERESA OF CALCUTTA (Kolkata)**

**HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II**

**World Mission Sunday — Sunday, 19 October 2003**

1. *"Whoever would be first among you must be slave of all"* (Mk10: 44). Jesus' words to his disciples that have just rung out in this Square show us the way to evangelical "greatness". It is the way walked by Christ himself that took him to the Cross: a journey of love and service that overturns all human logic. *To be the servant of all!*

*Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, Foundress of the Missionaries of Charity whom today I have the joy of adding to the Roll of the Blessed, allowed this logic to guide her. I am personally grateful to this courageous woman whom I have always felt beside me. Mother Teresa, *an icon of the Good Samaritan*, went everywhere to serve Christ in the poorest of the poor. Not even conflict and war could stand in her way.

Every now and then she would come and tell me about her experiences in her service to the Gospel values. I remember, for example, her pro-life and anti-abortion interventions, even when she was awarded the Nobel Prize for peace (Oslo, 10 December 1979). She often used to say: "If you hear of some woman who does not want to keep her child and wants to have an abortion, try to persuade her to bring him to me. I will love that child, seeing in him the sign of God's love".

2. Is it not significant that her beatification is taking place on the very day on which the Church celebrates *World Mission Sunday*? With the witness of her life, Mother Teresa reminds everyone that *the evangelizing mission of the Church passes through charity*, nourished by prayer and listening to God's word. Emblematic of this missionary style is the image that shows the new Blessed clasping a child's hand in one hand while moving her Rosary beads with the other.

Contemplation and action, evangelization and human promotion: Mother Teresa proclaimed the

Gospel living her life as a total gift to the poor but, at the same time, *steeped in prayer*.

3. *Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant* (Mk 10: 43). With particular emotion we remember today Mother Teresa, a great servant of the poor, of the Church and of the whole world. Her life is a testimony to the dignity and the privilege of humble service. She had chosen to be not just *the least* but to be *the servant of the least*. As a real mother to the poor, she bent down to those suffering various forms of poverty. Her greatness lies in her ability to give without counting the cost, to give "until it hurts". Her life was a radical living and a bold proclamation of the Gospel.

The cry of Jesus on the Cross, *"I thirst"* (Jn 19: 28), expressing the depth of God's longing for man, penetrated Mother Teresa's soul and found fertile soil in her heart. *Satiating Jesus' thirst for love and for souls* in union with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, had become the sole aim of Mother Teresa's existence and the inner force that drew her out of herself and made her "run in haste" across the globe to labour for the salvation and the sanctification of the poorest of the poor.

4. *"As you did to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me"* (Mt 25: 40). This Gospel passage, so crucial in understanding Mother Teresa's service to the poor, was the basis of her faith-filled conviction that *in touching the broken bodies of the poor she was touching the body of Christ*. It was to Jesus himself, hidden under the distressing disguise of the poorest of the poor, that her service was directed. Mother Teresa highlights the deepest meaning of service - an act of love done to the hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, prisoners (cf. Mt 25: 34-36) is done to Jesus himself.

Recognizing him, she ministered to him with wholehearted devotion, expressing the delicacy of her spousal love. Thus, in total gift of herself to God and neighbour, Mother Teresa found her greatest fulfilment and *lived the noblest qualities of her femininity*. She wanted to be a sign of "God's love, God's presence and God's compassion", and so remind all of the value and dignity of each of God's children, "created to love and be loved". Thus was Mother Teresa "bringing souls to God and God to souls" and satiating Christ's thirst, especially for those most in need, those whose vision of God had been dimmed by suffering and pain.

5. *"The Son of man also came... to give his life as a ransom for many"* (Mk 10: 45). Mother Teresa shared in the Passion of the crucified Christ in a special way during long years of "inner darkness". For her that was a test, at times an agonizing one, which she accepted as a rare "gift and privilege".

In the darkest hours she clung even more tenaciously to prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. This harsh spiritual trial led her to *identify herself more and more closely with those whom she served each day*, feeling their pain and, at times, even their rejection. She was fond of repeating that *the greatest poverty is to be unwanted*, to have no one to take care of you.

6. *"Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you"*. How often, like the Psalmist, did Mother Teresa call on her Lord in times of inner desolation: "In you, in you I hope, my God!"

Let us praise the Lord for this *diminutive woman in love with God*, a humble Gospel messenger and a tireless benefactor of humanity. In her we honour one of the most important figures of our time. Let us welcome her message and follow her example.

Virgin Mary, Queen of all the Saints, help us to be gentle and humble of heart like this fearless messenger of Love. Help us to serve every person we meet with joy and a smile. Help us to be missionaries of Christ, our peace and our hope. Amen!

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## *Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi*

***Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace.***

***where there is hatred let me sow love,  
where there is injury let me sow pardon,  
where there is doubt let me sow faith,  
where there is despair let me give hope,  
where there is darkness let me give light,  
Where there is sadness let me give joy.***

***O Divine Master,***

***grant that I may not try to be comforted  
but to comfort,  
not try to be understood but to understand,  
not try to be loved but to love.***

***Because it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in forgiving that we are forgiven,  
and it is in dying  
that we are born to eternal life.***



*Mother Teresa's visit to Seychelles July 1984*

## Mother Teresa Quotes

- Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.
- Joy is strength.
- The person who gives with a smile is the best giver because God loves a cheerful giver.
- One of the greatest diseases is to be nobody to anybody.
- Love to be real, it must cost—it must hurt—it must empty us of self.
- Our life of poverty is as necessary as the work itself. Only in heaven will we see how much we owe to the poor for helping us to love God better because of them.
- We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature – trees, flowers, grass-grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence... We need silence to be able to touch souls.
- If we pray, we will believe; If we believe, we will love; If we love, we will serve.
- Reach high, for stars lie hidden in your soul. Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal.
- It is a kingly act to assist the fallen.
- Pain and suffering have come into your life, but remember pain, sorrow, suffering are but the kiss of Jesus – a sign that you have come so close to Him that He can kiss you.
- There are many people who can do big things, but there are very few people who will do the small things.
- I must be willing to give whatever it takes to do good to others. This requires that I be willing to give until it hurts. Otherwise, there is no true love in me, and I bring injustice, not peace, to those around me.
- Loneliness is the leprosy of the modern world.
- When a poor person dies of hunger it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed.
- In loving one another through our works we bring an increase of grace and a growth in divine love.
- Even the rich are hungry for love, for being cared for, for being wanted, for having someone to call their own.
- Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing.
- There's nothing more calming in difficult moments than knowing there's someone fighting with you.
- A life not lived for others is not a life.
- The biggest disease today is not leprosy or tuberculosis, but rather the feeling of being unwanted.
- I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.
- Suffering is nothing by itself. But suffering shared with the passion of Christ is a wonderful gift, the most beautiful gift, a token of love."
- Prayer is the mortar that holds our house together.
- If you judge people, you have no time to love them.

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