

Goethals News

The Goethals Indian Library & Research Society, Kolkata

Vol. XIX No. 2

Bulletin

April - June 2016

SAINT TERESA OF KOLKATA

By Fr. J. Felix Raj, SJ



Mother Teresa has long been a saint seated at the shrine of the souls

of millions of Indians. The world adores her as Mother and admires her as the priestess of humanity.

Mother adopted Kolkata as her own place – for Kolkata she is the song of celebration, hymn of compassion, she is known as Blessed Teresa of Calcutta. She will be called Saint Teresa of Kolkata after the canonization – the city of Kolkata shall shine in her holiness. I wish and pray that her Sainthood washes away our sinfulness.

The Jesuits have always been close and respectful to Mother Teresa – the Fathers of St. Xavier's College have always appreciated her work. Fr. Celest Van Exem was her spiritual director for many years and she never failed to meet him once every week for her spiritual guidance. Fr. Edourad Le Joly was one of the writers who promoted her significantly with 21 books on her life and works.

I have had a close association with Mother. Whenever I invited her to St. Xavier's College to address the staff and students, she was there

**The Fruit of Silence is Prayer.
The Fruit of Prayer is Faith.
The Fruit of Faith is Love.
The Fruit of Service is Peace.
-Mother Teresa**

with her characteristic smile, humility and a presence that created an atmosphere of prayer and veneration. About thirty years ago I had met Mother Teresa in Mother House. I had just been ordained as a priest. As soon as she came to greet me she stretched out her hand and touched my feet – I hastily withdrew; she said, 'you are a new priest and I want your blessing.' I said 'who am I in front of you?' She responded in her humble way 'as a priest you are the image of Christ to me. So it is you who must bless me.' When I asked for her blessings she gave me a Rosary and said 'Pray for me and for my work for the destitute and dying'. I discovered in this lady the divine dispensation that reached the core of my heart. Every word she spoke, every touch and every look exuded a transformative tint. Mother Teresa is the universal Mother, she is like Goddess Durga for the cultural connotation of the people of Kolkata. She performed the mission of destroying the evil of pain and poverty and propagated peace of thought and purity of act. The permeating bliss that spread

across Mother's missionary journey of charity removed the emotional distance between people – she healed our race.

Mother Teresa was misunderstood – critics blamed her for working for conversion. One Judas among the Apostles betrayed Jesus Christ. In her epic years as a missionary, Mother has not converted a single person to a particular religious faith. She converted many, to the communion of Humanity, beyond considerations of parochial religious culture.

The city of Kolkata is intensely awaiting the canonization of Mother as Saint. Mother believed that God is specially revealed in the mystery of the human person who is 'created in the image and likeness of God' – she probed the meaning of human life and arrived at the radical goodness that resides in every individual.

I would have personally preferred His Holiness Pope Francis to canonize Mother in the very city where she lived and served. It would have been a momentous gift from the Pope to the people of this country. Now that the canonization is officially announced to be held in Rome, in St. Peter's Square on September 4, 2016, we express our gratitude to Pope Francis for his extraordinary gesture of approving the canonization of Mother Teresa.

My Encounter with Mother Teresa - No kindness is too small to have impact

By Fr. Dominic Gomes
Vicar General & Chancellor
Archdiocese of Calcutta



One woman, one mission - That's all, it took to change this world! "Mother Teresa captivated the whole world and so

it would not be inappropriate to call Mother Teresa "The Patron Saint of the Twentieth Century". Bent down in poised grace with her white sari draping her head, she was the very image of God's love on earth. *The world only knew her as diminutive and wizened, with a slight stoop and gnarled hands. Yet all who met her found her beautiful, for her eyes sparkled and her smile radiated joy.* She lived simply and she died as she lived, owning a prayer book, a pair of sandals, and a couple of saris with the trademark of blue-and-white habit of the order of nuns she founded - the Missionaries of Charity. "By blood I am Albanian, by citizenship I am an Indian, by faith I am a Catholic nun. As to my calling, I belong to the world. As to my heart, I belong entirely to the Heart of Jesus," is how she would describe herself.

The Missionaries of Charity, which she started, now runs more than 755 homes in 125 countries with about 4000 nuns, 300 brotherhood members and 10000 volunteers operating homes also for AIDS, leprosy and tuberculosis patients. They pursue a selfless task.

Mother Teresa is a Modern Day Prophet, an Angel from God. Mother bloomed wherever she went. She is a prophet because with every breath she drew, she tried to do "something beautiful for God". She is a prophet because she tried to make everything she did, even the smallest thoughts and tiniest gestures, an oblation, an offering of

love. A prophet is called to be a messenger of God's Love and Mercy. She showed God's mercy by serving the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, all those people who felt unwanted, unloved, uncared-for throughout society, people who have become a burden on society and so are shunned by everyone. Thus she fulfilled the golden rules in the books of Amos and Isaiah which tells us to learn to do good, seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphans and plead for the widows.

Mother Teresa used every opportunity to magnify the Lord and to defend the poor. On receiving the Nobel Prize at Oslo in 1979, she said, "Christ makes himself the hungry one, the naked one, the homeless one, and He says: 'You did it to me!' He is hungry for our love, and this is the hunger that you and I must find. "Yes Jesus is God and therefore His love, His thirst is infinite. Our aim is to quench this infinite thirst of a God-made-man Mother Teresa became, in the words of the United Nations General Secretary, Javier Perez de Cuellar: "the most powerful woman in the

world," because she cared for those in need. For Mother Teresa, to love one's neighbor was to love God. This was what was essential to her, not the size of her mission or the power others perceived in her.

My association with Mother Teresa had been very personal over the years. So many ways she has touched my life that I recall with love and passion, an example which I would like to narrate briefly.

In the year of 1992, I was apprised to do my studies in Rome. So I applied for my passport. For several months, my struggle with the officials to get a passport went in vain. Once, Mother Teresa noticed me so distressed and upset that she asked me the reason why I was so downcast. I conveyed my anxiety about my Passport. She told me to hand over her all the documents concerning the Passport personally. To my surprise, the very next day, she handed me the passport.

Mother Teresa believed no act of kindness too small to have impact. She encouraged people to look for the needy in their neighbourhoods and even in their own homes. During my four years of study in Rome from 1992 – 96 I was unable to come home to visit my mother. When she came to know my

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My personal experience of Mother Teresa....

By Cheryl Francis

Director, NSS and Dept. of Social Work
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"I have found the paradox, that if you love until it hurts, there can be no more hurt, only more love".

– Mother Teresa

My experience of working with the Missionaries of Charity goes back to early 90s. I joined as a consultant social worker for the Adoption Centre at Nirmala Shishu Bhavan. My worked included counselling eligible couples who applied for adoption. Once a month we were taken to visit Mother Teresa by the Sister In charge of Adoption. We would wait outside along with other visitors, and then suddenly see Mother coming out and blessing everyone saying "God Bless You" and placing the miraculous medal of Our Lady in our hands. This was never enough for anyone. We would invariably wait and just keep looking at her. The sparkle in her eyes and a gentle smile were her two jewels that fascinated me personally. Not many words would be spoken but her presence itself was an experience to be cherished.

On one occasion I got an opportunity to escort Mother Teresa from Mother House to St. Xavier's College and back. She was the Chief Guest for AICUF DAY in 1993 at St. Xavier's College. I could not believe that I was sitting with Mother just next to her in a car...only she and me and of course the driver....a very rare opportunity for me. In appearance Mother was both tiny and energetic. Her face

was wrinkled, but her blue eyes commanded attention, radiating energy, patience, kindness, intelligence filled with compassion. One experience that I will never forget is about the day she passed away. It was 5th September 1997 and I had scheduled a Home study visit for adoption at Kalyani. Since morning the TV channels flashed the Breaking News. So I told myself that since I was going for her work I will not cancel. I will go to Kalyani and on my way back, pay my tributes to her. But when I returned and came out of Sealdah station, I realized what I had underestimated. The entire stretch from Sealdah towards Mother House on AJC Bose Road was closed. So I started walking and reached Mother House. I was taken aback to see that the area around Mother House was cordoned off. Nobody was allowed to get inside. I waited patiently for more than an hour and said to myself, "If Mother wants me in, she will make way."

Within 10 minutes I found my way in. One MC Brother, whom I knew came out along with a Police Officer to take some media personnel in and I joined them. I managed to station myself just next to her as she lay in tranquility. I feel blessed having got this rare opportunity.

As I gazed at her face, I recalled some of her sayings and one that influenced me the most was her faithfulness. She often said, "***I have been called to be faithful and not successful.***" She treated everyone

equally. If she was talking to a poor person, she would continue till she finished even if the greatest dignitary was waiting for her. She treated every human being with equal respect and dignity. This kind of extraordinary quality is extremely rare.

Mother Teresa was against abortion. She believed in the beauty of life in



all its forms. I understood this better whenever I accompanied the adoption in charge to hand over the baby to the adoptive couple. The joy I saw in the couple and their family members cannot be expressed in words. The baby in the arms of her mother was an expression of total love and acceptance, which Mother often preached. She is one person in whom I saw the teachings of Jesus coming alive.

Mother Teresa also had a healing touch. We have heard stories of her miracles of healing serious illnesses and diseases. The miraculous medal which Mother distributed to everyone whom she met, and the tradition still goes on of distributing these medals, has extraordinary powers. I have personally experienced the healing power of this medal and have also given to people suffering from any kind of illness.

Every person's life ends the same way. What differentiates one person from another is the details of how s/he lived and how s/he died. I feel blessed to having worked with this saint so closely.



Mission of Merciful love

By Fr. Devraj Fernandes

Headmaster, St. Anthony's High School
Editor, The Herald



As a boy growing up in the 80's and later as a seminarian I kept hearing and reading about the person of

Mother Teresa. Her life and achievements were already part of General Knowledge and History text books. Close to my home in Kharagpur were hospices run by MC brothers and sisters. For us they were always sisters and brothers of Mother Teresa. Therefore it was not unusual that by the time I reached the Philosophate there was this eager urge in me to actually meet the person behind the legend.

I remember the day when our batch of second year students of Philosophy decided to go to Mother House to visit Mother and receive her blessings. Everyone was excited about the opportunity and no one bothered to actually telephone and check if she would be in! On reaching Mother House we were asked to wait by the attending sister

and later led to the parlor where Mother was to meet us. She would keep aside all her work to meet us future priests. As she entered the room we chorused a loud "Good Morning Mother" to which we received an equally joyous and energetic reply. There were too many of us to be accommodated on the parlour chairs so we promptly sat around Mother's feet and looked at her eagerly. After asking some preliminary questions about our study and the dioceses we belonged to she spoke to us spontaneously about the life of holiness that all consecrated persons were called to. The sparkle in her eyes as she vigorously spoke about her deepest convictions regarding service, prayer and love kept us all spell-bound. It was clear that this was a very strong person and her strength was her faith in God that made her reach out I love.

After a few minutes it was time for her to leave. We understood how privileged we were that she had actually made time to personally meet us. As she rose from her chair she approached each of us



seminarians individually and handed a miraculous medal of Our Lady. Time seemed to stop as she approached me, put her hand on my head in blessing, gave me the medal and said "Be a holy priest". She said goodbye and went on to her mission of merciful love that was spread throughout the world.

This brief encounter with Mother Teresa is etched in the core of my heart. This memory has grown to be a reference point, a point of retreat so to say, where I find healing, nourishment and strength to carry on. As the Church prepares for Mother's canonization it feels so fitting that we honor with the title 'Saint' someone whose priority in life was holiness.

My personal experience of Mother Teresa....

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"Do not think that love in order to be genuine has to be extraordinary. What we need is to love without getting tired. Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies."

- Mother Teresa



My Encounter with Mother Teresa

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predicament, Mother Teresa herself arranged my mother's trip to Rome along with her sisters. She said "Let there be kindness in your face, in your eyes, in your smile, in the warmth of your greeting. Always have a cheerful smile. Don't only give your care, but give your heart as well." If every one of us had a Mother Teresa in us, this world would be in a better shape.



Fr. J. Felix Raj, SJ with Mother Teresa during AICUF Congress on October 2, 1995.

Kolkata's Saint Mother Teresa

By Fr. Gaston Roberge, SJ.

Prof. Emeritus of Film Studies,
Mass Communication and Videography
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At a time when Blessed Mother Teresa is about to be proclaimed a saint by the Catholic Church, it would be good to make her

known even better than she now is. Mother has been sharply and painfully criticized by many individuals. For instance, Christopher Hitchens called Mother Teresa “a fanatic, a fundamentalist, and a fraud,” arguing that “even more will be poor and sick ...”

“The case against Teresa goes as follows: She preached that contraception (or artificial contraception, as the Roman Catholic Church calls it, as if there's any other kind) was morally equivalent to murder and that abortion is the greatest threat to world peace. She advocated suffering as a gift from god. She opposed every possible method that lead to women empowerment. She groveled before tyrants, frauds and dictators for money, and justified their regimes with saccharine remarks.”



These arguments need to be discussed. If we all come to better know Mother Teresa, we will glorify God more and imitate Mother more.

The head of a small country in North America offered to Mother Teresa a substantial sum of money for her work. She readily accepted

the money and received it at a public function. Many people strongly criticized her because the money offered to her was the result of dishonest manipulations well known by the public. Moreover, another fact that was sharply opposed to is that in her acceptance speech Mother addressed the head of that country saying: “Sir, you and your wife love the poor”. Those who criticized her perhaps did not know that Mother had been several years a school teacher. If a kid misbehaved in the classroom,

Mother, as an excellent teacher, would never tell him that he is a bad boy. On the contrary, she would tell him that he is a good boy, but a good boy does not do what he has done. By speaking that way Mother addressed and triggered the good and positive in him.

Some people felt that by helping the poor, Mother implicitly encouraged those who exploit the poor and wish to develop them into consumers and productive people. On the other hand, while Mother was intensely committed to do the Heavenly Father's Work (as she referred to what she did), never would she accuse anybody of being the cause of poverty among us.

The canonization of Mother is an excellent occasion to make her better known. We have a good example in what happened when Mother was beatified: an excellent documentary film on Mother, Mother Teresa -- The Legacy, a film by Ann & Jeannette Petrie. The film was premiered at the Beatification of Mother.

“At the heart of this film and, for the first time, we see and hear Mother Teresa reveal her simple but profound spirituality that, put into action, transcended religious, political and cultural boundaries and enabled her to open 500 homes for the poor in over 124 countries.”

A saying of Mother that has been objected to is what she said on receiving officially the Nobel Peace Prize. She said that the greatest obstacle to peace was abortion. These were hardly five words; her speech had to be very short. The



people who heard her or read the words through the communication media could not have known at that time the statement Mother later sent to the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (Sept. 9, 1994). The statement was of 500 words. At the beginning she wrote: “I have said often, and I am sure of it, that the greatest destroyer of peace in the world today is abortion.”

It would be good also to organize the showing of films on Mother Teresa, like Mother Teresa – the Legacy, and Mother Teresa – In the Name of God's Poor by Dominique Lapiere.

Kolkata can be joyfully proud of having Mother Teresa, who chose to love the Heavenly Father and His children.

The Many Moods of Mother Teresa



"Peace begins with a smile." - Mother Teresa



Mother will be canonized on September 4th, 2016 by His Holiness Pope Francis at St. Peter's Square, Vatican City



Mother Teresa's Room



This is a room where Mother worked from 1950's until her death in 1997. She sat at this desk every day when she was at Mother House, answering many letters sent to her. Business letters relating to society matters were sorted and placed in the small boxes for distribution to the sisters who assisted her. Mother held Council meetings, took phone calls and met with the sisters here. Her door was always kept open for them.

It was from this room and from this bed that Mother passed away on September 5, 1997 at 9.30 p. m. In her struggle to breath just before she died, Mother looked intently at the cross and crown or thorns which are beneath the framed picture of the Holy Face of Jesus.

Do small things with great love

By **Prof. Partho Mukherji**

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“Love cannot remain by itself – it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action, and that action is service”, says Mother Teresa.

And she has practised that which she preached throughout her life and beyond.

At 18, Mother was permitted to join a group of nuns in Ireland and after some months of training with the Sisters of Loreto, she was to travel to India. After her formal religious vows in 1931, she was named after St. Theresa of Lisieux - The patron saint of missionaries.

In India, Mother began by working as a teacher; but soon, the extensive poverty and deprivation of the stricken in the city made such deep impression on her that she initiated a new endeavour, the historical “Missionaries of charity”. The dominant aim was to serve and give shelter to those destitute who had nobody to look after them.

Principled by the saying of the Son of God, “whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do it to me”, this Lady dedicated herself to the well-being of the abandoned and the poor. She lived among them, she wore the Traditional Indian sari, survived on minimal income and often had to beg for funds. Her determination and perseverance was appreciated by the local communities and over time, the missionaries could extend their charity in the country and abroad. By 2013, there were 700 missions operating in more than 130 countries. ***Mother could “do small things with great love” and that made her appeal universal.***

Malcolm Muggeridge produced a documentary that aptly explains the

identity of Mother Teresa for the teeming millions of the world “Something Beautiful for God”. In her venture to locate the beauty of God in human being, Mother explored the philosophy of Magis – she investigated into the various dimensions and expressions of service as the means of developing a spirit of generosity. Every action is for 'God', His greater glory. She committed herself with certitude and providence participated with her.

In 1979, Mother was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize “for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress, which also constitutes a threat to peace”. She asked that the \$192,000 fund be given to poor. ***The Nobel Prize could not have received a nobler gesture.***

Mother Teresa has been accused by some of seeking to convert those of other faiths. Those dying in her homes were given the religions rites appropriate to their faith. Yes, she converted, many of us, to a commitment to charity and a sense of fellow being, irrespective of religions considerations.

It is not the critic who counts, nor the one who predict how the strong may stumble, the credit belongs to the Lady who is actually

there, her face and body marred by dust and sweat. She strove valiantly, with great devotion, to immerse herself in the worthiest cause.

In her later years, Mother worked more actively in the western countries, she believed that though the west was prosperous with material prowess, there was often spiritual poverty.

Mother Teresa of Kolkata is to be made Roman Catholic Saint. In 1997, when she left for her heavenly abode at the age of 87, she was known as “saint of the gutters”. ***The church has conferred on Mother Teresa an acknowledgment that she had received from the people she worked for and lived with, she had interceded with the Father in Heaven and performed miracles; She has healed with her holy soul.***

I have seen her a couple of times at St. Xavier's; she never declined when she was requested to visit us on occasions; I touched her feet and she blessed me. But my “personal” experience goes beyond that – every time I, in my own small manner, reach out to the less fortunate, I feel the spirit of the celebration of light that this Lady with the Lamp has given to her Kolkata. She has, with the lesson of her own life, taught me to dream of a world purged of pain – physical, sentimental – ***she dreamt big, she dared to fail and yet she acted with determination and courage. And magic happened.*** ■



Mother Teresa is handed the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize



Researchers at Goethals

- **Ana Jelnikar** on Yugoslav Missionaries in Bengal, Slovenia Europe.
- **Debalina Roy** on Bramabandha Upadhyay, Kolkata.
- **Dibya Anjela Lakra** on The Tribes of Central India, Kolkata.
- **Dipankar Sarkar** on Bible Studies, Kolkata.
- **Dr. Tamojit Ghosh** on Jesuit Saint, Mother Teresa, Catholics in India, Kolkata.
- **Fr. Khiet Pham, SJ** on Global Education in High Schools in India and Vietnam, London, UK.

- **Fr. Xavier Jeyaraj, SJ** on Peoples Movement, Kolkata.
- **Mousumi Roy** on Novels and Art, Kolkata.
- **Prof. Timothy Alec Allender** on Jesuit and Loreto connection, Sydney, Australia.
- **Rupali Rudra** on Novels and Art, Kolkata.
- **Swapan Kumar Mandal** on Land reclamation and its political context of Sundarban, Gosaba a case study 1930-70, Kolkata, India.
- **Upelina Bina Murmu** on Survey on Chinese Economy, Kolkata. ■

mails & emails



- **Alex Chin Fung (UK):** The Goethals library has a very interesting collection of books and manuscripts. I had a great time.
- **Antoiette Legnini (UK):** Remarkable collection of books and works of art! I greatly enjoyed my time, thank you for allowing me to visit.
- **Ms Upelina Bina Murmu :** Goethals Indian Library is very resourceful and an opportunity given to me to enhance my knowledge.
- **Ms. Ana Jelnikar :** Simply wonderful – lovely place to work.
- **Prof. Timothy Alec Allender :** The Goethals library is beautiful and full of very significant works.

“I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”

- Mother Teresa



As a preparation for Easter, St. Xavier's College and Morning Star College jointly organised two public lectures on Christ's Death and Resurrection in the St. Xavier's College campus on 12th & 13th March, 2016.

The lectures were delivered by Fr. Dr. John Romus, Dean of Theology, Morning Star College and Fr. Dr. Selva Rathinam S.J., President, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune.

The public lectures were attended by a large number of Fathers, Sisters and the Laity. The Talks were inspiring and enriching.

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