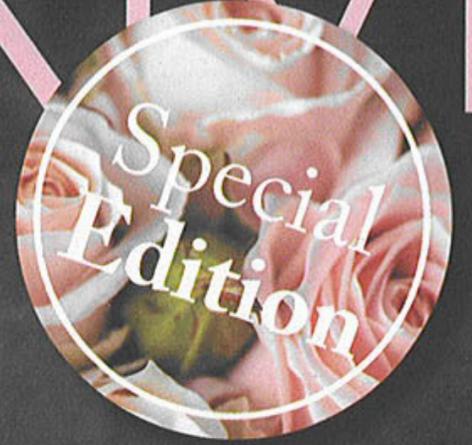


INFORM

Informative
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The Canonisation of
**Mother Teresa
of Calcutta**

September 4th

2016

✿
“The fruit
of service
is peace”
✿



The Road to Canonisation

In 1999, the now saint, Pope John Paul II waived the usual five year waiting period before commencing the cause for Mother Teresa's beatification, less than two years after her death on 5 September 1997.

The First Miracle

A woman named Monica Besra in West Bengal had a huge abdominal tumour. Her family brought her to the Missionaries of Charity. The sisters first took her to their doctors, who did not have a medical solution.

Then, on 5 September 1998, the first anniversary of Mother Teresa's death, the superior took a Miraculous Medal that had been touched to Mother Teresa's body during her funeral, placed it on Monica's stomach and prayed a simple prayer. Father Brian Kolodiejchuk, postulator of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of Mother Teresa of Calcutta recalled it as: "Mother, today is your day. You love the poor. Please do something for Monica. It was simple and direct."

At one o'clock in the morning on 6 September, Monica got up and found that her stomach was normal. She could not stand upright before, but that Sunday morning, Monica was standing up straight.¹

The Second Miracle

The case involves a man having a viral brain infection, in Santo, Brazil in 2008.

The various treatments undertaken were not effective, and his condition continuously worsened. By 9 December 2008, the patient was in a coma and dying. It was decided to proceed with emergency surgery. At 18:10 the patient was taken to the operating room, but the anaesthesiologist could not perform the tracheal intubation for anaesthesia.

Since March 2008, the patient's wife continuously sought the intercession of Blessed Mother Teresa for her husband. To her own prayers of intercession were joined those of her relatives, friends, and the parish priest, all of whom were praying for a miraculous cure through the intercession of Mother Teresa.

On this same day when the patient entered into serious crisis and had to be taken for an emergency operation, intensified prayers were addressed



to Blessed Teresa for his recovery. Precisely between the hours of 18.10 and 18.40 the patient's wife went to her parish church, and along with the pastor, turned to Blessed Teresa, begging with greater determination the cure of her dying husband.

At 18.40 the neurosurgeon returned to the operating room and found the patient inexplicably awake and without pain. The patient asked the doctor, "What I am doing here?" The next morning, 10 December 2008, when examined at 7.40 the patient was fully awake and without any headache; he had fully recovered.

The patient resumed his work as a mechanical engineer with no physical limitations. In addition, it should be emphasised that despite earlier tests that showed a state of sterility due to the intense and prolonged immunosuppression and antibiotics, the couple have two healthy children born in 2009 and 2012.

Even though the miracle occurred in 2008, it was not reported until 2013. The neurosurgeon, who was non-Catholic, mentioned the case to a priest of the Santos Diocese following the visit of Pope Francis that year.²

Reflections on Mother Teresa

Mother Teresa once observed: "You and I and every single human being in the world is a child of God, created in the image of God, created for greater things, to love and be loved."

This is a true, exalted, even divine idea of what it is to be human.

Our common experience is that human beings have a pull to the best, to the highest, to excellence (for example, in the arts, academics, sports, literature, etc.).

St Paul wrote to the Philippians: "Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." (Phil, 4.8) >



...**"we have been created to love and be loved"**. Mother Teresa



“Love is not talking, love is living. I can talk about love the whole day and love not once”.

Mother Teresa

The highest of all to which we humans aspire is love; this is, in Mother Teresa's words that “greater thing” for which we have been created: “to love and be loved”.

From our experience we also know there is a counter pull - a pull to evil, to sin which draws us away from our calling to love and be loved.

Mother Teresa reflects on the serious consequences this has: “That is why today we have so much suffering in the world because we forget that we have been created for greater things, that we have been created to love and be loved.”

This pull and counter pull is a battle/tension within each of us and the battle starts in my own heart, in the heart of each of us.

Because we live this tension, it is necessary for us to know what love is, to be able to distinguish true love from false love. And most importantly, we need to know how each of us in our own circumstances can love – in the here and now of our everyday, ordinary lives.

All definitions fall short when we speak of love, and there is always something more that can be said about it. We understand it best and learn most about love, however, by encountering it. Mother Teresa was known to challenge her listeners: “Love is not talking, love is living. I can talk about love the whole day and love not once.”

When once asked in an interview, “Can you sum up what love really is?” Mother Teresa promptly replied: “Love is giving. God loved the world so much that He gave His Son. Jesus loved the world so much, loved you, loved me so much that He gave His life. And He wants us to love as He loved. And so now we have also to give until it hurts. True love is a giving and giving until it hurts.”

Mother Teresa expressed this beautifully: “Love is a one-way street. It always moves away from self in the direction of the other. Love is the ultimate gift of ourselves to others. When we stop giving we stop loving, when we stop loving, we stop growing.”

Prayer, love, service! – love is the fruit of prayer, and service in turn is the fruit of love. Mother Teresa liked to give out what she called her “business card”. Unlike customary business cards, it did not contain her contact information, but several lines that express some of her most basic teachings.

They are as follows:

- ✿ The fruit of silence is prayer,
- ✿ The fruit of prayer is faith,
- ✿ The fruit of faith is love,
- ✿ The fruit of love is service,
- ✿ The fruit of service is peace.

Mother Teresa here reminds us that love is not a mere feeling; it is always expressed in concrete, tangible action: “love in living action,” as she liked to say – anywhere and anytime.

For Mother Teresa, prayer is grounded in silence: “In the silence of the heart God speaks”, she often repeated, especially when speaking about prayer. Only by listening to God can we enter into dialogue with Him. Thus she challenged her Sisters: “How many of us really listened to God speak in the silence of the heart? ... Have you heard the voice of God? Is my heart silent?” Mother Teresa knew that “to be able to pray we must be able to listen”.

The fruit of this silence is prayer. Mother Teresa knew how vitally important prayer is to the believer. “What blood is to the body, prayer is to the soul.” As she explained, “We need that intimate connection with God in our everyday lives. And how do we get that? By prayer.” Not only is prayer a turning of the “mind and heart to God”, it is also dialogue, as Mother Teresa expressed it: “God talks to me and I talk to Him; as simple as that. This is prayer.”

“The fruit of prayer is faith”: Two graces that Mother Teresa typically understood to be the fruit of prayer were a “clean heart” and a “deepening of faith”. In her letters and instructions the expressions “clean heart” or “pure heart” occur as either direct



Mother Teresa with St. Pope John Paul II.

“From childhood the Heart of Jesus has been my first love,” she wrote to a trusted priest when she was almost sixty years old. This love culminated in her cleaving to Jesus with an undivided heart through religious consecration.

At the time she received a call to begin a new religious congregation dedicated to the service of the poorest of the poor, Mother Teresa had a singular experience of God's love as an intense longing, a thirst, for her

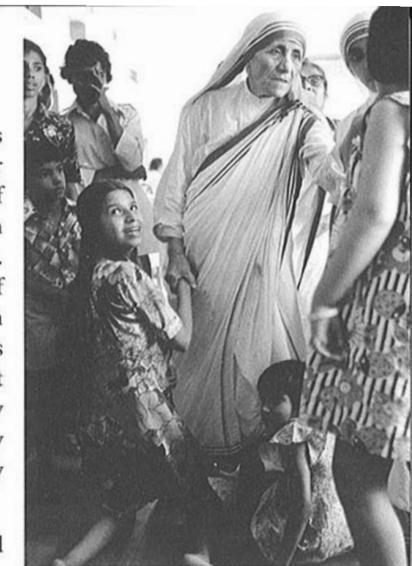
love and for the love of each person, especially those she was to serve.

Mother Teresa's meditation on *Matthew 16:15*, “Who is Jesus to me?” highlights her deep personal love for Jesus. It reveals the intensity of her effort to return love for love. She wrote, “Jesus is my God, Jesus is my Spouse, Jesus is my Life, Jesus is my only Love, Jesus is my All in All, Jesus is my Everything, JESUS, I love with my whole heart, with my whole being. I have given Him all, even my sins and He has espoused me to Himself in tenderness and love. Now and for life I am the Spouse of my Crucified Spouse.”

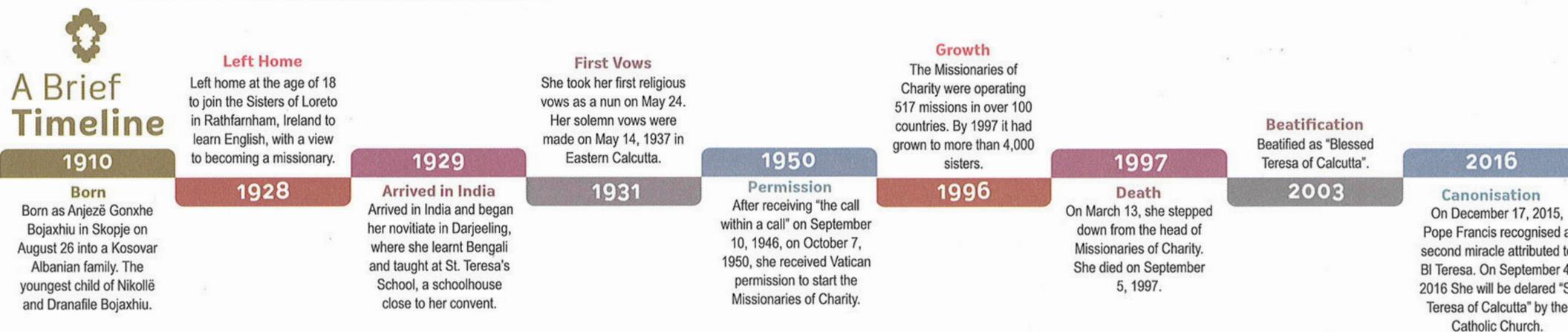
for one another.” These words of Mother Teresa shed further light on her understanding of the connection between faith and love and love and service. Love desires to express itself through deeds, to take form and to reach out in service. As Mother Teresa said, “I cannot love God in words only - my heart has to express it. My hands have to express it. My feet have to express it.”

Sometimes one may be called to live this - prayer, love, service – in a heroic way, for example, Mother Teresa's heroic living of interior “darkness” for almost all of her years as a Missionary of Charity. But all of us can live this in the ordinary circumstances of our everyday lives, by responding with love to whatever is being asked of us.

One significant way in which Mother Teresa proved her love was by doing little things for others, small acts of love that made the other feel welcomed, loved, cared for. Yet, it was not just doing the “little things” that was important for Mother Teresa. Still more



A Brief Timeline



quotes of, or at least as allusions to, the sixth beatitude, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (*Mt. 5:8*). Again and again she repeated, “Prayer gives us a clean heart and a clean heart can see God”, referring, of course, to seeing with the eyes of faith.

“The fruit of faith is love”: In faith Mother Teresa encountered God who revealed His love to her. Convinced of God's personal and tender love for all, she experienced God as “our loving Father.”

As she once expressed it in an interview, “He is the loving Father for us all. He is always there. We don't have to go far to look for him. He's right inside the heart, loving us, calling us, protecting us in tenderness and love. And I think for each one, He has that kind of drawing and caring, and loving, in different ways, but it is the same tenderness and love.” >



The same meditation lists the ways in which Mother Teresa recognized His presence and felt compelled to love Him in others: “Jesus is the hungry – to be fed, the thirsty – to be satiated, the naked – to be clothed, the homeless – to be taken in, the sick – to be healed, the lonely – to be loved, the unwanted – to be wanted, the leper – to wash his wounds, the beggar – to give him a smile, the little one – to embrace him.”

“The fruit of love is service”: In one of her public addresses Mother Teresa affirmed: “The fruit of faith is always love, and love cannot remain still. It has to get into action, and that action is service. That action is love

important was that they be done with “great love.” “Love is not measured by how much we do,” she said, “love is measured by how much love we put in; how much it is hurting us in loving.”

To what was Mother Teresa referring when she spoke of little things? To give an example, she would say: “What is my concern – maybe just a smile, maybe just a little flower to bring, maybe just a little shake of the hand.”

The last line on Mother Teresa's so-called business card states that “the fruit of service is peace.” When one's attention is focused on serving God and neighbour, the result is peace – with God, with oneself, and with others. Mother Teresa strove to be attuned to God working in her life and sought His will in every event . >

...“True love is a giving and giving until it hurts.” Mother Teresa

... But together we can do something beautiful for God.”

Mother Teresa

A deep sense of the sacredness of the human person, even in his most distressing condition, was one of Mother Teresa's outstanding characteristics. She recognized the dignity of each one, looking beyond social standing, race, nationality, religion and even a person's sinfulness. Nothing could distract her from seeing every human being as the child of God, important to Him and therefore also to her.

She would say: "Doesn't matter colour, doesn't matter race, doesn't matter nationality, doesn't matter religion. Every single man, woman, child, is the child of God created in the image of God. And that is what we look at and therefore a need of love and care and service and we give it."

By sharing with others the maxim written on her business card, Mother Teresa wished to emphasize that the practice of charity is within the reach of every Christian in whatever walk of life. Everyone has the mission to be a carrier of God's love. "Today God loves the world so much that he gives you, he gives me, to love the world, to be His love, His compassion. It is such a beautiful thought for us – and a conviction – that you and I can be that love and compassion."

Significantly, Mother Teresa pointed out that those with the greatest hunger and thirst for God and for love, and those to whom we are most obligated, are indeed those closest us.

"How can we love Jesus in the world today? By loving Him in my husband, my wife, my children, my brothers and sisters, my parents, my neighbours, the poor."

In fact, it is often those with whom we live who are the most in need.

"People are hungry for the Word of God, for love. Do we really know our poor? Right here! Maybe the poor are in our own family, for love begins at home. Do we know them?"

Mother Teresa has shown us the way. Her life is both admirable and imitable. Like her, we too can do "ordinary things with extraordinary love".

We do not have to imitate what Mother Teresa did; we do not have to live her particular vocation. She herself would say this many times: "As I often say to people, who tell me they would like to serve the poor as I do, 'what I can do, you cannot, what you can do, I cannot. But together we can do something beautiful for God.'"

Each one of us has the opportunity to love and serve wherever we are and in any situation. There are things only we can do at that particular moment in that specific place.

Because Mother Teresa was such a faithful carrier of God's love, she came to be seen by many, including John Paul II, as a "person-message" for our times. As we have this opportunity to remember the life of Mother Teresa, her example can teach and inspire us to be "carriers of God's love," to be "His love, His compassion, His presence" in the difficult and challenging situations of our daily life.

If we live our vocation to love and be loved, we can change the world, beginning where we are: in our family, community, city, country.

Mother Teresa, called by Jesus to be His light, by her heroic life of love of God and neighbour fulfilled her vocation "for greater things". It is now our turn to strive after greater things, to live our vocation to love and be loved.

Like her, we want "to experience love and in this way to cause the light of God to enter into the world" by our love of others, beginning with those around us.

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, pray for us!! ■

¹Adapted from: <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/mother-teresa-2016s-saint-of-mercy/#ixzz49oyCylc9>

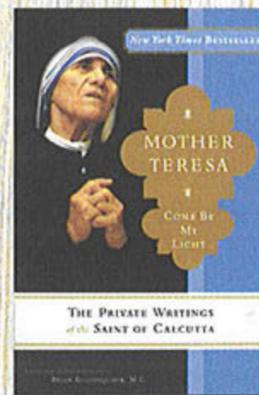
²Adapted from: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Fr.-Brian-on-the-miracle-of-Mother-Teresa-of-Calcutta-36190.html>



FR. BRIAN KOLODIJCHUK, M.C., Ph.D., was born in Winnipeg, Canada. He met Mother Teresa in 1977 and was associated with her until her death in 1997. He joined the Missionaries of Charity Fathers at the time of their foundation in 1984. Fr. Brian is postulator of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of Mother Teresa of Calcutta and director of the Mother Teresa Center.



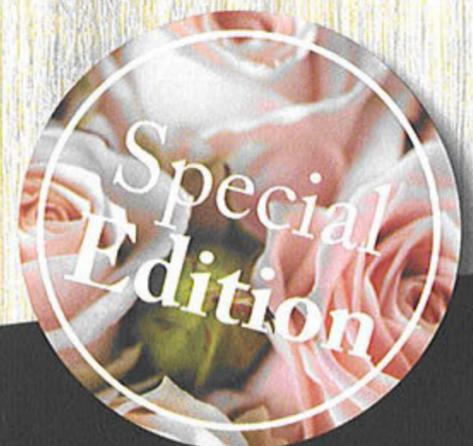
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The fruit of silence is **prayer**,

The fruit of prayer is **faith**,

The fruit of faith is **love**,

The fruit of love is **service**,

The fruit of service is **peace**.

Mother Teresa
of Calcutta