

Saint Teresa of Calcutta Feast Day 5th September

“Until you know deep inside that Jesus thirsts for you, you can't begin to know who He Wants to be for you. Or who He wants you to be for Him.”

These words of Blessed Mother Teresa open for us the depths of her faith and witness in the world. What was it in her that touched so many so deeply? How do we account for her universal impact on Christians and non-Christians alike? How did she accomplish so much with no extraordinary talents or qualifications?

Mother Teresa was a source of passion, spirit, and perseverance, which opened the hearts and minds of communities and world leaders. Similar to the Vincentian story, Teresa was practical, engaging, and relational and responded with a depth of love for the vulnerable beyond words.

Fr Brian Kolodiejchuk, Director of the Mother Teresa Centre in Calcutta, said of her; *“In the world of today, Mother Teresa has become a sign of God's love. Through her, God has reminded the world of his intense love – his thirst – for humanity and his desire to be loved in return”.*

Fr Joseph Langford, a trusted friend and cofounder of her Missionaries of Charity Fathers, in *Mother Teresa's Secret Fire* opens with questions *“Why Mother Teresa?, Why is the whole world running after you?”* Her name alone was synonymous with compassion and goodness. The world always seems to watch as *“her labours of love drew both rich and poor, believer and skeptic into the shelter of God's embrace”.* Fr Langford's book moves us in reflecting on what was it in Mother Teresa which moved us so much as a world but also importantly; *“What was God touching in us, through her?”*

Even in her lifetime, Mother Teresa was an icon of God's tender mercy, radiating the light of God's love to so many through the works of mercy, both material and spiritual. She was canonized on 4 September 2016 in Rome during the Sunday Mass celebrated by Pope Francis as part of the Jubilee for workers and volunteers of mercy.

With her canonisation, the Church presents her as a model and intercessor of those who, like her, “long to light the fire of love and peace throughout the world.”



By her example and through her intercession, may Mother Teresa inspire many to give their 'hearts to love and their hands to serve', starting with those closest to them, seeing the face of Christ in all we meet.

Mother Teresa repeatedly touched on two themes, God's longing for us and humanity's longing for God. She spoke of this longing in the words of Jesus on Calvary; *I thirst*. Mother Teresa shares "in this thirst of God is seen how much God wants our love and how much we need His love...His thirst for love is infinite"

With much gratitude let us pray, Saint Teresa, pray for us!

Prayer: Carrier of God's Tender Love and Mercy

Lord Jesus, merciful Face of the Father, you came to give us the Good News of the Father's mercy and tenderness. May we continue to live and deepen our awareness of being in need of mercy. May we grow in our willingness to extend mercy, love and hope in our communities, in our families and in our service of those experiencing vulnerability.

We thank you for the gift of our dearest Mother, Teresa of Calcutta. You chose her to be your presence, your love and compassion to the broken-hearted, the unwanted, the abandoned and the dying. She responded wholeheartedly to your cry, 'I Thirst,' by the holiness of her life and humble works of love to the poorest of the poor.

We pray, through her intercession, for the grace to experience your merciful love and share it with those we encounter, especially our suffering brothers and sisters. Help us to give our "hearts to love and hands to serve" after the example of Mother Teresa.

Lord Jesus, bless every member of our family, our parish, our diocese, our country, especially those most in need, that we all may be transformed by your merciful love. Amen.



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