

Saint Teresa of Calcutta

- Feastday: September 5
- Patron Saint of: World Youth Day
- Birth: August 26, 1910
- Death: September 5, 1997
- Canonized: by Pope Francis on September 4, 2016



*"If you judge people,
you have no time to
love them."*

*"Not all of us can
do great things. But
we can do small
things with great
love."*

The future Mother Teresa of Calcutta was born Gonxha Agnes Bojaxhiu in Skopje, present-day North Macedonia. At the age of 12, she felt a call to serve the poor. At age 18, she decided to join the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loreto nuns) in Ireland with the intention to serve in India. In 1928, she departed for India and arrived in Calcutta. She was assigned to teach at St. Mary's Bengali Medium School for girls, where she eventually became the principal.

In September of 1946, on the way to Darjeeling for her annual retreat, Mother Teresa received what she would name the "call within a call." Over the course of the next months, by means of interior locutions, Jesus asked her to establish a religious community that would be dedicated to the service of the poorest of the poor. Her goal was to extend the loving care of Jesus to souls who were "the unwanted, the unloved, the uncared for." In 1948, she started her work in the slums, visiting the sick, gathering and instructing little street children, and gradually opening her first school. God rewarded her great sacrifices with vocations, benefactors, and a flourishing mission. In October 1950, the new congregation of the Missionaries of Charity was officially erected as a religious institute in the Archdiocese of Calcutta. Despite her age and increasing health problems,

Mother Teresa traveled across the world serving the poor and disaster-stricken, opening new houses where the need arose. She was also invited to speak at innumerable public gatherings. On September 5th, she died at the Mother House of the Missionaries of Charity. Hundreds of thousands of people from all classes and all religions, from India and abroad, paid their respects. The Missionaries of Charity continued to grow after Mother Teresa's death. As of 2020, there were 5191 Sisters in 762 missions in 139 countries continuing Mother Teresa's legacy and giving wholehearted and free service to the poorest of the poor.