MOTHER TERESA
of CALCUTTA:
SERVANT OF THE POOR,
SAINT OF THE GUTTERS
LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND:
MOTHER TERESA’S ENDURING MESSAGE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TODAY

6-9 September 2016 | UN Headquarters

6-9 September
Exhibition in the UN Conference Building, 1st Floor, Curved Wall

8 September | 6 pm
Formal Presentation of the Exhibition

9 September | 3-6 pm
Conference on Mother Teresa’s Enduring Message to the International Community in Conference Room 3, UN HQ

All those interested in coming to the 9 September Conference are asked to RSVP at holyseemission.org/rsvpSeptember9.
Mother Teresa of Calcutta cared for those for whom so often no one else was caring. She founded a home for those dying on the streets so that those who had been forced to ‘live like animals’ might ‘die like angels, loved and wanted.’ She opened homes for lepers, for those with HIV/AIDS, and for orphaned, lost, and abandoned children. She cared for the homeless and destitute with shelter, food, and medical care. She established homes for the blind, the disabled, the aged, and the addicted. ‘Homelessness,’ she said at Harvard University in 1982, ‘is not only for a house made of brick. Homelessness is being completely forgotten, rejected, left alone, as if they are nobody.’ She cared for victims of famine in Ethiopia, those suffering radiation poisoning in Chernobyl, and earthquake victims in Armenia. She was considered the ‘saint of the gutters’ and cared for those who were shunned as a burden to society as if she were caring for Jesus Christ in ‘distressing disguise,’ making sure that no one was left behind without love.

‘The greatest evil is the lack of love and charity, the terrible indifference toward one's neighbour who lives at the roadside, assaulted by exploitation, corruption, poverty, and disease.’

Mother Teresa of Calcutta
Lifting Up the Poorest of the Poor

Each morning Mother Teresa would pray, ‘Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.’ The Missionaries of Charity she founded take a vow to give ‘wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor.’ For her, poverty wasn’t so much a ‘problem’ to be solved technocratically, but a troubling state in which so many human beings live. When she was criticized once for not teaching people ‘how to fish’ and for not concentrating on eliminating the systemic development issues leading to poverty, she replied, ‘The people I serve are helpless. They cannot stand. They cannot hold the rod. I will give them the food and then send them to you so you can teach them how to fish!’ She sought to care for more than their material needs. ‘There are thousands of people,’ she said, ‘dying for a piece of bread. There are thousands upon thousands dying for a bit of love.’ And she gave more than a bit of love to thousands, one person at a time.

‘We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked, and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty.’

Mother Teresa of Calcutta
Mother Teresa of Calcutta was a peacemaker and peacebuilder. ‘Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,’ she would pray each morning with words attributed to St Francis of Assisi. ‘Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is despair, hope.’ She courageously went to Beirut in 1982 and secured a ceasefire to rescue 37 disabled children from a refugee camp hospital. She perseveringly sought to remedy the causes that lead to the collapse of peace, from extreme poverty, to family breakdown, to a failure to forgive, to a lack of acceptance. In her 1979 Nobel Peace Prize Award Lecture, she said, ‘The greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion,’ because it involves a ‘direct killing’ of a child by a mother, a form of violence with vast cultural and ethical ramifications. ‘If we accept that a mother can kill even her own child,’ she said elsewhere, ‘how can we tell other people not to kill one another?’ In response, she sought to be a ‘missionary of charity’ and build peace through forming a different type of culture, one in which every person is treated with dignity, welcomed, defended, and loved.
Mother Teresa of Calcutta, born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in Skopje, Macedonia in 1910, felt her calling to religious life at the age of 12. At 18 years old, she travelled to Dublin, Ireland, to join the Sisters of Loreto and was given the name Sister Mary Teresa. In 1929 Sister Mary Teresa was sent to Darjeeling, India, for religious training and soon started teaching at Saint Mary’s High School for Girls in Calcutta where she spent 19 years educating girls from the city’s poorest Bengali families. But in 1946 on a train from Calcutta to the Himalaya region, she experienced a ‘call within a call’ to devote her life to the poorest of the poor in the slums of Calcutta. A year later she left the school to begin caring for the ‘unwanted, the unloved, the uncared for.’ In 1950 Mother Teresa’s order the Missionaries of Charity received official recognition form the Catholic Church. By the time of her death in 1997 the order numbered more than 4,000 sisters with 600 foundations in 123 countries. In 1979 Mother Teresa received
I never forget, one day I was walking down the streets of London, and there I saw a man. He looked the most rejected man that I have ever seen. So I went right near him and I took and shook his hand. He said, "Oh, after so long a time, I feel the warmth of a human hand." And his face was quite different. There was joy, there was sunshine in his eyes. I can't tell you the change that came on that man's life just with that simple shaking of the hand.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, SAINT OF THE GUTTERS, SERVANT OF THE POOR.

In 1979, Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and in 1985 spoke at the United Nations of the 40th Anniversary of the General Assembly, where Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar stressed her importance for the United Nations and the international community as he called her the 'most powerful woman in the world.' On 4 September 2016 Mother Teresa of Calcutta was declared a saint by the Catholic Church.

To honour the work and promote the legacy of Mother Teresa, this display is presented by: PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE TO THE UNITED NATIONS.