



Mother Teresa, 1979 Nobel Peace Prize Winner

by Sara and Jarda Tusek

Early Life

Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in Skopje, Macedonia, on August 26, 1910. Her family was of Albanian descent.

At the age of twelve, she felt strongly the call of God. She knew she had to be a missionary to spread the love of Christ.

First Missionary Training

At the age of eighteen she left her parental home in Skopje and joined the Sisters of Loreto, an Irish community of nuns with missions in India.

After a few months' training in Dublin she was sent to India, where on May 24, 1931, she took her initial vows as a nun.

From 1931 to 1948 Mother Teresa taught at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta, but the suffering and poverty she glimpsed outside the convent walls made such a deep impression on her that in 1948 she received permission from her superiors to leave the convent school and devote herself to working among the poorest of the poor in the slums of Calcutta.

Work with the Poor

Although she had no funds, she depended on Divine Providence, and started an open-air school for slum children.

Soon she was joined by voluntary helpers, and financial support was also forthcoming.



ing. This made it possible for her to extend the scope of her work.

On October 7, 1950, Mother Teresa received permission from the Holy See to start her own order, "The Missionaries of Charity", whose primary task was to love and care for those persons nobody was prepared to look

after.

In 1965 the Society became an International Religious Family by a decree of Pope Paul VI.

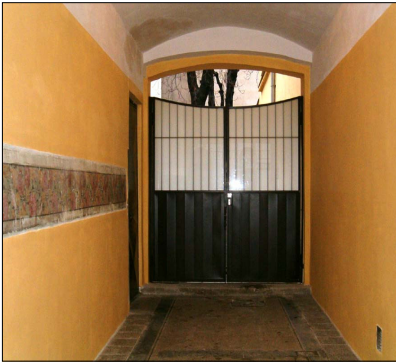
Today the order comprises Active and Contemplative branches of Sisters and Brothers in many countries. In 1963 both the Contemplative branch of the Sisters and the Active branch of the Brothers was founded. In 1979 the Contemplative branch of the Brothers was added, and in 1984 the Priest branch was established.

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Mother Teresa

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Missionaries of Charity

The Society of Missionaries has spread all over the world, including the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. They provide effective help to the poorest of the poor in a number of countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and they undertake relief work in the wake of natural catastrophes such as floods, epidemics, and famine, and for refugees.

The order also has houses in North America, Europe and Australia, where they take care of the shut-ins, alcoholics, homeless, and AIDS sufferers.

The Missionaries of Charity throughout the world are aided and

assisted by Co-Workers who became an official International Association on March 29, 1969.

By the 1990s there were over one million Co-Workers in more than 40 countries. Along with the Co-Workers, the lay Missionaries of Charity try to follow Mother Teresa's spirit and charism in their families.

*Whoever oppresses the poor
shows contempt for their
Maker, but whoever is kind to
the needy honors God.*

Proverbs 14:31

Facts on the Nobel Peace Prize

On 27 November 1895, Alfred Nobel signed his last will and testament, giving the largest share of his fortune to a series of prizes, the Nobel Prizes. As described in Nobel's will, one part was dedicated to "the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses". Learn more about the Nobel Peace Prize from 1901 to 2010.

Number of Nobel Peace Prizes

91 Nobel Peace Prizes have been awarded since 1901. It was not awarded on 19 occasions: in 1914-1918, 1923, 1924, 1928, 1932, 1939- 1943, 1948, 1955-1956, 1966-1967 and 1972.

Why were the Peace Prizes not awarded in those years? In the statutes of the Nobel Foundation it says: "If none of the works under consideration is found to be of the importance indicated in the first paragraph, the prize money shall be reserved until the following year. If, even then, the prize cannot be awarded, the amount shall be added to the Foundation's restricted funds." During World War I and II, fewer Nobel Prizes were awarded.

Mother Teresa's work has been recognised and acclaimed throughout the world and she has received a number of awards and distinctions in addition to the Nobel Peace Prize, including the Pope John XXIII Peace Prize (1971) and the Nehru Prize for her promotion of international peace and understanding (1972).

She also received the Balzan Prize (1979) and the Templeton and Mag-saysay awards.

From [Nobel Lectures, Peace 1971-1980](#), Editor-in-Charge Tore Frängsmyr, Editor Irwin Abrams, World Scientific Publishing Co., Singapore, 1997