

# Mother Teresa



## Pre-reading

### Questions:

- What do you know about Mother Teresa?
- What would you like to know about her?

### Definitions:

- Nobel Peace Prize – a prize given for outstanding achievement in the promotion of world peace
- Promote – to support the growth or development of something

## Reading

18 Mother Teresa was born in 1910 in what is now Macedonia. She was given the name Agnes by  
36 her Catholic parents, and was the youngest of three children. Early in her life, about age 12, Teresa  
felt a strong call to help the poor. She knew her **vocation** was missionary work.

51 At the age of 18 she left for Ireland to join the Sisters of Loreto. This community of nuns had  
71 missions in India. After a few months of training in Dublin, she was sent to India. On May 24,  
90 1931, she took her first vows as a nun. She chose the name Sister Mary Teresa. She took her final  
110 vows in May, 1937. It was then that she was given the religious title of Mother Teresa.

127 From 1931 to 1948 Mother Teresa taught at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta. The suffering  
143 and poverty she saw in Calcutta greatly affected her. In 1948 she received permission from her  
159 superiors to leave the high school.

165 Mother Teresa devoted herself to working among the poorest of the poor in the slums of  
181 Calcutta. She was known as the saint of the gutters. With no money, she started an open-air school  
200 for slum children. Soon she was joined by volunteer helpers. Financial help started coming from  
214 church organizations. This made it possible for her work to grow.

225 In 1950 Mother Teresa started the Missionaries of Charity to care for the sick and poor. She  
242 said the Mission was to care for “the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, and  
260 the lepers, all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, and uncared for throughout society.”

274 Mother Teresa opened the “Home for the Dying,” a free **hospice** for the very poor. Her work  
291 grew and grew. By the 1960's there were hospices, orphanages, and leper houses all over India.  
307 Her work soon spread throughout the world. By 1990 there were 25 centers in other countries.

323 She received the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize for her tireless work for the poorest of the poor. She  
341 refused the ceremonial banquet given to award winners. She instead asked that the \$6,000 banquet  
356 fund be given to the poor in Calcutta. When Mother Teresa received her prize, she was asked,  
373 “What can we do to promote world peace?” Her answer was, “Go home and love your family.”

390 Mother Teresa died in September 1997 at the age of 87. In 1999, Time magazine included her  
407 in their “100 Heroes and Icons of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.”  
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## Understanding

1. In Calcutta, Mother Teresa was known as what? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why do you think this name was given to her? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
3. What does the word **vocation** mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Mother Teresa belongs to what religious faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. In what country did Mother Teresa do most of her work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is a **hospice**? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How did Mother Teresa believe world peace could be promoted? \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Writing

Option A: How would you respond to the question, “What can we do to promote world peace?”

Option B: In your own words, summarize the story.

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