

# Leadership profile: mother teresa

[Family](#), [Mother](#)



Leadership Profile: Mother Teresa Mother Teresa is a fine example of a leader in today's culture. Her profound ways of humble and servant leadership has forever shaped the way this world looks at those who live without. Her prime example of ethical use of power has become an example to those who have a great deal of persuasion in this world. The example being, that one does not need money, power, an office, staff, an overbearing voice, or a tottering society, to change the world. Instead, all that is needed is a conviction, a heart of humility, and a life of devotion.

Born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu on August 26, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia, she was the youngest of three children. In her teens, Agnes became a member of a youth group in her local parish called Sodality. Through her involvement with their activities guided by a priest, Agnes became interested in missionaries. At age 17, she responded to her first call of a vocation as a Catholic missionary nun. She joined an Irish order, the Sisters of Loretto, a community known for their missionary work in India. When she took her vows as a Sister of Loretto, she chose the name Teresa after Saint Therese of Lisieux. (the Patron Saint of missionaries) In Calcutta, Sister Teresa taught geography and catechism at St. Mary's High School.

In 1944, she became the principal of St. Mary's. Soon Sister Teresa contracted tuberculosis, was unable to continue teaching and was sent to Darjeeling for rest and recuperation. It was on the train to Darjeeling that she received her second call -- "the call within the call". Mother Teresa recalled later, "I was to leave the convent and work with the poor, living among them. It was an order. I knew where I belonged but I did not know how to get there. Mother Teresa started a school in the slums to teach the children of

the poor. She also learned basic medicine and went into the homes of the sick to treat them. In 1949, some of her former pupils joined her. They found men, women, and children dying on the streets who were rejected by local hospitals. The group rented a room so they could care for helpless people otherwise condemned to die in the gutter. In 1950, the group was established by the Church as a Diocesan Congregation of the Calcutta Diocese. It was known as the Missionaries of Charity.

In 1952 the first Home for the Dying was opened in space made available by the City of Calcutta. Over the years, Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity grew from 12 to thousands serving the "poorest of the poor" in 450 centers around the world. Mother Teresa created many homes for the dying and the unwanted from Calcutta to New York to Albania. She was one of the pioneers of establishing homes for AIDS victims. For more than 45 years, Mother Teresa comforted the poor, the dying, and the unwanted around the world. Mother Teresa gained worldwide acclaim with her tireless efforts on behalf of world peace.

Her work brought her numerous humanitarian awards, including: the Pope John XXIII Peace Prize and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. In receiving this award, Mother Teresa revolutionized the award ceremony. She insisted on a departure from the ceremonial banquet and asked that the funds, \$6,000 be donated to the poor in Calcutta. This money would permit her to feed hundreds for a year. Beginning in 1980, homes began to spring-up for drug addicts, prostitutes, battered women, and more orphanages and schools for poor children around the world.

In 1985, Mother Teresa established the first hospice for AIDS victims in New York. Later, homes were added in San Francisco and Atlanta. Mother Teresa was awarded the Medal of Freedom, the highest U. S. civilian award. On February 3, 1994, at a National Prayer Breakfast sponsored by the U. S. Senate and House of Representatives, in Washington, DC, Mother Teresa challenged the audience on such topics as family life and abortion. She said, "Please don't kill the child. I want the child. Give the child to me. Mother Teresa traveled to help the hungry in Ethiopia, radiation victims at Chernobyl, and earthquake victims in Armenia. Her zeal and works of mercy knew no boundaries. Mother Teresa was a leader in both the political realm as well as the business realm, though she would have never claimed as being so. She never campaigned for any kind of office, nor did she ever start a business to make money. Instead, she became a leader in the world that she was born into, the world that she lived in. Mother Teresa was a leader, as unit one explains, someone who knew who she was and where she was going.

Her perception of self was that of someone who grasped the truth; the only way to solve a problem was to work for it. Her perception of self was that of a simple servant. She was perhaps a leader that will forever live for her examples of service and the unique ability to lead those who have given their lives to the Lord, and those even just searching. She was able to attain and sustain the people that chose to join her in her life's mission by continually convicting them of the need of these works to be done in a world that is starving for such. And she did it by jumping in first.

Physical danger or diseases never compromised her mission and vision. She always passed and presented that risk to those who joined her, and convinced to live fearlessly and with trust in the Lord, which compelled more people to follow. She was a leader that presented, to herself and followers, a new way to view and care for the poor, dying, hungry, and naked. A view that was Truth. A view that slowly convicts the hearts of today's world and convicts us to not be bound by fear for our own beings, but to recklessly do good in this world for those who are in need.

She had the quality of a leader that could stir things up in this culture and create conflicts that led to boundless resolutions. Resolutions that would forever be marked and lived out by generations to come. Mother Teresa is a fine example and definition of what it means to be a " Servant Leader". She was a servant leader in ways this world needs more of. She was someone that did not work for money, fame, power, or immortality, but rather she worked to change the world that she lived in. Mother Teresa was able to acquire followers that were not seen as followers, but fellow missionaries.

Some of these people were even students that she had taught in the past. These fellow missionaries joined her because of the example that she set before the world. They were not following her for what they were hoping to receive malleably from the world, but to change it. Mother Teresa did not lead by asking or demanding, but instead by challenging and loving. She was a leader in community. First, it was a community of just a couple of people living with the same convictions, and then quickly grew to worldwide communities.

She always expressed something that is very important for any servant leader to express-- Unlimited Liability. She showed this to those who had joined her, but most of all, to those of whom she was devoting her life to. She knew that her mission was to serve those in need. And in order to fully apprehend this, she lived the life of those of whom she was serving. She never separated herself, or put herself at a level that was unattainable for those who she lived for and with. If the people that she served had no heater in the winter, then she would live with no heater.

Above all the traits and unique qualities that Mother Teresa was blessed to possess in order to lead such movements in both political and business realms, her vision is truly what had convicted the world. And will continue to convict generations of missionaries and laity in the future. Her vision was something that she held close to her heart. A vision that was a matter of life for her, but at the same time, was attainable for anyone who wished to follow. She lived a vision that brought life to those who are forgotten.

It is a vision that brings dignity to all forms and stages of life. At the same time, a vision that brings dignity to the very life of who is participating in this vision. It is a vision that one must be devoted to, and as the devotion continues, as does the weight of the vision in this world. A change that is brought about through, rather than by, one person at a time. Mother Teresa passed on September 5th, 1997. She has been appointed for Canonization, and is now Beatified and referred to as Blessed Mother Teresa.