

Our parish has a new name---St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta!

With humility, joy, and deep gratitude to God, Cardinal Cupich and the Renew My Church Team, I am pleased to share with you that our unified parish is named St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Name symbolizes new relationship, identity and mission. Mother Teresa is loved by all and continues to inspire all to do good. With this announcement, I invite us all to learn a little more about Mother Teresa's life and to reflect on how her life can inspire our community to focus on the mission that Jesus has entrusted to us.

A Life Well-Lived---Getting to know Mother Teresa a little more:



Mother Teresa was born Gonxha Agnes Bojaxhiu on August 26, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia. Moved by a love for Jesus and missionary service, she traveled to Ireland at the age of 18 and joined the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known as the Sisters of Loreto; there she received the name Sister Mary Teresa after St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Three months later, she departed for India to begin her missionary work as a teacher in Calcutta, India. Six years later, she made her Final Profession of Vows and came to be known as Mother Teresa. She continued to teach for the next decade, but she was always troubled by the poverty found outside the school's walls. On September 10, 1946, Mother Teresa received her "call within a call," with months of hearing Jesus imploring her to "Come be my light" to "radiate [my] love on souls" by forming a religious community to love and care for the poorest of the poor. After two years of testing and discernment, dressed in her signature white and blue sari, Mother Teresa departed from the convent and entered the world of "the unwanted, the unloved, the uncared for."

Mother Teresa spent the next two years working in the slums of Calcutta; inspired by their teacher's love for service and for the poor, her former students also began to join her ministry. On October 7, 1950, the Missionaries of Charity was officially established in the Archdiocese of Calcutta. From there, Mother Teresa sent sisters to other parts of India and eventually all around the world. Today it comprises active and contemplative branches of sisters and brothers, a branch of priests, and lay volunteers known as the Co-Workers of Mother Teresa. In addition to providing education, food, and other services to the homeless and ministering to the poor, they also provide relief after natural disasters and care for refugees, former prostitutes, the mentally ill, sick children, abandoned children, lepers, people with AIDS, the aged, and convalescent. For inspiring and organizing these good works, Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and the highest civilian honors from India, the US, and other countries around the world. Less than two years after her death, Pope John Paul II permitted the opening of her Cause of Canonization in 1999, and she was beatified in 2003. On September 4, 2016, Pope Francis canonized Mother Teresa as Saint Teresa of Calcutta.

Inspiration for our parishioners individually and collectively:

Most of us actually remember a time when Mother Teresa was alive, and we witnessed at least the last parts of her evolution. Her name was changed from "Gonxha Agnes" to "Sister Mary Teresa" to "Mother Teresa" to finally "Saint Teresa," and her workplace changed from the classroom to the slums to the world. Now, the communities of St. Barbara and St. Therese are being called to imitate the example of Mother Teresa by:

1. Cultivating a greater love for Jesus.
2. Having a greater consciousness of the global realities we live in.
3. Striving to serve, particularly the poor and the needy.
4. Being a missionary disciple by sharing the Good News with all we encounter.
5. Living simply so that others might be able to simply live.

Finally, I had the honor of meeting with Sr. Justus, Superior of the Missionaries of Charity in Chicago. We had a wonderful exchange. I am truly impressed by her and her Sisters' humility and love. The following three things I invite you to participate:

1. Sr. Justus has graciously offered to lend our community 20 panels depicting the life story of Mother Teresa. These panels will be displayed at St. Therese Worship site for the weekends of Aug. 17-18 and 24-25 and at St. Barbara Worship Site on the weekends of Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, and Sept. 7-8. I invite you and your family and friends to take advantage of precious opportunity to know more about Mother Teresa.
2. You are invited to pray the novena to St. Mother Teresa beginning on Aug. 27th. Copies of the prayers will be available at the Church entrance table.
3. September 5th is the feast day of St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta; join us in a Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Barbara Church at 10am with Bishop John Manz. This will be a historic day for our entire faith community.

***“By blood, I am Albanian. By citizenship, an Indian. By faith, I am a Catholic nun.
As to my calling, I belong to the world. As to my heart, I belong entirely to the Heart of Jesus.”***

St. Mother Teresa, pray for us and our faith community.

Peace

Fr. Francis Li

Pastor