

BRINGING LENT HOME WITH  
MOTHER TERESA

Lesson Plan

By Lisa Mladinich

(For use with the book by Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle)

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## TEACHER'S NOTES

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Before you teach this beautiful lesson on faith and service, based on Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle's Lenten guide for families, *Bringing Lent Home with Mother Teresa*, ask Blessed Teresa of Calcutta to pray for you and the children, and for their families.

We have provided a link, below, to the Vatican website's brief but exquisite biography of Mother Teresa to give you a more adult understanding of her life and cause for sainthood. We hope you'll enjoy reading it as much as we did, and be blessed by a greater appreciation for her spirituality and example of holiness.

In the pages that follow, you will find many resources for your use in preparation for teaching the lesson:

1. A brief **Pronunciation Guide** for some of the Albanian names in the story of Blessed Teresa's life
2. Some basic **Vocabulary** for your review, so that answering the questions of the children will be easier for you
3. **Pointers for Using the Lesson Plan**
4. **Developmental Insights** at three levels to help you in your work with the children, and to assist you in choosing the best possible activities from this packet for your particular group of children
5. A comprehensive **Lesson Plan** adaptable to three age groups:
  - A. 1st and 2nd grade
  - B. 3rd and 4th grade
  - C. 5th and 6th grade
6. **Supplemental Resources** to give you options in customizing your plan, or creating additional units to enrich your lessons during this grace-filled season of Lent.

God Bless you!

Ave Maria Press

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## VATICAN BIOGRAPHY

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**Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910–1997)** *“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.” Small of stature, rocklike in faith, Mother Teresa of Calcutta was entrusted with the mission of proclaiming God’s thirsting love for humanity, especially for the poorest of the poor. “God still loves the world and He sends you and me to be His love and His compassion to the poor.” She was a soul filled with the light of Christ, on fire with love for Him and burning with one desire: “to quench His thirst for love and for souls.”*

(Read [more](http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20031019_madre-teresa_en.html) [http://www.vatican.va/news\\_services/liturgy/saints/ns\\_lit\\_doc\\_20031019\\_madre-teresa\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20031019_madre-teresa_en.html))

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## PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

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**Gonxha Agnes Bojaxhiu:** (gahn-ja ag-nis bo-yah-ju) Mother Teresa's birth name.

**Albania:** (al-bay-nee-uh) The small Balkan republic where Mother Teresa was born and raised.

**Skopje:** (scop-ee-ay) The town in Albania, where Mother Teresa lived as a child.

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## VOCABULARY

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- **Miracle:** Something wondrous and, in a natural sense, impossible, performed through the power of God, often as a sign and sometimes as a favor to those who devoutly implore the aid of heaven in their greatest needs
- **Missionary:** A person sent into foreign lands to bring the teachings of the Church and/or charitable assistance to native people (i.e. education or medical care)
- **Nun:** A woman who joins an “order” of religious sisters with a common mission involving acts of service and/or of contemplative prayer and almost always of taking vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience
- **Saint:** A person of very advanced holiness, who is already believed to be in heaven and is sometimes publicly recognized as a model of faith for the whole Church and therefore worthy of veneration

## POINTERS FOR USING THE LESSON PLAN

First, the attached activities are all just suggestions, from which you are free to choose. We are providing an abundance of options so that you may select those to which you and your students relate best and are able to use well in the time available.

When using this lesson plan:

- Always begin with prayer. Rely on God to complete all that you do in His name. Trust that He is with you as you teach.
- Especially with young children, avoid perfectionism. Enjoy them and love them. If children become tired or lose concentration, take a break and continue another time.
- Keep in mind that we learn in three ways: through sight, hearing, and touch (or movement). Try to incorporate all three learning styles into your lesson.
- Select age-appropriate activities, and adapt them to suit the individual needs or interests of your students.
- Add or subtract activities with an eye to making the lesson as enjoyable as possible, within the time allotted, for the particular children in your care.
- Consider the limitations or advantages of your work space; and be creative in expanding or contracting the proposed activities as needed.
- Look for opportunities to continue enriching the children's understanding. Some suggestions have been provided in the Supplemental Materials section and noted in the Lesson Plan.

## DEVELOPMENTAL INSIGHTS

Here is a very brief summary of areas of general competency and interest in the following age groups, which should help you in choosing from among our suggested activities for your lesson:

*[Please note that while developmental research is extremely valuable, it should be subject to the particulars of any given child. Be flexible. Use these as guidelines only, while observing the children for ways to connect the lesson to them in a personal way.]*

**First and Second Graders (aged 6–7)** still live richly in their imaginations, love routines, praise, and being with their families. They need lots of guidance and structure; but they are developing a new sense of independence and need lots of patient encouragement and praise. They don't operate well under pressure and can react in frustration if competition becomes too intense. They fidget a lot, so be patient with them. To keep their attention, use activities like stories, arts and crafts, puppets, acting, dress-ups, and playing instruments, simple worksheets, card and board games, and puzzles. If you have a blackboard or dry-erase board, they love to write and draw on them. They love music and movement and will trust you to lead them in vocal prayer, creative dramatics, and singing activities. Sevens are hyper-sensitive to criticism, so give them plenty of time to complete tasks. They are particularly fond of physical activities, since their coordination and strength are really blossoming. Keep lessons brief, varied, and focused, avoid competitive activities, discipline gently, and always be encouraging in spite of their being easily distracted.

**Third and Fourth Graders (aged 8–9)** are still lively and responsive to your creative ideas, and they can be very fond and enthusiastic toward teachers. Eights like clubs and group activities, and they are also able to understand the concept of “right and wrong.” They can relate to the suffering of others and can begin to engage in deeper discussions of their life experiences, family traditions, and personal feelings. They are more confident readers, so you can bring them together, Montessori-style, to look up Bible passages or read aloud from scripts for group dramatics. They willingly enter into lively competitions and love to out-do each other in memorizing Bible verses or finishing a group project ahead of others. They may start to be cliquish and a little insensitive towards each other, so gently demand good manners—especially during circle time—and give everybody a fresh start with each lesson.

**Fifth and Sixth Graders (aged 10–11)** can enjoy a deeper interest in the lesson and have greater attention spans than ever before. They tend to like television and movies. They are generally happy, more self-confident, and good problem solvers who love to plan, design, and build things. They are swiftly developing a sense of fairness; they want to do what is right and still love pleasing parents and teachers. It's a great time, (in limited doses) to ask them to nurture younger students or siblings. Their friendships are deepening and becoming more important to them. They have a growing interest in science, animals and nature, and love to do arts and crafts. They are not terribly religious yet, but will pray and behave well at Mass when properly supervised. They are more open to and enthusiastic about service projects, since they can now relate to the importance of helping others.

## LESSON PLAN

### Lenten Unit Focusing on the Life of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

Subject	Activity	Timing
<p><b>Check-in</b></p>	<p>Have children do <u>just one</u> of these topic-related activities from the Supplemental Resources section, <u>while you take attendance</u> or introduce the topic. Save the remaining activities for another class or for take-home activities.</p> <p><b>Grades 1&amp;2:</b> Mother Teresa Coloring Page or Mother Teresa Word Search (Beginner Level).</p> <p><b>Grades 3&amp;4:</b> Mother Teresa Coloring Page or Mother Teresa Word Search (Intermediate Level).</p> <p><b>Grades 5&amp;6:</b> Mother Teresa Coloring Page or Mother Teresa Word Search (Advanced Level).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Visual and kinesthetic way to provide focus, helps children transition from outside world to the lesson.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Have it on the tables when they arrive. They can finish up while you greet them and begin to introduce your topic. Unfinished work can be taken home.</p>	<p>5-10 min</p>
<p><b>Prayer Time</b></p>	<p><b>Mother Teresa’s Prayer:</b> “Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those people 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 them peace and joy.”</p> <p>(Add intentions and close with an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be)</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Getting the graces needed for them, prayer practice, showing you care.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Print out and fold the Stand-up Quotes finished “Sample” for your prayer table. Light a candle, it focuses them and reminds them of God’s presence. Have them stand up nice and straight, or sit/kneel on story rug. Pray for the poor and needy, and for missionaries. Also ask for the children’s intentions.</p>	<p>5 min</p>



<p><b>Story Time</b></p>	<p><b>Blessed Teresa of Calcutta: A Light Shining in the Darkness</b> (see kid-friendly biography provided for reading aloud)</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Present topic for the day in a vibrant and well-informed, age-appropriate way.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Engage them with energy, ask them questions, make them think. You are the visual and auditory element. Be bold.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p><b>Discussion</b></p>	<p><b>Five Finger Activity</b> (based on Matthew 24:40—suitable for all levels)</p> <p>Mother Teresa taught others to count off the words, “YOU-DID-IT-TO-ME” on their fingers as a reminder that the way we treat others is the way we treat Christ because He lives in all of us.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> To help them integrate the lesson and remember it.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Get them to do it all together with you, and repeat it several times as you give examples (see “Five Finger Activity” for suggested prompts and responses).</p>	<p>5 min</p>
<p><b>Act it Out</b></p>	<p><b>Mother Teresa Skit</b></p> <p><b>Please review:</b> “Acting Out Scenes from the Life of Mother Teresa” in your Supplemental Resources for tips on making this easy and fun.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Get them back up on their feet and “living” the lesson. Too much passive learning gets dull.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Jump right in and ditch the perfectionism. Let several children play each role. Forget about props and costumes. Prompt the children to speak and engage in pantomime. “Act” along with them as you direct. Gently but firmly enforce a “no touching” rule. Keep the activity brief and move on briskly to the next activity.</p> <p><b>Grade Level Note:</b> Both improvised and scripted material can be used at all levels, but with younger children, especially pre-readers, prompt them with your own words. Older students can read from scripts in groups.</p>	<p>10 min</p>

<p><b>Craft</b></p>	<p><b>Stand-up Quotes Activity</b> (all levels): Have them color the blue “stripes” at the top (like the Missionaries of Charity have on their habits--see your sample and photo) and have them write in the words “You Did It To Me” in the empty boxes at the bottom. Then fold it as if you were making a fan (accordion pleats – see photo in Supplemental Resources). It should stand easily on its own and can be displayed on a table or desk at home.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> More reinforcement and something beautiful to take home.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Some younger children will need help with the folding. <u>Encourage them to help each other</u> and remind them how pleasing it is to Christ when we do.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p><b>Song</b></p>	<p><b>Suggestions:</b> Sing one or two verses of “Lift High the Cross”, “Here I Am, Lord”, or “This Little Light of Mine” (see: “Song Lyrics”).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Tap their natural joy, throw off the day’s worries, add a liturgical feel, reach auditory and kinesthetic students.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> For younger children (grades 1-4), march to the story rug if you have one, otherwise march in place or use hand movements, bells or instruments.</p>	<p>3 min</p>
<p><b>Treat</b></p>	<p>Serve cold water in paper cups at the end to remind them that Christ thirsts to be close to us and love us forever. Remind them to be grateful for what we have and to always seek to bring Christ to a thirsty world.</p>	<p>5 min</p>
<p><b>Take Home</b></p>	<p><b>Crafts or activities not used during class time</b> can be saved for a review lesson at a later date, or sent home with the children to enjoy with their families. <b>Options are:</b> Good Samaritan Maze (3 levels), Mother Teresa Word Search (3 levels), Mother Teresa Coloring Page, Standing Quotes, Cross Craft.</p>	
<p><b>Letter home</b></p>	<p><b>Something friendly and brief about the lesson.</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Evangelize parents, help kids learn at home.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Tell them what you’re doing in class, include facts and other information to help keep the conversation going with their children. Encourage them to contact you with questions.</p>	

Supplemental Activities for Longer Programs or Additional Units During Lent

<p><b>Bible Story</b></p>	<p><b>The Good Samaritan:</b> Luke 10:25-37 (all levels)</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Help them love their Bibles and draw into the presence of the Lord in His holy Word.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Read it to them from a children’s Bible with nice pictures, or paraphrase the story based on the adult version. Help the story to come to life through eye-contact, gestures, and expressive use of your voice. Like Jesus, question the children about who did God’s will and acted as a neighbor to the man in need.</p>	<p>5-10 min</p>
<p><b>Maze Activity</b></p>	<p><b>Good Samaritan Maze</b></p> <p><b>Available at three levels:</b> Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced (grades 1-2, grades 3-4, grades 5-6)</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> to add visual and kinesthetic engagement to the Bible story.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> This would probably be a good take-home activity or a way of reviewing this lesson next week.</p>	<p>5-10 min</p>
<p><b>Chat and Craft</b></p>	<p><b>Lent, Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving with Cross Craft</b> (Full lecture: grades 3-6. Cross Craft: All levels) (see Supplemental Resources for full discussion and craft notes)</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Review Lenten practices, encourage them to make a plan for Lent.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Review notes and then use your own words. Encourage questions and comments. Be creative with your examples.</p>	<p>15 min</p>
<p><b>Giving Smiles</b></p>	<p><b>Smiles Activity</b> (grades 1-4)</p> <p>“Mother Teresa told her sisters that to become holy doesn’t mean we will be doing extraordinary things, but rather ‘consists in accepting, with a smile, what Jesus sends us. It consists in <b>accepting</b> and following the will of God.’ ... Mother Teresa makes it clear that we must not only accept God’s will, but go one step further. God calls us even to <b>smile</b>, to be thankful and trust him to know exactly what we need.” Donna-Marie Cooper O’Boyle</p> <p><b>Ask them:</b> What can you accept with a smile?</p> <p><b>Donna-Marie suggests:</b> “Challenge the children to give away at least ten beautiful smiles today and then to whisper a little prayer to Jesus for the people they have smiled at. They can keep track of the smiles by drawing a smiley face each time they have sincerely smiled at someone. For the younger ones, you can draw the faces and they can color them in once they have passed on their sweet smiles.”</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Giving young children a chance to practice smiling as an act of love and acceptance of crosses.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Involve parents with a note home.</p>	<p>Class time and beyond</p>

<p><b>Words of Love</b></p>	<p><b>Project Hope Bags</b> (grades 3-6)</p> <p><a href="http://www.hopebags.com">www.hopebags.com</a></p> <p>A wonderful homeless outreach program, started by children, to provide for the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of people living on the streets. Students can get involved by writing short notes of encouragement and love to those on the street.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> “We must be <b>convinced</b> that when we serve others, we are serving Jesus,” says Donna-Marie, who knew Blessed Teresa personally.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Website provides sample letters and guidelines for participation.</p>	<p>15 min</p>
<p><b>Balloon Activity</b></p>	<p><b>Are you a balloon?</b> (All levels) Or a humble and loving servant of God? Mother Teresa said, “If we were humble, nothing would change us—neither praise nor discouragement. If someone were to criticize us, we would not feel discouraged. If someone were to praise us, we also would not feel proud.” (In My Own Words, MT)</p> <p><b>You blow up the balloon or let out air to demonstrate the effect of praise and discouragement on people who lack humility.</b></p> <p>Have the children take turns doing the praising and discouraging, as you blow the balloon up and let the air out (up and down to show the feelings they are “causing” you).</p> <p>Then, switch roles. Put the balloon aside and have the class grow “taller” and “shorter” as you heap praises and discouragements on them (alternate so they go up and down, quickly) (i.e. “You are so good, you are so wonderful, you are perfect, you are a genius!” Then... “You can’t do that! You’ll never succeed! There’s no way! Don’t even try!”)</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> To give them an unforgettable experience of what it is to be subject to others’ opinions of them.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Avoid saying anything personal that might be hurtful. Have them start seated in their chairs so they can stand up to inflate and slump down to deflate (no one should end up on the floor).</p>	<p>5 min</p>
<p><b>Sacrifice Jars</b></p>	<p><b>Sacrifice Jars</b> (grades 1-4) <b>and other great Lenten activities for kids:</b> <a href="http://karenedmisten.blogspot.com/2009/02/meaningful-lent-part-4-lent-with-young.html">http://karenedmisten.blogspot.com/2009/02/meaningful-lent-part-4-lent-with-young.html</a></p> <p>“There are different versions of this all over the place, but here’s what we do: We place an empty jar next to a bowl of dried beans. For every sacrifice, prayer, act of kindness or penance performed, a bean goes into the jar. On Easter morning, the beans will be replaced with jelly beans and M&amp;Ms, reminding us that the rewards of Heaven will be sweet!” Karen Edmiston</p>	

<p><b>I Am the Vine</b></p>	<p><b>Lenten Grapevine Display for Home or Classroom:</b> (grades 1-6 – see notes for older children, below)</p> <p>From AmazingCatechists.com “We took a long sheet of brown construction paper and rolled it up the long way, and then twisted the paper so it was ruffled and twisted. This was about ten feet long. This is tacked on to the wall horizontally (but a little curvy like a grapevine). I then took green and purple construction paper. With the green, I cut out grapevine leaves. With the purple I cut out many grapes. The paper leaves and grapes were placed in a jar. The twisted long brown paper is the “grapevine.” The kids are given these instructions: Whenever they do a SECRET service for someone, like help someone without bragging or calling attention to themselves, they can tape on a leaf to the Grapevine. If the kids noticed anyone being kind, generous etc, they can tape on a grape to the Grapevine. This project can start on Ash Wednesday and continue through Lent.” Contributed by Mary Cinatl, Fort Worth Diocese for the Deaf</p> <p><b>Note:</b> For older students, this vine can be “dressed” with clippings of heroic deeds or good works being done in the Church and beyond.</p>	
<p><b>Inspirational</b></p>	<p><b>Child-Founded Charities</b> (grades 3-6) (<a href="http://www.kidzworld.com/article/6444-child-founded-charities">http://www.kidzworld.com/article/6444-child-founded-charities</a>) Inspirational true stories about existing charities started by caring kids.</p>	
<p><b>Practical</b></p>	<p><b>Volunteer Ideas for Kids</b> (all levels)</p> <p>(<a href="http://kidmoney.about.com/od/charity/tp/volunteer-kids.htm">http://kidmoney.about.com/od/charity/tp/volunteer-kids.htm</a>) Great ideas for getting involved at a young age.</p>	

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## MOTHER TERESA'S PRAYER

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“Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those people 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 them peace and joy.”

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be ...

Amen.

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## PRAYER TO MOTHER TERESA

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*Here is a prayer from a website devoted to Mother Teresa's cause for sainthood:*

*[http://www.motherteresa.org/Novena/MotherTeresa\\_collect\\_2008.html#C](http://www.motherteresa.org/Novena/MotherTeresa_collect_2008.html#C)*

“Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, longing to love Jesus as He had never been loved before, you gave yourself entirely to Him, refusing Him nothing. In union with the Immaculate Heart of Mary, you accepted His call to satiate His infinite thirst for love and souls and become a carrier of His love to the poorest of the poor. With loving trust and total surrender you fulfilled His will, witnessing to the joy of belonging totally to Him. You became so intimately united to Jesus your crucified Spouse that He deigned to share with you the agony of His Heart as He hung upon the Cross.

Blessed Teresa, you promised to continuously bring the light of love to those on earth; pray for us that we also may long to satiate the burning thirst of Jesus by loving Him ardently, sharing in His sufferings joyfully, and serving Him wholeheartedly in our brothers and sisters, especially those most unloved and unwanted. Amen.”

## BLESSED TERESA OF CALCUTTA: A BRIGHT LIGHT SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

Includes quotes from  
*Bringing Lent Home with Mother Teresa* by Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle  
(**Note:** Bolded sections can be cut for use with 1st and 2nd graders)

Born in Skopje, Albania, in the year 1910, Gonxha Agnes Bojaxhiu was the youngest child of a good, Catholic family. Her father died when she was a little girl, causing many hardships; but her mother supported the family with a fabric business she ran in their home, and they went to Mass faithfully every Sunday.

Gonxha longed to be a missionary, so when she was eighteen years old, she joined the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, also known as the Sisters of Loreto. She became a nun and took the name Mary Teresa. After her training in Ireland, she was sent to teach at St. Mary's, a private girls' school in Calcutta. For many years she was very happy there, and for several years she was the headmistress, or principal. She loved her students, and they loved her. Everyone called her Mother Teresa.

[For younger students, insert: Mother Teresa was a Catholic nun living in Calcutta, India. She was a principal in a school there. She loved her job, and she loved her students.]

One day in 1946, Mother Teresa was on her way from Calcutta to another town in India, called Darjeeling. For many hours the train rolled across the Indian countryside, as she prayed and watched the scenery pass by her window. But she was deeply struck by the site of so many poor and sick people, abandoned children, and homeless families, wandering or lying on the ground with no one to help them.

In her heart, she heard Jesus speak to her, setting her soul on fire with the desire to bring God's love to the poorest people of the world. Jesus begged her, "Come be my light! I cannot go alone!" He instructed her to start a new religious order called the Missionaries of Charity. He wanted her to bring his love to the poor and neglected people of the world and to teach them about him.

After two years, her superiors gave her permission to leave the school and start this new order. Mother Teresa found a place to live and took a course in nursing, and then she went out to look for the very poorest people in the worst parts of Calcutta. Every single morning she went to Mass, and she carried her Rosary with her, praying all day long as she worked.

Mother Teresa fed the hungry people she met, treating their wounds and illnesses, comforting and helping them in any way she could. She picked up abandoned babies and became like a mother to them. It was very hard, but she trusted in God to give her the strength she needed. Within months, she was joined by many of her students from St. Mary's, who had heard about her work and wanted to become Missionaries of Charity, too!

For the rest of her life, Mother Teresa spent all her days serving the poor. Her order spread all over the world, as she opened Missionary of Charity homes on every continent, with 4,000 members of her order and 610 foundations in 123 countries. In 1979, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, which she accepted "for the Glory of God and in the name of the poor."

Mother Teresa's friend remembers, "Mother Teresa was forever being told that she was very courageous to do the work that she did. She was humble and received all this praise in Jesus' name. She explained that if she wasn't totally convinced that Jesus was present in each and every person she cared for, each abandoned body of a leper that reeked with a foul stench, each abandoned child in dire need, each alcoholic, and so on, that she couldn't possibly do the work...Jesus' love gave her the courage. She said Christ whom she received in the Eucharist each morning at Mass, and whom she adored in the Blessed Sacrament each day, was the same Jesus she touched in each and every one of the forsaken poor. She had no doubt about it." (*Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle*)

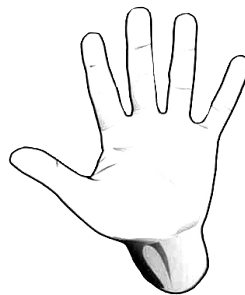
Mother Teresa died at the age of 87 on **September 5th, 1997**. Many miracles have been reported by those who pray to her. You can ask her to pray for you, too! She loved children very much, and she wants to help you with any problems or concerns you might have. With her help, you too can become a saint by doing whatever God calls you to do.

Many books have been written about her life, so it is possible to read her beautiful words of wisdom on many subjects. One of Mother Teresa's most famous quotes<sup>1</sup> is, "In this life we cannot do great things. We can only do small things with great love." That means that you don't have to travel all over the world and do huge projects to be a saint. All that is needed is that you do your small tasks and chores with great love.

She also loved to quote the Bible. One of her favorites is from the Gospel of Saint Matthew, where Jesus said, "What ever you do to the least of my brothers, you do to me." That means that when we are kind to anyone, we are kind to Jesus, and when we are unkind to anyone, we are unkind to Jesus.

She liked to count on her fingers like this to remind herself and others of Jesus' words (hold up your hand, fingers splayed, pointing to each finger as you say each of the five words):

"YOU-DID-IT-TO-ME"



Mother Teresa is a symbol of motherly love to all people, but especially to those who live in the worst kinds of poverty, abandoned by the world, and to people who are very lonely. Her life and work has inspired many ordinary people like you and me to join in this work and bring God's love to the world. If we pray and do our best to listen to God in our hearts, we can become more holy, we can serve the poor, and become the "light" of Jesus' love—just like Mother Teresa.

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1. See: "Standing Quotes Craft"



## MOTHER TERESA SKIT

In this script, the chorus is an assortment of players who will also double as individuals Mother Teresa meets on her walk through the streets of Calcutta. Several children can “play” Mother Teresa” in unison (boys and girls), or any other character, by sharing a script and acting in unison. A student who is a strong reader, or the teacher, should read the narrations.

For pre-readers, the teacher or parent simply prompts them with brief, paraphrased versions of what follows and they repeat the words together. No costumes or props are necessary. Feel free to describe the scene in detail. Be enthusiastic, but avoid being a perfectionist. The idea is to encourage them to imagine a vivid scene that will live in their hearts forever.

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, pray for us.+

<b>Narrator</b>	At first, we find Mother Teresa on a train in India looking out the window—her hands folded in prayer, her face very sad. As the train passes by, she sees many suffering people, sick and poor, abandoned and unloved.
<b>Chorus</b>	<i>(outside her window, pleading)</i> I am hungry. I am thirsty. I am sick. I am unloved. Why does everyone pass by without stopping?
<b>Mother</b>	I see them suffering, Lord. I hear them calling out. It is terrible.
<b>Jesus</b>	Come, be my light. Take my love out into the world so that everyone will know that I never abandon them. I never forget them. I always hear them calling to me.
<b>Mother</b>	I would have to leave the school, Lord.
<b>Jesus</b>	Someone else will take care of the school. I need you to serve the poor with me.
<b>Mother</b>	I will, Lord. I will follow you wherever you lead me.
<b>Narrator</b>	After two years of praying and waiting for permission to leave her job at the school, Mother Teresa goes to a special school to learn nursing, and then she leaves her home to go out alone into the streets to care for the poor and sick.
<b>Child 1</b>	I am hungry. Feed me!

<b>Mother</b>	<i>(smiling)</i> Here is some bread, my sweet child, and some milk. Eat! Drink! I will be back tomorrow. <i>(the child eats gratefully)</i>
<b>Child 2</b>	I am sick. Help me!
<b>Mother</b>	<i>(smiling and miming as if to wash the child's face)</i> Let me cool your fever and give you medicine. That's it. You are a good child. You will grow strong and healthy again.
<b>Child 3</b>	Why is she smiling? There is so much sadness, so much suffering.
<b>Child 4</b>	<i>(as mother continues to hand out food and comfort the sick)</i> I think she is an angel from God.
<b>Mother</b>	<i>(laughing)</i> No, not an angel. Just someone who brings you the love of God.
<b>Child 5</b>	I have no mother or father. I am abandoned and afraid.
<b>Mother</b>	Come with me, and I will be your mother. You don't have to be afraid any more. <i>(she mimes picking up the child in her arms, and the child follows her)</i>
<b>Narrator</b>	After a few months, some of Mother Teresa's students from the school, came to work with her, because they loved Jesus, too. Soon, many young people, women and men from all over the world, joined her order. They were called the Missionaries of Charity.
<b>Sister 1</b>	Hello, Mother. Would you let me help you bring love to the poor, too?
<b>Mother</b>	<i>(smiling and touching Sister 1's cheek)</i> Yes! Come, let us be the light of Christ together.
<b>Sister 2</b>	Look, Mother! This lady is very sick.
<b>Woman</b>	<i>(lying down)</i> I am dying. I am abandoned. I am so angry that my son has left me here on the street to die.

<b>Mother</b>	Let us carry you to our home for the sick, where you will see how much you are loved. <i>(they mime lifting her and the Woman stands and pretends to be carried to another place where they put her down again and mime tucking her in and tending to her)</i>
<b>Sister 2</b>	Now, she will be peaceful at the end.
<b>Woman</b>	<i>(angrily)</i> But my heart is broken. My own son abandoned me!
<b>Sister 1</b>	<i>(shocked)</i> Oh, that's terrible. Her own son!
<b>Mother</b>	<i>(smiling gently)</i> You must forgive him. You must try to understand him.
<b>Woman</b>	But it is so hard to forgive! He was supposed to love me.
<b>Mother</b>	God will help you. Come now, try! <i>(Mother folds her hands in prayer)</i>
<b>Woman</b>	<i>(clasping her hands over her heart)</i> Oh, Mother, I feel the pain leaving my heart.
<b>Mother</b>	It is God's grace. <i>(she smiles)</i>
<b>Woman</b>	Yes, yes... I do forgive. <i>(She smiles radiantly, then dies. This can be played as falling asleep)</i>
<b>Mother</b>	<i>(making the sign of the Cross)</i> Now her soul is at peace, and she will live forever with Jesus.
<b>Man</b>	<i>(entering)</i> Mother Teresa!
<b>Mother</b>	Yes, my dear son. <i>(smiling)</i>
<b>Man</b>	I was an orphaned child and you took care of me. Now, I want to spend my life caring for the poor. I am going to become a priest!
<b>Mother</b>	<i>(smiling)</i> Glory be to God!
<b>Man</b>	I want to be a saint like you. Tell me how to be holy.

<b>Mother</b>	The secret to holiness is accepting whatever God gives you and giving whatever he takes from you.
<b>Man</b>	<i>(very serious)</i> I will, Mother.
<b>Mother</b>	Never be afraid. Trust always in Jesus Christ.
<b>Man</b>	I will, Mother.
<b>Mother</b>	And one more thing, my child.
<b>Man</b>	<i>(even more serious)</i> Yes, Mother?
<b>Mother</b>	Don't forget to smile. <i>(they both smile and laugh)</i>

The End

## FIVE FINGER ACTIVITY

**Review the following from Mother's story:**

Mother Teresa loved to quote the Bible, especially the Gospel of Saint Matthew, where Jesus said, "What ever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do to me."

That means that when we are kind to anyone, we are kind to Jesus; and when we are unkind to anyone, we are unkind to Jesus.

Mother Teresa liked to count on her fingers like this to remind herself and others of Jesus' words (hold up your hand, fingers splayed, pointing to each finger as you say each of the five words):

**"YOU-DID-IT-TO-ME"**



**Have the children "count" the words on their own fingers, saying them aloud, after each prompting:**

**You say...**

When someone was hungry and you fed them...

When someone was thirsty and you gave them a drink...

When someone was sad and you comforted them...

When you were kind to your brother...

When you were kind to your sister...

When you were kind to the shy child at school...

When you obeyed your parents and teachers...

**They respond...**

You did it to me!

You did it to me!

You did it to me!

You did it to me!

You did it to me!

You did it to me!

You did it to me!

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## SONG LYRICS

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### **Lift High The Cross**

*Refrain:* Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim,  
Till all the world adore His sacred Name.

Led on their way by this triumphant sign,  
The hosts of God in conquering ranks combine.

*Refrain*

Each newborn servant of the Crucified  
Bears on the brow the seal of Him Who died.

*Refrain*

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
As Thou hast promised, draw the world to Thee.

*Refrain*

So shall our song of triumph ever be:  
Praise to the Crucified for victory.

*Refrain*

### **Here I am, Lord**

I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard My people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin,  
My hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear My light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

*Refrain:* Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them, They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
Give them hearts for love alone.

I will speak My word to them,  
Whom shall I send?

*Refrain*

I, the Lord of wind and flame,  
I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them,  
My hand will save  
Finest bread I will provide,  
Till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give My life to them,  
Whom shall I send?

*Refrain*

### **This Little Light of Mine**

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Won't let anyone blow it out.  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Won't let anyone blow it out.  
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Let it shine till Jesus comes.  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine till Jesus comes.  
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel—NO!  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Hide it under a bushel—NO!  
I'm gonna let it shine, Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Let it shine over the whole wide world,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine over the whole wide world,  
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

## STAND-UP QUOTES ACTIVITY



1. Print and fold the Sample and place it in your prayer space until needed for this activity.
2. Print out a Standing Quotes page for each of your students and have them sign the back.
3. Have them read the quotes aloud and make sure they understand the meaning of each quote.
4. Show them the finished Sample.
5. Have them color the stripes at the top of their page blue (with markers, colored pencils, or crayons).
6. Ask the children to fill in the five small boxes at the bottom with the words, "YOU-DID-IT-TO-ME," with one word in each box.
7. Finally, have them fold their paper in accordion pleats, as if they were making a paper fan (see image), and place the finished product on end, standing up.

Suggest to the children that placing this on a shelf or table somewhere in their home, where everyone can be inspired by Mother Teresa's words, would be a great Lenten gift to their families.



# SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

## ACTING OUT SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF MOTHER TERESA

Improvising or acting from a lively script in short, simple scenes help children review and retain what they have been learning. This is partly because dramatic work utilizes all three learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (see: [www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.MI.htm](http://www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.MI.htm)). Children will “see” the scene taking place all around them, “hear” the scene as they act it out, and “touch” the scene by using their own voices and bodies to reenact it. The best part of improvising these scenes and “living” in them is that because this activity engages the children’s vivid imaginations on so many levels. They will create their own mental pictures of the people, places, and events in the story, making memories that will last a lifetime.

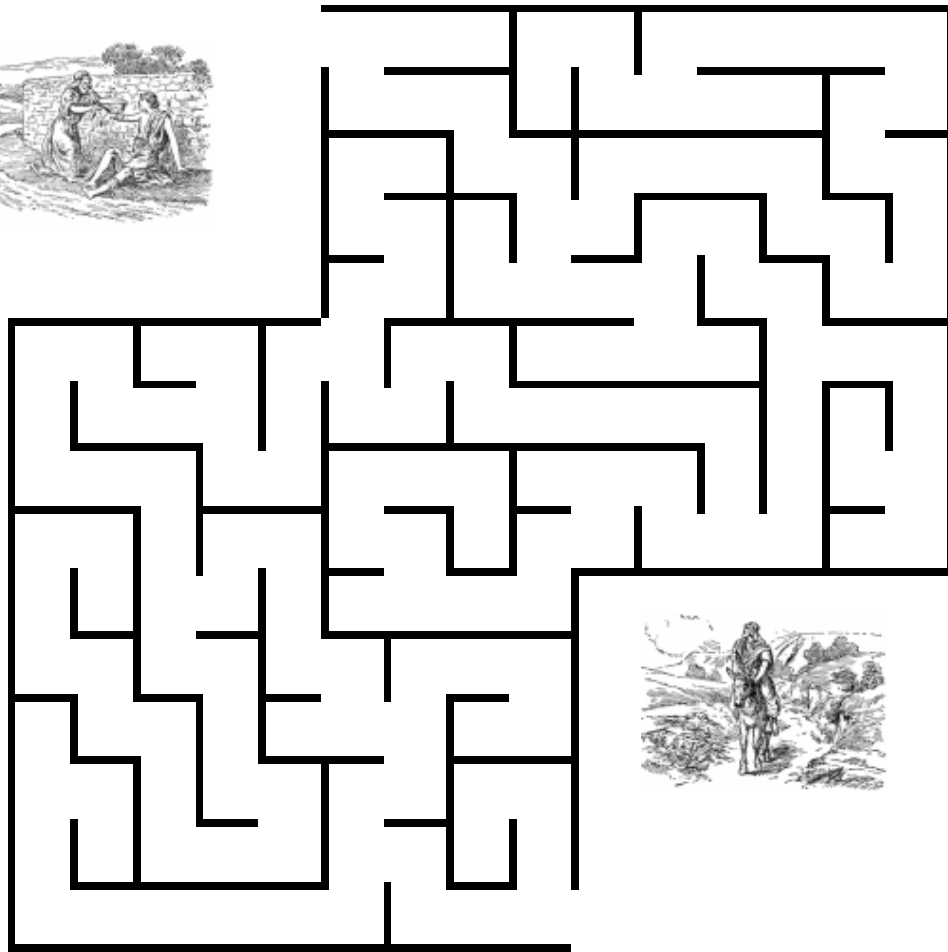
1. **Improvising scenes is great fun for children and can be done with no props or costumes at all.** Their wonderful imaginations fill in all the details they need. However, if you have a small group, you may use head scarves or other simple props and costume pieces to help the children with their imaginings. Large groups do better with nothing to cause arguments over who gets what.
2. ***Be tolerant of their playfulness and the great upsurge in energy that accompanies creative work.*** If you are a classroom teacher, you already know that, statistically-speaking, the majority of the children in your parish or school are un-churched, their parents failing to take them even to Sunday Mass. Therefore, you represent the Church to them; so please, ask Blessed Teresa of Calcutta to give you the grace to really love the children. Be patient and kind. Maintain a sense of humor. Tolerate their giggles and their initial awkwardness. It is not perfection you want; it is a chance to let the Holy Spirit work through their imaginations to draw them into the Heart of Christ. Good enough is truly good enough.
3. ***Let every child play the role he or she wishes to play.*** You can have multiple children playing each part. They simply have to work together to say lines that you provide to them verbally. (Older children can hold a copy of the script in their hands and share with others playing the same part, reciting the lines in unison.) Coach them along, saying for example, “All the Mother Teresas are very kindly smiling at the poor and sick people in the road. Now, (miming) hand out food and blankets and say, ‘God bless you!’ The poor people look at her with surprise, because no one has ever been kind to them before!”
4. ***Especially in classroom situations, a “no touching” rule is essential.*** All actions concerning fellow players are to be accomplished in pantomime, without anyone ever actually laying hands on their fellow actors. If you wish to play a scene where the children are pretending to carry sick people home to care for them, simply have the children pantomime lifting them up, and have the “sick people” pretend to be lifted and carry themselves.
5. ***Keep it short and simple, and enjoy these brief moments of play.*** Work on only one or two scenes in each class.
6. ***Ask the Holy Spirit to enter into your time with the children,*** completing what you leave unfinished and drawing them all together in the Heart of Christ, through the intercession of the Blessed Teresa of Calcutta.

# MAZES AND WORD SEARCHES

# GOOD SAMARITAN MAZE

First and Second Grade

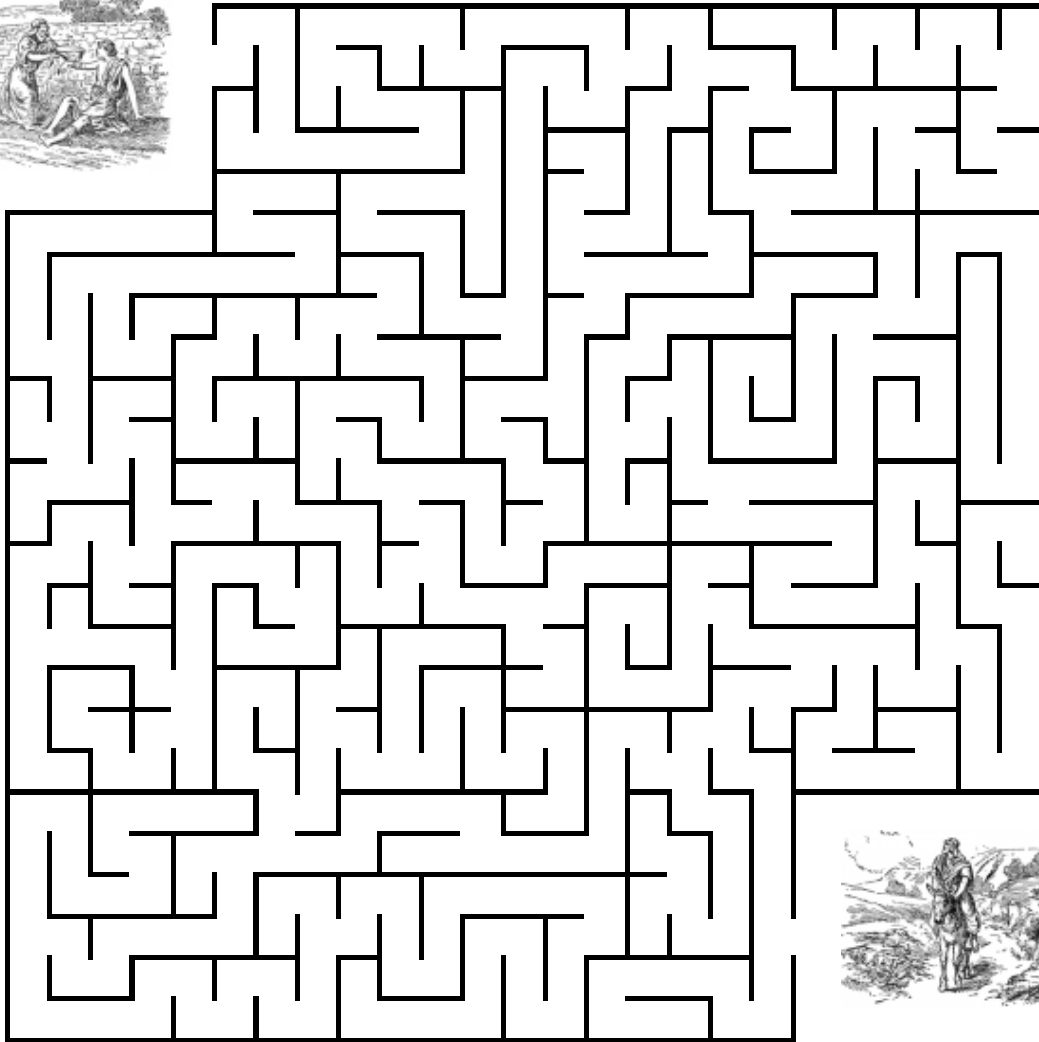
Start at the bottom right corner and find the man who needs help!



# GOOD SAMARITAN MAZE

Third and Fourth Grade

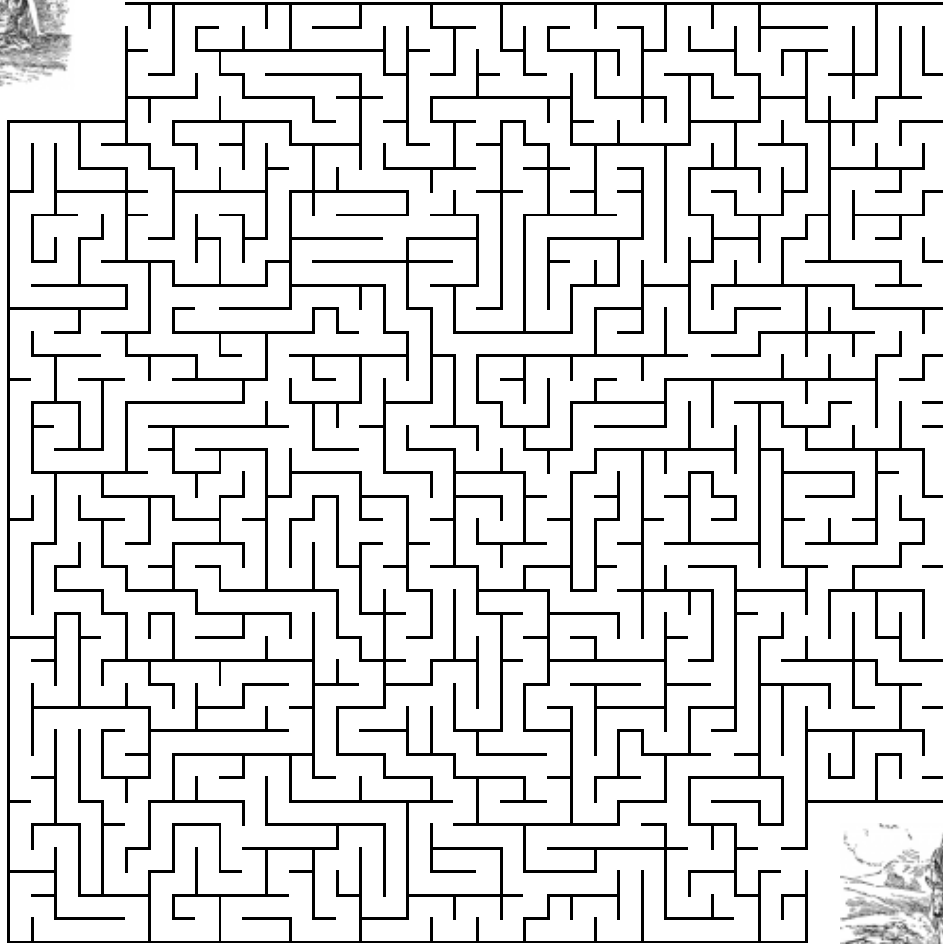
Start at the bottom right corner and find the man who needs help!



# GOOD SAMARITAN MAZE

Fifth and Sixth Grade

Start at the bottom right corner and find the man who needs help!



BLESSED TERESA OF CALCUTTA WORD SEARCH

Grades 1 and 2

S	L	V	S	S	V	J	J	O	R	J	M
A	A	A	T	T	F	R	E	V	R	E	M
S	R	R	S	U	R	C	F	S	H	R	O
I	S	H	S	R	I	F	S	V	U	E	A
M	O	O	R	V	T	M	S	T	Y	S	Y
F	J	P	R	A	Y	E	Y	U	E	V	F
A	S	E	R	E	T	R	E	H	T	O	M
I	S	T	V	S	P	A	R	P	O	S	A
T	M	O	A	E	V	R	C	E	T	T	H
H	L	F	S	U	E	T	E	S	T	O	V
P	A	O	E	A	A	T	A	H	P	P	V
E	T	S	A	T	V	E	F	S	A	E	A

ALMS

HOPE

MOTHER TERESA

FAITH

JESUS

PRAY

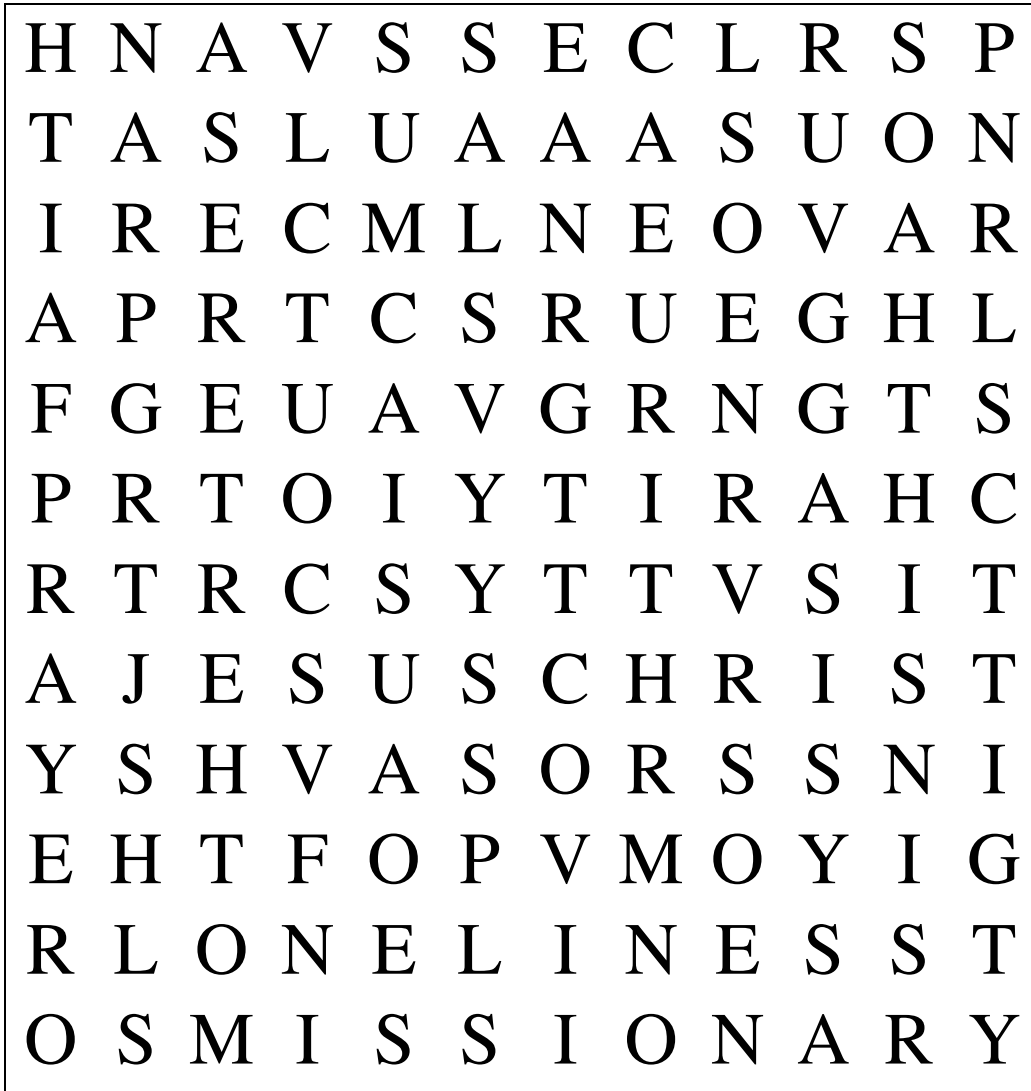
FAST

LOVE

SERVICE

BLESSED TERESA OF CALCUTTA WORD SEARCH

Grades 3 and 4



ALMSGIVING

FAITH

JESUS CHRIST

MISSIONARY

POVERTY

CALCUTTA

FASTING

LONELINESS

MOTHER TERESA

PRAYER

CHARITY

HOPE

LOVE

NUN

SERVICE



## BLESSED TERESA OF CALCUTTA WORD SEARCH

Grades 5 and 6



CALCUTTA

EASTER

FORGIVENESS

HOPE

JESUS CHRIST

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY

POVERTY

SERVICE

CATHOLIC

FAITH

FORTY DAYS OF LENT

HUNGRY

LONELINESS

MOTHER TERESA

PRAY

SUFFERING

DESTITUTE

FAST

GIVE ALMS

INDIA

LOVE

PASSION OF CHRIST

REPENT

VOCATION

## LENT, PRAYER, FASTING, AND GIVING ALMS

Discussion and Craft Combined  
Appropriate for All Grade Levels  
Estimated Time: 15 Minutes

(This craft found online at: <http://ranthisthat.blogspot.com/2009/02/lenen-activities-for-kids.html>)

**Craft Supplies Needed:** Large, colored popsicle sticks, glue, yarn, scissors, dark-colored markers.

**Time-Saving Tip:** Pre-cut yarn into 12-inch lengths.

**Important:** Before starting the lesson, have your students glue two large popsicle sticks into a cross formation (get these from a craft store, colored if possible). While the glue dries, explain the meaning of Lent, Prayer, Fasting, and Giving Alms. Suggested talking points are included below. The remainder of the craft follows this discussion.

\*\*\*

Let's talk about **Lent**. (Write it on the board, or hold up a card with the word clearly printed.)

Lent, which takes place every Spring, is a wonderful time of the year for Christians because during the 40 days of Lent we are very busy preparing for the biggest feast day of the whole year. Can anyone tell me what that feast day is? (No, not Christmas, but good guess!)

**Easter** is the day when we remember that after Jesus died for us on the Cross, He rose from the dead and was completely alive again! That's how powerful God's love is.

Easter Sunday is a day of great rejoicing throughout the whole Christian world, like a holy birthday party. Because after Jesus died for our sins, He opened the gates of heaven so that all the people who love Him will be able to come and live with Him there some day.

**During the 40 days of Lent**, we do three special things in order to prepare our hearts for the great joy of Easter Sunday. These three special things help us grow closer to God. When we do them, we make God happy. Does anyone know what those three things are?

All during the 40 days of Lent, we try very hard to remember to: **Pray, Fast, and Give Alms**.

(Write them on the board, or hold up a card with the words clearly printed.)

Can anyone tell me what **Prayer** is? (Circle it on the board, or hold up a card with the word clearly printed.)

Prayer is the way we talk to God.

Prayer can be out loud: (demonstrate) "Jesus, I love you!" (Perform the Sign of the Cross)

Prayer can be silent, spoken only in our hearts. I'm going to tell Jesus I love Him again, but this time in my thoughts. (Close your eyes for a moment to pray, and then open them and smile at the children. Perform the Sign of the Cross silently.)

Prayer can be sung: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee!" (Perform the Sign of the Cross.) [Other suggestions: A line or two of "Amazing Grace," or "Ave Maria"]

Prayer can be written (on blackboard or other visible surface): "Dear Lord, Thank you for this beautiful day!" (Draw a simple cross out of two lines to end the prayer.)

What is your favorite type of prayer?

Can anyone tell me what it means to **Give Alms**? (Circle it on the board, or hold up a card with the word clearly printed.)

Giving alms is a gift of love to anyone in need. For thousands of years Catholics have given money, food and clothing to the poor, medicine to the sick, schoolbooks and toys to those who could not afford them. We have built homes for the homeless, schools, hospitals, and churches – anything that was needed to help others to live happy, healthy lives. We sometimes call this “charity.” When your parents put money in the collection basket at Mass, they are giving alms. That money is used to help the Church to do many good things for others.

Do you know why we Catholics give so much to others?

Because Jesus said that we must love others the way we love ourselves, to treat people the way we would like to be treated! If we were hungry, we would want someone to be kind and give us some food. If we were thirsty or cold, we would want something to drink and a nice, warm coat to wear. By loving others enough to share what we have, by giving alms, we make God very happy!

It is very good to share our money, food and clothing with others. But almost anything can become a gift of love if we offer it to God. I can say, “Lord, I offer you all my smiles today,” and then smile at everyone, or “Lord, I offer you my chores and my school work,” and do my very best all day, or “I offer you the joy of listening to music or eating a delicious meal,” or “I offer you my sadness or tiredness or any other kind of suffering.” If you think of Jesus lovingly while you do any good thing, He will accept your gift and bless you for it. He will accept your “almsgiving” because it is a gift of love.

Can you think of anything you’d like to give to Jesus?

Can anyone tell me what **Fasting** is? (Circle it on the board, or hold up a card with the word clearly printed.)

Fasting is when we give up something that we enjoy in order to grow closer to God. We might give up candy or television for a day, or even a week, to remind ourselves through these small sacrifices that we are not always good and should be sorry for our sins. During Lent, we might even give that special something up for the whole 40 days!

We sacrifice something we like because the sadness of giving it up helps us remember that we have made mistakes and have not always been kind or loving or patient with others. Maybe we haven’t been good at sharing, or maybe we lose our temper with our younger brother or sister. Maybe we are not listening to Mom and Dad, or to our teachers. That small sacrifice of fasting from our favorite foods or computer games or television helps us to grow in holiness.

We can also fast from behaviors that are not nice. So if you’re usually not very good at sharing, you could practice sharing more. You’d be fasting from selfishness. If you lose your temper a lot, you could fast from being impatient. Ask God to help you, and try very hard, and you’ll discover that you can become a much more patient person!

So during Lent we do three important things. Can you remember what they are?

**Pray, Fast, Give Alms.**

[Have your students write the three terms on the popsicle-stick cross as they appear below – you can show them how on the blackboard, or by holding up a sample you have made in advance.]

P  
R  
A  
Y

GIVE ALMS

F  
A  
S  
T

Using a criss-cross pattern, have them wrap about a foot of yarn around the center of the cross and glue it in place.

Suggest that they take it home and keep the cross in a special place, where they will see it every day to remind them to pray, fast, and give alms throughout Lent. Staying faithful to their Lenten practices will bring them great joy at Easter time!

*Alternative: Have the children glue a small magnet at the back, so that their cross can adorn the refrigerator at home. Crafting magnets can be bought inexpensively online.*