



Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem ©
* *Knights of Malta* *

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Chancellor's Update

Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Mother Teresa first became well known because of her dedication to help the “poorest of the poor” by rescuing them from dying in the street to having a peaceful death, surrounded by compassion. Later she preached on behalf of another group of poor, those chosen to die an agonizing death in the wombs of their mothers.

In the years following her death the culture continued to deteriorate and attacks began on the practice of religion and religious belief. Some were wont to ask, “Where is Mother Teresa when we need her now?” or “Mother Teresa is dead, but why hasn’t someone else risen to speak out against these abuses?” Mother Teresa no longer walks among us, but her words are as valid as when she was with us.

Dear Friends,

I am praying for God’s blessing on all who are taking part in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. I hope that this Conference will help everyone to know, love, and respect the special place of women in God’s plan so that they may fulfill this plan in their lives.

I do not understand why some people are saying that women and men are exactly the same, and are denying the beautiful differences between men and women. All God’s gifts are good, but they are not all the same. As I often say to people who tell me that they would like to serve the poor as I do, “What I can do, you cannot. What you can do, I cannot. But together we can do something beautiful for God.” It is just this way with the differences between women and men.

God has created each one of us, every human being, for greater things – to love and to be loved. But why did God make some of us men and others women? Because a woman’s love is one image of the love of God, and a man’s love is another image of God’s love. Both are created to love, but each in a different way. Woman and man complete each other, and together show forth God’s love more fully than either can do it alone.

That special power of loving that belongs to a woman is seen most clearly when she becomes a mother. Motherhood is the gift of God to women. How grateful we must be to God for this wonderful gift that brings such joy to the whole world, women and men alike! Yet we can destroy this gift of motherhood, especially by the evil of abortion, but also by thinking that other things like jobs or positions are more important than loving,

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than giving oneself to others. No job, no plans, no possessions, no idea of “freedom” can take the place of love. So anything that destroys God’s gift of motherhood destroys His most precious gift to women – the ability to love as a woman.

God told us, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” So first I am to love myself rightly, and then to love my neighbor like that. But how can I love myself unless I accept myself as God has made me? Those who deny the beautiful differences between men and women are not accepting themselves as God has made them, and so cannot love the neighbor. They will only bring division, unhappiness, and destruction of peace to the world. For example, as I have often said, abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace in the world today, and those who want to make women and men the same are all in favor of abortion.

Instead of death and sorrow, let us bring peace and joy to the world To do this we must beg God for His gift of peace and learn to love and accept each other as brothers and sisters, children of God. We know that the best place for children to learn how to love and to pray is in the family, by seeing the love and prayer of their mother and father. When families are broken or disunited, many children grow up not knowing how to love and pray. A country where many families have been destroyed like this will have many problems. I have often seen, especially in the rich countries, how children turn to drugs or other things to escape feeling unloved and rejected.

But when families are strong and united, children can see God’s special love in the love of their father and mother and can grow to make their country a loving and prayerful place. The child is God’s best gift to the family and needs both mother and father because each one shows God’s love in a special way. The family that prays together stays together, and if they stay together they will love one another as God has loved each one of them. And works of love are always works of peace.

So let us keep the joy of loving in our hearts and share this joy with all we meet. My prayer for all of the delegates, and for every woman whom the Beijing Conference is trying to help, is that each one may be humble and pure like Mary so as to live in love and peace with one another and make our families and our world something beautiful for God.

Let us pray. All for the glory of God and good of souls.

God bless you.
Mother Teresa, MC

This message is courtesy of EWTN Library. **Mother Teresa** of Calcutta to the UN Women’s Conference in Beijing, 9/12/1995

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