**ST TERESA OF CALCUTTA - YEAR 6**

**FEAST DAY 5TH SEPTEMBER**

Saint Teresa was born on the 26th August 1910 in Skopje, part of the modern-day country of Macedonia. She was originally called Agnes Bojaxhiu. She was baptised the day after she was born. Agnes had an older brother and sister. When Agnes was eight years old her father died. She missed him very much. Without her father working to earn money Agnes’ family became poor. Agnes and her mother still helped people in need and gave food to them because Jesus said, *‘I was hungry, and you gave me food.’*

On the 15th August 1928 Agnes went on pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Black Madonna. While she was praying, she knew that God was calling her to be a nun and look after the poor. She joined the convent of the Sisters of Our Lady of Loreto in Ireland and received the name Teresa, after her patroness St Therese of Lisieux. She trained as a teacher and became principal of a high school in Calcutta in India. While she was there, she was horrified by the sight of so many sick and dying people on the streets. She knew that it was wrong, and she was determined to do something about it although she didn’t really know what to do at first.

In 1946 she was travelling to Darjeeling by train as she prayed the Rosary, Jesus spoke to her, ‘I thirst and I want you, to serve me in the poorest of the poor. ‘His message was clear, and she decided to leave the convent and help the poor by living among them. Mother Teresa took babies from bins and washed them. She fed the people, treated the sick and looked after the dying. She built schools for the children and shelters for families.

People came to help Mother Teresa in her work and eventually she had so many helpers they became a new order called the Missionaries of Charity. No-one was turned away and the sisters vowed not to own possessions or have wealth of their own, but to give everything they had to the poor.

On the 5th September 1997 Mother Teresa went home to Jesus. Pope John Paul II beatified Mother Teresa and on the 4th September 2016 Pope Francis canonised her, declaring her a Saint.

Saint Teresa is a great example of how we can live our lives to help those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta, pray for us.