

Give until it hurts: The speeches and letters of Mother Teresa

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### **Abstract**

Although Mother Teresa has been described as one of the most publicized women of the twentieth century, her speeches have often been criticized and/or unexamined due to their perceived rhetorical inadequacies. This thesis examines four speeches and letters by Mother Teresa using a close textual analysis. Through close textual analysis, this study finds that within the simplicity of her discourse lies a multifaceted way of expressing her complex faith to an array of audiences. She selects from a few consistent tools of persuasion, such as the redefinition of regularly used terms such as *love*, *poverty*, and *giving*. She tackles multiple moral and theological matters, but explains each of them by how they relate to the topic of *giving*. Her words mirror the theological ideas of her religious counterparts of the twentieth century, such as Pope John Paul II. However, her discourse is unadorned, and reflects the simplicity of the life that she lived and her worldview on life.

## **Chapter I Introduction**

Four tiny, emaciated infants all rested side by side in one single crib within a large room at the shelter. They were each awake, but did not cry or seem restless due to weakness and malnutrition. These were unwanted babies who had been abandoned somewhere in Calcutta, and now had little chance of survival. Mother Teresa gently picked up one of the infants, held it closely, and caressed the child's head (Drury & Bullough, 1999).

Long before this mother superior became a household name, Mother Teresa would go to the children's orphanage that she had established in Calcutta daily, and visit the babies, one by one. The orphanage, called Shishu Bhavan, housed many children including infants that had been left on the doorstep, hungry and dying. When she saw a sick and frail baby that she suspected might die that day, she would wrap the child in a blanket, put it into the arms of one of the helpers, and give strict instructions to the sisters and volunteers that worked there. The instructions from Mother, or "Ma" as she was lovingly referred to, were that they should hold the child until it died. In one case, a Shishu Bhavan volunteer put aside her regular duties and cuddled an infant the entire day until it died late that evening while still in her arms. The experience stayed with the woman for her lifetime (Spink, 1997). Mother Teresa was bothered by the "merciless rejection" with which so many of the dying poor were subjected (Gonzalez-Balado, 1997, p. 68). Therefore, Mother Teresa and her Missionaries of Charity did not see recovery from an illness as the highest concern, but what became most important was that each

person in their care would die in comfort and dignity, experiencing love and a sense of belonging.

Mother Theresa has been an icon for peace and humanitarianism in the world. Through her death, in 1997, the woman who was referred to as a living saint during her lifetime (Drury & Bullough, 1999) was immortalized for her words and works. This Catholic nun was a key figure in battles against abortion and other contemporary issues that she saw as intrusions upon God's commands for how people should live. She vowed to an austere life of "poverty, chastity, obedience, and wholehearted free service to the poorest of poor" (Spink, 1997, p. 120). She exchanged a life of teaching in the classroom for a life of working and serving on filthy streets. Her actions were no less of a powerful testament to her beliefs. As a Nobel Peace Prize winner, Mother Teresa requested that in place of the usual high-class dinner to honor Nobel Peace Prize winners, the funds be given to address the needs of the poor instead. At lavish receptions and socials with dignitaries, Mother Teresa and her Missionaries of Charity would only drink water as a sign of their solidarity with the poor (Gonzalez-Balado, 1997).

Mother Teresa's speeches have been criticized for a variety of reasons. Some people chastised Mother Teresa for speaking about things that were not proper or appropriate to the time, audience, or place (Hitchens, 1997). For instance, her acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize and her address at the National Prayer Breakfast sponsored by the United States Senate and House of Representatives both included remarks regarding abortion, although she was expected to speak essentially about her work with the poor. Besides the critiques about perceived inappropriateness, her actual

rhetorical style is also at times a source of criticism, since her speeches are known for plainness in style and language. She repeated the same stories, ideas, and prayers to varied audiences and read her words from a piece of paper, giving little eye contact during her delivery (Noonan, 1998). It has even been said that the form of her Nobel lecture “is rambling and seemingly unfocused, disjointed, and apparently redundant” (Kuseski, 1988, p.323).

Despite the criticisms, Mother Teresa’s discourse is worth exploring. Her words gained media attention and Mother Teresa’s discourse could divide an audience, changing the hearts and lives of some, turning others into adversaries, leaving few people unchanged or indifferent. In the twentieth century world of religion, this woman’s words have had significant power and have captured much attention. Knowing so, Pope John Paul II asked Mother Teresa to go and speak on behalf of the Catholic Church to various groups, such as government officials and dignitaries and responding with holy obedience Mother Teresa spoke whenever he asked her to speak (Drury & Bullough, 1999). People grouped toward Mother Teresa, whether because of her staunch conviction, admiration for her work, or her popularity. The exact reasons remain unknown, but nonetheless, her words captured international attention and have reshaped the public speaking platform in the twentieth century.

Another distinctive characteristic of Mother Teresa’s rhetoric is that her actions preceded her words, and gave her a place in public rhetoric. In the world of religious communication, people’s positions give them a place in public rhetoric, and draws attention to their actions. For example, Pope John Paul II’s historic act of visiting and

forgiving the man that attempted to assassinate him made headline news because he was the pope. His position drew attention to his actions. In contrast, it was Mother Teresa's actions that first drew worldwide attention, and gave her a position in the world of public speaking.

Since the inception of her popularity, many wanted to co-opt Mother Teresa, but none wanted to claim her. Politicians, humanitarians, and activists of all kinds showed admiration for Mother Teresa's humanitarianism, and applauded the kind nun who won the Nobel Peace Prize and became a prominent female figure in the world. However, most did not embrace Mother Teresa's entire message, such as her anti-abortion beliefs. Recently, for example, a Hilary Clinton presidential campaign ad showed a picture of Senator Clinton with Mother Teresa. Fidelis, a Catholic advocacy group, protested against the campaign move which hinted at Mother Teresa's endorsement of Senator Clinton. The picture of Mother Teresa is immediately followed by Hilary Clinton speaking at the United Nations Women's Conference on behalf of women's rights, including abortion. The co-opting move by the Clinton campaign outraged pro-lifers across the nation, since Mother Teresa and Hilary Clinton held radically different views on abortion. The Fidelis president informed Sister Nirmala, the superior general of the Missionaries of Charity (Hall, 2007), who then asked the Clinton campaign to remove the picture from the ad.

Mother Teresa is one of the most written about and publicized women of the twentieth century (Gezim, 2006), and although her speeches do not follow the accepted guidelines for public speaking, they are capable of expanding our understanding of what



constitutes good communication, despite their simplicity and the perceived deficiencies. This study shows how deviating from the expected can nevertheless result in celebrated speeches, and helps explain the reasons for the global impact of Mother Teresa's speaking. A deeper look at her language has the potential to further enlighten the church, the field of communication, and Mother Teresa's critics. In all their simplicity, Mother Teresa's speeches and letters hide a multifaceted style of rhetoric that is influential and full of meaning.

### ***Before She was Mother***

Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhui in 1910 in Skopje, Macedonia to Catholic refugees (Spink, 1997). As a young girl she felt a strong call to serve God as a religious sister. At the age of 18, she left her widowed mother and family to join the Sisters of Loreto, an Irish order, and served with them as a teacher in Calcutta for almost twenty years (Frangsmyr & Abrams, 1997). Throughout those years, she caught sight of the extreme poverty around her outside of those school walls. She began to sense a strong calling from God to share his love with the destitute, since it was a tenet of her Christian faith that it was Jesus Christ whom she would serve in the poor. With difficulty, and permission from Church authorities, she left the Sisters of Loreto to pursue the calling to serve the poor (Gonzalez-Balado, 1997).

The early days of the Missionaries of Charity were a humble beginning. Mother Teresa was only thirty-eight years old when she first left Loreto equipped with only a suitcase and a five rupees, most of which ended up in the hands of the poor (Gonzalez-Balado, 1997), reflecting a glimpse into the future that lied ahead for her. Early on, the

young Sister Teresa received medical training, and she worked tirelessly to get food, clothing, and medical aid to the needy in the slums (Spink, 1997). A few of her former students from Loreto, along with others, joined Mother Teresa to serve the poor, and during those first two years the community of sisters had grown to ten women (Gonzalez-Balado, 1997). Mother Teresa's small community continued to grow in number, as well as the number of homes that they established to serve those in need. Mother Teresa had sought permission from the Vatican authorities to start a new religious order, and after a two year wait, Mother Teresa received Papal permission to begin the Missionaries of Charity, whose ultimate task was to minister to the poor people living and dying in slums of Calcutta, one of the poorest cities in the world (Drury & Bullough, 1999). By the time the congregation received the official Vatican approval as a religious order, the Missionaries of Charity had already established homes for the needy in many major Indian cities (Gonzalez-Balado, 1997). They relied on divine providence for income, and received help from a variety of donors, including Pope Paul VI who gave Mother Teresa a luxury car that was raffled off to aid the poor (Stone, 1999). Today, the Missionaries of Charity have numerous branches throughout the world to serve the poor.

Through her years of philanthropic work, Mother Teresa gained immeasurable, though unsolicited, attention. In 1979, she received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition for her efforts in caring for the hungry, the sick, the dying, the homeless, and others in need. Upon presenting the Nobel Peace Prize to Mother Teresa, John Sanness, the Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, said that "the loneliest and the most wretched, the dying destitute, the abandoned lepers, have been received by her and her

Sisters with warm compassion devoid of condescension, based on this reverence for Christ in Man” (Frangsmyr & Abrams, 1979). The Nobel Peace Prize was one of many awards for her service. After her death, the formal process toward canonization as an official saint of the Catholic Church began. Her name was proposed (postulated) to the Vatican, along with a supply of supporting documentation and witnesses. After receiving the requirement of a miraculous event through her intercession, she was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2003, making her *Blessed* Mother Teresa and drawing her one step closer to canonization: official sainthood in the Catholic Church (Bitterman, Vinci, & Bindra, 2003).

Mother Teresa’s work has been acclaimed throughout the world, though with such widespread popularity also comes criticism. For example, Christopher Hitchens (1997), author of *The Missionary Position: Mother Teresa in Theory and Practice*, criticizes Mother Teresa for being hypocritical. He believes that her hypocrisy is most evident in her care for the poor, being that she cared for the poor in low-end, run-down Calcutta clinics, while she received better care in modern California clinics. He states that the Church’s cause for her sainthood has been too rapid and illegitimate, with only fake miracles and inaccurate claims to attest in her favor (Hitchens, 2003). Hitchens and others also unendingly mention her inappropriate discussions about abortion and contraception. As one critic states, “She consciously tried to oversell herself in order to propagate her church and her twin causes of abolishing abortion and artificial contraception from the world” (Chatterjee, 2003). They maintain that though she was a “friend of the poor,” she “spent her life opposing the only known cure for poverty, which

is the empowerment of women and the emancipation of them from a livestock version of compulsory reproduction” (Hitchens, 2003).

Some disapproved of Mother Teresa’s friendships with the rich, particularly the corrupt rich (Gillis, 2004; Hitchens, 2003). The rich were the sources that heavily funded the work of the Missionaries of Charity. But Mother Teresa was a friend of the rich and poor alike and showed charity for both. In response to her critics on the matter, she maintained that, “We have no right to judge the rich. For our part, what we desire is not a class struggle but a class encounter, in which the rich save the poor and the poor save the rich” (Benenate & Durepos, 2001, p.97). Others criticized Mother Teresa for not confronting the social systems that engendered the poverty and suffering that she dealt with as a Missionary of Charity. Some believed that though she sought charity, she failed in the fight against economic and political injustice (Nangle, 1999). To them, it seemed that Mother Teresa was only figuratively putting a band-aid on the larger wound. However, for every critic, there exist a number of advocates of the woman who metaphorically referred to herself as a “pencil in the hand of God” (Gonzalez-Balado, 1997, p. 23).

The majority of Mother Teresa biographers make an affectionate, historical account of the sister’s life. Malcolm Muggeridge (1971) is one of the numerous Mother Teresa biographers who shares about his self-professed admiration of Mother Teresa and her mission in his work. Muggeridge is credited for introducing Mother Teresa to the West through his documentary *Something Beautiful for God* (1971). Muggeridge was a British journalist and a high-profile agnostic who met Mother Teresa through an

interview assignment. Towards the end of his life he converted to Catholicism, partially crediting the influence of Mother Teresa. Jose Luis Gonzalez-Balado (1997), author of *Mother Teresa: Her Life, Her Work, Her Message: A Memoir*, another friend and pupil of Mother Teresa, defends Mother Teresa by sharing a story about her original plan for their order to take on the diet of the poor, in an effort to be in complete solidarity with their impoverished brethren. However, one of Mother Teresa's mentors ordered that she and her sisters should eat plenty and nutritiously, in order to be healthy and sustained for their service to the poor. The list of biographers and others influenced by the life of Mother Teresa, such as Muggeridge and Gonzalez-Balado, are significant in number. For example, Kathryn Spink (1997) traces the life of Mother Teresa, beginning with her early childhood in Albania, to her time with the Sisters of Loreto, and then into the period following her founding of the Missionaries of Charity. Spink also writes with admiration about the positive influence Mother Teresa had on the world. Navin Chawla's (2002) biography about Mother Teresa focuses on her devotion to God, and develops a case to better understand her belief in serving God in the poor. He shows that the heartbreaking encounters with the hungry, the dying, and the leprosy patients were, for Mother Teresa, a beautiful encounter with Jesus Christ (Chawla, 2002). Fr. Sebastian Vazhakala (2004) knew Mother Teresa personally for many years through their work together in forming the Missionaries of Charity Contemplative and the Lay Missionaries of Charity. His book includes memories of Mother Teresa from her brother, Lazar, as well as copies of Fr. Sebastian's handwritten letters from Mother Teresa (Vazhakala, 2004). Several more biographers have historically made an affectionate account of her life.

### ***Literature Review***

Aside from being a world-renown humanitarian, Mother Teresa's words are worth exploring because she deviates from standards in religious rhetoric by being a distinctive female on the twentieth century worldwide stage. To begin, most religious icons of the twentieth century have been males, so most studies about recent religious rhetoric examine men. Quimby and Billigmeier (1959) examined the shifting role of preaching in American Protestant evangelism through the first half of the twentieth century. Although women have always been an active part of Protestantism, their roles in leadership from the Reformation to the current church have slowly appeared and expanded (Greaves, 1985), so as expected, no women made the Quimby and Billigmeier study since women were predominantly excluded from main leadership positions and preaching in early American Protestantism. From the Reverend Jerry Falwell, to Pat Robertson, to Billy Graham, numerous studies have observed the words of religious men (Appel, 1987; Detwiler, 1988; Dill, 1988; Hahn, 1980, Spencer, 1995). And in the same way, women's leadership positions within Catholicism were few as in American Protestantism, leaving the voice of many Catholic women overlooked. Additionally, religious rhetoric in the twentieth century is not only restricted to men predominantly, but to well-educated individuals such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Dr. James Dobson, Billy Graham, and past popes (Jamison, 1980; Kuypers, 2000; Vail, 2006; Wilson, 2005). A study of the rhetoric of Pope Paul VI examined the recurrence of metaphoric clusters and compared the language to that of Governor Edmund Brown. Research found that Pope Paul VI's audiences were Catholics world-wide, which are demographically diverse, so he relied on

an inventory of already present metaphors that resonated across cultures (Jamieson, 1980). In a different study, a close reading of Dr. James Dobson's letter to over two million constituents of Focus on the Family, discussing the 1993 Fetal Tissue Research contained in the Health Revitalization Act, revealed that Dr. James Dobson tried to cross lines by reaching beyond the "indoctrinated audience." Dobson used secular sources and facts to ground his assertions before he incorporated Judeo-Christian resources (Kuypers, 2000). Mother Teresa, though she was an intelligent individual who also spoke world-wide to indoctrinated and non-indoctrinated audiences, lacked the level of formalized education of her religious counterparts.

Mother Teresa not only represented a woman's voice for Christianity in the modern world, but also a voice for female advocates who are content with church doctrine. While in many countries, women's roles in the Catholic Church are growing (Gilfeather, 1977), the voice of women who are content with their church role is often unheard or in a small minority. Rather, criticisms against a woman's role in the church have become increasingly loud and forceful. Many Catholic women have taken positions opposing church teachings and church hierarchy, particularly on certain issues such as birth control and the ordination of women (Jablonski, 1988; Wallace, 1988; White & Dobris, 1993). Angela Danzi (1990) believes that though women today hold more church positions such as directors of religious education, Eucharistic ministers, and serving on parish councils, the women in these positions are satisfied with women's roles in the Church. Danzi believes they are women who will "affirm leadership and authority and who will still firmly defer to what 'Father says'" (1990, p.92). A different study

examined the changing role of women in the Catholic Church finding that Catholic women are creating a new social reality by opposing decisions by church hierarchy, and shifting away from “their passive and subservient roles” (Wallace, 1988, p. 25). In 1984, Browne and Lukes (1988) studied Catholic women in Santa Clara, California to better understand and articulate the discontentment from women within the Church. They found that local issues such as religious education, the effects of sermons, a sense of belonging, and help in “day-to-day living” to be the most powerful predictor of women’s attitudes (Browne & Luke, 1988, p. 287). They also found that the factor of moral issues, such as Church teachings on divorce and remarriage, birth control, and abortion, to be an important predictor of women’s attitudes toward the church as well. A study, by Gellott and Phayer, notes that opposition from Catholic women began much earlier, in the 1920s and 1930s, and was evident in certain women’s groups who “saw clearly that conservative regimes would restrict them to domestic roles which they had already outgrown” (1987, p.91). Francis Kissling, the president of Catholics for a Free Choice, says that “there are clear signs that the women’s movement in the Roman Catholic Church is growing and includes reproductive choices as one of its demands” (1986). Dissenting women’s voices are heard more than those of the women that are content with their role in the church, such as Mother Teresa who openly submitted to the authority of the Catholic Church and embraced her place as a woman in the Church.

Studies on the rhetoric of Mother Teresa are few. In 1988, Kuseski observed that the Nobel speech of Mother Teresa had been ignored, and barred from “the close scrutiny of rhetorical criticism” because its lack of formalistic rhetorical “success” and perhaps



because scholars avoid criticizing “Mother Teresa’s ethos” (1988, p.323). Kuseski chose to study her rhetoric by extracting meaning from the key term *love* within Mother Teresa’s Nobel lecture by using Burke’s “Five Dogs” essay as a tool of critical method. She finds five different ways that the unifying key term is used, shedding light on the rhetor’s argument positions. In an economic approach, Mother Teresa’s utility was measured using a rational choice model (Kwilecki & Wilson, 1998). The study analyzed the Missionaries of Charity as Mother Teresa’s firm, and in terms of spiritual products and capital. They noted her entrepreneurial success in selling traditional Catholic products such as “the sacraments, the condemnation of abortion, and reverence for Church authority,” as well as “nonsectarian humanitarian values” such as the obligation to assist in charity and to recognize the sanctity of human life (Kwilecki & Wilson, 1998, p. 215). The method was found to be useful in understanding Mother Teresa’s religious behavior, and she was indeed found to be effective. Another study discusses the nature of her celebrity status and her relationship with the media, as she is considered one of the most written about and publicized women of the twentieth century (Gezim, 2006). Others who have written about her have asked who she was, where she came from, what she did, why she did it, and have even quoted and discussed what she said. Pamphlets, prayer books, and more books exist that are filled with the words of Mother Teresa. Historians, a sociologist, and even an economist have studied Mother Teresa, but though she is highly popular, very few studies focus on her discourse within the field of communication. This analysis seeks not only to quote and discuss her words, but to inspect below the surface, and closely examine the inner workings of her discourse.

### ***The Rhetorical Artifacts***

I have collected four speeches and writings by Mother Teresa as rhetorical artifacts for this study. These include the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, her statement to the Cairo International Conference in Population and Development, her address at the 1994 National Prayer Breakfast, and her 1995 message to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. I have selected these four because they offer an overall perspective of Mother Teresa's method in international public address. These four rhetorical audiences are broad, each comprised of an international audience. For example, the U.S. National Prayer Breakfast is attended annually by representatives from many different countries, such as Pakistan, Greenland, Albania, and Rwanda (Schulz, 2001). Additionally, the audiences in each artifact are not only made up of various nationalities, but also of diverse cultures and beliefs, including Christians and non-Christians, conservatives and liberals, wealthy and not-so-wealthy. To be selected as a speaker at any of these events could be considered an honor and maybe even a mark of professional success. Mother Teresa, however, was less interested in accolades and more interested in the public platform for the benefit of the poor. The 1979 Nobel Peace Prize possibly helped open wide the door to the other rhetorical venues selected here. The selection process for the Nobel Peace Prize alone is long and scrutinizing. Members of national assemblies, governments, and international courts of law, as well as university chancellors, professors, Nobel Laureates of previous years, and many other authorized individuals are asked to begin the process by nominating qualified individuals. Mother Teresa's reception of such a high honor could easily be considered a lifetime landmark.

Lastly, in each of these artifacts, she clearly asserts Catholic doctrine and her philosophy of giving.

This study is divided into five additional chapters. Chapter two summarizes close-textual analysis; the form of analysis chosen here to study Mother Teresa's discourse. This method focuses primarily on the internal dynamics of the text, and examines discourse even at the most basic level of words, sentences, and phrases. Additionally, chapter two looks at contextual factors surrounding the rhetorical artifacts and compares the words of Mother Teresa to her other religious counterparts, finding that there are minimal differences between the messages about loving and giving. Chapter three examines Mother Teresa's message, which is to influence others to give sacrificially. This part inspects how Mother Teresa focuses all of her rhetorical efforts into giving. Interestingly, she also tackles a number of key moral issues within her rhetoric, but only encounters them through the topic of giving. For example, the arrayed topics of life, God, hunger, marriage, drugs, materialism, love, vocations, abortion, world peace, prayer, and the Incarnation of Christ are all encountered in her rhetoric through the lens of *giving*.

Chapter four identifies three tools of persuasion that are used by Mother Teresa in an effort to move others toward social action. The three main methods used are (1) redefinition, (2) identification, and (3) a focus on the antithesis of her message. Redefinition gives new meanings, and expands the ideas associated with words like *poverty, giving, children, and love*. In examining Mother Teresa's use of redefinition, this study argues that her words about abortion are not at all inappropriate within the context of the topic of giving to the poor, contrary to the beliefs of some of her critics. Through

redefinition, Mother Teresa's words formulate abortion as a form of poverty. The next tool used by Mother Teresa is identification. Identification refers to the division caused by differences in shared substances, such as money and values, which then moves people to *identify* with others and make moves toward unity (Burke, 1969). Lastly, antithetical ideas focus on an opposing point as a tool for clarification and persuasion towards the other extreme.

Chapter five of this study is Mother Teresa's simple concentration on the results of giving. In light of her speeches, peace is the result of giving, while poverty is the result of not giving. Therefore, she spends much time honing in on peace, the antithesis of poverty. In relation, this study examines her ideas about the collaboration of people, particularly men and women, which points to her subtle stance on more key issues of moral dispute within the rhetorical environment. Lastly, chapter six contains the study's conclusions and implications.

## **Chapter II The Context and Method**

The context bracketing the words of Mother Teresa is worth examining, as it is influenced by international moral disputes, growth in the women's rights movement, plus the usual historical corruptions that plague societies. Mother Teresa's words are filtered onto audiences, encountered by the minds of listeners amid an assortment of events, ideologies, and experiences. Michael McGee's concept of the ideograph illuminates how Mother Teresa's message could resonate with her audience. McGee argues that any speech is a fragment, "a featured part of an arrangement that includes all facts, events, texts, and stylized expressions deemed useful in explaining its influence and exposing its meaning" (1990, p. 279). In the same way, speeches are received by audiences as fragments. Audiences' responses to speeches are first filtered through social, political, and cultural milieus, as well as various personal attitudes, experiences, and beliefs.

The theology of liberation is a prime example of McGee's ideograph at work, of an element affecting the social and political milieu of the time. Some saw Mother Teresa through the context of this ideology. The liberation theologians were also a group that co-opted and spoke the same language of Mother Teresa, contesting on behalf of the poor, but unable to fully embrace her.

Much like the vocation of Mother Teresa, the theology of liberation emerged as a response to injustice and the needs of the poor. The populist governments of the 1950s and 1960s, especially those in Latin America, brought industrial development by means of import substitution, which benefited the middle classes, but further marginalized the poor (Boff & Boff, 1987). The rich were getting richer, while the poor were growing

poorer. Authors of *Introducing Liberation Theology* give the example of the economy in Brazil which moved from 46<sup>th</sup> in the world in 1964 to 8<sup>th</sup> in 1984 (1987). Brazilian technological and industrial progress were monumental, however, the social conditions of the destitute in Brazil worsened at a monumental level as well.

Around the same time, from 1962-1965, the Second Vatican Council gathered calling for renewal, unity, and reform in the Catholic Church. The outcomes of the council were progressive and creative, including striking changes in liturgy and a push for greater social awareness. In the course of Vatican II, Pope Paul VI said to the church,

May the goods of this world be more equitably distributed among all men, and may they in their own way be conducive to universal progress in human and Christian freedom... Let the laity also by their combined efforts remedy the customs and conditions of the world, if they are an inducement to sin, so that they all may be conformed to the norms of justice. (1964)

Keeping with the momentum of Vatican II, some Latin American theologians began to think creatively of how to bring reform into their countries on behalf of the poor. They linked their faith with political action, leading to the theology of liberation.

Within the theology of liberation, Christians responded to political injustices by organizing into faith communities, and adapting scriptural teachings to fight for social and political change (Kearney, 1986).

Acting from the premise that Christian faith must be linked to social action to be meaningful, radicalized Christians joined dialogue with Marxism, denounced social injustices, provided leadership to politically marginal groups and struggled to change the very nature of the Latin American Catholic Church. The rationale and justification of such action was provided in the collection of writings known as the theology of liberation (Dodson, 1979).

The theology of liberation was characterized by four key elements (Allen, 2000). The first was the preferential option for the poor, which calls for the church's solidarity and

alignment with the poor in the demand for justice. Next was the idea of institutional violence, in which liberationists recognize hidden violence in social structures leading to poverty. Third, liberationists recognized this as structural sin, a larger and growing structure of wrongs, rather than many individual sinful acts. Lastly, liberation theologians argued that of the utmost importance was corrective action leading to human liberation. Governmental response to these movements seeking socio-economic changes came through the rise of military dictatorships, political repression, and police control of all public demonstrations, and the political climate continued to grow more volatile.

The theology of liberation grew in support throughout Latin America, and these political revolutions were characterized by considerable violence. Extreme advocates used liberation theology as an excuse for violence and revolutionary upheaval (Russell, 2001). The political Marxists group, the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (F.S.L.N.), united with the proponents of liberation theology and won power in Nicaragua in 1979, after forty years of oppressive ruling by the Somoza family. The violence from the political unrest took thousands of lives. One eminent death was that of Arch Bishop Oscar Romero, a priest who bravely spoke against violence and injustices within the government of El Salvador against the poor, although he was not associated with the FSLN. He was shot while saying Mass in 1980.

Though the Catholic Church affirmed the theology of liberation's concern for the poor, it spoke against it due to elements of Marxism. Prior to becoming Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger spoke on behalf of the Sacred Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith:

The first liberation... is that from sin. The full ambit of sin... cannot be restricted to “social sin.” The truth is that only a correct doctrine of sin will permit us to insist on the gravity of its social effects. Nor can one localize evil principally or uniquely in bad social, political, or economic “structures”... the “theologies of liberation,” which reserve credit for restoring to a place of honor the great texts of the prophets and of the Gospel in defense of the poor, go on a disastrous confusion between the *poor* of the Scripture and the *proletariat* of Marx. In this way they pervert the Christian meaning of the poor, and they transform the fight for the rights of the poor into a class fight within the ideological perspective of the class struggle. (Ratzinger, 1984)

The Catholic Church’s social teachings were not fully compatible with the theology of liberation. The Church embraced charity for the poor, but not the view of the political, revolutionary Jesus. The Church hoped for a more balanced approach on behalf of its priests and laity, by protecting the poor and working towards justice without a violent political uprising.

Mother Teresa relentlessly stood in conformity with the magisterium of the Catholic Church in all areas. So although she and the liberation theologians were speaking the same language about a preferential option for the poor, the two were in different camps, based on the Catholic Church’s disapproval of the theology of liberation. The liberation theologians believed that sinfulness existed within the system, while Mother Teresa agreed with the Church, that sinfulness could not be localized to the system alone. Yet, her words may have had a vacillating effect on those who heard her through the context of the theology of liberation. Her life and words highlighted the needs of the poor, which would meet the needs of the liberationists. Her words about helping the poor and bringing peace mediated between those in living in violence and hunger-stricken Latin America and the Church that she loved and obeyed.



People co-opt Mother Teresa, but she co-opts others as well. For instance, Mother Teresa talks about love as sacrificial giving. There is a whole movement by Catholic Christians on the rhetorical stage which establishes love as action. Though there is not necessarily an arranged collaboration amongst them, collectively these religious rhetors are together redefining love as an action, rather than the popular concept of love as a feeling. For example, Mother Teresa's rhetoric about love as an action of sacrificial giving echoes the ideas of Pope John Paul II's "Theology of the Body," though her words are more straightforward and unsophisticated, yet no less profound. As the first major teaching project of his pontificate, from 1979 to 1984, Pope John Paul II focused the talks for his Wednesday audiences on the "Theology of the Body," which is an intensely reflective teaching about love and human sexuality. Centering on the human person in light of Jesus Christ, Pope John Paul II connected human fulfillment to the imitation of Christ's complete gift of self. The Pope applied this approach of total self-giving to people in all stages of life: married couples, single people, and to priests and others in religious vocations. According to the "Theology of the Body," since love is based on the gift of complete self-giving, the opposite of loving someone would not be to *hate* them, but rather to *use* them, or to take from the person. Here are some examples of this "love versus use" and "gift versus take" concept in regards to Mother Teresa's words concerning giving to the poor. If someone were to give to the poor only because the act alleviated personal guilt, this "gift" would not be given out of love. It would be an act of using the poor for personal contentment. Again, if a person had an abundance of wealth and gave a few extra dollars to the poor without considering the dignity of the person, it

would not be an act of love. To a certain extent, it would be a robbery of the person's dignity, who would remain a faceless recipient. When a mother needs money to buy her child's medications or other necessities, she will gather all that she can to provide for the one she loves, instead of giving the child excess change without true concern.

Mother Angelica, the founder and a recurrent face on Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), is another rhetorical figure in the world of Catholicism whose speaks the same language as Mother Teresa. Currently, Mother Angelica's words reach far and wide, into many network cable homes. To some, she is known as the outspoken Mother Angelica, because of events such as when she disapproved of a mimed stations of the cross featuring a woman playing Jesus and viewed by Pope John Paul II at World Youth Day in Denver in 1993 (2001). To others, she is the acclaimed nun who began a Catholic network empire for the purpose of evangelization for thousands of Catholics and non-Catholics that tune into EWTN and her programs. Mother Angelica's words also sound like those of Mother Teresa, in that she describes love as the sacrificial action of giving. When speaking about the joys and sacrifices associated with choosing a life as a priest or religious sister, Mother Angelica describes this action as a "gesture of love" and as a "gift of one's own self" (1999). She adds that "giving up one's prized possessions and one's self is not as negative as it seems." Like Mother Teresa, Mother Angelica explains that love is found in giving (action), not only materially, but also through the gift of giving of one's time.

The first encyclical written by Pope Benedict XVI, "Deus Caritas Est" (God is Love), explores the concept of love as it is revealed in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and

sounds a lot like the words of Mother Teresa. Before being elected pope and choosing the name of Benedict XVI, German born Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger was the Prefect of the Catholic Church's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, whose job was to protect and promote Catholic doctrine. The media knew him to be a rigid conservative when dialoguing about faith and morals. The Washington Post referred to Ratzinger as Pope John Paul II's "enforcer of orthodoxy" who played "tough cop against dissent" (Dionne, 2005). The same article quoted Rocco Buttiglione, a philosopher who was close to Pope John Paul II, as saying that Pope John Paul II had "the gift of synthesis" because of his office, while "Cardinal Ratzinger has more the gift of polemic." Though his intensity was scrutinized by some, others were captivated by his conviction and rhetorical style, and hoped that "the world may come to appreciate him as... a Christian whose faith, honesty, integrity and unswerving devotion to the Truth is readily apparent" (2005). In an Eternal Word Television Network interview, Cardinal Ratzinger discussed the discomfort involved with his job, saying, "Yes, it's in many senses... uncomfortable. We have essentially and often to do with all the problems of the Church—problems of relativism, of heresies, of unacceptable theologies, difficult theologians and so on. Also with the disciplinary cases, also problem of pedophiles is our problem. We are really in this Congregation confronted with the most difficult aspects of the life of the Church today" (2003). When Ratzinger ascended to the office of the papacy, many were concerned how his hard-hitting style would be received, especially in the shadows of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II. As the new pope, the words in "Deus Caritas Est" are still unwavering, but also include hope about God's love. Not surprisingly, the words of the elderly nun

from Calcutta are in conformity with those of the “rigid” and “tough” new pope. More surprising is the fact that the new pope may have been playing the student, learning much from Mother Teresa.

Part one of Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical is philosophical and abstract as it looks at the meaning of love, and its place in salvation history. From the beginning of the encyclical, Benedict XVI tackles the same problem that surrounds both his and Mother Teresa’s rhetorical environment: the confusion arising around the word *love*. He states that “the term *love* has become one of the most frequently used and misused of words, a word to which we attach quite different meanings,” then he begins to look at the Greek definitions of *love* (2005). “Deus Caritas Est” looks closely at the relationship between eros and agape, which he states are tied closely together and both of which are inherently good. Mother Teresa, too, closely ties eros and agape forms of love. She says, “Woman and man complete each other and together show forth God's love more fully than either can do it alone” (United Nations World Conference on Women, 1995). On another occasion, she explains that “in loving [sexually], the husband and wife must turn the attention to each other” (National Prayer Breakfast, 1994). Mother Teresa’s rhetoric identifies the marital relationship, including its sexual nature, as a reflection of God’s love. She credits the eros form of love to be a powerful gift from God. However, included in the examples of marital love, she adds the need for an agape type of “giving until it hurts” between the spouses and *from* the spouses collaboratively.

Part two of the encyclical, “Deus Caritas Est,” refers to the Christian responsibility to love by proclaiming the word of God, taking part in the sacraments, and

practicing the ministry of charity. Mother Teresa's rhetoric, too, focuses on persuading and empowering others to practice "the ministry of charity." In countless ways, Pope Benedict's words emulate those of Mother Teresa. He identifies charitable acts towards those in need as necessary. He establishes that a reliance on prayer cannot be separated from charitable acts. Mother Teresa also notes the importance of prayer, especially within the family. And like the others, the pope does not describe love as a feeling, but as an action. In his encyclical, the pope states that, "There will always be suffering which cries out for consolation and help. There will always be loneliness. There will always be situations of material need where help in the form of concrete love of neighbor is indispensable" (2007). Like Mother Teresa, he addresses the common misconception that poverty is not exclusively a problem of lacking material goods. In his encyclical, he even uses her term of "spiritual poverty." The pope says, "Despite the great advances made in science and technology, each day we see how much suffering there is in the world on account of different kinds of poverty, both material and spiritual" (2007). As Cardinal Ratzinger in "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love", he writes that "the deepest poverty is the inability of joy, the tediousness of a life considered absurd and contradictory" (2000). Like Mother Teresa, the pope gives the lives of the saints as examples, especially the life of the Virgin Mary. And ironically, Pope Benedict's "Deus Caritas Est" encyclical makes reference to the saintly Mother Teresa four times.

The saints—consider the example of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta—constantly renewed their capacity for love of neighbor from their encounter with the Eucharistic Lord, and conversely this encounter acquired its realism and depth in their service to others. (2007)

It is almost as if, and quite possible that, Pope Benedict XVI has learned much about love from Mother Teresa, the recently beatified. Nonetheless, Mother Teresa is speaking the same language as the new pope.

Though Mother Teresa's words echo those of other international Catholic speakers, her style and delivery are unique. For example, the rhetoric of the new pope contains a philosophical character of going wide and deep, it is also different in that it is addressed specifically to "the bishops, priests and deacons, men and women religious and all the lay faithful" (2007), capturing a somewhat smaller audience than that of our rhetor. Though Mother Teresa's words are identical to the others in ideology, her words are directed towards a larger audience. Additionally, her words are remarkable because they are simple, yet creative. She chooses words that are iconic, representative of her own life. As Leff and Sachs state, "While word meanings are conventional and arbitrary, we encounter a rather different situation when words are combined in phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and discourses... above the level of the word, discursive form often enacts representational content" (1990). Mother Teresa's simple words represent her simple life. Also, they represent the simple life of relinquishment that she hoped others would embrace.

In light of the concept of the ideograph, Mother Teresa's words are easily recognizable fragments of what the Roman Catholic Church speaks. For example, Mother Teresa's talk, which highly elevates that role of charity, is the same language spoken by the Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that:

In his use of things man should regard the external goods he legitimately owns not merely as exclusive to himself but common to others also... The ownership of any property makes its holder a steward... with the task of making it fruitful and communicating its benefits to others, first of all his family. (United States Catholic Church, 1995)

Mother Teresa's words and example illustrate the importance of giving and seeking the common good. The Church's statement about charity towards the family as a priority is mirrored in Mother Teresa's words. In the four artifacts examined in this study, Mother Teresa uses the phrase "love begins at home" four times, which is one of her most frequently used phrases, only falling behind phrases such as abortion as "the greatest destroyer of peace" (used 8 times), "give until it hurts" (7 times), and "love one another" (6 times). Her talk about giving is not exclusive to giving materially. Catholic discourse often includes talk about the "sincere gift of self," which came from the Second Vatican Council (Gabriele, 2007), and reflects Mother Teresa's talk of *spiritual giving*. The Second Vatican Council expressed that man can only truly discover himself through this gift of self, which Archbishop John J. Myers of New Jersey described as "giving oneself away in loving ways," reflecting the sacrificial love of God (Gabriele, 2007). The concept of self-giving has been applied to sex, marriage, parenting (West, 2005), vocations, and even to organ donation (Cullen, 1998). Mother Teresa's rhetoric is permeated with fragments of the gift of self concept. She requests that her listeners give not only materially, but in all facets of life, beginning with those at home.

Mother Teresa's discourse about abortion is one of the most observable ideographs that she employs. Mother Teresa's critics unendingly mention her inappropriate discussions about abortion (Chatterjee, 2003), which are a consistent part of

her discourse and an ideograph representing the stance of the Catholic Church. Her words enter the public realm along with several other voices speaking about the key term, *abortion*. And although the Catholic Church has always maintained a stance against abortion, there still remains an ongoing debate on the morality of abortion amongst the members of the Church (Kissling, 1986). Some voice their favor for abortion, while others are vehemently against it. Mother Teresa competes against other voices in an effort to shift the understanding around this key term, socially and politically, and she speaks the same language that the Catholic Church speaks.

Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion... She [the Church] makes clear the gravity of the crime committed, the irreparable harm done to the innocent who is put to death, as well as to the parents and the whole of society. (Catechism of the Catholic Church # 2271-2272)

Like the Church, Mother Teresa also makes clear her belief that abortion is evil, and hurts parents and society. For instance, in her letter to the U.N. Women's Conference, she refers to "the evil of abortion." She reiterates the Church's stance that abortion harms parents. For example, at the United States National Prayer Breakfast, Mother Teresa explains that abortion causes a father to dismiss responsibility, and therefore "is likely to put other women into the same trouble" (1994). Again, speaking a fragment of Catholic Church teaching, she mentions abortion's harm to society. In the same speech, she says that, "any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use violence to get what they want" (National Prayer Breakfast, 1994). Mother Teresa's discourse is a recognizable piece of Catholic doctrine, another example of McGee's ideograph at work. As changing times and cultures bring shifting meanings about



abortion, Mother Teresa's words appear in public discourse to impact abortion ideologies.

In each of the four rhetorical artifacts presented in this study, Mother Teresa spoke to audiences comprised of people who held beliefs different from her own. Though many associated Mother Teresa with peace (Frangsmyr & Abrams, 1997), her words often made headlines because of the controversy that they presented (Kuseski, 1988). Nevertheless, Mother Teresa consistently maintained her opposition to morally-disputed issues such as abortion, despite the conflicting beliefs of audience members.

For example, one of the artifacts selected for this study is Mother Teresa's letter to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which took place in Cairo, Egypt, September 5-13, 1994. The Conference was summoned under the sponsorship of the United Nations and was one of the largest intergovernmental conferences on population and development ever held. At this conference, a "Programme of Action" was developed, which was designed to empower men and women regarding population issues. Its goals included making family planning universally available, including widespread access to abortion and birth control (United Nations, 2004, p. 19). The Vatican opposed the ideas, conclusions, and results of the International Conference on Population and Development (John Paul II, 1994).

Also included is Mother Teresa's speech on February 3, 1994 at the National Prayer Breakfast, held in Washington D.C. In attendance were about 3,000 people, including President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hilary Clinton, along with Vice President Gore and Mrs. Gore, plus several other political figures such as senators and Supreme

Court justices, many of whom were considered liberal democrats in support of reproductive rights such as abortion (Noonan, 1998).

Mother Teresa's message to the Fourth World Conference on Women, which hosted 36,000 participants, took place in Beijing, China in September, 1995. Similar to the ICPD, it was formed to discuss platforms in the focused areas of women's equality, health, education, and feminization of power. It is a useful reference for identifying the growing strength and evolution in the ripening of the modern Women's Movement. The Fourth World Conference on Women set a tone of feminism, with the principle themes being the advancement and empowerment of women in relation to women's human rights, women and poverty, and women and decision-making (Auth, 1998). Workshops included topics such as the challenges for Arab women, economics and disabilities, self-empowerment of African women, Somali women and the civil war, the struggle against militarization, non-electoral forms of political action, and an international roundtable on women's spirituality (Whipple, 1995).

The conference also included workshops and dialogue regarding many key moral issues of dispute such as lesbian rights, birth control injections, and detailed abortion methods, including the possible do-it-yourself method of menstrual extraction (Whipple, 1995). The conference was slated to discuss the conflict between the Catholic Church and the Peruvian government's family planning program, which suggested voluntary vasectomies and tubal ligations as forms of family planning. Included in the audience were the Peruvian president and his supporters that rejected the views of the Vatican. Also in the audience was a strong presence by members of the National Organization for

Women (NOW), whose intent was “to provide a strong feminist influence” (Bennett-Haigney, 1995), and other like-minded groups such as the Feminist Women’s Health Center who support feminist concerns such as women’s sexual and reproductive autonomy, lesbian rights and other women’s issues that are in stark contrast to the teachings of the Catholic Church. One conference attendee stated that, “... women are not going to remain confined or constrained by the intransigence of ultraconservative mentalities that pretend to turn into a dogma their incapacity to accept social change” (Spahn, 1995). Mother Teresa did not speak only to fellow Catholics or like-minded believers, but also to persons with opposing viewpoints.

### ***Close Textual Analysis***

Despite the noteworthy contextual factors lingering around Mother Teresa’s rhetorical environment, I have chosen a form of rhetorical criticism that places a diminished emphasis on the context, and has turned attention towards the rhetor’s words, “centering on the effort to interpret the intentional dynamics of a text” (Leff, 1992, p.223). I have chosen to use a close textual analysis to study the rhetoric of Mother Teresa at the basic level of words, sentences, paragraphs, and her discourse as a whole. Her life and words are familiar (Kuseski, 1988), however a deeper understanding of the inner workings of her rhetoric will be beneficial to the field of communication studies, to the church, and to Mother Teresa’s critics, as they reveal complexities within such a basic rhetorical style.

There are advantages to placing a particular concentration on the study of the text itself, even at the risk of the context becoming somewhat faded. Though Biblical

scholars, critics, and others claim that “a text without a context is a pretext,” (Moloney, 2005, p. 135) there remains a history of arguments regarding not focusing on the context, which has led to close textual analysis as a beneficial method for studying discourse. In the history of rhetorical criticism, Stephen Lucas (1981) traces Herbert Wichelns as an originator of the idea of intimate connection between criticism and history, between the text and the context. At the time, critics began to believe firmly in the importance of studying the historical, political, and ideological surroundings of oratory. In the many years following, the idea of an inability to separate text from the context became axiomatic. However, the marriage between text and context eventually began to waiver as critics protested that too much of an emphasis on the history that bracketed public address deflected the production of good rhetorical criticism. They felt that the texts had begun to fall into the shadows of history reports. Additionally, accurate accounts of the context were not always secured. For example, problems arise in being able to objectively understand and report contexts such as a cultural milieu, or the implications that a speech had on a population socially or politically. A separation between context and text began, and thrived, as revisionists searched for various methods to get to the heart of good criticism. Revisionists seemed too focused on methodology and terminology. All tried to get to the center of public discourse, but were criticized for leaning towards reductionism. Reductionism led the efforts at rhetorical criticism to “rigidify along the axis of the form/content dichotomy, since interpretation finds its end in abstract regularities rather than in the complex interplay among representational content, discursive form, and the context of a situation” (Leff & Sachs, 1990). Still, there was an avoidance of studying the

isolated text. The arguments within the field deflected “attention from the complex variegated texture of specific rhetorical products and focus upon abstract, essentialized conceptions of the rhetorical process” (Leff & Sachs, 1990).

As a response to the search for finding the inner workings of a text, close textual analysis slowly emerged as a type of “anti-method,” allowing the text itself to guide the critic to a conclusion. Close textual analysis has allowed the studying of a text at the micro-level of a basic sentence, phrase, word, and syllable structure (Lucas, 1990). In using close-textual analysis, the use of spatial images and a look at textual temporal dimensions give added understanding to the text (Leff 1986, 1988; Black, 1994). The concept of temporal dimensions refers to the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of time. Intrinsically, the text progresses chronologically as the story develops. Extrinsically, speeches and other forms of rhetoric respond to social, political, and economic circumstances of that period in history. It seeks to examine the intricate interplay between content, form, and context. For such uncharted territory within the field of communication, I have chosen to use a close textual analysis in an effort to allow the text to begin the revealing on its own. This analysis is an effort to tie in context, yet still allow these texts to guide the ship. An interaction between form and content is found when using this close textual analysis for Mother Teresa’s discourse, revealing that the simple structures of her words and sentences reflect ideologies that she embraced. The basic sentence structure and the simple style of language in her discourse imitate the simple life that she led and persuaded others to adopt. The use of close textual analysis differentiates her from the politics of liberation and the larger Church. Her words negotiate a space,

simultaneously finding her a place inside and outside of the Church. The texts show a subtly embedded meaning reflecting a larger picture of what Mother Teresa represented and the meaning of what her discourse meant to convince.

### **Chapter III** **Mother Teresa's Call to Give**

Mother Teresa's public discourse all points to giving, because regardless of the topic, she encounters everything through the framework of giving. The "call to give" is the major theme highlighted in this analysis, because throughout every speech and letter, there remains an unfaltering plea for others to give to the poor. Whether it is in her Nobel lecture, letters to governments, speeches at universities, or speeches to fellow priests and fellow religious, Mother Teresa's purpose is always to persuade the audience to give sacrificially where poverty exists. In other words, when hunger, homelessness, despair, isolation, rejection, and fear are present, one should give sacrificially. Regardless of her topic, whether she is speaking about the poor in Calcutta, abortion, the state of the modern family, or religion, all of her rhetoric is an attempt to persuade others to give. As an advocate for the poor, she not only shares stories about her philanthropic work, but persuades others to join in her mission. I refer to her invitation to give as a "calling" because Mother Teresa views giving as a command established by God, rather than a personal invitation to join in charity. Mother Teresa uses every communicative opportunity to explain who should give, to whom we should give, when to give, how to give, and why to give.

There are several facets to the way that Mother Teresa encounters the topic of giving. She uses redefinition to challenge the current meanings of *giving* and *loving*. The standard redefining method of persuasion that she uses is syllogistic in nature. Throughout the texts, the three words *give*, *love*, *self-sacrifice* become closely interrelated. Her instructions for giving are not exclusive to fellow religious or to those in

the Catholic community. She delivers the charge to give to every audience. Throughout her speeches, dimensions of time become visible from the texts, placing every individual on a time table with God awaiting a response. Mother Teresa's words illustrate a collectivity among all people and a required collaboration, yet simultaneously give individuality to each person, and encourage all to find their own special way of assisting the poor to help bring about peace.

Mother Teresa's speeches use a religious framework, as would be expected from a Catholic nun. Opening paragraphs include a prayer, references to God, or a Biblical passage that set a homiletic tone. In the addresses at the National Prayer Breakfast and in the Nobel acceptance speech, Mother Teresa provides biblical examples of giving, referencing the giving acts of God, Jesus, and Mary. "God *gave* his son." "Jesus *gave* his life." "Mary went in haste to *give* the good news." God "giving" his son demonstrates the sacrifice of a parent, who willingly endures the murder of his son for the benefit of others. The example of Jesus giving his life shows a person who endured a humiliating death for the sake of others. The example of Mary highlights a woman in the early months of pregnancy, possibly with nausea and other discomforts, who travels to a distant place to assist another. Each of these examples exemplifies giving with tremendous sacrifice.

Mother Teresa's speeches contain a pattern in verb usage, which can be easily broken into past and present tenses forming temporal dimensions. The majority of the verbs used to describe her actions are in the present tense, while most of the actions of God are relayed with past tense verbs, such as "God *created*," "He *said*," "He *came*,"



“God *loved* the world,” “God *gave* us his son,” and “God *told* us.” Mother Teresa could have chosen to say “God *says*” (present tense), however, her use of past tense verbs shift the text into the past and illustrate the longevity of these well-established biblical rules. Her words communicate that God’s words are not only ancient and longstanding, but also unchangeable. The uses of past tense verbs communicate that God spoke, the rules were established and transcend time, and are unchangeable. The texts shifts into an eternal time, and her words indicate that current existence is fleeting and that all people are held accountable in an eternal realm of time. What follows is a description of love, leaving the audience to find an ultimate purpose in an unfolding new definition of love, which will equate to a sacrificial type of giving compared to that of God, Jesus, Mary, and others that Mother Teresa encountered in her mission.

### ***Loving means Sacrificial Giving***

Mother Teresa redefines all love as sacrificial giving. Whether she is speaking about love amongst family members or between friends and neighbors, Mother Teresa’s definition of love contains the element of sacrifice. In her 1979 Nobel lecture and in her address to the assembly gathered at the 1994 United States Prayer Breakfast, Mother Teresa says, “This is the meaning of true love, to give until it hurts.” Though the meaning of the word “love” varies, Mother Teresa assigns a concrete meaning to the term, and provides several examples to clarify the definition. Her words encourage audiences to relinquish excesses, such as pleasures and addictions, in an effort to aid those in need.

In the four selected speeches, the word love (or a form of it) is used 197 times, far exceeding the use of any other words, and more than doubling the use of the second most

used word: God. This reflects Mother Teresa's primary concern of sharing a message of love. In the Nobel speech she said, "How much we do does not matter, because he [God] is infinite, but how much love we put in action." For her, love was her primary command from God, and her love and discussion of it reflected God's nature. As with her concept of poverty, love is assigned the new meaning of *giving until it hurts*. Love equals sacrificial giving. The request to give "until it hurts" is one of Mother Teresa's most well known, most embraced, and most criticized phrases.

Love is a common term, described as a basis of Christianity, and frequently used by people in today's world. The Oxford English Dictionary contains an array of definitions for love, including (1) That disposition or state of feeling with regard to a person which (arising from recognition of attractive qualities, from instincts of natural relationship, or from sympathy) manifests itself in solicitude for the welfare of the object, and usually also in delight in his or her presence and desire for his or her approval; warm affection, attachment; (2) Viewed as an abstract quality or principle. (Sometimes personified.); (3) Strong predilection, liking or fondness *for*, or devotion *to* (something); (4) In religious use, applied in an eminent sense to the paternal benevolence and affection of God towards His children, to the affectionate devotion due to God from His creatures; and (5) That feeling of attachment which is based upon difference of sex; the affection which subsists between lover and sweetheart and is the normal basis of marriage (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). Love is contemplated frequently in popular culture. Music lyrics describe love as loyalty, and daytime television may ascribe love as passion. Some consider love eternal and everlasting, while others use the phrase in a more temporary

sense. For example, “I’m not *in love* with you anymore” is used to end a relationship, meaning that love comes and goes, begins and ends. Spouses vow to love each other for a lifetime, yet the current divorce rate in the United States troubles their intention. Love is associated with passions and sex, but also used to describe familial relationships and friendships. Love’s meanings are wide-ranging, leaving its meaning subjective and dependent on contextual clues.

The Koine Greek language distinguishes four different ways in which the word “love” is used: *philio*, *eros*, *storge*, and *agape*. *Philio* represents “tender affection” (Vine, 1966, p. 703), and is a love within friendships and families. It is at the root of the city Philadelphia’s name, “The City of Brotherly Love.” *Eros* refers to love constituting a passionate, intense desire for something, and it is often referred to as a sexual desire, hence the modern notion of “erotic” (Moseley, 2006). The *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* states that *eros* “desires the other for itself” and describes it as an impulse or an intoxication that overcomes man (1964, p. 35). *Storge* is a familial love, like that felt by parents for their children.

*Agape* love is a word characteristic of Christianity (Vine, 1966, p. 702), and the discussion of *agape* love permeates Mother Teresa’s discourse. *Vine’s Expository*

*Dictionary of New Testament Words* describes *agape* as:

The deep and constant love and interest of a perfect Being toward entirely unworthy objects, producing and fostering a reverential love in them towards the Giver, and a practical love towards those who are partakers of the same, and a desire to help others to seek the Giver. (Vine, 1966, p. 704).

Within Mother Teresa’s rhetoric, all relationships require *agape* love. *Agape* is a love that reflects God’s love, and is essentially directed toward God. *Agape* love expects no

worthiness or repayment on behalf of the recipient, which is evident in Mother Teresa's care for the poor who are unable to give back to her monetarily. There is a deep connection between agape love and "*berit*," which is Hebrew for "covenant" and describes the relationship between God and his people. As the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* states, "The point at which [agape] love between God and the people of God is particularly revealed is at that point of suffering and especially martyrdom" (Kittel, 1964). The suffering and martyrdom described in the Kittel's *Theological Dictionary* are mirrored throughout Mother Teresa's rhetoric, because she speaks often of the hurt associated with love. For her, true love is revealed at the point of sacrifice and pain.

In this text, agape love that is self-sacrificing translates into *giving*. This *giving* is not just any type of contribution, but rather, a handing out to the extent of causing pain, whether emotional or physical. In Mother Teresa's Nobel lecture, her speech to the United States Prayer Breakfast, and in her letters to the United Nations Women's Conference and the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, self-sacrificing agape love translates into sacrificial giving. For Mother Teresa, "giving" means sacrificing emotionally and physically, to the point of suffering. She challenges the current meanings of loving and giving through a redefinition that functions through the following syllogism:

Major Premise: Loving means giving.

Minor Premise: Giving is self-sacrificing until it hurts.

Conclusion: Therefore, loving means self-sacrificing (or giving) "until it hurts".

Throughout the texts, Mother Teresa uses “giving,” “loving,” and “self-sacrifice” closely, where none can work without the others.

Mother Teresa’s construction of loving models the example Christ gave—by giving sacrificially of himself. Mother Teresa mentions Christ’s sacrifice regularly in the selected speeches. For example, she states, “And God loved the world so much that He gave His son—it was a giving” (National Prayer Breakfast, 1994). “And so this is very important for us to realize that love, to be true, has to hurt” (Nobel Lecture, 1979). According to Mother Teresa, if anything is credited as being love but lacks a painful sacrifice, it is a counterfeit version of love. In the longer addresses, her examples of sacrificial giving are numerous. In this example, Mother Teresa shares one of her personal encounters with sacrificial giving.

I want you to give me until it hurts. The other day I received \$15 from a man who has been on his back for twenty years and the only part that he can move is his right hand. And the only companion that he enjoys is smoking. And he said to me: “I do not smoke for one week, and I send you this money.” It must have been a terrible sacrifice for him but see how beautiful, how he shared. And with that money I brought bread and I gave to those who are hungry with a joy on both sides. He was giving and the poor were receiving. (Nobel Lecture, 1979)

Here, the man gives up smoking—something that gives him pleasure, and is bad for his health as well. The story suggests the relinquishment of things that give pleasure for the sake of the poor, such as sacrificing a favorite pastime like golf and using the saved cash for the needy. However, it also implies the sacrifice of addictions, and things that cause harm to the body (or soul), such as excessive alcohol use, and drug use.

Mother Teresa advises audiences not to give from their abundance, but from their need. By doing so, the gift is ensured the element of sacrifice. In the Nobel lecture and in

the address at the Prayer Breakfast Mother Teresa speaks against giving from excess by stating, “I don't want you to give me from your abundance. I want you to give me until it hurts” (1979, 1994). Her words bring to mind the Biblical example in Matthew of the poor widow who gave all she had, only two very small copper coins, into the temple treasury, as the rich people put in their larger gifts from their excess. She asks that people not simply give spare change to the poor or give in an effort to remove guilt or obligation. Unlike most philanthropists who would be pleased for people to send money for relief and aid, regardless of the motive or intent of the giver behind the gift, Mother Teresa challenges the extent behind the gift.

### ***It's All about Giving***

Mother Teresa's message focuses on one basic tenet of Christianity: *giving*. For Mother Teresa, all other aspects of life—God, hunger, marriage, drugs, materialism, love, vocations, abortion, world peace, prayer, and the Incarnation of Christ—are understood through the framework of giving and all things are explained from it. The Incarnation of Christ is explained as God *giving* himself to humanity. It demonstrates that God entered humanity as a gift—a gift that was ultimately painful. Religious vocations are about *giving*. For example, the women who join her order are examples used in her Nobel and Prayer Breakfast speeches. She says, “We have many beautiful vocations who are wanting to *give* their whole life to Jesus in the service of the poorest of the poor” (1979, 1994). This example presents women who painfully left behind families, friends, and financial security to follow God and depend on his providence alone. Even prayer is about giving; prayer is about making the sacrifice to *give* time to God. Amidst the

activities of a busy day, Mother Teresa asks listeners to let go of their time and invest it in a relationship with God.

Mother Teresa also explains certain topics, such as drug use and contraception, through the framework of *not* giving, which is spiritual poverty. For example, the use of contraception in marriage is understood by Mother Teresa as self-centeredness, because it does not *give* life. In her address at the National Prayer Breakfast, Mother Teresa explains that, “in destroying the power of giving life, through contraception, a husband or wife is doing something to self. This turns the attention to self and so it destroys the gifts of love in him or her” (1994). She says that contraception does “something” to self, meaning that it diminishes the ability to be other-centered. Mother Teresa does not condemn contraception through long explanations about Catholic Church teachings, but rather, she explains that it does not “give,” meaning that it does not comply with ability to love sacrificially. Mother Teresa explains Western drug problems as a lack of giving by citing stories of young people who are lonely and unsupported by family. She says:

I was surprised in the West to see so many young boys and girls given into drugs. And I tried to find out why. Why is it like that? And the answer was: Because there is no one in the family to receive them. (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994)

In the last example, Mother Teresa reverts back to *giving*. Rather than stating that so many young boys and girls *turn to drugs*, here she chooses to say that they are *given* to drugs. In this particular example, she chooses a form of the word *give*, though it seems like an inward giving, rather than the outward form of giving that she usually advocates. In the discussion of giving there is the corresponding discussion of *receiving*. Previously, Mother Teresa explains that if one gives, one *receives* peace, which is a gift from God.

However, this is different, because the focus is not on what the giver receives. Instead, the focus is on the receiver, the one who is getting the act of love. Receiving most often goes unmentioned within Mother Teresa speeches, but exists as an implied reality. There is a correlation between giving and receiving, but giving becomes incomplete without receiving. A rejection of the gift does not further peace. For example, Mother Teresa often refers to children as a gift from God *given* to parents. If parents receive the child, God's gift is still a gift, but an unfulfilled gift. So in keeping with the context of giving, the drug problem is an issue of parents not properly *receiving* the gift. Mother Teresa's concept of being *given to* drugs or other items entails that the powerful force of sacrificial giving sustains people in a positive way, while a lack of love does the opposite.

Mother Teresa speaks of love as the ultimate human purpose, and this is a recurrent concept within her speeches. For example, in all four of the speeches selected for this study, Mother Teresa includes the following statement: "We have been created by God for greater things—to love and be loved" (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994; Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, 1994; United Nations World Conference on Women, 1995). Mother Teresa states that the ultimate purpose of creation is "to love and be loved" several times. She states repetitiously to assuredly deliver this key point. Regardless of the audience or environment, Mother Teresa shares this overall purpose from God to mankind and it revolves around love. By referring to creation, no one is excluded from the call to give. If listeners believe in mankind's creation, every single human is included. Bound within an



element of eternal time, the listener is expected to follow an arrangement of propositions, spoken with the purpose of persuading the audience into a response of giving.

*Major Premise:* God, who makes all the rules, created us *to love and be loved*.

*Minor Premise:* Love means sacrificial giving (giving until it hurts).

*Conclusion:* We were created by God to sacrificially give and receive, and will be held eternally accountable for our actions if we do not fulfill our purpose.

The major premise is easily identifiable, stated explicitly and frequently. As mentioned before, Mother Teresa's words show the unchangeable nature of God's laws and purposes for creation. Notice the two-way complementary nature of love within the major premise. Mankind is created to love (*give*) and be loved (receive the *giving*).

### ***Calling All to Give***

Mother Teresa's call is not exclusive to particular audiences; it is a call to all who hear her. Priests and fellow religious, pro-choice and pro-lifers, the poor and the wealthy, Catholics and non-Catholics, and government officials—amongst others—were in the audiences of Mother Teresa. Regardless of audience, her message remained unadorned and consistent with regard to giving materially and spiritually.

A closer observation of the "giving status" of the current Church emphasizes Mother Teresa's boldness in asking for a total sacrificial gift from Catholics and non-Catholics alike. A study by the Barna Group (2004) reveals that one out of every twenty United States households tithed their pre-tax income to non-profit organizations. Only four percent of the nation's households gave ten percent or more of their income to churches. The segments that were most likely to give at least ten percent to their church

were evangelicals, adults with an active faith (those who had attended church, prayed, and read the Bible during the previous week), African-Americans, born again Christians, charismatic or Pentecostal Christians, and people from households with a gross income of \$60,000 or more. On the contrary, Catholics were the least likely to tithe. The study found only one percent of Catholics tithe ten percent.

In light of Mother Teresa's rhetoric, the Church also has problems with giving, but not only in material giving. A *CBS News/New York Times* poll conducted in January 2005 showed that four out of every ten Catholics said that abortion should be available, although but under stricter limits. However, the Catholic Church deems abortion as one of the gravest of sins, even punishable by excommunication (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2272). In the same survey, six out of every ten people who called themselves strong Catholics said they favored the use of artificial methods of birth control, which is also contrary to the teachings of the Church. Less than one percent of women of child-bearing age use natural family planning as a method of spacing (Alan Guttmacher Institute, 2002), although it is the only method accepted and endorsed by the Church. So despite the numbers of people that are nominally Catholic, the numbers of people that share the views of the Vatican and are completely obedient to Church magisterium, such as Mother Teresa, remain a minority.

Franco Ferrarotti (1993), the author of *Faith without Dogma: the Place of Religion in Postmodern Societies*, believes that the Catholic Church began to conform to social change in the early 1970s, but then the conformity halted when Pope John Paul II entered the papacy. Ferrarotti contends that customary obedience to the hierarchy allows

acceptance of questions about Church teachings such as birth control and the position of women in the Church and in society (1993). These recent statistics show that many share Ferrarotti's progressivist view of the Church.

Even had she spoken to only groups of fellow Catholic, Mother Teresa's job of persuading others to give would still have been considered a difficult task, being that her ideals were not congruent with those in the majority. It may seem outlandish to consider someone affiliated with the Catholic Church, like Mother Teresa, as a minority, since current membership in the Catholic Church stands at about 1.085 billion worldwide. Although the number of baptized Catholics has increased on every continent except Europe, those who completely agree with and adhere to Church doctrine remain a minority. Mother Teresa's rhetoric is visibly more powerful and daring than most would expect, because she is a minority that ultimately challenges all to a standard that even most Catholics do not adhere to. Her words call all people to sacrificially give, even when considering issues such as abortion, when Catholics alone waiver on this debatable issue in the Church.

As mentioned, Mother Teresa's rhetoric offers a list of propositions that lead the audience to recognize eternal accountability for a lack of action towards the poor. Each of her propositions is clearly indicated in her speeches. For example, the following statements referring to the commanding words of Christ also reflect her major premise, which states the purpose of human creation: to love and be loved. In the Nobel lecture, Mother Teresa explains the clarity of Christ's command by saying, "And we read that in the Gospel very clearly: Love as I have loved you...." (1979). Mother Teresa discusses

the call to love more than any other topic is her speeches. She never deviates from exhaustively expressing the importance of loving. She delivers stern words to detract audiences from participating in a counterfeit version of love. In two of the four selected speeches, she states the following firm address:

How can you love God whom you do not see, if you do not love your neighbor whom you see, whom you touch, with whom you live?  
It is not enough for us to say: "I love God, but I do not love my neighbor." Saint John says that you are a liar if you say you love God and you don't love your neighbor. (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994)

These words highlight the consubstantiality between God and neighbor, reminding of the heightened importance of loving.

The minor premise is the concept of love as a sacrificial gift, which identifies love as a more concrete reality by explaining that it means sacrificial giving. It is explained through several examples and is a main focus throughout the text. Her primary example of sacrificial giving is God, as evidenced in this example in two of her speeches. She says, "It was a *giving*. It is as much as if to say it *hurt* God to *give*, because he *loved* the world so much that he *gave* his son [italics added]" (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994). Sacrificial giving and become complementary, where one cannot exist without the other. Mother Teresa's use of God as the primary example of giving leads the audience to a deeper understanding of God. God, who has supreme reign, has no need to give sacrificially, but does so to become a prime example for people to imitate.

The conclusion is simple: people were created by God to give sacrificially and to receive. But tagging to the conclusion, the rhetor informs of problems associated with an unfulfilled purpose. She supports the conclusion by allusions to the afterlife, and

reminders of eternal accountability for human action. These things offer incentive for the audience to respond quickly and efficiently. Mother Teresa shifts the audience into an eternal time by asking, “When we die, we will come face to face with God, the author of life. Who will give an account to God...” (Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, 1994). In two other speeches she does the same by declaring:

On the last day he will say to those on his right, “Whatever you did to the least of these, you did to me, and he will also say to those on his left, whatever you neglected to do for the least of these, you neglected to do it for me.” (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994)

Mother Teresa does not allow her audience to remain in the present, but challenges them to adopt an eternal perspective. By moving the text into an eternal time, she communicates that the present is fleeting. This rhetorical act adds an element of urgency, and works to persuade the listener to give in order to maintain a fulfilled purpose before death. The urgency is echoed through an underlying Biblical message. In the Prayer Breakfast and Nobel addresses, Mother Teresa shares a Bible story referred to as “The Visitation,” in which Mary, pregnant with the child Jesus, goes “in haste” to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptist. Although we are unaware of the exact details of this Bible story, one can presume that the long journey for a pregnant woman, in ancient times prior to transportation conveniences, was a sacrifice. This story describes how people should “go in haste” to serve others as Mary did for her cousin, Elizabeth, despite the difficulty involved.

Mother Teresa could have simply asked audiences to help the poor, but instead, Mother Teresa relates the act of giving to an eternal need and expectation. In order for this method of persuasion to be effective, the audience is expected to follow the

sylllogism along through the conclusion. Each proposition builds on the next and heightens the urgency and importance of Mother Teresa's message in order to move the listener. If one does not believe in an eternal life, or in God, or God as creator, or God as the official rule-maker, then the syllogism falls through without effectiveness.

When Mother Teresa was asked to speak publicly about giving, she did, but she also communicated a message that was in conformity with her beliefs, by tying many issues regarding faith and morals back to *giving*. She explains various topics, such as the Incarnation, religious vocations, contraception, and drug use, by their relation to giving. Her narratives about God, Jesus, Mary, and others that she encountered illustrate sacrificial giving. Mother Teresa's words leave little uncertainty about her meanings of "love" and "giving," directing her audience toward corporal action. She encourages audiences to not give out of their abundance, but out of their want, because for Mother Teresa, anything without sacrifice does not constitute love. Her words about sacrificial giving lead to a final outcome of peace.

#### **Chapter IV** **The Persuasive Tools Found in Her Words**

The title of a children's book by Kathleen Kudlinski (2006) refers to Mother Teresa as a "Friend to the Poor." Much of the world is in agreement with Kudlinski, placing the name of the famous Catholic nun in correlation with the needy. But upon studying Mother Teresa's rhetoric, the pending questions arise "Who exactly are *the poor*?" and "What is her definition of *giving* to them?" The rhetoric of Mother Teresa seeks to achieve one goal: to persuade others to give to the poor. However, she extensively elaborates on the meaning of "giving to the poor."

Using a close-textual analysis, the texts disclose a pattern of particular methods used by Mother Teresa in an effort to persuade her audiences. She relies on three main tools to effectively communicate her message: redefinition, identification, and focusing on antithetical ideas. These three work together to contextualize commonly used terms such as *poverty*, *love*, and *giving*, and to impact worldwide ideologies about giving.

First, Mother Teresa redefines regularly used terms. So much of her rhetorical efforts are spent on giving words alternative meanings, by expanding the ideas associated with words such as *poverty*, *giving*, *children*, and *love*. Secondly, she uses the tool *identification* to help audiences conceptualize the division between themselves and the poor. The term *identification* works well for the purpose of its double meaning. Initially, Mother Teresa asks audiences to *identify*, or find, the poor. Her discourse indicates that the poor are hidden and overlooked, and need to be recognized in order to receive charity. Subsequently, to *identify with* someone is to have sympathy for their needs. Burke (1964) explains that identification creates a need around which a shared substance forms. Out of

division, humans desire consubstantiality. Rather than the division coming from poverty versus wealth, Mother Teresa's rhetoric implies that there is division between those living in *poverty* versus those living in *peace*. Part of the strategy of Mother Teresa is not only to find the poor and extract sympathy, but to encourage her auditors to respond. Lastly, she frequently discusses antithetical ideas to make her points clear. For example, to rhetorically combat the issue of abortion at the U.N. Women's Conference, Mother Teresa writes at length about motherhood. Motherhood and abortion (a rejection of motherhood) are antithetical. In another speech, she focuses on *life*, referring to it as "the most beautiful gift from God" (Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, 1994). Here again, *life* may be viewed as the antithesis of *abortion*. According to Mother Teresa's rhetoric, *poverty* (an absence of loving/giving) is the direct opposite of *peace* (a presence of loving/giving). Therefore, much of her talk regarding the poor is focused on peace, which to her, is the antithesis of poverty. So within this study, her methods of redefinition, identification, and antithetical concepts will be examined to demonstrate how Mother Teresa uses a distinctive language in order to persuade others to give.

***Poverty Becomes "The Neglect to Love"***

The term *poverty* is associated with a lack of physical necessities, such as food and shelter, but by using the tool of redefinition, Mother Teresa expands this narrow view of the term. In the United States, television commercials and Christian radio stations request financial help for hungry children in distant lands, and MTV and news stations air footage of the band U2's lead singer, Bono, and other celebrity philanthropists aiding the



poor and helpless in third world countries. Mother Teresa challenges common notions regarding poverty, and her words plead with audiences, inviting them to share her ideas. She communicates that (1) physical hunger and poor living conditions are not the worst of the world's problems, and that (2) poverty is not a remote problem for any of her audience members, regardless of income, social class, neighborhood, or nationality. She does this by elaborating on the definition of poverty or redefining it. She does not select from an elaborate vocabulary, but relies on basic terms and an assortment of personal narratives.

On occasion Mother Teresa directly distinguishes between *material* poverty and *spiritual* poverty. As expected, *material* poverty is the common perception of poverty, which is the state of those living without physical necessities such as food and shelter. Despite the gloomy perception associated with material poverty, Mother Teresa selects from her numerous encounters with the poor and cites many examples of the joy and goodness that can accompany those living in material poverty. At the National Prayer Breakfast, she states the following about the materially poor: "The poor are very great people. They can teach us so many beautiful things"; "This is the greatness of people who are spiritually rich even when they are materially poor"; "Those who are materially poor can be very wonderful people" (1994). She describes material poverty with words such as *great, beautiful, rich, and wonderful*. Within her rhetoric, the homeless and hungry become less helpless charity recipients and transform into teachers and positive examples. Her words indicate that living within *material poverty*, a human can still be rich in joy, hope, and dignity. The woman who was known for her daily encounters with

the hungry and homeless shares the positive aspects of material poverty, encouraging her audience to follow her example.

The concept of joy, hope, and goodness found within a life of material poverty is a principle found within the Biblical text. Jesus Christ was not born into affluence. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus tells the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Lazarus, who suffered physically from material poverty during his lifetime, enjoyed eternity. The rich man, who lived lavishly and ignored the physical needs of Lazarus, eternally suffered in hell. Additionally, St. Paul writes to Timothy that the love of money is a root of all evil (1 Timothy 6:10, New International Version). Jesus' famous Sermon on the Mount asserts that the poor in spirit will inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Mother Teresa's words imply that her ultimate goal is to alleviate the worst type of poverty—not material poverty, but what she refers to as *spiritual* poverty. To her, spiritual poverty presents itself from a lack of love. Although it saddened her to see the pain associated with sickness and physical hunger, her profound calling came through witnessing the pain of those that suffered and died *in loneliness*, without someone's presence and love. Mother Teresa describes persons suffering from spiritual poverty as *lonely, unwanted, unloved, shut-out, and terrified*. Through her actions and her words she sought the end of spiritual poverty. Alleviating spiritual poverty remained her main mission, and the rest remained secondary. As she addresses each audience in these artifacts, she includes stories about the “poor” who are lacking love, attention, and someone who wants to be with them and provide for them. For the hungry, the “neglect to love” is present through a lack of sustenance. For the lonely, the neglect to love is

present though a lack of time and attention. For the unwanted, the neglect of love transpires as rejection. For those shut-out from society, the neglect comes as avoidance. For the terrified, a lack of consolation translates into a neglect to love. All “neglect to love” becomes redefined as *poverty*.

Mother Teresa’s narratives about the spiritually poor give aid to her new concept. In both Mother Teresa’s Nobel address and in her speech at the United States Prayer Breakfast, she includes the following story about a man who suffered from both kinds of poverty.

Then there was the man we picked up from the drain, half eaten by worms and, after we had brought him to the home, he only said, “I have lived like an animal in the street, but I am going to die as an angel, loved and cared for.” (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994)

In this example, the man suffered from material and spiritual poverty, but because of the help of the Missionaries of Charity, he was aided *materially* through physical care, but most importantly, he was aided *spiritually* through the reception of compassion and someone’s presence. The man in Mother Teresa’s story expressed his joy in terms of spiritual poverty, not material. He expresses that he will “die like an angel,” not because he finally ate or washed up (material), but because he was “loved and cared for” (spiritual).

Mother Teresa’s narratives manifest the concept of spiritual poverty as a problem especially for the materially wealthy. In both her Nobel lecture and the United States Prayer Breakfast speech, she says, “I have often seen, especially in the rich countries, how children turn to drugs or other things to escape feeling unloved and rejected” (1979, 1994). In the same two speeches, she describes the spiritual poverty she encountered in

the elderly. She states, “I saw that in that home these old people had everything... and I did not see a single one with a smile on their face. They are hurt because they are forgotten” (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994). In her speeches, Mother Teresa presents the materially wealthy as *sad, difficult, and hurtful*, a stark contrast to language typically used to describe material poverty, such as *great, beautiful, rich, and wonderful*. Her words challenge the audience to assist the more easily-accessible *poor*, which suffer from loneliness, fear, or sadness. By changing the meaning of the word, poverty enters into the worlds of a larger portion of her audiences, because the population suffering from spiritual poverty is larger than that of material poverty. Especially for those in wealthier countries, it may be easier to encounter someone lacking in time and attention, spiritual poverty, as opposed to encountering someone lacking in food and shelter, material poverty.

Mother Teresa makes a distinction between the poverty of the West, characterized as spiritual poverty, versus the material poverty in the rest of the world. Relying on her personal experience, she expresses that the spiritual poverty of the West is more difficult to eliminate. She says:

But I found the poverty of the West so much more difficult to remove. When I pick up a person from the street, hungry, I give him a plate of rice, a piece of bread, I have satisfied. I have removed that hunger. But a person that is shut out, that feels unwanted, unloved, terrified, the person that has been thrown out from society—that poverty is so hurtful and so much, and I find that very difficult. (Nobel Lecture, 1979)

She describes the neglect in love, from being shut-out, unwanted, unloved, and afraid. This example of the “poverty of the West” illustrates Mother Teresa’s challenge of the misconception of a distant poverty, showing that according to her new definition, poverty

can be experienced even in the midst of money and material luxuries. According to the book, *Poverty in America* (2006), “The World Bank uses a poverty standard of \$1 to \$2 per person per day, or \$1,095 to \$2,190 per year, for a family of three in developing countries in Africa or Latin America. In contrast, the average official poverty threshold for a family of three in the United States was \$17,738 in 2000” (Iceland, 2003). For the majority of Americans, poverty may seem a distant problem. In light of her operationalization of poverty, the young, old, rich, and materially poor, can be living in the worst form of poverty: sadness and loneliness.

Mother Teresa’s use of spiritual poverty is distinctive from Christ’s teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. Biblically, to be “poor” in “spirit” is a blessing (beatitude)—an idea with a positive connotation. By inverting the terminology, Mother Teresa refers to being “spiritually poor” as negative concept. Jesus’ concept of being “poor in spirit” is very different from Mother Teresa’s concept of being “spiritually poor”, although this is problematic because of language differences. Common interpretation of Jesus’ words “poor in spirit” refer to a spirit within that is detached from possessions, and fully dependent on God’s providence. One Biblical scholar states that, depending on the context, the translation for the word *poor* can mean “oppressed, afflicted, wretched, miserable, helpless, humble, patient, or meek” (Falconer, 2001). However, in the context of the Sermon on the Mount, he finds it to mean “the humble recognition of one’s utter nothingness before God, that without His gifts one is and has nothing” (Falconer, 2001). Other Biblical scholars share this view. Another explains that to be poor in spirit is being able to see that there is nothing in oneself that is good or that can be given to God, so a

full reliance on God's mercy is recognizably needed (Deffinbaugh, 2003). Mother Teresa's use of "spiritually poor" also refers to an internal spirit that is lacking. But on the contrary, it is lacking in emotional needs, such as human love and attention, which she finds present particularly in the West.

Mother Teresa's words identify the poor in a new way, and redefine the word *poverty*. She differentiates between material poverty and spiritual poverty, one being a lack of physical needs and the other being a lack of emotional needs. Spiritual poverty is not minimalized to the emotional, but rather, the spiritual condition becomes manifested emotionally. For example, the people that are aided by the Missionaries of Charity are receiving spiritual nourishment through the emotional care and compassion of the sisters. Mother Teresa's use of personal narratives helps illustrate her recognition of spiritual poverty as the utmost problem. Through her redefinition, poverty becomes recognizable as an epidemic of mass proportions, affecting countless lives beyond those in lower socio-economic spheres. By extending the meaning of poverty, the audience is directed to identify the poor in their lives and see that many "poor" people exist in close proximity, even in the upper class of the United States. Mother Teresa's rhetoric functions persuasively by redefining regularly used terms in a new way. In her letters and speeches, she explains that people are poor because they are not receiving the gift of love—whether it comes in the forms of food and shelter or in the forms of time and attention—not because they are materialistically poor.

### ***Identifying the Poor***

Kenneth Burke considered identification an element of persuasion. In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke stated that, “Identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division” (1969, p. 22). To Burke, a guilt redemption cycle exists where there is division and lack of equality. When people recognize their differences from other people, it is followed by a movement towards consubstantiality. Burke tells us that the similarities amongst people create sites of consubstantiality, a sharing of substance. Although everyone is different and unique, people are consubstantial if one person can identify how he/she is similar to another person because their similarities unite them. People can identify with one another through shared feelings, ideas, values, and things. Identification is a means of redemption to overcome the division and make up for the guilt, because humans begin to share with others on various levels. Mother Teresa alters the common understanding of poverty in order to help her audience to identify the poor.

Burke’s process of identification requires at least three steps (Quigley, 1998). The first step is to name something (or someone) according to specific properties. Within Mother Teresa rhetoric, this part of the process is to name someone as poor, according to the Mother Teresa’s definition. The properties of poverty are to be lacking in love, whether that presents itself as a lack of physical and/or emotional needs. The second step in the process is to associate with some, but also disassociate from others. This suggests that persons (and ideas or things) share, or do not share, important qualities in common. For example, members of her audience can probably associate with the people in her

stories through the shared substances of sadness and loneliness, since most people have experienced these same feelings. In the same way, Mother Teresa's words help her listeners to disassociate from other groups. For example, she creates a dividing line between the Western and Eastern worlds, by referring to "the poverty of the West," which is described as loneliness and sadness amidst luxuries. When considering the unhappiness associated with the poverty of the West, audiences are led to disassociate with the cultural norms of the West, such as the emphasis on personal time and wealth. Mother Teresa guides the audience to see the division between themselves and the poor. According to Burke (1969), without division, there would be no need for humans to communicate their unity. The third and last step in the process of identification is the end result of identifying, which is the state of being consubstantial with others, focusing on the importance of the needs of the emotionally or materially poor. In the last step of identifying, the audience would be led to act: to share food, money, or time with the poor as a way to be consubstantial.

Mother Teresa creates sites of identification in order to lead the audience to feel connected with the poor, realize their division, and then to act on their behalf. Unlike current solutions to poverty, which remove the individual from relieving the needs of the poor by relying instead on the government or institutions, Mother Teresa assigns poverty relief to every individual. To begin, Mother Teresa shares the importance of identification by asking, "Do you know who they are?" She explains the importance of knowing one's neighbors well enough to recognize their needs, echoing the Biblical principle of loving one's neighbors. Next, she illustrates the process of identification, by using narratives



about the poor that she has encountered who know the needs of their neighbors, and provide for them. By exposing people to the various forms of poverty, she shows similarities between the audience and the poor, and guides the audience to put an end to the guilt that comes from their division from the poor and directs them to action. Lastly, Mother Teresa demonstrates recompense for action toward the poor, which is consubstantiality with Christ.

Identifying the poor in close proximity intertextually points to the Bible's call to love one's neighbors. People in need cannot receive aid, unless someone is able to know them well enough to identify their need. It is easier to not respond to the challenge of giving to the poor, if the poor remain unknown and unidentified. If the beggar on a street corner were recognized as a relative or friend, rather than a stranger, someone would be more prone to help rather than neglect. Identification gives dignity to the poor, because charity does not then fall onto nameless and faceless recipients. When speaking about the hungry, Mother Teresa emphasizes the importance of *knowing* and identifying them, prior to giving to them. Identification leads to value and significance.

Mother Teresa's use of narratives fills out her teaching about identification. She uses the following story in two of the speeches:

Do you know who they are? I had the most extraordinary experience with a Hindu family who had eight children... so I took some rice and I went there immediately. And I saw the children—their eyes shining with hunger. I don't know if you have ever seen hunger. But I have seen it very often. And she took the rice, she divided the rice, and she went out. When she came back I asked her: "Where did you go, what did you do?" And she gave me a very simple answer: "They are hungry also." What struck me most was that she knew - and who are they? A Muslim family—and she knew. (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994)

In this example, given by Mother Teresa, the Hindu and Muslim families were divided by beliefs, but identified with each other through their shared material poverty. Their continued desire for consubstantiality resulted in a sharing of the substance of food. Their shared need made them consubstantial with one another.

Mother Teresa shares the stories of the poor, and the audience is directed to identify similarities with the poor, as well as resolve the guilt that results from their division. Since Mother Teresa expands the definition of poverty to include the sad and the isolated, more listeners are able to identify with these feelings, leading to consubstantiality. For example, in the Nobel speech (1979) she asks, “Maybe in our own family we have somebody who is feeling lonely, who is feeling sick, who is feeling worried, and there are difficult days for everybody. Are we there?” Mother Teresa mentions that “there are difficult days for everybody,” forming sameness between the poor and the audience. Furthermore, her details about the poor show the audience the existing differences between themselves and those suffering from poverty. This division manifests an unresolved guilt in the listener, which can only be removed by a response of action toward the poor. She asks, “Are we there?” signifying that responsibility of action relies on each individual.

Mother Teresa does not only request that people identify the poor and give aid, but she makes clear that the gift brings consubstantiality with Christ. More than anything else, when speaking about poverty (whether material poverty like hunger or spiritual poverty like sadness), Mother Teresa identifies the poor as Jesus Christ. In her speeches at the Prayer Breakfast and in her Nobel speech, Mother Teresa states that, “Jesus makes

Himself the hungry one, the naked one, the homeless one, the unwanted one, and He says, ‘You did it to me’” (Nobel Lecture, 1979; National Prayer Breakfast, 1994). The Missionaries of Charity never failed to make it known that they were not social workers, but rather Christians who were attending to Christ within the poor (Drury & Bullough, 1999). The understanding of this call was so vital to the life and mission of the Missionaries of Charity that Mother Teresa gave the sisters a way to remember this special call from God. On the five fingers of her hand, she said the five words of Jesus, “You did it to me,” intertextually referencing the Scripture passage in the Gospel of Matthew in which Jesus says, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, *you did it to Me*” (Matthew 25:40, NASB). Mother Teresa is saying that as audiences provide for the poor, they also become consubstantial with Christ, because he is consubstantial with the poor. Mother Teresa provides for the wealthy, an opportunity to attain oneness with Jesus.

***Mother Teresa on Abortion: The Unborn Poor***

Mother Teresa’s tools to combat poverty remain consistent in her fight against abortion, which she identifies as the greatest form of spiritual poverty. She says that abortion “brings a people to be spiritually poor, and that is the worst poverty and the most difficult to overcome.” Her rhetorical battle against abortion demonstrates how she fights all forms of poverty through the use of particular methods.

Mother Teresa uses *redefinition*, *identification*, *focusing on the antithesis*, and an additional method referred to as *vilification*, to advocate for the unborn poor and against abortion, which she claims is the *greatest* destroyer of love and peace. She uses

vilification to identify abortion as an evil foe, which is a common practice in pro-life rhetoric. Next, Mother Teresa redefines abortion as a form of poverty, by describing how a child is “poor” by being neglected in love, because there is a lacking of spiritual, as well as material, giving on behalf of parents. She redefines the word “child,” by focusing on the positive aspects of children, attempting to disassociate the negative aspects of parenthood. She also reveals children as a tangible form of wealth. Using identification, Mother Teresa forms consubstantiality between the audience and the unborn, and shows the division between those that received the opportunity to be born and those that did not. She identifies the unborn as Christ, and shows that parenthood is a means to become consubstantial with Christ and better understand the nature of God. Lastly, she uses antithetical terms as a means of persuasion.

***Vilification:*** Mother Teresa uses vilification as a tool only within her discourse about abortion. Her use of vilification implies an evil foe, although she does not explicitly mention one. She also uses frequent “god” and “devil” terms, which are words that are generally accepted by cultures as positive or negative concepts. As a final tool of vilification, Mother Teresa employs indisputable terms to describe abortion, rather than relying on the vague terms that are regularly debated in abortion rhetoric.

In studying pro-life and pro-choice rhetoric, research finds that both sides of the abortion debate use vilification as a rhetorical strategy, which discredits the opposing side by characterizing them as an evil opponent (Vanderford, 1989). Mother Teresa is no exception. Although Christianity advances the concept of a personified adversary—Lucifer—Mother Teresa’s adversary is implicit, rather than explicit. In these four

selected artifacts she does not mention Satan, but she does mention the word “evil” a few times, particularly in regard to abortion. Mother Teresa explicitly speaks about God, mentioning the word “God” 87 times throughout the four artifacts. The texts maintain a religious tone, and set up a dichotomy between God and the invisible presence of the adversary, the source of the mentioned “evil.” The rhetor leads the audience to identify only two sides within the abortion debate—God’s side or the implicit evil adversary’s side. Mother Teresa not only implies the external form of evil, but also the correlating internal form of evil, which is a proclivity to sin: the result of humanity’s fallen nature. She implies a human struggle between selfishness and detachment, and between sin and goodness.

In *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (1953), Richard Weaver discusses ultimate terms which are generally accepted as cultural absolutes. Two categories of Weaver’s ultimate terms include “god” and “devil” terms. “God” terms are idealistic, to which other words would be inferior. “God” terms used by Mother Teresa are *peace, love, family, and children*. “Devil” terms are the counterpart of “god” terms, and are words that represent evils within a culture.

Mother Teresa’s vilification strategy uses “devil” terms extensively, as she refers to abortion many times as evil, operationalizing abortion as *a direct war, war against the child, direct killing of the innocent child, destroying the child, and the greatest destroyer of peace*. Throughout her rhetoric, Mother Teresa frequently unites devil and god terms, such as “killing of *innocent child*” and “destroyer of *peace*.” The devil terms “kill” and “destroy” indicate an unfair seizure of the prized ideals of *innocence, children, or peace*.

Pairing the two opposing sides heightens the awareness of each, because a god term is better understood in relation its counter part devil term. The innocence of a child becomes more visible and cherished when it stands beside an evil opponent such as *killing*. The god term *peace* becomes more valued when it is positioned close to its destruction.

Mother Teresa's style is usually known for its simplicity, but her discourse about abortion produces the embellishment of alliteration. The use of alliteration gives expressions "vigor and picturesqueness" (Collitz, 1932), and is reserved for her attack on what she deems the highest form of poverty. Alliteration is used within the tool of vilification in phrases like *murder by the mother* and a *deliberate decision* to intensify the effect, whether intended or not.

When discussing the women contemplating abortion, rather than using the word *abort*, Mother Teresa uses the word *kill*. Within the abortion debate, people often dispute the meanings of words such as *choice* and *life*. In regard to pregnancy, the Oxford English Dictionary defines the word *abort* as "to prevent further development of a fetus or embryo in the womb by removing it or causing its expulsion; to remove in the course of an abortion." The term is understood as moral to some and not to others. To Mother Teresa, to *abort* means to kill. She assigns a word (*kill*) that, when standing independently, is highly charged. Though the meaning of the word *abortion* is debatable (murder or not murder), the word *kill*, when standing alone, has a specific meaning: to end life. Additionally, the word *kill* is generally accepted as morally wrong. Mother Teresa again sets up another dichotomy that leaves no questionable areas. She assigns the

abortion the clear definition of *killing*, leading her audience to choose a side: killing or not killing. Mother Teresa refers to abortion as “the greatest destroyer of peace” eight times. Throughout her speeches she refers to several “destroyers” of peace, including violence, drug addictions, war, hunger, and sickness, but abortion is the ultimate devil term as the *greatest* destroyer of peace. She reproaches mothers, fathers, and reproves countries that permit abortion, saying that abortion has become a way to attain what people want through violence. The vilification strategy ties into the process of identification, because the audience is persuaded to unite against a shared foe. Her audience may have expected to hear tragic stories about the hungry dying on the streets, but Mother Teresa names abortion as the *greatest* form of poverty.

***Redefinition:*** Through the framework of Mother Teresa’s understanding of “poverty,” the text reveals a tie between an unborn fetus on the brink of being aborted, and a starving man dying on a street in Calcutta, because both are poor. For some, Mother Teresa’s rhetoric regarding abortion seemed like an illusive way to use her popularity as a platform for her fight for the rights of the unborn, since abortion and poverty seem to be unrelated. But for Mother Teresa, abortion is redefined as the worst kind of spiritual poverty. Mother Teresa continues to rely on her expanded use of the word “poverty” to counter abortion, but she also expands the meaning of the word “child.” She works extensively to show the value of children, regarding them as a sign of great wealth and the opposite of poverty.

When discussing abortion, Mother Teresa reverts back to her original redefinition of poverty: a neglect to love, which is a lacking of material needs or spiritual/emotional

needs. In her Nobel address, she says, “Let us make that one point—that no child will be unwanted,” pointing to the spiritual poverty of unwantedness. According to Planned Parenthood (2006), some of the main reasons that a woman chooses abortion are: (1) She is not ready to have a baby, (2) She cannot afford a baby, (3) She does not want to be a single parent, (4) She has all the children she wants. All of these reasons given can be understood as an inability to provide love in the forms of sustenance, time, and/or attention. For Mother Teresa, the aborted baby is one of the poor, spiritually and materially. Her understanding of the aborted baby as a subset of the poor authorizes Mother Teresa to criticize abortion when speaking about the poor in Calcutta. She classifies the fetus as “an innocent child” and the act of abortion as an action of not wanting or loving the child—another example of spiritual poverty.

Mother Teresa’s words attempt to disassociate the negative aspects of parenthood by leading her audience to value all children, and positively embrace the sacrifices demanded by parenthood. She does this by reframing the word “child.” Unsurprisingly, Mother Teresa maintains that a life exists in the womb, referring to the unborn as *children*. In her Nobel acceptance speech alone, Mother Teresa uses the words *child* or *children* 29 times, and every time children are described solely in positive terms. In the four speech texts, she uses the word “baby” or “babies” only three times, two of which are in reference to avoiding a pregnancy through the use of natural family planning, while the word “child” is used numerous times throughout the texts. She refers to children as *God’s best gift to the family*, and tells the audience that children are *carved in the palm of God’s hand* and *created in God’s image and likeness*. She speaks often of the high



demand and desire for children by couples that are unable to conceive. Additionally, she frequently includes that she and her Missionaries of Charity will accept any unwanted children, and regularly recalls the thousands of children that have been adopted with the help of her congregation. Mother Teresa demonstrates the value and joy that only the young bring into the world also by relying on narratives, such as a story about the innate generosity and purity of a young Hindu child that she encountered who sacrificially gave up sugar for three days in order to share with others in need. Mother Teresa's rhetoric identifies children as the only means of repopulation and continuation of the world. She calls children *the most beautiful gift from God* several times. She makes many of these attempts to show the value of children.

Not only does Mother Teresa demonstrate children as valued, but as forms of tangible wealth. Within Mother Teresa's discourse, peace (the presence of loving) is the opposite of poverty (an absence of loving). However, wealth (the presence of material and spiritual needs) is another quality opposed to poverty. Children are valued because they are material manifestations of wealth, while peace is an intangible form of wealth. To the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, she states that, "it is so beautiful to see the love and unity that a child brings to a family." For Mother Teresa, children are more wealth than money. When writing to the United Nations Women's conference about abortion, she stated that "no job, no plans, no possessions, no idea of 'freedom' can take the place of love" (1994). She includes that jobs and possessions are subordinate to "love," referring to the interrelated children and

parenthood. Even despite families' economic hardships, she pleads for the life of every child.

Within the discussion of parenthood and the value of children, Mother Teresa she signals parenthood as a means to become consubstantial with Christ and better understand the nature of God. Referring frequently to the word "child" reflects spiritual peace, by all people, born and unborn, being children of God. It reflects a peace and unity among people. Additionally, Mother Teresa's reference to a "child of God" reflects God's parental nature. This forms consubstantiality between people and God, since God is a spiritual parent, and humans are physical parents. Mother Teresa offers parenthood as an opportunity to more deeply understand and share in God's nature.

**Identification:** When speaking about abortion, Mother Teresa attempts to identify the unborn, since it is easier to promote compassion and defense for those that we currently know, as opposed to the unidentified. Her various uses of identification are not substantially different from her use of redefinition. To *make known* the unborn is not a new tactic, but rather a popular method of persuasion within the pro-life movement. For example, various states in the U.S. have introduced bills which would require a woman to have an ultrasound before having an abortion in order to connect the mother with the life of the child. Pro-life groups like National Institute of Family and Life Advocates have donated ultrasound machines to crisis pregnancy centers hoping to give expectant mothers a glimpse their unborn child. The online Crisis Magazine (Stricherz, 2002) recounts the story of a pregnant 17-year-old who was on the verge of having an abortion. Instead, she stopped by a crisis pregnancy center and an ultrasound swayed her decision.

She said, “I didn’t realize that’s something inside of you... that’s when I decided I was not going to have an abortion. I could see the hands and the feet, and I could hear the heartbeat. It sounded like horses galloping—da-dum-da-dum-da-dum.” Countless stories such as this one exist, where women are faced at their unborn child through an ultrasound. It is a method of *identifying* and *making known* the child within the womb. In the same way, Mother Teresa works to make known all of the poor, and convey a level of consubstantiality with them in an effort to save them.

In light of Kenneth Burke’s work on identification, a division exists between those that are born and those that are not. Mother Teresa reminds the audience that they and their children were once in the womb. She differentiates between those who are wanted, and those whose are unwanted and aborted. She declares, “And we who are standing here—our parents wanted us. Our children, we want them, we love them” (Nobel Lecture, 1979). Through the process of identification, a sense of guilt comes from the division: one group was brought to full-term while another group was not.

The identification of the unborn is repeated rhetorically throughout the texts, such as through an underlying Biblical message, making the unborn consubstantial with Jesus Christ. In two of the four speeches within this artifact, she shares a Bible story referred to as “The Visitation,” in which Mary, pregnant with the child Jesus, visits her cousin Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptist. The story serves several rhetorical purposes how people should “go in haste” to serve others as Mary did for her cousin, Elizabeth. However, as a tactic of persuasion, the story sheds a light and gives life to two

fetuses: Jesus Christ and John the Baptist... two people of great magnitude in Christian history. Mother Teresa says:

The child in the womb of Elizabeth leapt with joy. (Nobel Lecture, 1979)

He [John the Baptist] recognized the Prince of Peace [Jesus]. (Nobel Lecture, 1979)

While still in the womb of Mary—Jesus brought peace. (National Prayer Breakfast, 1994)

The unborn was the first one to proclaim the coming of Christ. (National Prayer Breakfast, 1994)

When discussing the Visitation, Mother Teresa uses several action verbs. The words *leapt*, *recognized*, *brought*, *proclaim* all emphasize that the unborn Christ and John the Baptist had an active role in the womb. It gives them an active life and an identity, and further shows the consubstantiality between Jesus and the poor.

Again, the abortion debate is an entanglement of definitions regarding when life begins. Regardless of whether or not people are in agreement with her, Mother Teresa's rhetoric is straightforward, and leaves little grey area in her identification of the unborn. For Christians in particular, identifying the poor as Jesus Christ heightens the value of the poor and heightens the value of a gift towards the poor. By identifying the unborn child as Christ himself, abortion is raised to an ultimate crime.

***The Antithesis of Abortion—Life and Motherhood:*** Aristotle's *Rhetoric* states that "so far as the style is concerned, it is the antithetical form that appeals to us."

Aristotle maintains that antithesis should be an aim of rhetoric, because it is an agreeable way "to get a hold of new ideas easily" (p. 187). The use of antithesis is well documented back to the days of ancient Greek oratory. The method was practiced, refined, and valued for its ability to persuade (Erickson, 1979). Much like Antiphon, Isocrates, and other

ancient orators, Mother Teresa's rhetoric shows the value in using antithesis as a tool of persuasion. When studying health communication, Brashers and Babrow too suggested that perhaps the best chance of overcoming the limitations of our own perspective comes "when we attempt to bring it to the fore and consider its antithesis" (1996, p. 245).

The final method of persuasion used by Mother Teresa is to contemplate the antithesis of abortion, which are life and/or motherhood. As previously mentioned, the role of unborn life itself is identified as of extremely high value. She also shows the joy and dignity of every life, regardless of economic resources, and her focus on the gift of life permeates each address. Tied to the importance of human life, Mother Teresa elevates the role of motherhood, by describing it as a powerful position in our societies. The word *mother* is mentioned 41 times, more than double the mention of fathers. Overall, most of Mother Teresa's rhetoric is consistent among varied audiences regardless of demographic makeup; however, in her message to the United Nations World Women's Conference she changes up her method by arguing that motherhood is the ultimate gift from God, probably because the audience was predominantly comprised of women. Mother Teresa always discusses abortion, sometimes mentions contraception, but never mentions sterilization, homosexuality, or other things considered sins in the Catholic Church. Regardless of her reasoning for speaking mostly about abortion, she does not avoid the other issues, but tackles them decisively by focusing on motherhood.

Mother Teresa's rhetoric about abortion demonstrates her use of vilification and her other regularly used tools of persuasion—redefinition, identification, and antithetical concepts. Using redefinition, she alters the meaning of "the poor" to include all unborn

children and societies involved with abortion, and she heightens the value of children, while disassociating the sacrifices of parenthood. Her words point to children as a form of wealth that exceeds the importance of financial wealth. She establishes parenthood as a method to become consubstantial with Jesus, who is in the poor unborn, and also with God, by identifying with God's spiritual parenthood. As usual, she uses Biblical and personal narratives to illustrate what she teaches about poverty and life. And lastly, like the ancient Greek orators, Mother Teresa uses antithetical ideas to shed light on abortion. Though audience members may have varied opinions about the morality of abortion, Mother Teresa takes several approaches in an effort to persuade against it.

**Chapter V**  
**Peace is the Result of Giving and the Antithesis of Poverty**

To Mother Teresa, peace is the ultimate goal, as well as the end result of all sacrificial giving. She uses a process to bring the audience to the understanding that individual acts of sacrificial giving can bring worldwide peace through a ripple effect. She does so by first defining peace, by differentiating it from the “peace of the world,” and attaching it closely to sacrificial giving. She continues by heightening the value of each individual, by focusing on every person’s distinctive abilities and purpose in the mission towards peace. Lastly, she explains that every individual has a world impact, but whether that impact is positive or negative relies on whether or not they give sacrificially.

Mother Teresa’s message reveals that poverty is a lack of peace or a lack of giving. The rhetor does not focus on major wars, but instead mentions smaller “battles” such as hunger, loneliness, and divorce. The reason is that it is easy to observe that the events surrounding her rhetoric were plagued with hard times for so many countries in the world. Especially with current uses of mass media, the news of major violence and strife could not be overlooked. Once again, Mother Teresa’s method is to redefine and redirect. She establishes a definition of peace, and explains that peace is not only for the affluent or for those from supportive families, but for everyone. In her speeches, Mother Teresa offers her listeners a prescription to achieve peace. Her goal is for peace to begin in small ways, within families and in neighborhoods. She illustrates that a collaborative effort towards peace on small scales will impact peace on larger scales. In her discourse, peace is an outcome of loving, which as previously stated, comes from sacrificial giving.

Mother Teresa begins several of her speeches with the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, also known as the Peace Prayer, which begins with the phrase, “Lord, make me a channel of thy peace” (Frangsmyr & Abrams, 1997). On the surface, the prayer appears benign. But after Mother Teresa’s explanation of the challenging definition of what she marks as Christ’s peace, becoming an “instrument of peace” becomes something demanding, sacrificial, and quite possibly unwelcome.

Mother Teresa delivered her message of peace and sacrificial giving from the Cold War through the Persian Gulf War. The presence of the conflicts involving the United States begat desires of peace from Americans, and Mother Teresa delivered an answer. The Cold War lingered from World War II through the time of Mother Teresa. This state of political turbulence between Soviet countries and Western powers emphasized the ideological differences between nations—between communism and capitalism. Years later, in a physical upheaval of peace, the Vietnam War took thousands of lives in the decade leading up to Mother Teresa’s Nobel Peace lecture. Vietnam’s total United States withdrawal occurred in 1973, only six years before her address to the world on the Nobel stage (Vietnam War, 2007). At the mark of the nineties, at the height of Mother Teresa’s popularity, the world watched the Persian Gulf War erupt, as nations, including the United States, pulled together to disband the efforts of Saddam Hussein, which began with Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990 (Persian Gulf War, 2007). Fighting came in the forms of air wars, ground battles, and terrorist attacks, leading to much bloodshed, post traumatic stress disorder, and civil unrest. While Mother Teresa delivered messages to the United Nations World Conference on Women in 1995, women



in Rwanda recovered from the 1994 one-hundred day Rwandan Genocide, that entailed a mass genocide targeted at the Tutsi and moderate Hutu populations. Besides violent killings with machetes and guns, Rwandese females of all ages underwent “a range of gender-specific violence such as rape, various forms of genital mutilation, hacking off of breasts, sexual slavery, forced abortion and forced marriage” (Amnesty International U.S.A., 2004). The violence led to a massive spread of HIV, material poverty, stigmas, and irreparable physical and emotional brokenness. This is a list of only a few of the war experiences that occurred during the time of Mother Teresa’s message.

Peace on the home front, too, increasingly slipped away from families during Mother Teresa’s lifetime. Studies point to disturbing statistics for families. According to the book, *Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them* (1999), James Garbarino gives statistics about the rising rates of depression and violence among youth in the past few decades. He states that the rate of serious depression among American youth increased from 2% in the 1960’s to almost 25% in the 1990’s (1999, p.41). The rates of depression were found equally among affluent and non-wealthy youth. Youth suicide rates skyrocketed 400 percent since 1950. Additionally, between the eighties and the mid nineties, the youth homicide rate increased by 168 percent (1999). Based on a study conducted from November 1995 to May 1996, nearly 25 percent of American women reported being raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabiting partner, or date at some time in their lifetime, according to the National Violence against Women Survey (2000). A lack of peace is easily identifiable

and exists on a much smaller scope within families, and Mother Teresa's words are a response and a call to action.

The word *peace* is an ambiguous term. It is used as a Christmas card favorite, and plastered all over advertisements at malls, grocery stores, and in homes throughout the holidays. The term "world peace" is used in comedy as the answer of contenders in pageants. The Oxford English Dictionary (2006) defines peace as, "(1) Freedom from civil unrest or disorder; public order and security, (2) Freedom from quarrels or dissension between individuals; a state of friendliness; amity, concord, (3) Freedom from anxiety, disturbance (emotional, mental, or spiritual), or inner conflict, and (4) Freedom from external disturbance, interference, or perturbation, especially as a condition of an individual." In light of her rhetoric, this study ascertains that Mother Teresa would agree to all of these definitions, except the fourth, which she would categorize it as not a true form of peace.

Mother Teresa identifies "peace of the world" as the freedom from external disturbances or as a state of unbotheredness, as explained in Oxford Dictionary's fourth definition. The state of unbotheredness refers to being free from inconveniences, worries, or other difficulties, which Mother Teresa describes as the "peace of the world," as shown in her address to the National Prayer Breakfast: "(Jesus) came not to give the peace of the world, which is only that we don't bother each other" (1994). Her reference to "peace of the world" is one of her many uses of intertextuality, alluding to a Bible verse in the Gospel of John, where Jesus Christ differentiates between the peace that he brings versus the peace *of the world*. In the verse, Jesus says that he does not give peace

as the world gives peace (John 14:27, NASB), and neither does Mother Teresa offer a prescription for peace as the world does. Mother Teresa focuses on the peace of Christ, which is the opposite of a state of unbotheredness. On the contrary, it comes from sacrifice and pain.

A majority of people agree that peace is desirable and needed, however, there are no tangible and agreed upon descriptions of how peace is acquired. For example, a number of United States citizens agree that American troops should be removed from Iraq as an end to the loss of lives and in an effort to *bring peace* on the home front. In contrast, President Bush maintains that the involvement of United States troops overseas is an effort towards keeping the American people safe and *at peace* on the home front. In a recent address to the nation, the president stated that “Millions of ordinary people are sick of the violence and want a future of *peace*... and they are looking at Iraq” (Bush, 2007). Both those against the war and those who support the president’s decision for war, communicate a desire peace, yet disagree on how to acquire it, largely because the term *peace* remains broad and insubstantial due to a lack of shared meaning. Mother Teresa’s rhetoric assigns the current use of the word peace a level of concreteness.

### ***Pictures of Peace***

Although all Mother Teresa’s public discourse is about giving, all discussions about giving point to one final result: peace. Within the context of the message, peace becomes the ultimate, shared goal. The concepts of sacrificial giving, love, and peace work together so intimately to form a spatial structure which Mother Teresa uses to

persuade others into social change. Mother Teresa's ideas work syllogistically.

Previously, redefining the word *love* followed the following syllogism.

Major Premise: Loving means giving.

Minor Premise: Giving is self-sacrificing until it hurts.

Conclusion: Therefore, loving means self-sacrificing (or "giving until it hurts").

Her words about peace follow a similar syllogistic construction.

Major Premise: Love means sacrificial giving.

Minor Premise: Love brings peace.

Conclusion: Giving sacrificially brings peace.

Her basic concept of "giving until it hurts" forms a basis for her concept of love, and leads to an understanding of how to achieve peace. Peace becomes the final result of giving.

Looking through the lens of a close textual analysis, rhetoric can form spatial images in which we can see the text moving and forming structures to show the flow of persuasion. G.P. Mohrmann states that "When we talk of metaphorical space and place, we are not talking of passive constructs, are talking instead about constructs alive with potential for action" (Leff, 1986, p. 380). In other words, a text alone can contain internal dynamics and movement, such as how Mother Teresa's discourse moves back and forth through time: from the past, to the present, through eternity.

As Mohrmann suggests, Mother Teresa's rhetoric contains movement, as well as textual structures. For example, her concept of Christ's peace forms a pyramid, in which

peace becomes a final result. At the bottom of the pyramid is the most basic element in Mother Teresa's words: the concept of sacrificial giving. This is a foundation for all areas of her rhetoric, whether she is discussing marriage, the needy, families, or the world, because she emphasizes the need to "give until it hurts" in all forms of relationships. Next, in the center portion of the pyramid is love. Mother Teresa consistently argues that sacrificial giving leads to love, shown is her commonly used phrase in the four selected texts, "Love to be true, has to hurt." The pyramid begins to take shape, because love is not formed without the foundation of sacrificial giving. Finally, the concept of peace becomes the summit of the pyramid, because it is the final goal of giving. *Peace* only comes from *love*, and *love* only comes from "*giving until it hurts.*" The three concepts that form the pyramid work together intimately, because they are mutually dependent, as evidenced in these three sentences from Mother Teresa:

Jesus came to give the *peace*... which comes from *loving* [italics added].  
(National Prayer Breakfast, 1994)

But where there is *love*, there is always *sacrifice*. And when we *love until it hurts*, there is joy and *peace*. (Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, 1994)

Works of *love* are always works of *peace*. (United Nations World Conference on Women, 1995)

In this sentence, love and peace are consubstantial. For Mother Teresa, the terms are so interrelated forming oneness, reflecting her style of rhetoric which forms consubstantiality between people, and between people and God. Another example of the unity between these words is shown when Mother Teresa discusses the purpose of creation. She sometimes says that "we were created to love and be loved," but on other occasions, she states that people were created to "live peace." She is not identifying two

different purposes for creation, but rather, her usage of the words *love* and *peace* are closely tied. Her words form this pyramidal structure that points toward human purpose and persuades others to engage in sacrificial giving, which will lead to peace.

### ***The Complimentary Nature of People***

Mother Teresa defines peace as the ultimate goal, and additionally illustrates how humans can work together to achieve peace at larger levels, such as peace for entire nations. She does this first by beginning in small ways, by introducing how sacrificial giving brings peace within families. Then, she shifts to cover a wider area, such as peace within countries. In order to show the potential global impact of sacrificial giving, she focuses on the distinctive purpose of every individual, and the need for collaboration between all people.

First, Mother Teresa's words assert that every individual is unique with a specific purpose. To the United Nations World Conference on Women, she states the exclusive capabilities of the individual. She says, "What I do, you cannot do. What you do, I cannot do" (1995). She creates a sense of self worth by putting immeasurable value on the individual. Mother Teresa's words communicate that everyone possesses different capabilities, so no one can fulfill another individual's purpose, not even Mother Teresa.

Next, Mother Teresa leads the audience to shift attention to their own participation in national peace, through collaboration with others. To the United Nations World Conference on Women, Mother Teresa says, "Together, we can do something beautiful for God" (1995). Her "something beautiful for God" reflects the biblical fulfillment of Christ's bringing his peace to the world. She explains that *individuals* must

first bring Christ's peace before the *world* can experience Christ's peace. In other words, if every individual works toward peace through sacrificial giving, the result will have worldwide impact, which fulfills the will of God. Mother Teresa expresses this concept to the United Nations Women's Conference by saying, "But when *families* are strong and united, *children*... grow to make their *country* a loving and prayerful place [italics added]" (1995). The words *families* and *children* are used as small components of a *country*. In a discussion about abortion to the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (1994), Mother Teresa says that a *family's* reception of the gift of a child is in turn the *nation's* reception of the same gift. In this way, Mother Teresa shows the task of bringing peace as a snowball effect, beginning with a small grassroots effort, and then growing into something monumental. All individuals become responsible for beginning the larger movement of peace for of their countries.

Mother Teresa informs her audiences that individual efforts have the capability to impact nations in two ways—positively by bringing peace or negatively by bringing injustice. After Mother Teresa describes how individuals can collectively bring national peace, she demonstrates that an individual's failure to give sacrificially not only fails to bring peace, but also does something negative. This is displayed in her speech to the National Prayer Breakfast. She states, "This requires that I be willing to *give until it hurts*. Otherwise, there is not true love in me and I *bring injustice*, not peace to those around me" (1994). Mother Teresa shows that every individual has impact, and no individual can do nothing. Everyone brings something—either sacrificial giving or injustice, and everyone gives way to a result—peace or a lack of peace.

***Mother Teresa on the Differences between Women and Men***

Mother Teresa's words about the interconnectivity of mankind in God's plan can be closely examined when she speaks about the differences between the sexes. The unique call by God for each individual and among humans and between humans and God is evident in Mother Teresa's letter to the World Conference on Women. In a previous chapter within this study, Mother Teresa's abortion rhetoric was examined in order to inspect her use of various methods of persuasion, such as redefinition, identification, and antithetical ideas. In the same way, a close examination of her words regarding men and women reveals a deeper understanding of how Mother Teresa expresses the complimentary nature of humans. This example focuses on the physical distinctiveness and interdependence between women and men.

As with her general examples about peace, Mother Teresa leads to the importance of male and female collaboration by beginning with the uniqueness of each. To the Women's Conference, she asks, "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*" (1995). She describes each one's purpose as different, although both purposes are equally important—both are meant to reflect God's love by giving sacrificially. Mother Teresa asserts distinct differences between men and women to a twentieth century culture in which the roles of men and women have become more mutual, where men and women can both share the same jobs and roles in the home.



Mother Teresa then moves to demonstrate individual man and woman's potential for larger impact, through collaboration, and her words begin to reveal her ideologies that are explained with simplicity. To describe male and female collaboration, she uses words such as *together*, *strong*, *united*, and *complete*. Mother Teresa explained to the United Nations World Conference that "a child needs both mother and father because each one shows God's love in a special way" (1995), highlighting the required collaboration between men and women in parenting. Her words about men and women reflect the Catholic Church's teachings about human love and sexuality, which points to marital sex as insight on the nature of God's love for humanity. As Vatican II states, "The acts in marriage by which the ... union of the spouses takes place are noble and honorable ... [it] fosters the self-giving they signify" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2362). In other words, marital sex promotes giving in all areas of life, which echoes all of Mother Teresa's discourse. In her piece to the Women's Conference, she states, "[Men and women] complement each other and *together they witness God's love better*" (1995). Mother Teresa and the Church describe sex as reflective of the self-sacrificing nature of God. For example, the physical nature of a man and woman shows an obvious complimentary nature between the two, and easily points to the male as a "giver" and female "receiver" in sex, revealing a collaborative nature in humans. This bodily action expresses Jesus Christ's gift of Himself to His bride, the church. In sex, man and woman are complementary to fulfill a greater purpose established by God, unity (peace) and children (spiritual wealth), both which are concepts opposed to poverty within the framework of Mother Teresa's discourse. This sacrificial giving of one's self is meant to

permeate all aspects of life.

In summary, Mother Teresa's message about peace is challenging, because it argues that the way to peace requires sacrifice, and also because no one is exempt from participation, whether it be positively or negatively. Her words are surrounded by various understandings about "peace," but Mother Teresa explains her understanding of it by tying it to sacrificial giving by following a syllogistic construction. As G.P. Mohrmann suggests, her speeches form a structure, which is pyramidal with sacrificial giving as the bottom foundation, leading to love in its center, and then to peace as the final peak and outcome. Her discourse includes the required collaboration between all humans toward peace, and she focuses on the complementary nature between men and women to highlight this point.

## **Chapter VI**

### **Conclusion and Implications**

As the world comes to commemorate the ten year anniversary of the death of Mother Teresa, we should begin to recognize that her words are worth further study. Mother Teresa gained access to the public speaking platform through her actions towards the poor. Although her critics charge her for speaking about irrelevant or inappropriate topics within her speeches, this study argues that Mother Teresa never swayed from the agreed topic of giving to the poor. When asked to speak about giving, from the perspective of the text, she did not fail to do just that. Mother Teresa expands the meaning of “giving to the poor” beyond its common meaning. The word *give* becomes defined as a difficult task, and the word *poor* encompasses more than just the hungry.

Mother Teresa’s public discourse all points to one basic tenet of Christianity: *giving*. The arrayed topics of life, God, hunger, marriage, drugs, materialism, love, vocations, abortion, world peace, prayer, and the Incarnation of Christ are all encountered in her rhetoric through the lens of “giving.” Mother Teresa consistently uses personal and biblical narratives to communicate her meaning of giving. By referring to how Christ “gave” his life, Jesus Christ becomes the key example for giving, which reflects a giving associated with pain and sacrifice. For this reason, Mother Teresa frequently incorporates the phrase, “give until it hurts.” Her words about love as a corporal action, rather than a feeling, echo those of other Catholics in public rhetoric. She encourages audiences to relinquish personal desires, embrace inconveniences, and make other sacrifices in an effort to aid to those in need. Unlike most others, Mother Teresa’s words do not exempt anyone to give sacrificially to all poor.

The findings here suggest that Mother Teresa relies on three main tools to effectively communicate her message. First, using redefinition, she gives new meanings, and expands the ideas associated with words like *poverty*, *giving*, and *love*. For example, she expands the meaning of poverty to include all that are neglected in love, whether spiritually or materially. Immediately, the lonely, the sad, and the fearful join the hungry, and the homeless. By redefining poverty, the audience becomes more likely to identify someone suffering from poverty in close proximity. Next, she asks audiences to identify the poor, moving the audience to recognize the poor and their division, and inspire a response to give. By doing so, Mother Teresa helps form consubstantiality between the audience and the poor, since both have endured common feelings such as sadness and despair. She shares that providing for the poor brings further consubstantiality with God, since he is consubstantial with the poor. This concept of Christ in the poor is key to her mission, and a source of persuasion to incite a response from the audience to give. Finally, like the rhetors of ancient Greece, Mother Teresa uses antithetical ideas to make her points clear. For example, her discourse centers on peace, the opposite of poverty. Or when discussing abortion, she focuses on motherhood, parenthood, and children. The term “child” is frequently used, not only in contrast to abortion, but also in contrast to poverty, since children, to Mother Teresa, are a form of material wealth. Her methods of *redefinition*, *identification*, and *antithetical concepts* are all used towards her ultimate purpose.

Mother Teresa’s argues that the way to peace requires sacrifice and pain, which is an unpopular view of peace within today’s American culture. Mother Teresa additionally

argues that no one is exempt from participation in the outcome of peace. For her, individuals either work for peace, or against it. No one is able to do nothing. Her explanation of peace follows a syllogistic construction, in which sacrificial giving leads to love, and love to peace. This winner of the Nobel Peace Prize indicates that everyone is equally important towards God's plan for peace.

Mother Teresa's discourse has expanded the type of communication found in the twentieth century, particularly by showing more about women's rhetoric. The voices of women in rhetorical studies have been limited. As one scholar observes, "Women have been closed out of the rhetorical tradition, a tradition of vocal, virile, public—and therefore privileged—men." (Glenn, 1997, p.1) Communication scholars have studied women involved in the Women's Suffrage Movement, such as Abigail Scott Duniway (Ray & Richards, 2007) and Virginia Minor (Keith, 2006), as well as other female social movement leaders such as Dorothy Day (Anderson, 1982; Jablonski, 2000). They have studied female politicians such as Hillary Rodham Clinton (Manning, 2006), Ann Richards (Dow & Tonn, 1993), and Patricia Schroeder (Sullivan, 1993). Although the numbers of communication studies on women is growing, they are still few in comparison to the studies of political, social movement, and religious discourse from men. The rhetoric of Mother Teresa exposes our field to more about women's, as well as religious, discourse.

Mother Teresa breaks the mold for twentieth century speeches in many ways. She is a distinctive voice for women in the church. She represents the unheard women who are content with their role in the church. Additionally, her speeches are atypical in

comparison to regularly studied speeches within the field of communication. Her speeches are unadorned and not necessarily celebrated for eloquence and artistry, and for this reason, her words have been highly overlooked. There is much that we can learn that is hidden within her rhetoric.

One of the implications of Mother Teresa's rhetoric is a need for communal love and an obligation to all of God's people. For her, giving is both an obligation to God's command, as well as an obligation to one's fellow human beings. Her condemnation of the West emphasizes the need to shift away from a culture that is individualistic, self-serving, or expects a repayment. She displays a despondency and dissatisfaction associated with the lack of communal giving. Rather, she speaks toward a collectivity among mankind that is united and other-centered. She discusses small circles of community, such as families, and draws the audience into a larger circle of global community. Her words about giving draw the audience from a worldly perspective on a horizontal plane, towards an eternal perspective that moves upward on a vertical plane. She encourages her audience to seek the long-term applications of communal love.

Another implication of Mother Teresa's discourse is the heightened importance of actions above words. She challenges audiences to minimize talk, and take action. For instance, at a time when the authenticity of politicians' words has been questioned (Kendrick, 1994; Davis, M.L., & Ferrantino, M. 1996), we know that publicly speaking about something does not equate to action. Although the field of communication understands the significance of words, Mother Teresa challenges that words are not as important as action, or words backed by action.

While many have spoken against the role of women in the Church, Mother Teresa takes a counter approach by being radical in an orthodox way. She has become a revolutionary for women in religion through religious orthodoxy, by adhering strictly to Church teachings. Through redefinition, she contextualizes Church doctrine and presents it to the world. The results of her method can enhance, as well as detract from her message. For some, her radical ways categorize her religion as an *opiate of the masses*, suggesting that her orthodoxy only furthers what some perceive as outdated or oppressive religious thought. However, for others, it is her radical orthodoxy that makes her discourse attention-getting. Its distinctiveness, in comparison to other female rhetors, plus the reinforcement of Mother Teresa's actions, brings positive implications. She is a woman who displaces a legalistic approach to religion, with a liberating approach, by doing for Catholicism what Christ did for Judaism. She backs religious doctrine with action and compassion.

By looking through Mother Teresa's framework, love is what ultimately brings liberation. Mother Teresa spoke the same language as others, so she was often co-opted, but not often claimed in her totality. Few wanted to claim her outspoken views about abortion, contraception, and other moral disputes. She spoke the same language as liberation theologians, but this analysis uncovers her strides toward liberation, although not in the expected manner. They both embraced a preferential option for the poor, but her beliefs were not fully consistent with them. Through sacrificial giving, people are liberated from hunger, sadness, and loneliness. Within the temporal shift into eternal time, the rhetor is less concerned with the temporary, although she is trying to resolve

temporal needs as a way of achieving everlasting peace. Her words urge the listener to believe that participation in self-sacrificing love matters eternally. On the contrary, she expresses that a lack of participation in love brings injustice. For her, a hungry person's daily meal is important, yet more important is the quenching of the hungry person's need to give and receive love. Although Mother Teresa is trying to relieve the immediate poor from temporal bondage, she speaks of liberation, but not necessarily of a temporal one.

Mother Teresa became co-opted by others, as well as misrepresented by other. Many have misunderstood Mother Teresa, seeing her as a representative for the standard work in the alleviation of material hunger. Various politicians, governments, groups, and philanthropists work to remove hunger and homelessness, so embraced Mother Teresa on that level alone. The failure to see past the surface identity of Mother Teresa is a misrepresentation of the deeper messages that she relayed. For her, the way to attain peace required much more than the eradication of hunger, but rather, required the collaborative efforts of all, in emotional and physical aid, towards all.

Future research on the rhetoric of Mother Teresa is highly recommended. This study focused on four of her popular speeches and letters; however, the study of individual speeches can provide further understanding of her discourse. For example, her message to the United Nations World Conference on Women is unique in wording, and deserves individual attention. Studies on Mother Teresa's influence on papal discourse are another direction of future study, because it has been noted here that a recent encyclical shows fragments of her words. Also, the Church's response to Mother Teresa



is a suggested area of future study. Books, websites, and newspapers indicate her effect, but research on her audience's response is absent.

The study of the rhetoric of Mother Teresa provides insight to the field of communication. First, it exposes the field of communication to more about twentieth century women's rhetoric. Next, the study of Mother Teresa shows that our field should be ever ready to examine discourses that break all of the normative rules of good public speaking, especially with a rhetor such as Mother Teresa whose actions speak as boldly as her words. Also, the current study reiterates the aid that comes from the text being placed at the forefront through the use of close-textual analysis. Without the confines of method, these four selected texts guided to a deeper understanding of the rhetor's words. On a pragmatic level, students of communication can learn from the rhetoric of Mother Teresa that unadorned language, together with credibility, is powerful. This study is only the beginning, and leaves plenty more to learn from the words of the woman whose life and discourse were about the journey of sacrificial giving rippling into widespread love and peace.

*"We have an opportunity to love others as he loves us, not in big things, but in small things with great love."*

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

1979 Nobel Lecture

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## **Appendix A Nobel Lecture**

Humanitarian/Nobel Peace Prize 1979

December 11, 1979 at Oslo City Hall, Oslo, Norway

As we have gathered here together to thank God for the Nobel Peace Prize I think it will be beautiful that we pray the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi which always surprises me very much—we pray this prayer every day after Holy Communion, because it is very fitting for each one of us, and I always wonder that 4-500 years ago as St. Francis of Assisi composed this prayer that they had the same difficulties that we have today, as we compose this prayer that fits very nicely for us also. I think some of you already have got it—so we will pray together.

Let us thank God for the opportunity that we all have together today, for this gift of peace that reminds us that we have been created to live that peace, and Jesus became man to bring that good news to the poor. He being God became man in all things like us except sin, and he proclaimed very clearly that he had come to give the good news. The news was peace to all of good will and this is something that we all want—the peace of heart—and God loved the world so much that he gave his son—it was a giving—it is as much as if to say it hurt God to give, because he loved the world so much that he gave his son, and he gave him to Virgin Mary, and what did she do with him?

As soon as he came in her life—immediately she went in haste to give that good news, and as she came into the house of her cousin, the child—the unborn child—the child in the womb of Elizabeth, leapt with joy. He was that little unborn child, was the first messenger of peace. He recognized the Prince of Peace, he recognized that Christ has come to bring the good news for you and for me. And as if that was not enough—it was not enough to become a man—he died on the cross to show that greater love, and he died for you and for me and for that leper and for that man dying of hunger and that naked person lying in the street not only of Calcutta, but of Africa, and New York, and London, and Oslo—and insisted that we love one another as he loves each one of us. And we read that in the Gospel very clearly—love as I have loved you—as I love you—as the Father has loved me, I love you—and the harder the Father loved him, he gave him to us, and how much we love one another, we, too, must give each other until it hurts. It is not enough for us to say: I love God, but I do not love my neighbor. St. John says you are a liar if you say you love God, and you don't love your neighbor. How can you love God whom you do not see, if you do not love your neighbor whom you see, whom you touch, with whom you live. And so this is very important for us to realize that love, to be true, has to hurt. It hurt Jesus to love us, it hurt him. And to make sure we remember his great love he made himself the bread of life to satisfy our hunger for his love. Our hunger for God, because we have been created for that love. We have been created in his image. We have been created to love and be loved, and then he has become man to make it possible for us to love as he loved us. He makes himself the hungry one—the naked one—the

homeless one—the sick one—the one in prison—the lonely one—the unwanted one—and he says: You did it to me. Hungry for our love, and this is the hunger of our poor people. This is the hunger that you and I must find, it may be in our own home.

I never forget an opportunity I had in visiting a home where they had all these old parents of sons and daughters who had just put them in an institution and forgotten maybe. And I went there, and I saw in that home they had everything, beautiful things, but everybody was looking towards the door. And I did not see a single one with their smile on their face. And I turned to the Sister and I asked: How is that? How is it that the people they have everything here, why are they all looking towards the door, why are they not smiling? I am so used to see the smile on our people, even the dying one smile, and she said: This is nearly every day, they are expecting, they are hoping that a son or daughter will come to visit them. They are hurt because they are forgotten, and see—this is where love comes. That poverty comes right there in our own home, even neglect of love. Maybe in our own family we have somebody who is feeling lonely, who is feeling sick, who is feeling worried, and these are difficult days for everybody. Are we there, are we there to receive them, is the mother there to receive the child?

I was surprised in the West to see so many young boys and girls given into drugs, and I tried to find out why—why it is like that, and the answer was: Because there is no one in the family to receive them. Father and mother are so busy they have no time. Young parents are in some institution and the child takes back to the street and gets involved in something. We are talking of peace. These are things that break peace, but I feel the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a direct war, a direct killing—direct murder by the mother herself. And we read in the Scripture, for God says very clearly: Even if a mother could forget her child—I will not forget you—I have carved you in the palm of my hand. We are carved in the palm of His hand, so close to Him that unborn child has been carved in the hand of God. And that is what strikes me most, the beginning of that sentence, that even if a mother *could* forget something impossible—but even if she could forget—I will not forget you. And today the greatest means—the greatest destroyer of peace is abortion. And we who are standing here—our parents wanted us. We would not be here if our parents would do that to us. Our children, we want them, we love them, but what of the millions. Many people are very, very concerned with the children in India, with the children in Africa where quite a number die, maybe of malnutrition, of hunger and so on, but millions are dying deliberately by the will of the mother. And this is what is the greatest destroyer of peace today. Because if a mother can kill her own child—what is left for me to kill you and you kill me—there is nothing between. And this I appeal in India, I appeal everywhere: Let us bring the child back, and this year being the child's year: What have we done for the child? At the beginning of the year I told, I spoke everywhere and I said: Let us make this year that we make every single child born, and unborn, wanted. And today is the end of the year, have we really made the children wanted? I will give you something terrifying. We are fighting abortion by adoption, we have saved thousands of lives, we have sent words to all the clinics, to the hospitals, police stations—please don't destroy the child, we will

take the child. So every hour of the day and night it is always somebody, we have quite a number of unwedded mothers—tell them come, we will take care of you, we will take the child from you, and we will get a home for the child. And we have a tremendous demand from families who have no children, that is the blessing of God for us. And also, we are doing another thing which is very beautiful--we are teaching our beggars, our leprosy patients, our slum dwellers, our people of the street, natural family planning.

And in Calcutta alone in six years—it is all in Calcutta--we have had 61,273 babies less from the families who would have had, but because they practice this natural way of abstaining, of self-control, out of love for each other. We teach them the temperature meter which is very beautiful, very simple, and our poor people understand. And you know what they have told me? Our family is healthy, our family is united, and we can have a baby whenever we want. So clear—those people in the street, those beggars—and I think that if our people can do like that how much more you and all the others who can know the ways and means without destroying the life that God has created in us.

The poor people are very great people. They can teach us so many beautiful things. The other day one of them came to thank and said: You people who have vowed chastity you are the best people to teach us family planning. Because it is nothing more than self-control out of love for each other. And I think they said a beautiful sentence. And these are people who maybe have nothing to eat, maybe they have not a home where to live, but they are great people. The poor are very wonderful people. One evening we went out and we picked up four people from the street. And one of them was in a most terrible condition--and I told the Sisters: You take care of the other three, I take of this one that looked worse. So I did for her all that my love can do. I put her in bed, and there was such a beautiful smile on her face. She took hold of my hand, as she said one word only: Thank you--and she died.

I could not help but examine my conscience before her, and I asked what would I say if I was in her place. And my answer was very simple. I would have tried to draw a little attention to myself, I would have said I am hungry, that I am dying, I am cold, I am in pain, or something, but she gave me much more—she gave me her grateful love. And she died with a smile on her face. As that man whom we picked up from the drain, half eaten with worms, and we brought him to the home. I have lived like an animal in the street, but I am going to die like an angel, loved and cared for. And it was so wonderful to see the greatness of that man who could speak like that, who could die like that without blaming anybody, without cursing anybody, without comparing anything. Like an angel—this is the greatness of our people. And that is why we believe what Jesus had said: I was hungry—I was naked—I was homeless—I was unwanted, unloved, uncared for—and you did it to me.

I believe that we are not real social workers. We may be doing social work in the eyes of the people, but we are really contemplatives in the heart of the world. For we are touching the Body of Christ 24 hours. We have 24 hours in this presence, and so you and

I. You too try to bring that presence of God in your family, for the family that prays together stays together. And I think that we in our family don't need bombs and guns, to destroy to bring peace--just get together, love one another, bring that peace, that joy, that strength of presence of each other in the home. And we will be able to overcome all the evil that is in the world.

There is so much suffering, so much hatred, so much misery, and we with our prayer, with our sacrifice are beginning at home. Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the action that we do. It is to God Almighty--how much we do it does not matter, because He is infinite, but how much love we put in that action. How much we do to Him in the person that we are serving.

Some time ago in Calcutta we had great difficulty in getting sugar, and I don't know how the word got around to the children, and a little boy of four years old, Hindu boy, went home and told his parents: I will not eat sugar for three days, I will give my sugar to Mother Teresa for her children. After three days his father and mother brought him to our home. I had never met them before, and this little one could scarcely pronounce my name, but he knew exactly what he had come to do. He knew that he wanted to share his love.

And that is why I have received such a lot of love from you all. From the time that I have come here I have simply been surrounded with love, and with real, real understanding love. It could feel as if everyone in India, everyone in Africa is somebody very special to you. And I felt quite at home I was telling Sister today. I feel in the Convent with the Sisters as if I am in Calcutta with my own Sisters. So completely at home here, right here.

And so here I am talking with you—I want you to find the poor here, right in your own home first. And begin love there. Be that good news to your own people. And find out about your next-door-neighbor—do you know who they are? I had the most extraordinary experience with a Hindu family who had eight children. A gentleman came to our house and said: Mother Teresa, there is a family with eight children, they had not eaten for so long--do something. So I took some rice and I went there immediately. And I saw the children—their eyes shining with hunger—I don't know if you have ever seen hunger. But I have seen it very often. And she took the rice, she divided the rice, and she went out. When she came back I asked her—where did you go, what did you do? And she gave me a very simple answer: They are hungry also. What struck me most was that she knew—and who are they, a Muslim family—and she knew. I didn't bring more rice that evening because I wanted them to enjoy the joy of sharing. But there were those children, radiating joy, sharing the joy with their mother because she had the love to give. And you see this is where love begins--at home. And I want you—and I am very grateful for what I have received. It has been a tremendous experience and I go back to India—I will be back by next week, the 15th I hope—and I will be able to bring your love.

And I know well that you have not given from your abundance, but you have given until it has hurt you. Today the little children they have—I was so surprised—there is so much joy for the children that are hungry. That the children like themselves will need love and care and tenderness, like they get so much from their parents. So let us thank God that we have had this opportunity to come to know each other, and this knowledge of each other has brought us very close. And we will be able to help not only the children of India and Africa, but will be able to help the children of the whole world, because as you know our Sisters are all over the world. And with this prize that I have received as a prize of peace, I am going to try to make the home for many people that have no home. Because I believe that love begins at home, and if we can create a home for the poor—I think that more and more love will spread. And we will be able through this understanding love to bring peace, be good news to the poor. The poor in our own family first, in our country and in the world.

To be able to do this, our Sisters, our lives have to be woven with prayer. They have to be woven with Christ to be able to understand, to be able to share. Because today there is so much suffering—and I feel that the passion of Christ is being relived all over again—are we there to share that passion, to share that suffering of people. Around the world, not only in the poor countries, but I found the poverty of the West so much more difficult to remove. When I pick up a person from the street, hungry, I give him a plate of rice, a piece of bread, I have satisfied. I have removed that hunger. But a person that is shut out, that feels unwanted, unloved, terrified, the person that has been thrown out from society—that poverty is so hurtful and so much, and I find that very difficult. Our Sisters are working amongst that kind of people in the West. So you must pray for us that we may be able to be that good news, but we cannot do that without you, you have to do that here in your country. You must come to know the poor, maybe our people here have material things, everything, but I think that if we all look into our own homes, how difficult we find it sometimes to smile at each other, and that the smile is the beginning of love.

And so let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love, and once we begin to love each other naturally we want to do something. So you pray for our Sisters and for me and for our Brothers, and for our Co-Workers that are around the world. That we may remain faithful to the gift of God, to love Him and serve Him in the poor together with you. What we have done we should not have been able to do if you did not share with your prayers, with your gifts, this continual giving. But I don't want you to give me from your abundance, I want that you give me until it hurts.

The other day I received 15 dollars from a man who has been on his back for twenty years, and the only part that he can move is his right hand. And the only companion that he enjoys is smoking. And he said to me: I do not smoke for one week, and I send you this money. It must have been a terrible sacrifice for him, but see how beautiful, how he shared, and with that money I bought bread and I gave to those who are hungry with a joy on both sides, he was giving and the poor were receiving. This is something that you and

I—it is a gift of God to us to be able to share our love with others. And let it be as it was for Jesus. Let us love one another as he loved us. Let us love Him with undivided love. And the joy of loving Him and each other—let us give now—that Christmas is coming so close. Let us keep that joy of loving Jesus in our hearts. And share that joy with all that we come in touch with. And that radiating joy is real, for we have no reason not to be happy because we have no Christ with us. Christ in our hearts, Christ in the poor that we meet, Christ in the smile that we give and the smile that we receive. Let us make that one point: That no child will be unwanted, and also that we meet each other always with a smile, especially when it is difficult to smile.

I never forget some time ago about fourteen professors came from the United States from different universities. And they came to Calcutta to our house. Then we were talking about that they had been to the home for the dying. We have a home for the dying in Calcutta, where we have picked up more than 36,000 people only from the streets of Calcutta, and out of that big number more than 18,000 have died a beautiful death. They have just gone home to God; and they came to our house and we talked of love, of compassion, and then one of them asked me: Say, Mother, please tell us something that we will remember, and I said to them: Smile at each other, make time for each other in your family. Smile at each other. And then another one asked me: Are you married, and I said: Yes, and I find it sometimes very difficult to smile at Jesus because he can be very demanding sometimes. This is really something true, and there is where love comes—when it is demanding, and yet we can give it to Him with joy. Just as I have said today, I have said that if I don't go to Heaven for anything else I will be going to Heaven for all the publicity because it has purified me and sacrificed me and made me really ready to go to Heaven. I think that this is something, that we must live life beautifully, we have Jesus with us and He loves us. If we could only remember that God loves me, and I have an opportunity to love others as he loves me, not in big things, but in small things with great love, then Norway becomes a nest of love. And how beautiful it will be that from here a centre for peace has been given. That from here the joy of life of the unborn child comes out. If you become a burning light in the world of peace, then really the Nobel Peace Prize is a gift of the Norwegian people. God bless you!



**Appendix B**  
**Address to the National Prayer Breakfast**

February 4, 1994 in Washington, D.C.

On the last day, Jesus will say to those at his right hand, “Come, enter the Kingdom. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was sick and you visited me.”

Then Jesus will turn to those on his left hand and say, “Depart from me because I was hungry and you did not feed me, I was thirsty and you did not give me drink, I was sick and you did not visit me.”

These will ask him, “When did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or sick, and did not come to your help?”

And Jesus will answer them, “Whatever you neglected to do unto one of the least of these, you neglected to do unto me!”

As we have gathered here to pray together, I think it will be beautiful if we begin with a prayer that expresses very well what Jesus wants us to do for the least. St. Francis of Assisi understood very well these words of Jesus and his life is very well expressed by a prayer. And this prayer, which we say every day after Holy Communion, always surprises me very much, because it is very fitting for each one of us. And I always wonder whether eight hundred years ago when St. Francis lived, they had the same difficulties that we have today. I think that some of you already have this prayer of peace, so we will pray it together.

Let us thank God for the opportunity he has given us today to have come here to pray together. We have come here especially to pray for peace, joy, and love. We are reminded that Jesus came to bring the good news to the poor. He had told us what that good news is when he said, “My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.”

He came not to give the peace of the world, which is only that we don't bother each other. He came to give peace of heart which comes from loving—from doing good to others.

And God loved the world so much that he gave his son. God gave his son to the Virgin Mary, and what did she do with him? As soon as Jesus came into Mary's life, immediately she went in haste to give that good news. And as she came into the house of her cousin, Elizabeth, Scripture tells us that the unborn child—the child in the womb of Elizabeth—leapt with joy. While still in the womb of Mary, Jesus brought peace to John the Baptist, who leapt for joy in the womb of Elizabeth.

And as if that were not enough—as if it were not enough that God the Son should become one of us and bring peace and joy while still in the womb, Jesus also died on the Cross to show that greater love. He died for you and for me, and for that leper and for that man dying of hunger and that naked person lying in the street—not only of Calcutta, but of Africa, of everywhere. Our Sisters serve these poor people in 105 countries throughout the world. Jesus insisted that we love one another as he loves each one of us. Jesus gave his life to love us, and he tells us that he loves each one of us. Jesus gave his life to love us, and he tells us that we also have to give whatever it takes to do good to one another. And in the Gospel Jesus says very clearly, “Love as I have loved you.”

Jesus died on the Cross because that is what it took for him to do good for us—to save us from our selfishness and sin. He gave up everything to do the Father’s will, to show us that we too must be willing to give everything to do God’s will, to love one another as he loves each of us. If we are not willing to give whatever it takes to do good for one another, sin is still in us. That is why we too must give to each other until it hurts.

It is not enough for us to say, “I love God.” But I also have to love my neighbor. St. John says that you are a liar if you say you love God and you don't love your neighbor. How can you love God whom you do not see, if you do not love your neighbor whom you see, whom you touch, with whom you live? And so it is very important for us to realize that love, to be true, has to hurt. I must be willing to give whatever it takes not to harm other people and, in fact, to do good to them. This requires that I be willing to give until it hurts. Otherwise, there is no true love in me and I bring injustice, not peace, to those around me.

It hurt Jesus to love us. We have been created in his image for greater things, to love and to be loved. We must “put on Christ,” as Scripture tells us. And so we have been created to love as he loves us. Jesus makes himself the hungry one, the naked one, the homeless one, the unwanted one, and he says, “You did it to me.” On the last day he will say to those on his right, “whatever you did to the least of these, you did to me,” and he will also say to those on his left, “whatever you neglected to do for the least of these, you neglected to do it for me.”

When he was dying on the Cross, Jesus said, “I thirst.” Jesus is thirsting for our love, and this is the thirst for everyone, poor and rich alike. We all thirst for the love of others, that they go out of their way to avoid harming us and to do good to us. This is the meaning of true love, to give until it hurts.

I can never forget the experience I had in visiting a home where they kept all these old parents of sons and daughters who had just put them into an institution and, maybe, forgotten them. I saw that in that home these old people had everything: good food, comfortable place, television—everything. But everyone was looking toward the door. And I did not see a single one with a smile on his face.

I turned to Sister and I asked, “Why do these people, who have every comfort here—why are they all looking toward the door? Why are they not smiling?” (I am so used to seeing the smiles on our people.” Even the dying ones smile.) And Sister said, “This is the way it is, nearly everyday. They are expecting—they are hoping—that a son or daughter will come to visit them. They are hurt because they are forgotten.”

See, this neglect to love brings spiritual poverty. Maybe in our family we have somebody who is feeling lonely, who is feeling sick, who is feeling worried. Are we there? Are we willing to give until it hurts, in order to be with our families? Or do we put our own interests first? These are the questions we must ask ourselves, especially as we begin this Year of the Family. We must remember that love begins at home, and we must also remember that the future of humanity passes through the family.

I was surprised in the West to see so many young boys and girls given to drugs. And I tried to find out why. Why is it like that, when those in the West have so many more things than those in the East? And the answer was, “Because there is no one in the family to receive them.” Our children depend on us for everything: their health, their nutrition, their security, their coming to know and love God. For all of this, they look to us with trust, hope, and expectation. But often father and mother are so busy that they have no time for their children, or perhaps they are not even married, or have given up on their marriage. So the children go to the streets, and get involved in drugs, or other things. We are talking of love of the child, which is where love and peace must begin. These are the things that break peace.

But I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child—a direct killing of the innocent child—murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? How do we persuade a woman not to have an abortion? As always, we must persuade her with love, and we remind ourselves that love means to be willing to give until it hurts. Jesus gave even his life to love us. So the mother who is thinking of abortion, should be helped to love—that is, to give until it hurts her plans, or her free time, to respect the life of her child. The father of that child, whoever he is, must also give until it hurts. By abortion, the mother does not learn to love, but kills even her own child to solve her problems. And by abortion, the father is told that he does not have to take any responsibility at all for the child he has brought into the world. That father is likely to put other women into the same trouble. So abortion just leads to more abortion. Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching the people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. That is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.

Many people are very, very concerned with the children of India, with the children of Africa, where quite a few die of hunger, and so on. Many people are also concerned about all the violence in this great country of the United States. These concerns are very good. But often these same people are not concerned with the millions who are being

killed by the deliberate decision of their own mothers. And this is what is the greatest destroyer of peace today: abortion, which brings people to such blindness.

And for this I appeal in India and I appeal everywhere: “Let us bring the child back.” The child is God's gift to the family. Each child is created in the special image and likeness of God for greater things—to love and to be loved. In this Year of the Family we must bring the child back to the center of our care and concern. This is the only way that our world can survive, because our children are the only hope for the future. As other people are called to God, only their children can take their places.

But what does God say to us? He says, “Even if a mother could forget her child, I will not forget you. I have carved you in the palm of my hand.” We are carved in the palm of his hand; that unborn child has been carved in the hand of God from conception, and is called by God to love and to be loved, not only now in this life, out forever. God can never forget us.

I will tell you something beautiful. We are fighting abortion by adoption—by care of the mother and adoption for her baby. We have saved thousands of lives. We have sent word to the clinics, to the hospitals, and police stations: Please don't destroy the child; we will take the child. So we always have someone tell the mothers in trouble: “Come, we will take care of you, we will get a home for your child.”

And we have a tremendous demand from couples who cannot have a child. But I never give a child to a couple who has done something not to have a child. Jesus said, “Anyone who receives a child in my name, receives me.” By adopting a child, these couples receive Jesus, but by aborting a child, a couple refuses to receive Jesus.

Please don't kill the child. I want the child. Please give me the child. I am willing to accept any child who would be aborted, and to give that child to a married couple who will love the child, and be loved by the child. From our children's home in Calcutta alone, we have saved over 3,000 children from abortions. These children have brought such love and joy to their adopting parents, and have grown up so full of love and joy! I know that couples have to plan their family, and for that there is natural family planning. The way to plan the family is natural family planning, not contraception. In destroying the power of giving life, through contraception, a husband or wife is doing something to self. This turns the attention to self, and so it destroys the gift of love in him or her. In loving, the husband and wife must turn the attention to each other, as happens in natural family planning, and not to self, as happens in contraception. Once that living love is destroyed by contraception, abortion follows very easily.

I also know that there are great problems in the world—that many spouses do not love each other enough to practice natural family planning. We cannot solve all the problems in the world, but let us never bring in the worst problem of all, and that is to destroy love. This is what happens when we tell people to practice contraception and abortion.

The poor are very great people. They can teach us so many beautiful things. Once one of them came to thank us for teaching them natural family planning, and said: “You people—who have practiced chastity—you are the best people to teach us natural family planning, because it is nothing more than self-control out of love for each other.” And what this poor person said is very true. These poor people maybe have nothing to eat, maybe they have not a home to live in, but they can still be great people when they are spiritually rich. Those who are materially poor can be wonderful people. One evening we went out and we picked up four people from the street. And one of them was in a most terrible condition. I told the Sisters: “You take care of the other three; I will take care of the one who looks worse.” So I did for her all that my love can do. I put her in bed, and there was a beautiful smile on her face. She took hold of my hand, and she said one thing only: “Thank you.” Then she died.

I could not help but examine my conscience before her. I asked, “What would I say if I were in her place?” And my answer was very simple. I would have tried to draw a little attention to myself. I would have said, “I am hungry, I am dying, I am cold, I am in pain,” or something like that. But she gave me much more—she gave me her grateful love. And she died with a smile on her face.

Then there was the man we picked up from the drain, half-eaten by worms. And after we had brought him to the home, he only said, “I have lived like an animal in the street, but am going to die as an angel, loved and cared for.” Then, after we had removed all the worms from this body, all he said—with a big smile—was: “Sister, I am going home to God.” And he died. It was so wonderful to see the greatness of that man, who could speak like that without blaming anybody, without comparing anything. Like an angel—this is the greatness of people who are spiritually rich, even when they are materially poor.

We are not social workers. We may be doing social work in the eyes of some people, but we must be contemplatives in the heart of the world. For we must bring that presence of God into your family, for the family that prays together, stays together. There is so much hatred, so much misery, and we with our prayer, with our sacrifice, are beginning at home. Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do, but how much love we put into what we do.

If we are contemplatives in the heart of the world with all its problems, these problems can never discourage us. We must always remember what God tells us in the Scripture: Even if the mother could forget the child in her womb—something that is impossible, but even if she could forget—I will never forget you. And so here I am talking with you. I want you to find the poor here, right in your own home first. And begin love there. Bear the good news to your own people first. And find out about your next-door neighbors. Do you know who they are?

I had the most extraordinary experience of love of a neighbor from a Hindu family. A gentleman came to our house and said, “Mother Teresa, there is a family who have not

eaten for so long. Do something.” So I took some rice and went there immediately. And I saw the children, their eyes shining with hunger. (I don't know if you have ever seen hunger, but I have seen it very often.) And the mother of the family took the rice I gave her, and went out. When she came back, I asked her, “Where did you go? What did you do?” And she gave me a very simple answer: “They are hungry also.” What struck me was that she knew. And who were “they?” A Muslim family. And she knew. I didn't bring any more rice that evening, because I wanted them—Hindus and Muslims—to enjoy the joy of sharing.

But there were those children, radiating joy, sharing the joy and peace with their mother because she had the love to give until it hurts. And you see this is where love begins: at home in the family. God will never forget us, and there is something you and I can always do. We can keep the joy of loving Jesus in our hearts, and share that joy with all we come in contact with. Let us make that one point: that no child will be unwanted, unloved, uncared for, or killed and thrown away. And give until it hurts—with a smile.

Because I talk so much of giving with a smile, once a professor from the United States asked me, “Are you married?” And I said, “Yes, and I find it sometimes very difficult to smile at my spouse—Jesus—because he can be very demanding—sometimes this is really something true.” And there is where love comes in—when it is demanding, and yet we can give it with joy.

One of the most demanding things for me is traveling everywhere, and with publicity. I have said to Jesus that if I don't go to heaven for anything else, I will be going to heaven for all the traveling with all the publicity, because it has purified me and sacrificed me and made me really ready to go to heaven. If we remember that God loves us, and that we can love others as he loves us, then America can become a sign of peace for the world. From here, a sign of care for the weakest of the weak—the unborn child—must go out to the world. If you become a burning light of justice and peace in the world, then really you will be true to what the founders of this country stood for. God bless you!

**Appendix C**  
**A Message for the United Nations World Conference on Women**

(Read by Mercedes Wilson of the Family of the Americas)  
September, 1995 in Beijing, China

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 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 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, 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.



## **Appendix D**

### **Statement to the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development**

September 9, 1994

I speak today to you from my heart—to each person in all the nations of the world, to people with power to make big decisions as well as to all the mothers, fathers and children in the cities, towns and villages.

Each one of us is here today because we have been loved by God who created us and our parents who accepted and cared enough to give us life. Life is the most beautiful gift of God. That is why it is so painful to see what is happening today in so many places around the world: life is being deliberately destroyed by war, by violence, by abortion. And we have been created by God for greater things—to love and be loved.

I have said often, and I am sure of it, that the greatest destroyer of peace in the world today is abortion. If a mother can kill her own child, what is there to stop you and me from killing each other? The only one who has the right to take life is the One who has created it. Nobody else has that right: no conference, no government.

I am sure that deep down in your heart, you know that the unborn child is a human being loved by God, like you and me. How can anyone knowing that, deliberately destroy that life? It frightens me to think of all the people who kill their conscience so that they can perform an abortion. When we die, we will come face to face with God, the Author of life. Who will give an account to God for the millions and millions of babies who were not allowed to have the chance to live, to experience loving and being loved?

God has created a world big enough for all the lives He wishes to be born. It is only *our* hearts that are not big enough to want them and accept them. If all the money that is being spent on finding ways to kill people was used instead to feed them and house them and educate them—how beautiful that would be. We are too often afraid of the sacrifices we might have to make. But where there is love, there is always sacrifice. And when we love until it hurts, there is joy and peace.

If there is a child that you don't want or can't feed or educate, give that child to me. I will not refuse any child. I will give a home, or find loving parents for him or for her. We are fighting abortion by adoption and have given thousands of children to caring families. And it is so beautiful to see the love and unity that a child brings to a family.

The child is the most beautiful gift of God to a family, to a nation. Let us never refuse this gift of God. My prayer for each one of you is that you may always have the faith to see and love God in each person including the unborn. God bless you.

