

This week end our Catholic Church will celebrate an extraordinary soul and woman who was a minister of gospel values; Mother Teresa of Calcutta. (tomorrow) Today in Rome Pope Francis will officially canonize her.

As I was reading the gospel passage today from Luke and heard the words the words that Jesus addressed to the crowds: “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” Immediately I thought of Mother Teresa. In a recent article in Priest magazine, author Vincent Parachin wrote about Mother Teresa and her life and death. In the article Vincent listed five principles that define Mother Teresa’s life and ministry.

1) Prayer 2)Religious respect 3)poverty 4)humility 5)joy.

Vincent went on to elaborate on each of the principles. 1) prayer.To begin with the driving force behind Mother Teresa’s boundless energy and compassion was prayer. No matter where she was, no matter how busy she was, Mother Teresa prayed daily. She once told a reporter, “I don’t think I could do this work for even one week if I didn’t have four hours of prayer daily.” She

also was adamant that her sisters spend at least an hour a day in prayer, permitting no exceptions. Without one hour of prayer daily, she told her sisters their strength to serve would dry up.

2) Secondly Mother Teresa held the utmost respect and reverence for all religions. She respected the religious backgrounds of those she and her sisters ministered to. She made sure that the person who died would receive a funeral ritual that was in keeping with their faith affiliation.

3) Third Mother Teresa embraced a vow of poverty which meant that her and her sisters would live just as the poor they served did. Mother Teresa said, "Poverty is necessary because we are working with the poor. When they complain about the food, we can say we eat the same the poor have to wash themselves and walk barefoot; we do the same...it opens the heart of the poor when we say we live the same way they do."

4) Next Mother Teresa embraced humility. She embodied the verse taken from St. Paul's letter to the Phillipians. (Ch. 2 v 3-4) "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather in

humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. a perfect example of this came on October 26, 1985. Mother Teresa was scheduled to address the United Nations General Assembly but that morning after mass and prayer Mother Teresa did her laundry and then mopped the floors and cleaned the toilets. All of her life she worked side by side with her sisters and October 26th would be no different.

5) Finally the fifth principle of her life was joy. Mother Teresa worked in the most challenging and potentially discouraging environments possible. Yet she did it with a heart filled with joy; often talking about the joy of loving the poor and of serving them. Speaking to her sisters Mother Teresa stressed the importance of joy in their order. “Joy is one of the most essential things in our society. A missionary of Charity must be a Missionary of Charity of Joy.”

Throughout her life Mother Teresa carried her cross with

prayerful stamina as she followed Christ. (Tomorrow) Today she is being rewarded for her struggles and her faith. May her principles of living a life of service: Prayer, Religious respect, Poverty, Humility, and Joy have an affect on us as we carry our crosses and follow in the footsteps of Christ.