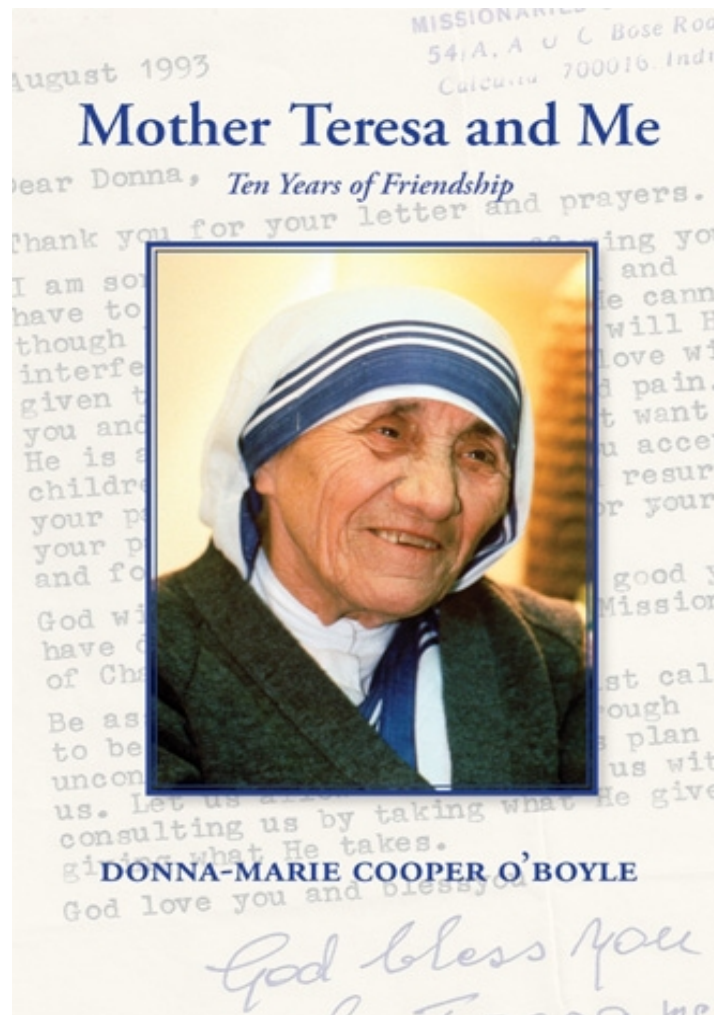


Mother Teresa and Me: Ten Years of Friendship

By Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle



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A brush with fame blossomed into something far more spiritual, much longer lasting – infinitely more beautiful...

Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle will never forget the first time she laid eyes on Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Hunched, frail, shorter than one of Donna's own children, the aging servant of the poorest of the poor cut an unassuming figure awaiting the start of Mass with her Missionary of Charity sisters. They would speak briefly after the liturgy – Mother Teresa wanted to meet the mother of such reverent and grace-filled children – and then spend the next ten years intermittently sharing hopes, dreams, and prayers through the mail and in face-to-face conversations.

With Mother Teresa and Me, Donna-Marie invites you to step inside her deeply personal experiences with one of the greatest souls of modern times. Take her up on the offer and don't be surprised if you, too, find your heart blessed and your soul inspired by the diminutive nun who left an enormous impression on Donna-Marie – and on the whole world.



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From the Introduction:

“In these pages I share my personal encounter and friendship with a humble woman who, by God’s grace, transformed countless hearts all over the world. My hope is that this testimony will speak to your heart. I believe the blessings bestowed upon me through the holiness of Mother Teresa must be shared with those who did not have the good fortune to know her personally.

While this book focuses on the life and spirit of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, it also speaks of other saints in our midst—inspiring people I have met along the way throughout my spiritual journey...”

Excerpt: “Mother Teresa taught her sisters to “beg the Lord” for an extreme love of the poor. She trained them to begin their day trying to see Jesus through the Eucharist in holy Mass. She explained to them that they are Jesus to others and they are to seek him in the people they serve. Throughout each day the Missionaries of Charity connect with Jesus in two profoundly physical ways: first, under the appearance of consecrated bread and wine and, second, under the appearance of the devastated bodies of the poorest of the poor. She tells the sisters to do everything “with Jesus, for Jesus, and toward Jesus” so that their lives become a prayer.

That is certainly what happened to Mother Teresa herself. Looking back on her early days with the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Teresa said that, had she not picked up that first dying woman on the street, she may not have picked up the fifty thousand more. She always said, ‘Jesus comes to meet us. To welcome him, let us go to meet him...’”

Excerpt: “What could possibly top a personal encounter with such holiness as I saw in Mother Teresa that day in D.C.? Nothing.

Or so I thought.

We traveled back to the reality of everyday home life in Connecticut. On the trip back, I was feeling much more contemplative than when we set out. The sense of grace at work was almost overwhelming.

I took out pen and paper and began to record a few thoughts. One notion that kept recurring was: “Why not try to communicate further with Mother Teresa?” This desire prodded me throughout the seven-hour ride home.

Again, my initial reaction to the thought was negative. I didn’t want to take any time from her vital work. After some serious soul-searching, I decided to call the mother superior of the convent we’d visited. It couldn’t hurt to ask her advice on what I should do next...”

With a Foreword from author, speaker, and syndicated Catholic talk show radio host, Teresa Tomeo: “...Donna-Marie’s written voice is much like her speaking voice: peaceful, gentle, and lovingly filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit. There is something about her that soothes the soul and calms the nerves. And isn’t that just what we need in our hectic lives and our noisy media-saturated culture?

“I believe these attributes come from Donna-Marie’s love of Christ and her devotion to Our Lady and the teachings of the Catholic Church, which were strengthened through knowing Mother Teresa and Father John Hardon and

receiving continued support and spiritual advice from both of them. You may also get to know yourself a little better as well, and you may even see yourself among the pages as Donna-Marie walks us through her life with the blessings and challenges of being a mom, a prominent Catholic presenter, and a best-selling writer. Donna introduces you to everyday saints, folks she meets at book signings or conferences who share their love of faith with her and also have a story to tell. You just might be among them..."

Endorsements:

"Part biography of Blessed Teresa, part memoir of a friendship, *Mother Teresa and Me* offers encouragement, nourishment, and inspiration to people in all walks of life as we encounter, in Blessed Teresa's words, "Calcutta all over the world." Drawing on the life and faith of Blessed Teresa, as well as on a personal friendship with her, Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle shares miracles large and small. She paints a picture of a world in which each of us – however distant the goal may seem – can become a saint."

Karen Edmisten, author and blogger <http://karenedmisten.blogspot.com>

"Here, at last, is a look at Mother Teresa, not as she stood in the midst of her amazing life, but as she influenced someone we all could know, someone who could live right down the street from you or me. Donna-Marie captures the impact of a friendship few of us can fathom and makes it seem normal, achievable, and in accomplishing that, she makes sainthood not only a nice theory but a goal we want to pursue. In this treasury, we have two women's hearts touching, across miles and vocations, and in the glimpse of their friendship, we see a part of ourselves, and we are inspired."

Sarah Reinhard, <http://snoringscholar.blogspot.com>

"Through careful discernment, Donna Marie has kept the story of her friendship with Mother Teresa close to her heart for the last several decades. By sharing it with us now, Donna offers us a gift that she and this modern-day saint began creating years ago; a gift that gently but urgently challenges us to give back by recognizing the streets of Calcutta in our own backyards. Oh, that we might take up this challenge and, thereby, change the world!"

Roxane Beauclair Salonen, award-winning children's author; <http://roxanesalonen.blogspot.com>

"Mother Teresa's words to Donna-Marie seem like words to us all. Rather than feeling like we are on the outside looking in, the warmth of the friendship between these two women wraps us all in wisdom, holiness, and love. Most of all, Mother's Teresa's messages to Donna encourage us to desire the holiness which she stated is not a luxury for a few but rather everyone's duty."

Patti Maguire Armstrong, Catholic speaker and author www.raisingcatholickids.com

"Donna-Marie has composed a loving distillation of Blessed Teresa's thought based upon a decade of correspondence and visits with the saint of the ghettos. It is *A Tale of Two Mothers*, of how a chance meeting of the small, dynamic Albanian nun with a young American housewife became a conduit of grace for many. One comes away convinced that the greatest power under heaven is not wealth or political influence but the loving spirit of a mother, for spiritual motherhood is especially efficacious in bringing a healing touch into the many and intangible Calcuttas of the modern world."

*Elena Maria Vidal, author of *Trianon* <http://teaattrianon.blogspot.com>*

About the Author:

Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle is known to millions as the friendly face and soothing voice of Catholic motherhood. Her frequent appearances on radio and television, her many books, and her speaking engagements are the public face of a life devoted to seeking holiness in the context of a happy Catholic family.

She grew up in a large, close-knit Catholic family, married, and is raising five children, the youngest now entering college. Family life has always been her first vocation.

But in addition to her work as a mother, Donna-Marie has found opportunities to serve God both close to home and throughout the world. She has been a catechist for over twenty years at her parish and a Eucharistic minister to the sick, as well as a world-renowned journalist and author.

Donna-Marie's decade-long friendship with Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta led to a long correspondence and meetings around the world. Following in the footsteps of Blessed Teresa, Donna-Marie became a lay Missionary of Charity and founded a branch of the lay Missionaries of Charity. Today, Donna-Marie is passionate about encouraging others to follow in the footsteps of her blessed friend, caring for the poorest of the poor.

It was Mother Teresa who constantly encouraged Donna-Marie to keep writing for mothers, women, and families, and she wrote the foreword to Donna-Marie's book *Prayerfully Expecting: A Nine Month Novena for Mothers-To-Be*, as well as back-cover endorsements for her other books. Donna-Marie was also blessed with the spiritual guidance and friendship of the late world-renowned theologian, Rev. John A. Hardon S. J.

Remembering Jesus' request in the Gospel of Matthew that we should care for Him in others, Donna-Marie founded the "Friends of Veronica," an outreach to the seniors, the sick, and the lonely in nursing homes and hospitals. Their goal is to bring love and comfort in imitation of St. Veronica, who lovingly gave her veil to wipe Jesus' forehead as He walked to Calvary. Donna-Marie has founded several other apostolates and organizations.

Donna-Marie was invited by Cardinal Rylko, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity to participate in an International Congress for women at the Vatican in early 2008 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* penned by Pope John Paul II.

Donna-Marie has been a frequent guest on EWTN television and discusses Catholic and family and parenting issues on a regular Ave Maria Radio segment called "Mom's Corner" at "Catholic Connection" with radio host Teresa Tomeo.

She is also an EWTN TV host. Look for Donna-Marie in upcoming EWTN television segments called "Everyday Blessings for Catholic Moms."

Books by Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle

These are some of Donna-Marie's best-known books:

- Catholic Prayer Book for Mothers (Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Company, 2005)
- The Heart of Motherhood: Finding Holiness in the Catholic Home (The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2006)
- Prayerfully Expecting: A Nine Month Novena for Mothers-To-Be (The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2007)
- Catholic Saints Prayer Book (Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Company, 2008)
- The Domestic Church: Room by Room: A Mother's Study Guide (Circle Press, 2008)
- Grace Café: Serving Up Recipes for Faithful Mothering (Circle Press, 2008)
- Mother Teresa and Me: Ten Years of Friendship (Circle Press, 2009)

In addition to her books, Donna-Marie's writing can be found in many Catholic magazines, newspapers, and on the Internet in her many columns at CatholicMom.Com, Catholic Exchange, Catholic Outpost, and Catholic Online, as well as on her website and many blogs. Donna-Marie also writes a parenting column for the "Irish Family Press," an Irish Catholic newspaper in Ireland.

Donna-Marie's work has been blessed with many awards and honors, including the Media Award from the American Cancer Society. She has received the prestigious honor of Pope John Paul II's and Pope Benedict XVI's Apostolic blessings on her books and work, along with commendations from two

Connecticut bishops, Bishop Lori and Archbishop Mansell. In addition to those honors, in 1988 she received a letter of commendation from Cardinal Pironio, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, as well as several letters of commendation from the Catholic clergy and letters of acknowledgement of her work from two popes.

Keeping up with Donna-Marie

Donna-Marie travels the country to speak about prayer, motherhood, family and women's issues. In addition, she sometimes travels internationally to speak and give retreats.

To schedule, talks, retreats, and events, you can reach Donna-Marie through her main Web site:
<http://www.donnacooperboyle.com>.

She can also be reached through email: DMCOBoyle@aol.com

Her daily inspiration can be found at her blogs:

- “Embracing Motherhood”
<http://www.donnamarieembracingmotherhood.blogspot.com>
- “Daily Donna-Marie: A Dose of Inspiration”
<http://www.donnamariecooperboyle.blogspot.com>
- “Moments of Inspiration with Your Favorite Saints”
<http://www.momentsofinspirationsaints.blogspot.com>
- “View from the Domestic Church”
<http://www.viewdomesticchurch.blogspot.com>

All of Donna-Marie's blogs can be accessed through her main Web site.

You can also find her on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/donnacooperboyle>

and her Facebook fan page:

<http://www.facebook.com/donnacooperboylefanpage>