**Assembly – Wednesday 6th September 2016**

**A mother to many**

An introduction to the work of Mother Teresa of Calcutta

**Aims**

To reflect on commitment to caring and how this links to the Jubilee Year of Mercy. (SEAL theme 4: Going for goals).

**Assembly**

1. To start assembly show this song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQ9aV94AVaY>. Discuss who it is and what has happened recently to have her in the news.
2. *Display and image of St Teresa on screen.*Mother Teresa was born in 1910. She was the youngest in her family and was called Agnes. As she grew up, she felt more and more convinced that she should become a nun. (*Explain that a nun is someone who pledges her life to prayer and serving others)*So, by the age of 18, she had joined a convent as a missionary. A ‘convent’ is a community where nuns live and pray together and a ‘missionary’ spreads the Christian faith to others, often travelling to other countries to do so. Agnes became known as Sister Teresa. She trained to be a teacher.
3. Eventually, Mother Teresa, as she became called, went to work in India’s largest city – Calcutta. She was horrified to see so many sick people living on the streets, begging for money and scraps of food.
4. Mother Teresa remembered Jesus’ words from Matthew’s Gospel (35–36, *The Message*): LINK TO YEAR OF MERCY

*I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink  . . .
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,
I was sick and you stopped to visit  . . .*
She was sure that God wanted her to do something relating to these words. So, she obtained permission to leave her convent to live among the poor. She had only the smallest amount of money. She taught children who could not afford to go to school and helped their families.
5. Others came to work and pray with her. They were known as the ‘Co-workers of Mother Teresa’. With their help, Mother Teresa opened a home to care for people who were very ill and dying and had nowhere to go. She also opened a home for orphans and young children who had no one to care for them.

Mother Teresa faced great difficulties. She needed money to help others and the work was extremely hard and tiring, but she approached it with great joy. Mother Teresa spoke up for the poor and challenged rich people and governments to help. It’s been said that she was very small in stature, but had a very big smile and a hugely generous heart.
6. After Mother Teresa died in 1997, some of her letters showed just how hard her work was. Sometimes she found it hard to believe in God, but she kept saying her prayers. Sometimes the problems were enormous and what she could do seemed so little, but she didn’t give up.
7. She was beatified on 19th October 2003.
8. She was canonised by Pope Francis on Sunday 4th September 2016 and became St Teresa of Calcutta.
9. In this Year of Mercy, the life of Mother Teresa is an example of what it can mean to truly care.

– People who really care don’t just tell others what to do – they are willing to be the ones who help.
– People who really care don’t give up – they say their prayers and are true to their goals.
– People who really care know that small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

Mother Teresa had a saying: ‘Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.’

**Time for reflection**

Let us reflect on the following words from Mother Teresa.

Prayer - Make us worthy Lord – in St Teresa’s words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L7AyEcD3gAA>