

# ASKING FOR HELP

**Minutes after they** first met in New York City, Mother Teresa asked John F. Kennedy Jr. to drive her to the airport to receive a shipment of donated clothing from New Delhi. “You see,” she said, “I ask everyone for help all the time. I ask and I ask and just when they think they’ve done enough and are fed up with me, I ask for more.”

“It was thrilling to help her,” John said. “How many times have you jumped at the chance to drive someone to the airport through some of the worst traffic in the northern hemisphere?”

Princess Diana asked Mother Teresa how she could overcome the depression that haunted her. Mother Teresa asked Diana, in turn, to reach outside her troubled self to help others, especially the poorest of the poor. After that, Diana took up humanitarian work with gusto, and indeed found new joy and meaning in meeting, helping, and *loving* people all over the world.

In Ethiopia in 1981, hundreds of thousands of people were starving to death during a drought. The few hundred kilos of medicine and food Mother Teresa had brought from Calcutta were a tiny drop in that vast ocean of need, compounded by the confusion and lack of coordination among many international relief agencies. And the roads were so bad, she couldn’t reach villages in the interior where the supplies were desperately needed.

Together with her sisters in Calcutta, she prayed and fasted, asking

God to help the Ethiopian people, their animals and their land.

She also wrote a letter to the president of the United States. About a week later she received a telephone call from the White House, and President Reagan came on the line. He thanked her for her letter and assured her that on behalf of the American people he would do everything possible to see that help arrived quickly. “After that, thank God,” she said, “the supplies started to flow, and helicopters got food to the villages.”

When I met Mother Teresa in the Philippines in 1988, her eyes radiated the love that kept her going, and I saw how this one little woman was able to help so many, when with a glance she touched my life.

Hers was a shining example of the power of unconditional love, enduring faith, and inexhaustible joy. Fearlessly, she embraced the hungry, the homeless, the sick and the dying, the children of every faith and country. Her simple acts of love were contagious. Presidents and CEOs couldn't say no to her humble requests. People went to India and all around the world just to be with her and learn how to love.

Someone once told her that she was the most powerful woman in the world. She replied with a smile, “I wish I was. Then I would bring peace to the whole world.”

Join Mother Teresa's revolution of the heart by caring for the poor in your community. To support Mother Teresa's work around the world directly, please write to the **Missionaries of Charity**, 54-A, AJC Bose Road, Calcutta 7000016, India.