



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2026

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Mother Teresa Institute Quarterly Newsletter

October-December
2026

The Mother Teresa Institute (MTI) began the fall semester with our annual capstone event, the fifth annual Colloquium and Symposium. This event featured a two-day celebration of Mother Teresa's feast day and the tenth anniversary of her canonization (more on this event can be found on pages 4-6 of the newsletter). Additionally, the MTI continued our preparation for a series of events coming up later this fall, including the exciting roundtable and book launch with Cardinal Marc Ouellet. We remain exceptionally grateful to the partnership, collaboration, and support of our friends in the Theology Department and Center for Carmelite Studies at the Catholic University of America for their assistance in all our events. In addition to our ongoing reading partnership programs, the 20th Century Saints project, and other events, we will also be partnering with Sharon Green and Charity Playbook to update our public outreach and website design. We also offer a very sincere note of gratitude to Michael Collopy for the beautiful new MTI logo (which can be found in the top left corner of this newsletter!).

Upcoming 2026-2027 Events Schedule

OCT 2026	Fall Reading Partnership Program
NOV 12, 2026	Cardinal Ouellet Roundtable and Book Launch (Washington, DC)
DEC 2026	Advent Reading Partnership Program
Spring 2027	2 nd Annual Student Research Symposium (Virtual)
JUN 26, 2027	20 th Century Saints Conference (Washington, DC)

Anyone with interest or questions about joining the reading partnership should contact the MTI Research Fellow, Joe Evans at joseph@mtinstitute.org.

Publication Review

Doljak, Sara Ahlin. "From Compassion to Justice: Exploring Mother Teresa's Influence on Modern Legal Frameworks." *Vergentis. Revista De Investigacion De La Catedra Internacional Conjunta Inocencio III* 20 (2025): 109-116. <https://doi.org/10.12800/vg.20.7>.

Doljak explores the intersection of Mother Teresa's humanitarian principles with contemporary legal protection for vulnerable groups, advocating for a holistic approach to social justice. The author notes that laws to safeguard human rights are insufficient and Mother Teresa's work highlights the need for compassionate, hands-on efforts to supplement these frameworks. Doljak analyzes Mother Teresa's life and contributions to offer a collaborative approach between legal systems and humanitarian actions to uphold dignity, justice, and equality.

Please forward information for published articles or materials to mti@mtinstitute.org.

Words from Mother Teresa

Jesus says, "Amen, Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to Me." If sometimes we feel as if the Master is away, is it not because I may have kept myself far from some Sister? One thing that will always secure Heaven for us—acts of Charity and Kindness, with which we have filled our lives. We will never know how much good just a simple smile can do. We tell people how kind, forgiving and understanding God is—are we the living proof? Can they really see this kindness, this forgiveness, this understanding alive in us?

~ Mother Teresa to the MC Sisters, May 1, 1964

Message from the Director

Carriers of God's Love - A Fall Reflection: From Gratitude to the Crib

As the final months of the year unfold, I find myself drawn to a simple yet demanding invitation at the heart of Mother Teresa's spirituality: to become a carrier of God's love. October, November, and December guide us along a natural spiritual path. We move from mission to gratitude and remembrance, and finally to the poverty and tenderness of the crib. Each month invites us to receive Christ more deeply and to carry His presence more faithfully into the ordinary places of our lives.

October: Carrying Christ into the Ordinary

October opens under the mantle of Our Lady of the Rosary and includes World Mission Sunday. It is a fitting time to remember that mission does not begin far away. It begins across the room, at the kitchen table, in the workplace, in our parish, and in the quiet encounters that make up an ordinary day.

Mother Teresa often called her co-workers to be active carriers of God's love. For me, that call becomes concrete when I look to Mary. At the Annunciation, Mary welcomed Jesus with her yes and then went in haste to serve Elizabeth. Prayer did not close her in on herself. It moved her outward in love. She carried Christ within her, and His presence became a gift to another.

This is the grace I want to ask for in October: that prayer may bear fruit in immediate charity. I may not be asked to do anything dramatic. More often, love will take the form of patience, attention, fidelity, forgiveness, or a hidden act of service. These small choices allow the warmth of Christ's presence to reach someone who may be waiting, perhaps silently, to know they are seen and loved.

November: Gratitude That Becomes Generosity

In November, the Church turns our attention to All Saints and All Souls, and many of us also celebrate Thanksgiving. These observances invite remembrance, gratitude, and hope. They remind me of what Mother Teresa often repeated: that holiness is not a luxury for the few but something for all of us. It is lived in daily faithfulness, often by the saints next door, whose goodness may be known only to God.

Mother Teresa's gratitude was more than a polite response when life went well. It was rooted in trust in God's tender mercy in every circumstance. That gratitude does not deny sorrow or make suffering easy. Rather, it keeps the heart open to God, even when we are carrying loss. As we remember those who have died, we entrust them to the Lord and renew our hope in the communion of saints and the promise of eternal life.

True thanksgiving must also widen the heart. If I recognize all I have received, gratitude should become generosity. It should move me toward those with the least, those who are lonely, and those who are easily forgotten. Giving thanks becomes an act of love and justice when it leads me to share my time, attention, resources, and presence.

December: Making Room at the Crib

Advent and Christmas bring this journey to the crib in Bethlehem. There we meet a God who comes without grandeur, as a helpless child. The Nativity reveals the poverty, humility, and trust that characterize divine love. God chooses to depend on the welcome and care of ordinary people.

At the crib, I hear an early echo of Jesus' words, "I thirst." The Christ Child thirsts for love and a place in the human heart. Christmas, then, is not chiefly about abundance. It is about making room. It is the quiet work of preparing a peaceful resting place for Jesus in our hearts.

We make room for Him not only in prayer but also in the people He places before us. Mother Teresa teaches us to recognize Jesus in the distressing disguise of those who feel unwanted, unloved, or uncared for. During the holidays, when loneliness can be especially painful, a visit, a phone call, a shared meal, or a sincere word of welcome can become a place where Christ is welcomed.

As I follow this path from October's missionary witness, through November's grateful remembrance, to December's humble manger, I am reminded that the Christian life is a movement of receiving and giving. We receive Jesus in prayer, in the Eucharist, in Scripture, and in the love of others. We then carry Him into the world through concrete acts of tenderness and mercy. My prayer for this fall is that each of us may say yes with Mary, give thanks with an open heart, and make room for Jesus by welcoming Him in one another. In this way, our homes, communities, and daily encounters can become living cribs where God's love is born anew.

~ Fr. Brian Kolodiejchuk, MC



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MTI Annual Keynote Lecture and Colloquium. September 4-5, 2026

The Mother Teresa Institute (MTI) held its fifth annual Colloquium and Symposium at the Catholic University of America (CUA) in celebration of the tenth anniversary of Mother Teresa's canonization and her annual feast day. This two-day event featured a series of thought-provoking presentations during the academic portion of the program on Friday and a broader public oriented program on Saturday.

The Friday Colloquium, the academic portion of the program, was a full-day event held in the Happel Room in Caldwell Hall at CUA. The program began on Friday, September 4, with an opening mass, celebrated by Fr. Darren Dentino, MC, in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception before the start of a full day of academic discussion related to the theme of "Charity to the Poor in Matthew 25:40 – You Did It To Me." After introductory comments from the director of the MTI, Fr. Brian Kolodiejchuk, MC, and CUA President Dr. Peter Kilpatrick, the day began with a reflection full of colorful anecdotes from the plenary speaker, Archbishop Timothy Broglio. The archbishop noted how Mother Teresa "made the Gospel come alive" and how the MTI continues this tradition by "responding to concrete needs in concrete situations." The first panel presentation focused on biblical and historical perspectives of Matthew 25:40 and charity to the poor to help set the foundation for the remaining discussions. The first speaker, Fr. Stephen Ryan, OP, from the Dominican House of Studies, presented "Loving God in the Person of the Poor and Needy in the Old Testament." This was followed by Dr. Katja Hess, a New Testament scholar from the CUA Theology and Religious Studies department, who offered a presentation titled "Christology as the Ground of Love: Re-reading Matthew 25:40" with an emphasis on responsorial ethics. The panel concluded with a thought-provoking presentation from Fr. Gregory Hrynkiw, a Byzantine-Catholic monk who leads a fledgling community in Saskatchewan, on "Pope Leo XIV's Nehemiah Option and St. Basil the Great's New City—the Basiliads: A Liturgical Vision for Building Communities Centered on the Poor." The second panel session focused on ethical perspectives of Mother Teresa's work with the poor in the context of Matthew 25:40. The first speaker, Dr. Mark Graham, a theology professor from Villanova University, presented "Catholic Moral Theology, Parables, and Nagging Omissions: Mother Teresa's Contribution to an Unresolved Tension." He was followed by the MTI's research fellow, Dr. Joe Evans, who discussed Mother Teresa's recognition of human dignity as a "fundamental way of encountering the Lord." The panel was completed by Samuel Kalu, a seminarian at St. John Seminary in Boston, who added a Marian touch to the discussion, with "Mother Teresa, Mary, and the Church of the Poor." The final panel session brought various theological perspectives. We began with Fr. Darren Dentino, MC, who is completing his PhD at the Catholic University of East Africa, with a paper titled "Matthew 25:40 and Mother Teresa's Mission to Reconstitute the Human Person by the Revelation of Charity." He was followed by Fr. Yann Vagneux, MEP, who has spent the past thirty years in Nepal and India, offering a Hindu and Catholic perspective on "God in the Distressing Disguise of the Poor." The final presentation, from Fr. John Lydon, OSA, the director of the Cabrini Institute for Migration at Villanova University, provided an Augustinian interpretation of a Church for the poor and Mother Teresa through the lens of the teaching of Pope Leo XIV. The day concluded with a reflection from Bishop Bryan Bayda, the Ukrainian Eparchy of Toronto, who focused on our relationships by encouraging us to ask four questions: what do I think of the other person, what do they think of me, what is God telling us, and what is our response.



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The celebration continued Saturday, Mother Teresa's feast day, with the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Gabriele Giordano Caccia presiding over Holy Mass in the Crypt Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine. Archbishop Caccia's inspiring homily acknowledged the importance of love and recognition of human dignity in Mother Teresa's belief and faith, to honor her feast day. The program then began with a welcome from CUA President Dr. Peter Kilpatrick before we shifted to the presentations. The discussion continued in Hannan Hall at CUA with the annual keynote lecture, "Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Pope John Paul the Great: Improbable journeys and legacies as leaders and friends," from Jim Towey, Mother Teresa's legal counsel in the United States. The first speaker, Jim Towey, provided the keynote address by weaving personal anecdotes and insight from the lives of two great saints of the 20th century, Mother Teresa and Pope John Paul the Great. He focused on the events prior to their public ministries, mainly before 1950, that led them to an unlikely partnership and friendship that changed the world in the second half of the century. The next speaker, Michael Collopy, who spent fifteen years photographing Mother Teresa, offered a moving presentation titled "Works of Love are Works of Peace." He shared his incredible collection of photos and the remarkable stories behind them. While his artistic talent was abundantly evident, it was the heartfelt anecdotes and insight into St. Teresa of Calcutta and the time he spent with her that captivated the audience. The program concluded in the afternoon with an inaugural showing of Antonio Farisi's documentary "Calcutta is Everywhere: Mother Teresa in Rome" and then a panel discussion with Fr. Brian, Michael Collopy, and Bishop Bryan Bayda. The panelists responded to a variety of questions and comments from the audience related to Mother Teresa, her love for the poor, her enduring legacy, and other unique insights.

More than one hundred and fifty participants joined in the annual event, both in person and virtually. The combined experience of academic exploration, personal encounters and reflections, and the shared dialogue of all who attended help foster an environment of devotion to Mother Teresa on her feast day, while also helping the MTI to accomplish its goals of promoting and developing the authentic legacy of Saint Teresa of Calcutta and providing resources and insight to all who are interested in her life, charism, and message.



Fr. Darren Dentino celebrates the opening mass in the Basilica of the National Shrine.



Plenary presentation from Archbishop Timothy Broglio (Archdiocese of Military Services).



Jim Towey offers the Keynote presentation.

Photo Credits: Mother Teresa Institute.



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Samuel Kalu and Fr. Mark Morozovich discuss his presentation on Mary, Mother Teresa, and a Church for the Poor.



Papal Nuncio Archbishop Caccia celebrates mass for Mother Teresa's feast day.



Audience members at the annual Colloquium ask questions following a presentation.



MTI Research Fellow, Joe Evans, with Dr. Mark Graham and Fr. John Lydon, OSA. Representing Villanova University.



MTI Director, Fr. Brian Kolodiejchuk, MC, with Bishop Bryan Bayda and Michael Collopy, during the panel discussion at the Symposium.



The "Ukrainian delegation" at our Colloquium. Fr. Gregory Hrynkiw, Bp. Bayda, Sem. Vladyslav Stefanyshyn, and Fr. Brian.



CUA President, Dr. Peter Kilpatrick, offers the opening comments at the start of the annual Symposium.



Fr. Stephen Ryan, OP, presents an Old Testament perspective on charity to the poor during the Colloquium.

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INTRODUCTION BY POPE FRANCIS

AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF VOCATIONS

MAN-AND-WOMAN,
IMAGE OF GOD



EDITED BY CARDINAL MARC OUELLET

HOMILY BY ROBERT F. PREVOST, OSA/POPE LEO XIV

THE CUA PRESS, CUA THEOLOGY
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TOWARDS AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF VOCATIONS: MAN-AND- WOMAN, THE IMAGE OF GOD

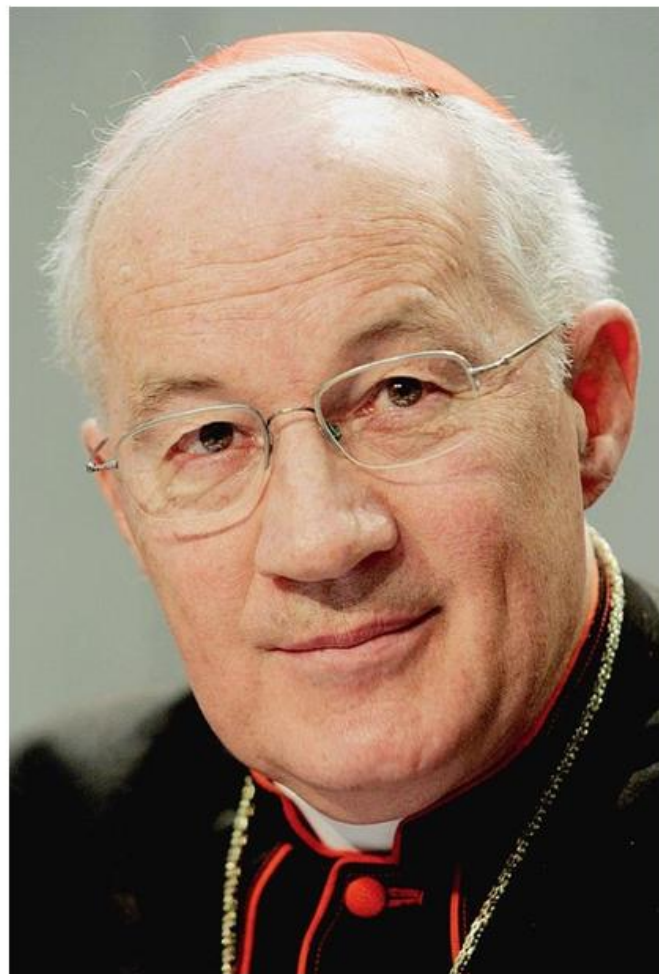
CARDINAL MARC OUELLET BOOK LAUNCH

NOVEMBER 12, 2026

4:00-5:30 pm

- Welcome - CUA Press
- Opening Comments - President Kilpatrick
- Book Overview - Card. Ouellet
- Respondents:
 - Fr. Aquinas Guilbeau, OP
 - Br. Thomas Piolata, OFM, Cap
- Comments/Q & A - Card. Ouellet
- Reception and Book Signing

The Catholic University of America
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