

Mother Teresa remains hospitalized for malaria

NEW DELHI, India (CNS) — Mother Teresa of Calcutta was in better condition after being hospitalized for malaria, complicated by breathing problems, a hospital bulletin said.

"Mother Teresa is better. She had a restful night and her breathlessness has been controlled," the Aug. 23 bulletin said.

"At present she is being monitored and her condition is stable," the bulletin said.

The superior general of the Missionaries of Charity was admitted to the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences Aug. 20 complaining of fatigue and uneasiness. A team of specialists found her "suffering from malaria and acute breathlessness caused by lung congestion," reported UCA News, an Asian church news agency based in Thailand.

She started having difficulty breathing the night of Aug. 21.

The Albanian-born nun was fitted with a heart pacemaker in Calcutta, India, in 1989 and underwent heart surgery in California last year. In May she was treated in Rome for three broken ribs sustained in a fall.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner, who turns 83 on Aug. 27, started work among the poor of Calcutta in 1949 and now has missions in 80 countries. She is regarded by many as a living saint.

She was in New Delhi to receive an Indian government award for "promoting peace and communal harmony," but fell sick hours before the awards ceremony.

A spokeswoman for the Missionaries of Charity in New Delhi said the sisters were praying for the speedy recovery of their superior general.

Father George Pereira, deputy secretary-general of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, said "nothing will happen to Mother."

He told UCA News Aug. 23 that "God will protect her, because she is so much needed in this present day world. Not only India, (but) the whole world is looking forward to her presence and prayer."

"Her inspiration is so much needed to heal this world," Father Pereira said.



AP/Wide World Photos
Mother Teresa took part in an awards ceremony in New Delhi Aug. 20. The Nobel laureate is recovering from breathing problems and malaria.

Pope's visit

Continued from page 7

aggression. We are receiving the man responsible for freedom in all the East European countries," he added.

The Vatican never recognized the forceful annexation of the three countries into the Soviet Union during World War II.

In Lithuania, the only country with a Catholic majority, the pope plans to commemorate victims of religious and political persecutions. Catholics form 80 percent of the 3.4 million people.

During the Sept. 4-8 stay, he is scheduled to celebrate Mass on Lithuania's Hill of Crosses, a centuries-old pilgrim-

mage site where people continually put up crosses at night after Communist authorities tore them down during the day.

The pope also plans to visit the graves of 13 Lithuanians killed by Soviet troops Jan. 13, 1991, during pro-independence demonstrations.

These events should test papal tact. Former communists rule Lithuania and have high government posts in Latvia. Although these officials now espouse democratic and capitalist principles, Catholic leaders are worried that they retain an authoritarian mentality.

Honoring victims of communism also involves treading on Russian sensitivities because of Russian domination during the Soviet era. Baltic populations still refer to the Soviet period as the "Russian occupation," and Russian influence is still strong.

Ethnic Russians are an important and controversial segment of the Baltic inhabitants. They form about one-third of the populations of Latvia and Es-

tonia and 9 percent of the Lithuanian population.

In Latvia and Estonia, major political disputes center on whether ethnic Russians should be granted citizenship.

Under Soviet communism, Russians were the political elite, sent from Moscow to control national life. Russian troops of the Soviet army, their civilian dependents and hundreds of thousands of Russian workers moved into the region to fill the factories of the Soviet-created war industry.

Russian troops are still in all three countries, as phased withdrawals have not been completed. Russia has tied troop removal to better legal treatment of ethnic Russians.

Russia also is the regional political power and has financial clout because Baltic economies were firmly tied to it during the Soviet decades.

Papal trip advisers do not expect the pope to get involved in the nitty-gritty of these economic and political problems. Instead, they said that the pope

will give overall guidelines for solving sticky issues, stressing the need to achieve regional justice and peace through dialogue and reconciliation.

Father Jerumanis said that while Russia is pressuring over the ethnic issue, "in everyday life there are no tensions between Latvians and Russians" in Latvia.

The pope also said Aug. 22 that the trip is an excellent opportunity to stress ecumenism as a main component of church rebuilding and should be seen as a stimulus for "intensifying dialogue" among the predominantly Catholic, Lutheran and Orthodox populations.

A meeting with ecumenical leaders is planned in all three countries.

The pope will be in Latvia Sept. 8-9 and in Estonia Sept. 10.

Catholics represent almost 25 percent of Latvia's 2.7 million inhabitants. Lutherans number about the same. Orthodoxy is the other main religion.

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