

Pope to beatify Mother Teresa

Cindy Wooden/CNS

VATICAN CITY — Many nations will have official delegations at the Oct. 19 beatification of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, but members of the Missionaries of Charity are focusing their attention on a less formal group of special guests.

Seats at the ceremony in St. Peter's Square already have been reserved for 3,000 men, women and children who eat or sleep at the soup kitchens and shelters in Rome run by members of the order founded by Mother Teresa.

Immediately after the Oct. 19 Mass, the guests will be served lunch in the Vatican's audience hall.

The beatification is "a celebration to give glory to God for what he has done through Mother Teresa," said Missionaries of Charity Father Brian Kolodiejchuk, promoter of her cause. "Mother Teresa does not need our applause Oct. 19."

Working in temporary offices set up in the Missionaries' Rome shelter for homeless men, the priest said the Missionaries of Charity hope the be-

atification will cause a "ripple effect," reminding the world of the call to serve God in the poor.

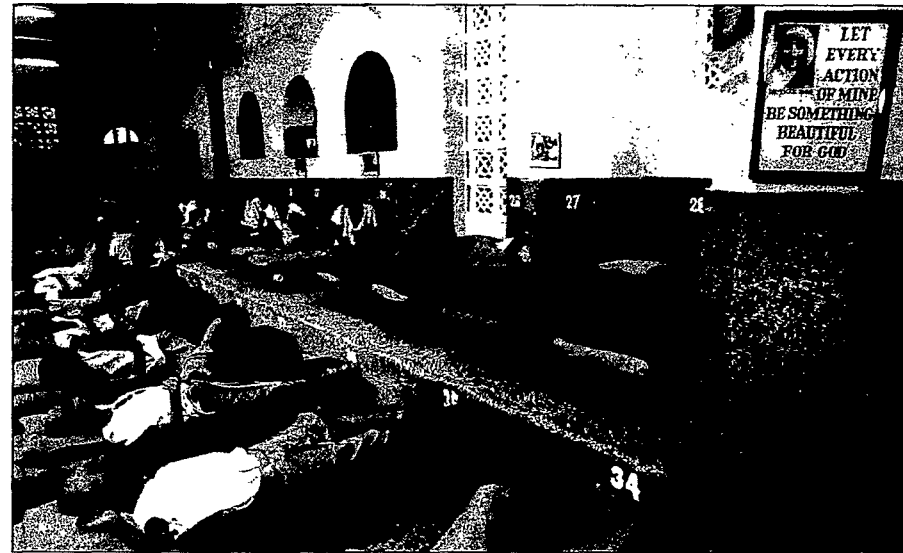
And while the tiny nun in her blue-trimmed sari would have had to force herself to smile in the midst of such attention when she was alive, "she has a different perspective now," the priest said.

"She just wanted to be a pencil in God's hands," he said. "She used to say, 'God uses nothingness to show his greatness,'" and the Oct. 19 ceremony should be focused on faith in him.

The beatification will take place on World Mission Sunday, a day Pope John Paul II usually dedicates to highlighting the Christian obligation to explicitly proclaim salvation in Christ.

While there is no doubt Mother Teresa was a "missionary" of charity and never hid her Catholic faith, winning converts to Catholicism was not the first focus of her work, Father Kolodiejchuk said.

"She wanted to proclaim the Gospel not with words, but by being a light, a radiance of God's pres-



Reuters/CNS

The words of Mother Teresa hang in a frame at the Nirmal Hriday Home for Dying Destitutes in Calcutta, India, Sept. 24. Pope John Paul II will beatify Mother Teresa at the Vatican Oct. 19.

ence," he said.

The ceremony, Father Kolodiejchuk said, is not the result of a popularity contest or the universal Catholic Church's posthumous recognition of Mother Teresa's work — a Catholic version of her 1979 Nobel Peace Prize.


"People really had a sense that she was holy," he said.

Father Kolodiejchuk said he believes it was no coincidence that Pope John Paul decided to preside over the beatification as part of the


celebration of his 25th anniversary as pope.

The pope's preaching on the dignity of the human person, the value of every human life, the Christian obligation of solidarity and the central role of Christian activity nourished by prayer and the Eucharist were echoed in Mother Teresa's life, Father Kolodiejchuk said.

In the end, he said, "People are fulfilled and happy when they love God and are focused outward like Mother Teresa and Pope John Paul."



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