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## Saints and Orphans

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# **Journals from Jan Term Health Care in India**

## **2011-01-15 Saints and orphans**

Why hello Linfield students and fellow readers alike! Our trip to India is going exceptionally well and we are learning things that words could not express. That one must see to understand. One of the shining stars of the trip so far was a day spent in Kolkata at Mother Teresa's home: the Mother House, and the associated orphanage.

The morning of our visit I contemplated the great opportunity our group had been given to be able to visit these world famous sites. We walked off the bus and down an alley to the Mother House and mother Teresa's humble dwelling. We were able to see her room with her meager belongings and there were other Sisters about the premises hosting visitors, singing heart breaking hymns, and going about daily chores. We walked through a room where Mother Teresa's life work was displayed in chronological order. From a young age she felt called to a life dedicated to carrying out God's will. She felt called to help the poor by living among them. She reached out to people suffering from leprosy, people living in slums, gypsies, and children. Over her 87 years of life she gave wholeheartedly to those in need all over the world wherever there was need. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 for her global services. During our visit we were able to see a glimpse the depth of Mother Teresa's charity and the width of her compassion and love. She is buried at the Mother House and the sign in front of the establishment I felt touched on a spiritual level and the grounds felt as if there was holiness in our midst.

After visiting the Mother House we went over to the orphanage Mother Teresa started. We visited toddlers who came right up to us and hugged us and willingly gave uninhibited affection the way only young children can. They smiled, they babbled, they danced and clapped... We visited young school-age children who were too shy to give more than a wave from across the room. We visited children who were disabled and who's parent could no longer manage their care who were surrounded by gracious volunteers who gave them much needed attention and helped them with their physical therapy.

This experience gave me a new appreciation for my health, my physical ability, and the circumstances which I have been born into that have afforded me a relatively worry-free life. It has also reignited a desire to use my Nursing degree to help those who are in greatest want. These organizations have shown me that it is indeed possible to make a change and I again [as cliché, new graduate, dreamer, American as it is] ache to change the world one little act at a time.

Mother Teresa said: "God created us so we do small things with great love"

Namaste ["the divinity in me acknowledges the divinity in you"]

Brooke Carstensen