

**Mother Teresa**  
by  
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Like many others, I was saddened by the death of Mother Teresa a couple weeks ago. Her life had a profound impact on my choice to be Catholic. Therefore, I decided making time to watch some of her funeral would be a good way to pay my respects. There was one small problem. I love football. And football was being televised at the same time as the tape delayed funeral. Thus I found myself flipping the channels back and forth between Mother Teresa and a football game.

During the game, a large defensive lineman for the good guys executed a perfect blind-side sack, violently driving down the quarterback's crumpled body. He then popped up to his feet, razed his eyes skyward and pointed his finger in the air in what I loosely construed as an act of faith. At that point, I didn't care if he faced Apollo and saluted Sasquatch. It was cool with me because my team was winning. I then merrily flicked back to the funeral only to find sobering footage of Mother Teresa picking up filthy, dying people. "How can anyone do that," I murmured from my comfortable chair with a beer on my right side and my football roster on my left. I flicked back to the football game. After a series of plays, the bad guys scored. I flicked back to the funeral.

The broadcasters were babbling about whether Mother Teresa would be beatified and then cannonized as a saint in the Catholic church before the regular waiting period (whatever that was). I soon became annoyed with their trivializing notions. They were talking about her like she was going to be inducted in heaven's hall of fame for a selfless life performance. "Couldn't they see their hypocrisy. God didn't need them tripping all over each other with their words to elevate themselves in the ears of their listeners," I mumbled.

I flicked back to the football game. The bad guys recovered a fumble and on the following play had completed a long bomb. What a drag. I flicked back to the funeral. Mother Teresa was moving severely handicapped children out of a home in Beirut while the camera shook as the area was literally bombed. One little boy had such a terrible disorder, he couldn't stop shaking. He was also malnourished. He looked like a skeleton.

I gazed down at my bloated gut as this uncomfortable feeling began to overtake me. I fought the feeling and flicked back to the football game. This was better. The good guys were winning. I had paid my respects to Mother. Besides, my mind needed the relaxation from such a taxing week.

Then it happened again. A football player who scored a touchdown got down on one knee and bowed his head in reverence to his God. This kind of Christianity was cool. The good guys were winning. But this time I wasn't jumping up and down. There was something wrong with my picture. Mother Teresa's Christianity began eating away at me.

I flicked back to Mother Teresa putting bandages on lepers. Yuck! This kind of Christianity was not cool. It was hideous. It was disgusting. It was repulsive. But most of all, it was disturbing. It disturbed the nice, little, happy system of faith I was trying to live.

"I don't need this conscience crisis on my day off," I told myself. I flicked back to the football game. The game had begun to lose it's appeal. I flicked back to the funeral. The broadcasters announced that Hillary Clinton was representing the United States. Ugh!!! I flicked back to the football game. The good guys were winning but I didn't seem to care any more. Something crummy was bothering me. In a moment of conviction, I turned off the television, got down on my knees and put my face in my hands.

On the surface, Mother Teresa looked like the biggest loser. I wanted to be a winner. "Christianity is not cool Ray," said this voice as I prayed. "Ok God," I answered. "Let me not wear Christianity for display. Help me to work tirelessly for others and be a winner like Mother Teresa."



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