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Mother Teresa School celebrates namesake's postage stamp

By David Eck

ST. ANDREW DEANERY — It's not often that a school's namesake is honored with a U.S. postage stamp, but the students at Mother Teresa Catholic Elementary School celebrated that special occurrence last week.

The 44-cent stamp was unveiled at the school during an hour-long ceremony Sept. 7, the first day it was widely available. It was issued Sept. 5 during a special ceremony at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The stamp features a portrait of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta painted by Colorado artist Thomas Blackshear II.

Retired Cincinnati Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk encouraged the students to imitate Mother Teresa in their own lives.

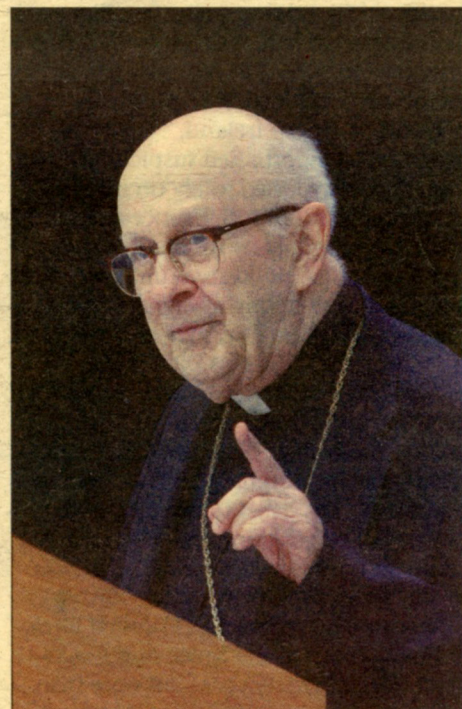
"Be like Mother Teresa," he said. "Look after those who she looked after and you'll do okay."

The private elementary school opened for the 1998-99 school year after being formed by a group of parents. The founders were inspired by Mother Teresa when it came to naming the new school, said Sister of the Precious Blood Anne Schulz, principal of Mother Teresa School.

"They valued the attributes of Mother Teresa and wanted someone that you students could relate to and a role model for the rest of your lives," Sister Anne said, addressing the students at the unveiling. "What the parents and your parents see so important in Mother Teresa is her love and respect for everyone. Her deep commitment to Jesus . . . motivated her whole life. Mother [Teresa] was loved by



Middletown Postmaster Greg Engel and Precious Blood Sister Anne Schulz unveil the 44 cent stamp. At right, retired Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk of Cincinnati was among the special guests at Mother Teresa School for the local unveiling.



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everyone, the rich, the poor. She was respected by everyone."

Sister Anne went on to explain that she met Mother Teresa herself and witnessed her love firsthand. Blessed Mother Teresa lived in our time, spoke our language and was touched by the modern convenience, all of which shows that people of today can become saints, she said.

"She found ways to help her fellow men, to uplift them from their poverty," Sister Anne said. "She also showed us that we must respect everyone, even those that most people would like to pretend didn't exist."

Sister of Charity Kathryn Ann Connelly, the former superintendent of schools for the Cincinnati archdiocese, attended the stamp unveiling. She was an early supporter of the parents who founded the school and was instrumental in its creation. Current school superintendent James Rigg and Mary Henninger, assistant superintendent, joined Sister Kathryn Ann at the event.

Other guests included members of the Ohio Legislature and area postmasters.

"Today we honor Mother Teresa who received her Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 for her humanitarian work," said Middletown Postmaster Greg Engel. "Noted for her compassion toward the poor and suffering, Mother Teresa served the destitute of India and the world for nearly 50 years."

He said millions of the stamps were made available across the country and postal officials expect the stamp to be extremely popular during the Christmas season. Collectors will also be interested in the stamp. Mother Teresa School students received a special envelope with the stamp and cancellation. These envelopes are also available at the school for pur-



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Students at Mother Teresa School gathered for the unveiling.

chase by the public.

During the school celebration, students presented posters describing Mother Teresa's work and sayings. They also sang and prayed.

"Ironically, the last thing Mother Teresa would have ever wanted is any sort of event that would force people to, as she would often say, 'Think more of me and less of Jesus,'" said Alex Schuster, assistant principal at the school. "Many of our students here at Mother Teresa Catholic Elementary School have taken up the task of finding key ideals, efforts and statements from the life of service exhibited by Mother Teresa."

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*'Be like Mother
Teresa. Look after
those who she
looked after and
you'll do okay.'*

— Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk



CNS PHOTO/BOB ROLLER

In Washington, women attend a Mass in honor of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Following the Mass, the U.S. Postal Service unveiled a stamp of Mother Teresa.