

COMMUNITY

39 Million Hugs and Counting – Amma Visits US, Toronto

NewsUSA

(NU) - Mata Amritanandamayi, or Amma, as she is called, is a world-renowned humanitarian and spiritual leader whose life of service has inspired millions of people to help others.

Saddened by the poverty she saw around her in rural India as a young girl, she resolved to improve the lives of the needy, sharing whatever she had with them and consoling them with a motherly hug. Since then Amma has embraced more than 39 million people across the globe, inspiring a global network of charities known as Embracing the World along the way.

Inspired by Amma's dedication and tireless service, Embracing the World volunteers throughout North America serve more than 150,000 meals to the homeless and hungry each year and conduct other charitable projects.

Amma is one of the most accessible humanitarian and spiritual leaders in history. She has visited the U.S. yearly for more than 32 years, and while here, she spends a remarkable 12 to 15 hours with the public every day. In each city, Amma gives talks, leads prayers for world peace, gives one-on-one advice, and embraces the people who come to see her. People of all faiths and walks of life attend Amma's programs, viewing Amma as a source of inspiration and solace as well as a model of hope, love, and selfless service in these difficult times. Whenever she is asked about her religion, Amma replies, "My religion is love."

Amma has been honored with several international awards, in-



cluding the prestigious Gandhi-King Award for Non-Violence, the James Parks Morton Interfaith Award, and the Cinema Verité Award for humanitarian and human rights work.

In December of 2014, Amma joined Pope Francis and 10 other global spiritual leaders from a range of faiths to sign the Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery.

Upon presenting Amma with the Gandhi-King Award for Non-Violence at the United Nations in 2002, renowned primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall said, "I believe (Amma) stands here before us, God's love in a human body."

Amma is touring North America this summer from June 6, 2019, through July 18, 2019, with free public programs in 11 cities, including Seattle, San Ramon, Los Angeles, Santa Fe, Dallas, Atlanta, Boston, New York City, DC, Chicago, and Toronto. For dates, locations and any additional information, visit www.amma.org. Each city has programs that are free of charge and open to all.