

Charles de Foucauld, was born in France in the late 1800's. Orphaned at the age of 6, he and his sister Marie were sent to live with their grandfather. In his teen years, Charles abandoned his catholic faith and decided to see the world. In his twenties he undertook a risky and heroic exploration of Morocco for the French Geographical Society. After this adventure he returned home to share the stories of his adventure with his family. At some point in his storytelling, it is said that his youngest niece looked at him and asked what he had done for God while he was doing all of that work for France?

That question burned inside the twenty eight year olds mind and it initiated a quest to rediscover the presence of God in his life. It led to this mantra that Charles prayed every day, "My God, if you exist, let me come to you."

Several years later after a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the now forty three year old Charles was ordained a priest. He decided to make a simple life for himself in Nazareth. Legend has it that one day Charles was interrupted during his prayers by a person who had been abandoned and left to die on the street. With the help of grace, Charles questioned whether he had the right to commune with God alone while his brothers and sisters were left alone to die. This question led to another spiritual search which took him to Algeria where he lived a contemplative lifestyle among the poor. It was here where he founded the Little Brothers and Little Sisters who to this day model Christ by living with the poorest of the poor all over the world.

Charles once wrote, “The whole of our existence, the whole of our lives should cry the gospel from the rooftops...not by our words but by our lives.”

As we listen to Jesus tell the story of the Prodigal son in our gospel today, we can see how easy it is to walk away from our father in pursuit of worldly things. When this world leaves us destitute and down we can always return to our father who is waiting for us ready to bring us back into the family. With the healing power of reconciliation we can turn our hearts around and focus on helping other brothers and sisters who are in need of spiritual, physical and mental help;

It seems a good time to stress the power of stewardship in the life of a parish. If we adopt the time, treasure, talent mindset in our faith life we can see the opportunities that are available to all of us when it comes to

sharing our faith. It becomes more than just words,  
promises and lip service. Instead our faith becomes visible,  
inspiring, and concrete .

Consider this reflection on the power of Stewardship:

My church is composed of people like me.  
I help make it what it is.

It will be friendly if I am.  
Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them.  
It will do great work, if I work.

It will make generous gifts to many causes,  
if I am a generous giver.

It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship,  
If I invite and bring them.

It will be a church of loyalty and love,  
Of fearlessness and faith,  
And a church with a noble spirit,  
If I, who make it what it is,  
Am filled with these same things.  
Therefore, with the help of God,  
I shall dedicate myself to the task  
of being all the things that  
I want my church to be.