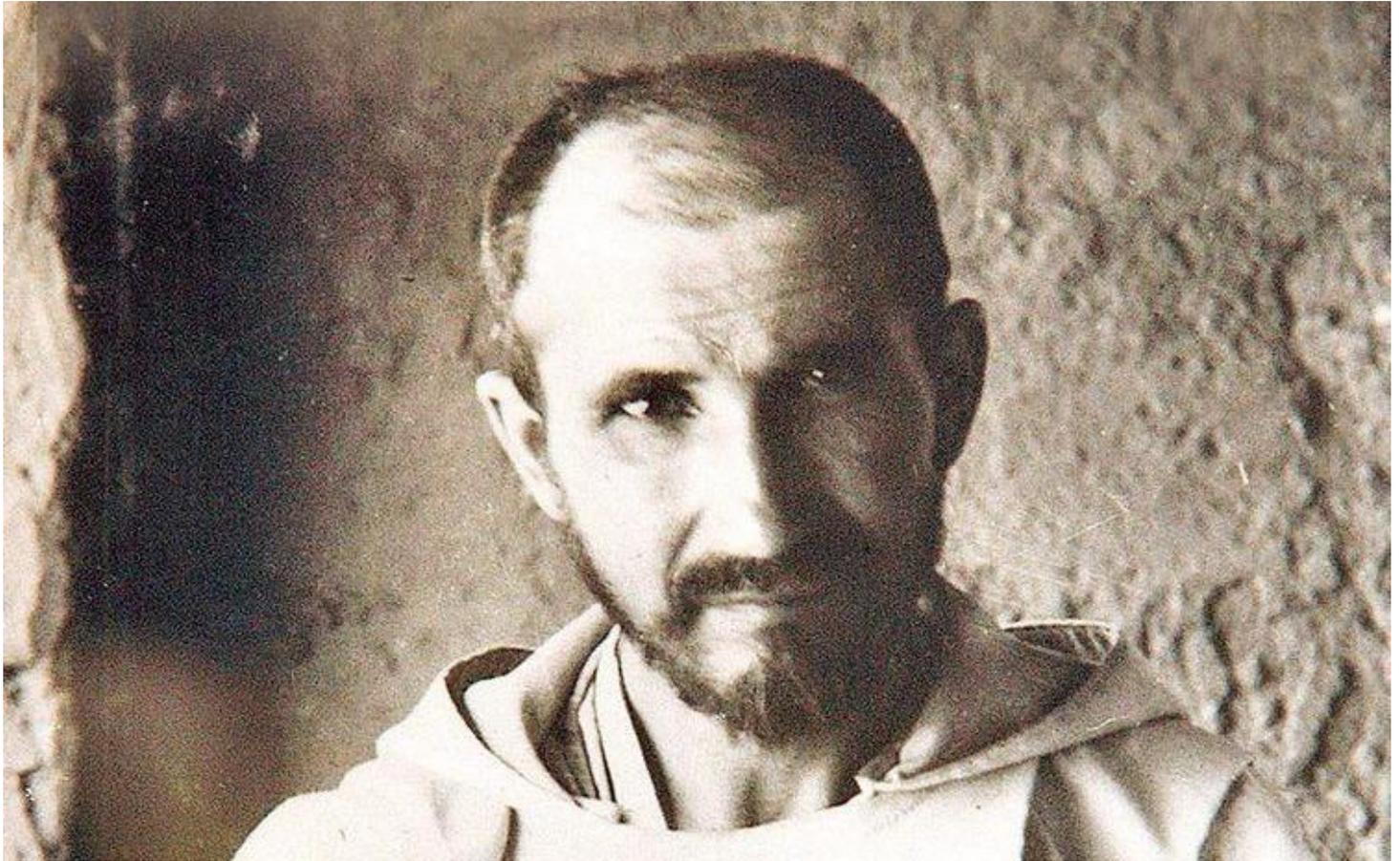


**Wednesday 1 December 2021**

# Charles de Foucauld



Charles Eugene, Viscount of Foucauld, was born in 1858. He served as a French Army officer in Algeria beginning in 1881. He helped map the oases in Morocco in 1883. In 1886 he underwent a religious conversion and, in 1890, joined a Trappist monastery. He soon left to become a solitary hermit in Palestine. He went to Algeria in 1901 and eventually settled at Tamanrasset where he lived the life of a missionary priest and prepared a Taureg dictionary.

He was killed in an anti-French uprising on 1 December 1916, by those who said that his goodness tended to create friendly feelings toward the French.

**Sermon** © Revd Dr Monk.

**Liturgy and prayers of intercession** © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

**Bible readings** © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,  
<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

## Introduction and welcome

**HYMN 1 All my hope on God is founded**      (click on this link to hear the hymn)

### The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

**All    Amen.**

The Lord be with you

**All    And also with you.**

### The Preparation

**All    Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, with all your mind,  
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

**All    Amen. Lord, have mercy.**

The saints were faithful unto death

and now dwell in the heavenly kingdom for ever.

As we celebrate their joy,

let us bring to the Lord our sins and weaknesses,  
and ask for his mercy.

**All**    **Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name.  
Amen.**

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All**    **Amen.**

## **The Gloria**

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

**All**    **Glory be to God in Heaven,  
Songs of joy and peace we bring,  
Thankful hearts and voices raising,  
To creation's Lord we sing.  
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,  
Glory be to God our King:  
Glory be to God our King.**

**Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,  
Bore the load of this world's sin;  
Only Son of God the Father,  
You have brought us peace within.  
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,**

**Now your glorious reign begin:  
Now your glorious reign begin.**

**You O Son of God are Holy,  
You we praise with one accord.  
None in heav'n or earth is like you,  
Only you are Christ the Lord.  
With the Father and the Spirit,  
Ever worshipped and adored:  
Ever worshipped and adored.**

### **The Collect for the Charles de Foucauld**

Loving God,  
who restored the Christian faith of Charles de Foucauld  
through an encounter with Islam in North Africa  
and sustained him in the desert  
where he converted many with his witness of presence:  
Help us to know you wherever we find you,  
that with him, we may be faithful unto death;  
through Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All Amen.**

### **First reading**

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

For all people who were ignorant of God were foolish by nature;  
and they were unable from the good things that are seen to know the one who exists,  
nor did they recognize the artisan while paying heed to his works;  
but they supposed that either fire or wind or swift air,  
or the circle of the stars, or turbulent water,  
or the luminaries of heaven were the gods that rule the world.

If through delight in the beauty of these things people assumed them to be gods,  
let them know how much better than these is their Lord,  
for the author of beauty created them.

And if people were amazed at their power and working,  
let them perceive from them  
how much more powerful is the one who formed them.

For from the greatness and beauty of created things  
comes a corresponding perception of their Creator. *Wisdom 13:1-5*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## **Second reading**

A reading from the Letter of St James

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

*James 1:2-4,12*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 Bless the Lord my soul**      (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

## **Gospel reading**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

Jesus said, 'I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures, but will tell you plainly of the Father. On that day you will ask in my name. I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father.'

His disciples said, 'Yes, now you are speaking plainly, not in any figure of speech! Now we know that you know all things, and do not need to have anyone question you; by this we believe that you came from God.' Jesus answered them, 'Do you now believe? The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!'

*John 16:25-33*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

The catechism of the *Book of Common Prayer* defines a sacrament as, 'An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, in us.' The idea is simple enough: we do something in our visible, constrained-to-be physical world. This action behaves like a signpost and points beyond itself to something that is invisible to the human eye because it occurs in the spiritual domain. That 'something' is just as real as that which occurs in the physical world. In a sense, it's more real because it has the capacity to be carried into our afterlife and become eternal.

Conceptually, a baptism is possibly the simplest of the sacraments. During a baptism service, someone (maybe a priest) pours water over a person's skin. That's the 'outward and visible' part. The water symbolically washes the skin in an action that mimics the spiritual process the ceremony is intended to enact—the 'inward and spiritual part.'. The washing points beyond itself and says the person is cleansed in a spiritual sense. That cleansing is so radical that the liturgy talks of 'new life' and 'new birth.' It's the precondition for God to enter that person's soul.

The Church recognises other sacraments. For example, we consume bread and wine in the Eucharist. This intake points beyond itself and tells us that we are doing something that is spiritually nourishing. The act of consuming and the result have this in common: they both describe feeding, first physical and then spiritual.

But there are other sacraments. Holy Church talks of marriage, ordination, confession, extreme unction, and so on. A great many others have been suggested. For example, the seventeenth-century French spiritual writer de Caussade coined the term 'the sacrament of the present moment.' By this phrase, he meant that any act of waiting for something can be dedicated to God and becomes a resting in Him.

Every act of Christian love has the capacity to be a sacrament. Scripture insists that God is love. That idea is stated most explicitly in 1 John 4 but it permeates everything. Acts of love are visible because love is a doing word, an outrageously potent verb that is acted out in our physical world. Love can be seen—it's outward and visible. But that act of love also helps instil something of God who, remember, is love. God is the power that motivates and achieves the act of love. Any act motivated by love has therefore pointed beyond itself to tell something of God.

The dual command to love God and love our neighbour encapsulates the concept of love as a Christian sacrament. Loving our neighbour is the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual love of a God who is love.

This concept is illustrated most clearly in a parable recounted in Matthew's Gospel. There, Jesus tell a parable about judgement that sometimes call 'the parable of the sheep and goats'. The important kernel of the parable's message is that when we act lovingly in response to human need, we actually do it for Jesus. As

Jesus says at the 'punchline' of the story, 'That which you did for the least of these, you did it for me' (Matthew 25:40).

Viewed sacramentally, then, love becomes motive and motive illustrates love. They entangle in a ravishing and interconnected case of cause and effect. We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19) and we love because He commands us to (John 13:34 and Matthew 22:37-40).

The so-called 'de Foucauld movement' involves a person living in the midst of a local community. It could be Oldham. They seek to love their neighbour as they love themselves. They seek to share the love of God and show God by that love. This form of life is evangelistic but it does not involve preaching. Rather, it follows Francis of Assisi's idea of 'Preaching but only using words if absolutely necessary.'

This way of living is powerful. And it works because a great many people want to believe in God. They want to see him but often look in all the wrong places. They therefore need the sacrament of love. They need disciples like us to love them in a Christlike way. When we do so, our love is clearly visible but, God is at work below the person's 'spiritual radar' and enters and heals and cleanses and nourishes and, yes, loves them. Perhaps, to paraphrase the *Book of Common Prayer*, 'Love is an outward and spiritual sign of His inward and spiritual love in us.'

## The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
the source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God  
and makes Christ known in the world?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**All This is our faith.**

**We believe and trust in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

**Amen.**

## Prayers of intercession

We pray for strength to follow Jesus.

Saviour, we hear your call.

**All Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**All Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Unless you change  
and become humble like little children,  
you can never enter the kingdom of heaven.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**All Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Happy are the humble;  
they will receive what God has promised.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**All Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Be merciful as your Father is merciful;  
love your enemies and do good to them.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**All Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Love one another, as I love you;  
there is no greater love than this,  
to lay down your life for your friends.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**All Help us to follow.**

Jesus said: 'Go to people everywhere  
and make them my disciples,  
and I will be with you always, to the end of time.'

Saviour, we hear your call.

**All Help us to follow.**

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

## The peace

Once we were far off,  
but now in union with Christ Jesus we have been brought near through the  
shedding of Christ's blood,  
for he is our peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

**All And also with you.**

**HYMN 3 And can it be?**

[\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

## The Dismissal

May Christ who makes saints of sinners,  
who has transformed those we remember today,  
raise and strengthen you that you may transform the world;  
and the blessing of God the Almighty:  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be with you now and remain with you always.

**All Amen.**

**HYMN 4 Christ triumphant**

[\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All In the name of Christ. Amen.**

# The Liturgy of the Sacrament

## Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right and good,

our duty and our salvation,

always and everywhere to give you thanks,

holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For following the example of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,

your holy martyr Charles de Foucauld shed his blood for the glory of your name.

His death reveals your power made perfect in our human frailty.

You choose the weak and make them strong

in bearing witness to you

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

With joyful hearts we echo on earth

the song of the angels in heaven

as they praise your glory without end:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,

through Jesus Christ, our Lord;

and as we obey his command,

send your Holy Spirit,

that broken bread and wine outpoured

may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,  
help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with Charles de Foucauld and all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ  
which he gave for you,  
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts  
by faith with thanksgiving.

**All** We do not presume  
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your manifold and great mercies.  
We are not worthy  
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.  
But you are the same Lord  
whose nature is always to have mercy.  
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body  
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him,  
and he in us. Amen.

Communion is distributed.

### **Prayer after Communion**

Eternal God,  
who gave us this holy meal  
in which we have celebrated the glory of the cross  
and the victory of your martyr Charles de Foucauld:  
by our communion with Christ  
in his saving death and resurrection,  
give us with all your saints the courage to conquer evil  
and so to share the fruit of the tree of life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All** Amen

**All** Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.