

CHARLES DE FOUCAULD
Hermit and African Explorer

by Rene Bazin, trans. by Peter Kohn

Charles Eugene de Foucauld, whose history I shall try to relate, was born at Strasbourg on September 15, 1858. p.1

In him two sentiments which might call the past to life survived-- respect for the priest and most tender attachment to the family. Nay, more, he had a taste for reading. p.6

"When you start with saying what you are going to do you must not come back without having done it..." p.55

Holiness is the most powerful attraction for drawing souls together. p.67

"Let us be sad, but let us thank God for our sadness." p. 76

"I must get strength from my weakness, employ this weakness itself for God, thank Him for this suffering and offer it to Him...I ask Him from the bottom of my heart to increase my suffering if I can bear a heavier load, so that it may afford Him a little more compensation and do His children a little more good; that He may diminish it if it is not for His glory and according to His will, but I am sure it is the will of Him who wept for Lazars..." p.80

"There is more strength in my words than in my heart." p.81

"I have nothing to bear; He bears all." p.82

"The faithful thought of Him and of those I love...forms my life." p.87.

"Thy happiness suffices me." p.88

"Let us pray for each other, in order to be faithful to what God desires from us each in our own lives. They appear very different, but it is only in the appearance; when God makes the foundation of life as it ought to be, all lives resemble each other, the rest is of little importance." p.90

The ceremony of Brother Marie-Alveric's religious profession took place on Candlemas Day, February 2, 1892. p.90

"Think no more about it," was substantially the prior's reply, "and wait in peace, for the good God, if it comes from Him will well know how to provide the occasion." p.95

"It is the happiness of the country to be able to surround ourselves with all those we love...to have always round us those we love, this indeed is sweet.. Why did I go so far away, you will say to me, if I feel this happiness so keenly? I have in no wise sought joy, I have sought to follow 'by the odour of His perfumes' Jesus, who, has loved us so much...and if I have found my delight in following Him, it is without having sought it. But this delight does not prevent me from feeling profoundly the sorrow of being separated from all these I love.

LOVE

"The opportunity of offering a sacrifice to God--that is still the greatest blessing, the only true one there is in life, the one which unites us most to our blessed Saviour--When one loves, what is sweeter than to give something to the beloved; above all, to give Him something to which we are attached, to suffer for love of Him, to give Him all our heart's blood?" p.102

"If there are two persons on earth who should speak only of God, are they not we in whose friendship there is nothing terrestrial? Let our conversation be, then, that of the angels, my dearest Father But whilst the angels have tongues of gold and hearts of fire, we stammer and are lukewarm! let us do what we can.. that will be a reason for helping each other, for praying much for one another, for loving each other all the more because we are weaker, for having to sustain one another from afar, in order to follow, like our Lord, the sorrowful way which He has shown us; "Take up your cross and follow Me." p.103

"Consult your director in everything, above everything, even little things. I tell you this because I was always the better for doing so, and the worse for doing otherwise; I wish you to profit by my experience. This habit of asking what one should do, even in little things, has a thousand good effects; it gives peace; it accustoms you to conquer yourself; it makes you look upon the things of this earth as nothing; it gets one to make a host of acts of love; to obey is to love; it is the purest, the most perfect, the highest, the most disinterested, the most adoring act of love, it makes one, especially at first, perform not a few acts of mortification...p.104

"There is no vocation in the world as great as a priest's; and in truth, it is not of the world, it is, even here, of heaven..The priest is something TRANSCENDENT, exceeding all...What a vocation, my dear Brother, and how much I praise God for having given it to you...p.108

"BLESSED ARE THE POOR: that is the beatitude I want. I have already been offered a corner where I believe my soul will be well. In any case, He who assigns each leaf its place can put me in mine."

"My God, how good Thou art to have shattered all around me, to have so reduced to nothing all that would have prevented me from being Thine alone!" p.124

They also wondered at the joy which they detected in this homeless man, without relations, riches, and without position. p.128

He would have liked the desert; at any rate he found out and made himself a solitude everywhere. p. 139

"Jesus did not lie down at full length on the Cross." p.153

"Unintentionally, I have certainly invented a new air." p.159

"Alas! I am so cold that I dare not say I love; but, I want to love! That is why I love watching, Unhappily, less and less am I able to watch..." p.185

"Every time I pray to Jesus, the same answer seems to come back; 'Do miracles for Me, and I will do them for thee'..." p.189

"Speak much and always so as to improve and uplift and bring souls nearer to God, and prepare the ground for the Gospel." p.189

"When people are sitting conversation more easily takes a serious and intimate turn." p.189

"While evangelizing the poor, do not neglect the rich." p.190

"If we are holy, that will be preaching without words, and strengthening our authority." p. 190

Father de Caussade's doctrine; "The present moment is always like an ambassador, declaring God's command. All our learning consists in recognizing His command in the present moment." p.202

"Dread is the sign of duty." p. 210

"How long will it be before their feelings are what they pretend to be? Perhaps they will never be." p.223

"Jesus chooses for each the kind of suffering which He sees best suited to sanctify him, and often the cross He imposes is the one that we would have refused had we dared, while accepting all the rest. The one He gives is the one that we least understand..." p. 228

"Should we dare have hope if God did not make it our duty?" p.228

"One can, in this life, only embrace Jesus by embracing His Cross.

"Prayer and penance! The farther I go, the more I see that these are the principal means of acting on these poor souls. What am I doing in the midst of them?" p.262

Proverb; Part your tents, bring your hearts together. p.279

Proverb; Living people often meet. p.279

"To work more directly for the one end; to see more people, and to give more time to prayer and spiritual reading." p.281

Simplified rosary for the use of infidels. At the beginning they would make an act of charity, and then, in any language, say on the little beads; "My God, I love Thee"; and on the big beads; My God I love Thee with my whole heart!" p.282

"Laughing puts the person who is talking to you in a good humour; it draws men closer together, allows them to understand each other better; it sometimes brightens gloomy character, it is a charity."

"Not mixing with them, but on the edge, not to be in the way, but ready to receive them should they wish to come." p.286

"Yes, Jisus is enough; where He is, nothing lacks. However dear be those in whom His likeness shines, it is He who is all. He is all in time and in eternity." p.293

"The soul is not made for noise, but for meditation, and life ought to be a preparation for heaven--not only by meritorious works, but by peace and recollection in God." p.297

"They can receive the Gospel only by authority, and the authority necessary to make them adopt it and reject all they know, love and venerate can only be acquired after long and intimate contact, by great virtue and God's blessing." p.3200

Civilization "consists of two things; education and gentleness."

"...to establish contact, to make themselves loved, to inspire esteem, trust and friendship." p.307

"The apostolate of kindness is the best of all." p.313

"You can do good only when you know and are known." p.313

"Much patience and gentleness." p.313

"To cease believing what one has always believed, what one has always seen believed around one, what is believed by all whom one loves and respects--this is difficult." p.316

"If only I might serve!" p.322

"We are in the hands of God; nothing happens except what He permits." p.327

"How good God is to hide the future from us! What a torture life would be were it less unknown to us! and how good He is to make so clearly known to us the heaven hereafter which will follow our earthly time of trial!" p.336

"God had only made him for sowing. P. 339

As Christians we should give an example of self-sacrifice and devotion. It is a principle to which we must be faithful all our life, in simplicity, without asking ourselves whether pride does not enter into our conduct; it is our duty, let us do it, and ask the well-beloved Spouse of our soul that we may do it." p.338

He died on the first Friday of December, the day consecrated to the Sacred Heart, and in the manner that he wished. p. 346

Pray for us, dear Little Brother!