

May 1, 2025

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

TAMANRASSET SOJOURN

By Julie Mussché

A Quote

"It is not necessary to teach others, to cure them or to improve them; it is only necessary to live among them, sharing the human condition and being present to them in love."

BLESSED CHARLES DE FOUCAULD

Reflection

Our group of traveling nomads entered the new year of 1979 laying over in Tamanrasset. The stop offered a day and a half respite in a hotel with a shower, a bed and restaurant. Absolutely fabulous after over a week on the road.

Tamanrasset, or Tam as it is referred to by Sahara enthusiasts, is an oasis city in the middle of the Sahara, a significant point along the traditional camel

caravan route. One of the big items of transport was salt, which was used to preserve food as well as considered a regional delicacy. Tam is also a center of Touareg culture and surrounded by one of the most starkly beautiful landscapes on the planet. It was the place where the Blessed Charles de Foucauld lived out his ministry of inclusive love until he was martyred by gun violence in 1916.

For me, this was my point of destination on our Trans-Sahara journey. I had studied both the physical and cultural geography of the area in preparation, and was familiar with the cosmological significance of the mountains to the Touareg. Prior to checking into the hotel, we spent a half day exploring the Hoggar Mountains, a mountainous plateau stricken of vegetation and intersected by volcanic extrusions. Following this adventure, we checked into the hotel, cleaned up, and made our way down to the sitting area to relax and people-watch before dinner.

All of a sudden, we heard what sounded like the 405 freeway on a Friday afternoon. We ran to the look and were surprised to see an armada of cars, motorcycles and trucks roar into town. It was beginning to look a lot like Glamis. We discovered it was the inaugural Paris-to-Dakar car rally. The quiet desert hamlet soon erupted with excitement and multi-lingual conversations.

What an unexpected convergence of humanity and celebration of nomad community. There was story sharing among people, particularly about vehicles, and some folks sat down to chat over cool drinks. People mingled, freed by their delight in each other.

There is something sacred about the gathering of strangers and the divinely inspired curiosity energizing the quest for familiarity. Such a blessing, to be invited into the life of another, even for just a moment. As the Blessed Charles de Foucauld reminds us, “Above all, always see Jesus in every person, and consequently, treat each one not only as an equal and as a brother or sister, but also with great humility, respect and selfless generosity.”



Multiracial Group of People by the Table
Photo by Diva Plavalaguna

For Pondering

- Where have you encountered the blessing of a community of strangers?
 - How has the Sacred been manifested in that encounter?
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For Prayer

*Father,
I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me,
and in all your creatures –
I wish no more than this, O Lord.
Into your hands I commend my soul:
I offer it to you with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord, and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father.*

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