

6 ways kids can learn from Blessed Father Stanley Rother

On Sept. 23, Oklahoma-native [Father Stanley Rother](#) was beatified, the second of three steps to sainthood. The first martyr born in the United States, he was murdered in 1981 after being falsely accused of getting involved in the dangerous and violent political conflict there. Father Rother grew up on a family farm and liked getting his hands dirty. Not the best student, he almost didn't become a priest because of his challenges with learning Latin. But he had a great way with making friends, and he used his farming skills to help the poor farming communities of Guatemala. Despite his troubles with Latin, he learned two languages to become part of the community there. He tended to the sick, taught the community about Jesus and helped them build an irrigation system to support better crop production. He knew if he stayed in Guatemala that he was risking his life, but he refused to abandon his community.

How can Father Rother's example inspire us to be extraordinary?

Archbishop Paul S. Coakly of Oklahoma City told Catholic News Service that Father Stanley knew barely any Spanish before he joined the mission in Guatemala. He was also pretty young – only 33 years old. But he used his agricultural skills and ability to make quick friends to dramatically help the poor. Here are some ways to help us remember that God has given us ordinary people special gifts to be extraordinary for others.

1. Learn about the many ordinary men and women who became saints by clicking through Saints for Kids and Playing with the Saints.
2. Watch this inspiring [trailer for a documentary](#) on Father Stanley.

3. At the end of the day, think about ways that you might have used your talents to help someone. Did you give extra attention to a lonely classmate? Did you speak up for someone that needed extra support? Did you help out your coach, teacher, mom or dad to make their day a little easier? Ordinary deeds can make an extraordinary difference in someone's day.
4. Train to become a saint. ["How to Be a Hero" by Julia Harrell](#) includes passages about everyday people who became saints. The book also offers reflection questions to help inspire us to become saints.
5. Use your talents to help your community, church or school. Got a good voice? Sign up for the choir. Are you a good organizer? Get involved in the school clubs that organize ways to help others.
6. Be brave. Remember being Christian takes courage. Use Father Rother's words as inspiration. Although he knew he was in danger staying in Guatemala, he told those pleading for him to return home for safety, ["the shepherd cannot run, my people need me."](#)