

Walking the Talk

St. Francis of Assisi was an Italian Catholic friar, deacon and preacher. He is one of the most venerated religious figures in history. Among his many accomplishments, in 1223 he arranged for the first Christmas live nativity scene.

One day, St. Francis invited a young monk to join him on a trip into town to preach. The young monk was so honored to get such an invitation from St. Francis that he quickly accepted.

All day long, he and St. Francis walked through the streets and byways, alleys and suburbs, and they rubbed shoulders with hundreds of people.

At the end of the day, the two headed back home; however, not even once had St. Francis addressed a crowd, nor had he talked to anyone about the gospel. The young monk was greatly disappointed, and he said to St. Francis: "I thought we were going into town to preach!"

St. Francis responded, "My son, we have preached. We were preaching while we were walking. We were seen by many, and our behavior was closely watched. It is of no use to walk anywhere to preach unless we preach everywhere we walk!"



That is a fundamental principle of Christianity. The world watches to see if our walk matches our talk. That is a major gauge of our credibility.

The truth applies to those of us who work in Life Care and Century Park. Our *Mission and Values* statement proclaims: "We believe our work is rooted in the Judeo-Christian ethic, and that obedience to God is best measured by our service to others."

Do we represent the teachings of Christ in our relationships with others? Are we the servant leaders He challenged His followers to be? Do we demonstrate love and compassion to those we lead and to the residents and families we serve?

Not only do those questions – and the conclusions people reach – apply inside our facilities but in the community as well.

As St. Francis told the young monk: We are seen by many and our behavior is closely watched.

Set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity (1 Timothy 4:12 ESV).