

**Saturday 1/30/10** Create a clean heart in me, O God. 2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17 Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, Mk 4:35-41 16-17

Why are you terrified? Faith is all anyone needs. Death is always on our minds. What else can we fear? That is why Jesus promises life. He gives life. He is life. When I look into the mirror, what I see with my eyes is dying, really it is already dead. At the very best God will be able to use it for a few more years. What I do not see with my eyes is there too, and it is alive. It is well. It is being born into all eternity. It is Him. I must decrease. He must increase. I will decrease. He will increase. It is the fundamental law of life. One day He will increase into eternity and then my joy will be complete.

**Friday 1/29/10** Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned. 2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17 Ps 51:3-4, 5-6a, 6bcd-7, 10-11 Mk 4:26-34

Life in the Spirit is a life of revelation and enlightenment. Everything in life gradually is revealed, like the grain mentioned in today's gospel, as a parable. It is bewildering to everyone at first, but His disciples are, in time, enlightened as He personally explains everything to them in private. For a disciple this enlightenment always starts with his coming to grips with his own sinfulness, and with His great mercy and healing power. As the sheer reality of this takes hold, no one can resist His love and His call to go out to the others to spread the good news.

**Thursday 1/28/10** The Lord God will give him the throne of David, his father. 2 Sm 7:18-19, Ps 132:1-2, 3-5, 11, 12, 13-14 24-29 Mk 4:21-25

What consolation for me personally is there in today's readings! Those who know me know of two great miracles in my life, the first when I first encountered the living Jesus in answer to the unbeliever's prayer "Lord, if you exist, show me." It came through the gospel verse that ends today's gospel. The second, the promise of a son, that came to be immediately upon our arrival in Texas. God is real. He is very close and present to each of us. Rest in Him, safe and sound and secure in His promise.

**Wednesday 1/27/10** For ever I will maintain my love for my servant. 2 Sm 7:4-17 Ps 89:4-5, 27-28, 29-30 Mk 4:1-20

God rules. He chooses. He makes the covenant. His covenant is with His Chosen One, Jesus. Of course, Jesus' humanity demands a line of ancestry, and God's favor and protection must extend to those ancestors. It is natural and all nature is His, but the covenant is always with Jesus, and it is an everlasting covenant. It naturally extends to the descendants of Jesus, His entire family. As so clearly stated yesterday and confirmed today Jesus' family is all those who accept the Word of God. What unbelievable joy it is to accept the Word and live in the joy of His covenant with the Father.

**Tuesday 1/26/10** Proclaim God's marvelous deeds to all the nations. 2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5 Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 7-8a, 1 Mk 3:31-35

Sisters and brothers and mothers. True children in our common faith. Family images. We are family. We are family when we do the will of God. And what is God's will? Check it out. God's will is pretty simple. What does God want? God simply wants us to be His family, and act like it! It is serious. People are dying and our selfishness and self-centered rules are keeping us bound up and unable to help Him save them. Wake up! Sing a new song. They are all meant to be your brothers and sisters!

**Monday 1/25/10** Go out to all the world and tell the Good News. or: Alleluia, alleluia. Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22 Ps 117:1bc, 2 R. (Mark 16:15) Mk 16:15-18

Conversion is a way of life. It is the normal way of life, the human way. When you are in the dark what you see are just the grey shadows on the wall, and they can often look very troubling and even scary. Come into the light and the beauty, and color, and the detail can blow you away! As you begin to study, and ponder, and listen, revelation begins. Your mission takes shape. Then, as you reach out and take them by the hand, and as you embrace your mission, moment by moment a great miracle occurs. Your very own shadow begins to fall into someone else's darkness, calling him into the light. It takes time, but as he turns into the light his chains begin to

fall away. Then the joy of true friendship grows into something that God can use in ways you never could imagine. Those who cast the shadows always grow closer together as, hand in hand, they help each other approach the beautiful light of Jesus. So "go into the world!"

**Saturday 1/23/10** Let us see your face, Lord, and we shall be saved. 2 Sm 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27 Ps 80:2-3, 5-7 Mk 3:20-21

Life in the Spirit is so often different from what we expect. God just flat does things His way, and He uses us as much as He can. If you are living the life in the Spirit expect to miss a few meals now and then, you might even forget to eat! Expect people, especially those close to you, to think you are crazy or weird. Who could act like that, he must be out of his mind! Be careful though, missing meals and doing things that cause people to think you are crazy are not the signs of life in the Spirit. They are just a little collateral damage! Maybe you really are weird! The signs will always be the fruits of the Spirit, peace, joy, love, etc. coming into the lives you touch. When that is happening, who cares if someone thinks you are nuts!

**Friday 1/22/10** Have mercy on me, God, have mercy. 1 Sm 24:3-21 Ps 57:2, 3-4, 6 and 11 Mk 3:13-19

There are at least three "levels" of human life. We are animals. This reality compels us to do certain things. We eat, we sleep, we relieve ourselves. These are natural, normal things for all animals like us, but we are more. We are conscious and our consciousness also drives us to action. It drives us to control the animal for its own preservation. And then there is the third level. We are divine. We are, but there is only one God. As we move into this level, even glimpse it, we come to know that its gateway is marked "Surrender". I becoming we. The reality of God is life. We are divine, and the operative word is "we". As I touch our divinity I am drawn, invited, never coerced, into the mystery that is life. As that wonderful reality takes traction in me, I begin to die and that is the surrender that ends in us. Can I grasp it all? Not now, but life is eternal. We have no need of haste. The story of Saul and David today is a powerful metaphor. As Saul, the animal, steps into the cave to relieve himself, the man, David, must choose. Do "I" kill the animal or not? The divine "we" says no. There is no killing in life. Death will come in its own time, not as slaughter, but in a new birth. So the animal is spared, and when this is brought to light even the animal is moved. In the end the animal will pass away, the man will too, only the divine is left. What comes after? It must be unimaginably good.

**Thursday 1/21/10** In God I trust; I shall not fear. 1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7 Ps 56:2-3, 9-10a, 10b-11, 12-13 Mk 3:7-12

Trusting God makes you fearless. Listening to Him makes you prudent. If you want to draw close to Him get used to being with sick people, and suffering people, and poor and hungry people. They are always the ones who crowd around Him. They are the ones who need Him and know it. Recognizing your weakness, and sickness, and poverty is the first step in His direction.

**Wednesday 1/20/10** Blessed be the Lord, my Rock! 1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51 Ps 144:1b, 2, 9-10 Mk 3:1-6

What giants have you faced, or what giants are you facing? What battle plan do you use, or do you run away? Maybe your giant today is a person. Maybe he is something outside like a sickness, or inside like a bad habit or terrible fear. Giants come in all colors and many sizes. All they have in common is that they are big, too big for us! Just remember that nothing is bigger than God. There is absolutely only one single way to overcome a giant. We all know what it is. Too bad that it is so hard to shake our fear of that one really big giant we call death. It is the one big bad boy that always comes out to face us. He looks so, so, big. How can we defeat him? The secret is in his name. He is already "death". We do not have to defeat him, Jesus already did! Death is history!!! So just charge, throwing the only stone in your little bag, the precious name of Jesus. And don't tell Him He can't work on Sunday, It only makes Him angry!

**Tuesday 1/19/10** I have found David, my servant. 1 Sm 16:1-13 Ps 89:20, 21-22, 27-28 Mk 2:23-28 For someone whose faith is in anything but God, today's readings must be a very, very strong wake-up call. Yes I understand that you serve God, but how do you do it? Are there not so many

ways? Have you not chosen one that "fits" you. A path, a way, a method that "works" for you. Dear friend, it is not the path, the way, or the method that means anything at all. No path, or way, or method can save. Only Jesus is Lord. When that path, or way, or method starts to take over your heart, be so very careful. God will have absolutely none of it. He will pull it down, no matter the pain and grief and temper tantrums you throw, and He will raise up in its place a new one so different you most likely would never recognize it. Remember, man was not made for the Cursillo, or the Renewal, or the Called and Gifted... All these were made for man. They were made to bring Him to Jesus. If any ever ceases to do so they are surely already gone.

**Monday 1/18/10** To the upright I will show the saving power of God. 1 Sm 15:16-23 Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23 Mk 2:18-22

You just must take time to look at today's readings. Houston, we have a problem!!! God has anointed us kings. So what is your kingdom? What is mine? He has given each of us a mission to lead our kingdom out to destroy the "bad guys". He says destroy, utterly destroy. But what about co-lateral damage!!! I can't destroy that bad guy of laziness. If I do I might not be as cheerful to my friends. But I'll never come late for mass!!! I might not have enough time to lend a hand to Johnnie Poor-guy, but I'll be at mass on time! Or, I can't completely annihilate that "bad guy" named greed, I might get hungry. But I'll definitely give 10% to the Church!!! Oh Lord, I see it is completely impossible. I give up! Change me, Lord, completely. Then I know you will be able to pour in that new wine that is You!

**Saturday 1/16/10** Lord, in your strength the king is glad. 1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1 Ps 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 Mk 2:13-17

Every single one of us is so very special to Him. He has prepared an entire universe for each and every one of us. Not like a parakeet cage, it is an open universe with no bounds at all. He has made it so that each universe intersects many, many others. In fact they all tie together. Here I am a young man wandering about trying to round up my daddy's missing livestock, but over here are many crying for a king, and here is the one who will anoint me. Of course not everything in the universe is the way God wants it. He is not finished yet! And the wonder of it all is that He has chosen to use me, each and every me, to bring it to perfection. And, even more, He has loved me into the freedom to say yes or no to His plans! How do I know when I am on the right path? Is He saving me from the enemy, that's the surest sign. Is He using me to help save His people from the grasp of their enemies roundabout? He will always be found with sinners simply because that is where the outcome is most in doubt. That is where He can do the most good. That is where He can save.

**Friday 1/15/10** For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord. 1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a 89:16-17, 18-19 Mk 2:1-12

Why does everyone want a king? Why do some people want to be one? Here is a better question. Who is your king? Oh... you think so??? Well let's look at the facts. Who is gobbling up all your resources? Who is getting the benefit of all your hard work? Who is commanding all your precious time? And...Who or What is ever on your mind? There is only one answer to this little problem. It is so very simple. If He is truly the king in your life then don't stand around waiting for orders from anybody else. Just confidently put your hand in the hand of the MAN and walk out that door every single day to do the work He gives you. He is your friend not your master. He said so Himself.

**Thursday 1/14/10** Redeem us, Lord, because of your mercy. 1 Sm 4:1-11 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25 Mk 1:40-45

Oh my! Do we not serve a jealous God!?! He will have absolutely no part in letting us put anything between us and Him, not anything! Not money, not our own wisdom, not anything! How often have I heard people say, "We must say more rosaries", or "We need more healing prayers," or "We need more adoration of the Eucharist," "We need more Cursillos or more churches or more relics" the list is endless. It is not rosaries, relics, churches, prayers, people, priests, rites, or anything that we need, only Him. All these things are good, even wonderful, perhaps essential when they bring us to Him. It is only when we, in our ignorance and rebelliousness try to use

them as a way to bring Him somewhere for our own benefit that everything goes haywire. He will have none of it. We have gotten the horse before the cart, and when that happens we are already in the middle of a big wreck! So, goodness! What are we to do! Why not listen? If he says build a church, why not say "Are you sure?". When He says "Yes!", say "Where?" When He says, "Here.", say, "How?" and when He says "Please start building." don't say anything, just rely on His help. Not only will the right things start getting done, it is at least slightly possible you might learn something in the process. Only Jesus can save. When He does that is all people need to know. All the rules and prescriptions and man-made "guidelines" just push Him out of the city. If He has saved you don't focus on telling people how bad you were and how good you are now, just keep pointing to Jesus. No matter how great you are He is at least a teensy bit better!

Wednesday 1/13/10 Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will. 1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20 Ps 40:2 and 5, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10 Mk 1:29-39

Why is it so hard for blind men to see...for deaf men to hear? All day long He is calling me, but I am confused. I keep running over to Eli, poor guy, his "eyesight" is worse than mine! "Here am I, I come to do your will.", I say to God, but am I?...Do I? Folks the fine print is not so fine, and His voice is not such a whisper. GET UP! LEAVE THE SYNAGOGUE! HELP THE SICK PEOPLE UP SO THEY CAN GET BACK TO WORK! STILL THE DEMONS AND DRIVE THEM OUT! And most of all, most of all. pray, pray, pray, and get out to all those "nearby villages." Dear friends, that is why He has come. That is why He is here. That is why you are too.

Tuesday 1/12/10 My heart exults in the Lord, my Savior. 1 Sm 1:9-20 1 Samuel 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd Mk 1:21-28

Word gets around. Do you think God wishes to stay hidden and obscure? Of course not! Then why did He create so many blind people. Could it be that He is looking for real men, real men and women, not a bunch of toadies who follow Him around slaving and panting like a pack of overfed dogs! Yes, things do not always go the way we want them to. We must buck up all our courage, gather all our wit, steel our watery wills and *do* everything we can. That is only human! Then we finally can come to our senses, after we have tried it all, and realize that He is the power. Then we turn to Him, like Hannah, with complete confidence. Of course the others think we are nuts, or drunk, or worse. But then, when God delivers...Then word gets around!

Monday 1/11/10 To you, Lord, I will offer a sacrifice of praise. 1 Sm 1:1-8 Ps 116:12-13, 14-17, 18-19 Mk 1:14-20

An apostle is a person who has been sent. Anyone sent is sent for a purpose. He has a job to do. An apostle is a bridge. He is a link from one place to another that is very different. To go into the Kingdom of God, which is really and truly at hand, one must cross that wonderful bridge that is Jesus Christ Himself. Every apostle is just a little bridge that starts firmly planted in the earth of our culture and that leads into the great freeway bridge that is Jesus. An apostle is just a little approach ramp, but he is so necessary to get access. If you are an apostle, take care of your signage. Make certain that the way is clearly marked. Make sure that everything you say and do points clearly to that wonderful bridge everybody must cross to come home safe and sound.

Saturday 1/9/10 The Lord takes delight in his people. 1 Jn 5:14-21 Ps 149:1-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b Jn 3:22-30

He must increase; I must decrease. It is simple as that.

Friday 1/8/10 Praise the Lord, Jerusalem. 1 Jn 5:5-13 Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20 Lk 5:12-16  
Our God is a God of wonders and miracles. In fact everything He does deserves to be in that category. A miraculous cure certainly deserves attention, but perhaps we risk missing the point. Without the wonderful, awesome miracle of life itself no cure is even possible, and ultimately all infirmity leads to that wonderful "cure" that is the realization of eternal life with Him. Did Jesus spend so much time in prayer telling the Father what to do? Or begging Him for favors? I suspect He spent most of that time loving and listening to His Father so that His actions would be His Father's actions. I personally think He spent every hour of every day doing all He could just to make the Father happy.

**Thursday 1/7/10 Lord, every nation on earth will adore you. 1 Jn 4:19–5:4 Pd 72:1-2, 14 and 15bc, 17 Lk 4:14-22**

**Are you my brother? That's the only question I need ask. Jesus is my brother, and He is here right here among us. Just listen and you will clearly hear Him. Every time you hear someone bringing glad tidings to the poor, proclaiming freedom to those captivated by evil, opening peoples eyes to the truth, bringing freedom to those who are put down, in short letting everyone know the Good Time is here, you are hearing Him. You are hearing someone anointed with His vey Spirit. Bless His Name, adore Him, adore Him by keeping His commands.**

**Wednesday 1/6/10 Lord, every nation on earth will adore you. 1 Jn 4:11-18 Ps 72:1-2, 10, 12-13 Mk 6:45-52**

**Are you afraid of anything? Several months ago, when I started this little exercise, the subject of perfection came up. Here it is again. What brings about perfection? Love. What brings peace in time of trouble? Understanding. Please, dearest friends, understand one thing. You are loved!!! That is the beginning of a perfect life, understanding that we are loved.**

**Tuesday 1/5/10 Lord, every nation on earth will adore you. 1 Jn 4:7-10 PS 72:1-2, 3-4, 7-8 Mk 6:34-44**

**Two things strike me about these passages. First, love is life-giving. Second, when Jesus went to feed the people He first put them in groups. Is there a theme here? I think so. Life in the Spirit comes in groups. That is where love becomes real and not just words or ideas. It is where people learn to eat together, to share with one another, to love each other, and ultimately, to live for Him in one another.**

**Monday 1/4/10 I will give you all the nations for an inheritance. 1 Jn 3:22–4:6 Ps 2:7bc-8, 10-12a Mt 4:12-17, 23-25**

**You, my friends, are the children of God. You have been given the nations for an inheritance. Why fritter it away? Like any good father He has put this inheritance in your care that it might prosper and grow as a blessing for your own children. Listen to His Spirit, know His Spirit, follow His Spirit. It is not difficult to discern His Spirit. It is the only one that speaks the truth. It is the only spirit that constantly proclaims Him Lord. It is the Spirit Who constantly points to Jesus, Jesus the answer for every question, the solution to every problem, the one and only truth in a world filled with deception and lies.**

**Saturday 1/2/10 All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God. 1 Jn 2:22-28 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 Jn 1:19-28**

**Will the real liar please stand up! What does it mean to "deny Jesus"? Are we not denying Him when we start to worry? Are we not denying Him when we charge off to do His work without listening to Him? Are we not denying Him when we think we have all the right answers? Dear friend, He is the answer, the only answer, and He is right here all the time. If God is good, then He is God's goodness. Have you seen the saving power of God? All the ends of the earth have. If you have seen it then break into song! Sing praise! The one who baptizes with fire is coming along right behind you!**

**Friday 1/1/10 May God bless us in his mercy. Nm 6:22-27 Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 Gal 4:4-7 Lk 2:16-21**

**Have you been blessed? Have you seen it? Well then, for goodness sake, go tell somebody! Why on earth do you think you have been blessed, why do you think your eyes have been opened? Let somebody else know about it. They will be amazed! And don't ever give up reflecting on these wonderful things, all these wonderful gifts of son-ship that free you from slavery**