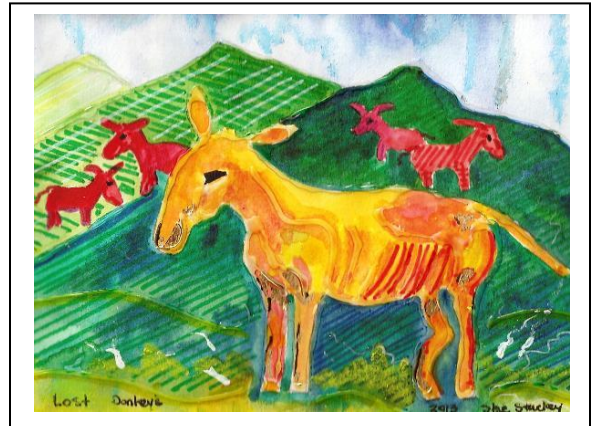


# Making Space for God

## Opening Prayer

Lord, teach me to listen. The times are noisy and my ears are weary with the thousand raucous sounds which continuously assault them. Give me the spirit of the boy Samuel when he said to Thee, "Speak, for thy servant heareth." Let me hear Thee speaking in my heart. Let me get used to the sound of Thy Voice, that its tones may be familiar when the sounds of earth die away and the only sound will be the music of Thy speaking Voice. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

From the Pursuit of God by A. W. Tozlar



## Reflection- Looking Back

Take some times to settle yourself. Review your calendar and think back over where you have been this summer and focus on answering this one question: **How has the Lord been present to you?** In the events of your life; in your joys and fears; in what has occupied your mind and heart; in what you dream about or long for; in what you are thankful for. Journal these thoughts and offer them to the Lord.

## Scripture Study—1 Samuel 9:1-10:8 Samuel Anoints Saul

Israel asked for a king and God granted their request. His choice was a tall, good looking farm boy named Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. Getting the king anointer, Samuel, together with the king designate, Saul, required some creative maneuvering on God's part. So the tale started with lost donkeys. Saul and his servant went out looking for their humble beasts of burden and found something neither one expected in their wildest imaginations. Read the passage a couple of times and reflect upon your experience of searching. How does the process open you to new discoveries of yourself and the world around you?

## Reading for Reflection

It is as if each human person constitutes a committee constantly sitting to decide life's questions and the behavior desired in a given situation. This committee has many members within, each voice a particular slant—our fears, feelings, dreams, and hopes, our history and relationships, our memory, our various sub-personalities, and our reason. Hopefully the chairperson of that committee is reason, deeply guided and influenced by affectivity. Descriptively the task of a human person appears to become more and more integrated, whole, together, within that on-going meeting. All the voices need to be heard and listened to. Ultimately, at their best, people make choices that chart the direction and, over time, develop the person. Since this ability and responsibility to choose is at the heart of human motivation, the spiritual director aids another to reach a harmonious decision from this complex and fascinating committee.

*Dyckman and Carroll in Inviting the Mystic, supporting the Prophet page 33*

God's will is not found in our doing whatever we want, acting on whim. God does not baptize our silly frivolous choices (though he does still love us). We believe God's will is found in doing what we want at the very best and deepest level of who we understand ourselves to be. This is quite different. The director's role is to help us to be honest and to search until that deepest self is discovered.

Accept responsibility for what happens to your life. We have choices, even in situations that appear to be forced on us. One freedom can never be taken from us: the freedom to choose our attitude in every situation. Take ownership of the transitions in your life.

*The Other Side of Chaos: Breaking Through When Life Is Breaking Down by Margaret Silf*

If we could lift the veil and if we watched with vigilant attention, God would endlessly reveal himself to us and we should see and rejoice in his active presence in all that befalls us. At every event we should exclaim: "It is the Lord!" —Jean Pierre de Caussade

When their response to spiritual desolation is unconsidered, the desolation may easily cause some measure of bitterness or submerge them in sadness and hopelessness. Spiritual desolation, when it appears as purely futile distress, is especially difficult to bear, and those who undergo it will all the more easily fall prey to its harmful promptings. Through the consideration Ignatius proposes, such persons cross the threshold out of this spontaneous sense of heavy meaninglessness and into awareness that there is, in fact, a God intended meaning in their experience of desolation. Once their darkness has acquired meaning in God, these persons gain new energy to resist and reject the desolation itself.

*The Discernment of Spirits: An Ignatian Guide for Everyday Living by Timothy M. Gallagher*

If our physical or emotional resources are depleted and we are overly tired or experience depression, the primary need is for wise measures to replenish those resources. Having done so, we will the more effectively face the situation at hand.

*The Discernment of Spirits: An Ignatian Guide for Everyday Living by Timothy M. Gallagher*

But I am always wary of decisions made hastily. I am always wary of the first decision, that is, the first thing that comes to my mind if I have to make a decision. This is usually the wrong thing. I have to wait and assess, looking deep into myself, taking the necessary time. The wisdom of discernment redeems the necessary ambiguity of life and helps us find the most appropriate means, which do not always coincide with what looks great and strong.

*From an Interview with Pope Francis*

You were within, and I was without.... You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone, and you dispelled my blindness. Looking back over his experience, Augustine realizes that God was active within him, in his heart, in his interior world, and that he, Augustine, was without, looking outward, fixed on the world beyond himself, unaware of God's activity within him.

*The Discernment of Spirits: An Ignatian Guide for Everyday Living by Timothy M. Gallagher*

## **The Benediction**

Let naught trouble thee; Let naught frighten thee; all things pass. God alone changeth not. Patience can do all things. Whoever has God, has everything. God alone sufficeth.

*Prayer of Saint Teresa*

## Reflection Questions for 1 Samuel 9:1-10:8

1. What physical, cultural, economic, or educational assets did Saul bring to his leadership role? How about you?
2. What social conditions were at work that caused the people to cry out for a king? What are the social conditions at work on campus that support your roles?
3. Note the relationship between Saul and his servant. Who have been people like the servant in your life?
4. Saul's father was a man of standing in his community, yet Saul in 9:21 speaks of his heritage in diminished terms. What might that reveal of his self concept?
5. Though Samuel opposes the appointment of a king, notice how he treats Saul in his private coronation. Reflect upon the conflicting feelings that might have stirred in Samuel's mind.
6. "The Spirit of the Lord will come powerfully upon you and you will prophesy with them and you will be changed into a different person." 1 Samuel 10:6. What might that mean in this context?
7. What steps did the Lord take in this story to call Saul to himself and to service? Identify the steps the Lord took in calling you?