

See if you can imagine this. Some early morning movement wakens you, your eyes open and there sitting at the foot of your bed is God. “It’s about time, sleepy-head,” God smiles. And at a movement of his hand there you are on your feet, all dressed, and ready.

“Uh ...What am I ready for, God?” God smiled wider. “My church and I have spent years evangelizing you, filling you with faith, the Holy Spirit, Jesus and his love. Today is your confirmation-bar-mitzvah-coming of age day. Today you take the Jesus you’ve received, the faith ... and share him with others. Today you start evangelizing!”

“Me evangelize? O God, that’s for priests and nuns and people with theological training. I wouldn’t know how to evangelize. I don’t want to be a religious nut or a nuisance. And maybe I don’t have enough confidence to make myself vulnerable and talk about my personal faith. I have it. I’m just not the one to share it.”

God smiled. “Evangelizing the whole world, sharing Jesus and his church and faith with others, is much too important to leave to the experts. I need everybody. I need you.”

“God of heaven and earth, you don’t need me. I’m not expressive or poetic. I can gossip about churchy things just fine, but when it comes to talking about love, your love for me and mine for you, our times together, your blessings ... I wouldn’t know how.”

God’s face darkened slightly. “Please don’t tell me what I do or do not need. I need you to evangelize. Family and friends first maybe ... although this is ticklish I grant you ... then others that on purpose I will put on your path. More to the point, *you* need to evangelize. It will make you faith grow.”

“God, can’t I just give a good example of loving kindness, and let others do the talking.”

“No. My Pentecost gift to the church was tongues of fire. Tongues. Is telling someone about some experience you had of me, or some blessing you got ... that hard?. A story of your blessings, my help, some strange coincidences. My word will be hidden inside their words, more subtle and searching than a fine two-edged sword, able to penetrate the impenetrable. If you ask, prudence will be given you, and the spirit of wisdom. All gold, in view of her, is a little sand. I want the missions, the masses, the novenas, the religious formation gatherings, the catechism. But I also expect you to put some story of me and some of the things I’ve done for you in your conversation like yeast into flour.”

“God, I go to Sacred Heart parish.” “Good, and I’m glad. But do you think I planted Sacred Heart parish in the middle of downtown Salinas to be a cozy fire for a few religious groupies. I put that parish ... or any parish ... where it is to be a local center and school of evangelization.”

“Is there any reward for doing this.”

God laughed. “Whatever you give for the sake of Jesus and for his Gospel will receive a hundred times back in this life, and eternal life in the age to come.”