

Appeared in the August 2007 edition of: The Branson Christian News,  
The Ozarks Christian News and, The Chronicle.



## Fishing with the Lord.

By Rev. Joseph Classen

Another Monday had come and gone, but I wasn't too happy about it. You see, Monday is my one and only day off each week. It's the only day that I can finally brush off the stress from the other six days. As the associate pastor of a parish serving 2,900 families, every day seems like a marathon of endless activity. So again, when I had to give up yet another coveted "day off," I was not too pleased, but, willfully making sacrifices is simply part of the job.

Later that week as I looked over my schedule, I realized that I actually had a few hours free on Friday afternoon. Without hesitation I filled in the blank space with one big word, "Fishing!" At last, Friday afternoon came and by 3:00 PM I had all my work taken care of. By golly, I was genuinely free for a few hours! I rushed back to the house, changed out of my usual clerical garb, put on some old worn out outdoor duds, threw a fishing rod in the back of my truck and hit the road!

Out of the suburbs I fled, away from the confining walls of shopping centers, apartment buildings and neighborhoods, away from the mind-numbing atmospheric noise that just naturally emerges from thousands of people living in a relatively small area. Down the

highway I raced, getting closer to my destination with every passing second.

As I closed in on my destination, there was not a sign of suburbia to be found. Endless rows of tall, lush corn waved "hello" as the soothing sounds of an old George Jones song played on the radio. Miles of noting but crop fields, woodlands and rolling hills welcomed me for the afternoon.

As I drove up a steep hill to get to the old farm pond I'd be fishing, I suddenly realized that I did in fact forget an obligation for the day. I still hadn't had my "quiet time" yet. As a priest, my day is filled with prayer in many different forms, but it's absolutely critical for me to spend one solid, unbroken, undisturbed daily hour with the Lord. If I don't spend that quality time with God, then I simply have nothing to give.

**Realizing that I only had one hour to fish anyway, I simply took a few moments to put myself in a prayerful spirit and consciously dedicated that hour to the Lord.** With every

cast I offered a prayer. In just that short time a peace came over me that erased all the chaos of the last few weeks. As I walked, talked, and fished with the Lord, He hooked me up with some serious blessings, and then, He hooked me up with a monster 6lb 22" bass! As I gently released that beautiful fish I was reminded once again of an important lesson: Put the Lord first in all things. It never ceases to amaze me what the Lord will do in the time we give Him, so give Him the best of each day!



*Joseph Classen is author of the book "Hunting for God, Fishing for the Lord". You can learn more about Joe and his book at [www.HuntingforGod.com](http://www.HuntingforGod.com)*