

# Forty Weeks ~ Sacred Story



## Week Thirty Three Encouragements & Wisdom

*E & W reflections are additional helps for your Sacred Story prayer journey. Reflect on them ahead of your prayer exercises for the week or outside of your fifteen-minute prayer windows during the week.*

In our initial Seattle project at two thirds through the Forty Weeks, some of our participants offered reflections on the spiritual benefits received through Forty Weeks *Sacred Story* prayer. The reflections cover many different and important themes:

Awareness and Attention to Reality  
Finding Balance in Life  
Concern for Others  
Spiritual Growth  
Difficulties Encountered  
**Gratitude and Healings**  
Intimacy and Friendship with God  
God's Love and Mercy  
**Peace and Hope**  
The Structure and Routine of Prayer  
Appreciation of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist  
Growth in Self-Understanding

For these next weeks, please find your encouragement and wisdom in reflecting on the spiritual benefits received in praying with *Sacred Story*. This week's reflections cover the themes of Gratitude and Healings and Peace and Hope. As you listen to these reflections, be amazed at how powerfully God is working in all of our lives. The Good News is much more powerful than the bad. Remember, God is healing the world one life at a time while he writes our sacred story.

## GRATITUDE AND HEALINGS

1. After thirty-plus years of being away from the Catholic Church, when certain life events left me at my bottom, I turned to God and prayer. I know God has had a hand in my returning and ever-growing faith. Returning to my religion, finding a home at Holy Family and being a part of Sacred Story have all been invitations from our Lord. I am truly thankful and blessed to participate in Sacred Story as I continue to understand myself better in relation to my growing faith and daily practice.
2. I have a new-found daily prayer practice that transforms my mental and emotional well-being. I have a daily solution for overwhelming feelings. I have a clear direction for increasing my faith and feel empowered to change my thoughts, words and actions to strive towards holiness.
3. Sacred Story has helped me overcome the death of my wife. There are times when I call for God's help and when I slow down my mind and listen. God will help me.
4. Sacred Story has provided the grace to untangle many of my disorders with God's grace. The guided prayer routines provide dependable wellsprings of meaning and powerful spiritual truth. The benefits are manifold. Peace, mindfulness, and a deep centeredness in God's mercy and love. It unconsciously overflows into all areas of my life.
5. Seeing my life as a story, from God's perspective. Understanding how the past impacts the present and the future. Relating to Jesus as physician for my healing. Realizing how basic forgiveness is to spiritual growth. The restfulness of time spent with God.
6. Since I can no longer afford to spend money on various avenues of my mental/emotional/spiritual health and development - I am most grateful for the opportunity of this program. Spending a great deal of time in prayer is something I've been doing for years prior to the program but of course I find interior freedom takes more than prayer - at least for me. The *Sacred Story* Program has given me alternatives for continued emotional/spiritual health without the financial cost. It has been encouraging in the same idea that I've been seeking for years - to become more my authentic, true self - the person I was meant to be - the person God wants me to be.

## PEACE AND HOPE

1. (I experience daily) a growing hopefulness.
2. (Sacred Story Payer) to me it has been guidance during a difficult time.

3. I have found more peace with myself and am not "wondering" as much as before regarding God and his mysterious self. I need to go back and reread (the E & W) often.
4. Sacred Story provides the greatest peace I have known in decades. This program is a great 'kick in the pants' to focus on what really matters in life - a personal relationship with Jesus and God. The daily anxieties are still there, but managed by a greater faith resulting from grace from Jesus. What I think is just as important as what I do and say. I never understood before the 'mystical body' of Christ and how all of us connect through Jesus, even the people I don't like or those who act stupidly. I finally am able to better understand my 'family of origin' issues through Christ's grace, to understand when/how my innocence was wounded and my heart broken – and it also helps me become aware of the people I hurt. Connection to Jesus in prayer throughout the day provides meaning for my life.
5. The spiritual benefit I find most consoling right now is knowing that I can read the lessons and for just that moment focus on the opportunity of grace that is there for me.

