

# Forty Weeks ~ Sacred Story



## Week Thirty Two 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 Finding Balance in life, Concern for Others, and Spiritual Growth. 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.

## **BALANCE**

1. One spiritual benefit I am aware of is one I can't exactly put into one word, but the following phrase will do: it's the quality of 'not-allowing-myself-to-overreact-as-much-while-still-reacting-compassionately' to life's challenges.
2. It kept my focus off my problems.
3. I am appreciating the different ways of praying, and appreciating that there is a balance to life's positives and negatives.

## **CONCERN FOR OTHERS**

1. I kept being angry about things outside me and had lost all sense of my own power over my life. Not all sense of my own power, but I didn't really respect it. I am learning now to use my power, which is good, but frightening and painful and not always with the results I would prefer. I learned the real need to forgive; doing it sucks a lot, but I think it will be great in the long run. I am very discouraged exactly now when I fill this out, but I feel really, really glad to have made this journey.
2. The greatest gift that I have received so far in this amazing journey is that I have stopped being an "observer" of other people's journey. I have taken ownership of the sacred story that has and continues to unfold in my own life. There has been a powerful internal shift that I have become very aware of. We are all called to sanctification in this life... no more comparing myself to others. These disciplines have been life changing!
3. Sacred Story prayer has given me a new perspective on love, sin, grace, and forgiveness. I find myself even offering up novenas for people and situations. I say the rosary more often and commit to praying for others, some of whom have offended me and particularly those closest to me – my kids.

## **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

1. This project is a worthy endeavor for all the participants...it enriches their spiritual lives greatly. I feel privileged to be part of it and I am really enjoying it. Thank you, for your guidance. Pray for me and for all of us as we travel this Sacred Story Journey...it's quite a trip!

2. I have enjoyed the readings thus far – although not as diligent as I initially thought I would be. Thank you for your messages of encouragement stating we are not perfect and that simply having the intention to do better than we are can be enough. Each step (albeit small) is the step in the right direction. I have really enjoyed being in this study and look forward to hearing the results.
3. Sacred Story has been life changing. I feel like my life has turned in a completely new direction.
4. I feel so much more open about my faith and beliefs.
5. Very simply...Life Changing. A wonderful experience and I had no idea when I started that this is how I would feel. THANK YOU for having the insight to start this program.

