

SACRED STORY



January 26, 2014

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Encouragement & Wisdom

*E & W reflections are additional helps for your Sacred Story prayer journey.
Reflect on them at week's beginning or outside of your 15-minute prayer periods.*

The Affirmations

Christ, who has walked before me, knows everything I suffer.

During the Cold War, an American Jesuit named Walter Ciszek was captured by the Soviets and charged as a spy. He suffered for years in solitary confinement. They interrogated him night and day until after four years, he broke down and signed a confession that he was guilty. Fiercely proud, he had built his identity on not signing the confession. When he finally broke, he was devastated and filled with darkness and despair. He slowly began to consider Christ in Gethsemane and his own aloneness and abandonment. Suddenly, Fr. Ciszek felt comforted and realized that Christ understood his suffering.

There is no human suffering that Christ has not personally tasted. We experience great abandonment in those moments when it seems no one can understand our own unique circumstances and pain. Yet, Christ was born, lived and died so that we would never be alone again—so that we would be forgiven and one day find life eternal with him. Christ has walked before us so that we would know that in all things, he understands our grief, suffering and pain, and even in these, is close to our hearts.

Lord Jesus Christ, out of love for us, you have taken on all the suffering of the world.

You have done this willingly, so that we would be freed from all that separates us from you. Thank you for undergoing death so that we can have life. Help us to know that there is nothing in heaven or on earth; nothing above or below; no principality or power that can ever separate us from your love. Be our *Creation, Presence, Memory, Mercy and Eternity.*



*The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom should I fear?*

*The LORD is my life's refuge;
of whom should I be afraid?*

(Psalm 27: 1)

