

## *Living Life as Sacred Story 2014: FORTY WEEKS*

### Weeks 8: Advice and Suggestions

**Week 8** focuses us on the wounds caused by sin. Specifically, we use the patterns of vice and addiction in our lives as a different type of spiritual archeology into our history. Last week, the Decalogue opened us to the wide perspective of God's deep desire for us to be in right relationship with Him. We wanted to see what aspects of the Decalogue challenge us, to understand where relationship is broken and where it needs healing.

This week, we follow the patterns of vice and addiction to understand their source in our original wounds. Vices and addictions usually begin as anesthesia for wounds that cause us great pain. The vices and addictions therefore can provide us with vital information about the primary wounds in our hearts.

This week is meaningful in a different way from last week, as this exercise requires us to be precise and forthright about our most challenging and/or embarrassing weaknesses. Some of us may feel we have dealt with these issues already, and we have. Indeed, we will most likely need to deal with these issues on some level for the rest of our lives.

When we encounter these anxieties, fears, and questions, we need to bring them to Christ. As the Divine Physician, He knows the difference between tracing the lingering effects of poison versus picking at a scab. If you feel Christ is not calling you to ponder a specific issue, spend your prayer time asking God to help you simply trace the patterns of vices and addictions in your life.

Remember that as the saints became holier, they became more aware of the ways that small sins played into the whole pattern – and why they needed Christ as Savior (see exercise in Week 5). We can avoid fruitless navel-gazing or obsessive worries as long as we remain focused on the loving mercy of Divine Physician who died to heal us.

The [Week 8 E&W](#) can be a great help as we continue to work through these exercises, and work through our misunderstandings about the nature of sin and healing. We all have tendencies to over-focus or minimize sin (scrupulosity or presumption), depending on our personality or situation. This week's E&W gives us another resource to think about this tension in a healthy way.