

DISCOVER

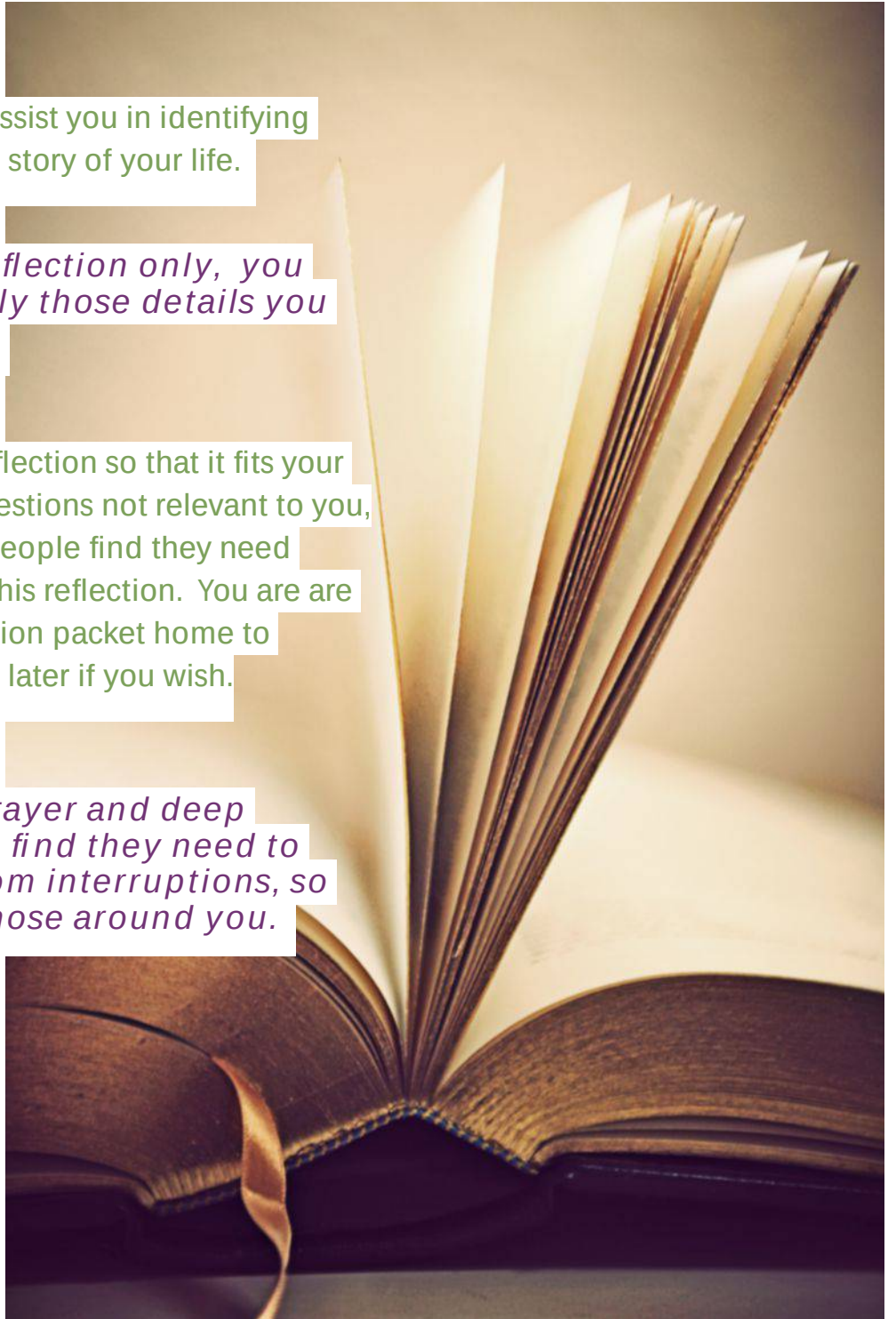
YOUR STORY

This reflection is designed to assist you in identifying what role God is playing in the story of your life.

This is for your private reflection only, you will be asked to share only those details you are comfortable sharing.

Feel free to personalize this reflection so that it fits your life. If there are sections or questions not relevant to you, feel free to skip them. Some people find they need more time than is allotted for this reflection. You are encouraged to take this reflection packet home to continue reflection or to revisit later if you wish.

This activity can evoke prayer and deep reflection. Many people find they need to find a quiet place free from interruptions, so please be respectful of those around you.





Religious Identity

If someone asked you about your faith or religion, how would you answer? Circle all the terms below that you feel describe you:

<i>Christian</i>	<i>Jewish</i>	<i>Religious</i>	<i>Catholic</i>
<i>Protestant</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Not Religious</i>	<i>Former Catholic</i>
<i>Evangelical</i>	<i>Buddhist</i>	<i>Unaffiliated</i>	<i>Culturally Catholic</i>
<i>Non-denominational</i>	<i>Hindu</i>	<i>No Religion</i>	<i>Practicing Catholic</i>
<i>Orthodox</i>	<i>Atheist</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal</i>
<i>Mormon</i>	<i>Agnostic</i>	<i>Secular/Humanist</i>	<i>Pagan</i>
<i>Jehovah's Witness</i>	<i>Spiritual</i>	<i>Unitarian/Universalist</i>	<i>New Age</i>

What other terms or labels would you use to describe yourself?

Choose one or two terms that best describe you. Define what those terms mean for you.



Life's Meaning

Maybe you have spent significant time reflecting on your life's purpose and know exactly what life is all about. Perhaps you have never considered the question of life's meaning. Most likely, you fall somewhere in between these two extremes. Consider these widely different responses to the question: "What is the meaning of life to you?" asked to people on the street in downtown Baltimore, Maryland. *

I kind of gauge it as finding peace within yourself and happiness. I mean I think people have many different ideas of how to go about finding happiness but think it's all these little trivial things. Ultimately it's just finding what's within because then you can be happy wherever you are. It's internal.

Living these days being a responsible human being. You know, I raised my kids right. They're in college and I'm trying to do right with the rest of my life.

Judaism says the purpose of mankind is to get closer to God. And, so, things that people do that re positive help them get closer to God. From a religious spiritual point of view, that's what the meaning of life is. There's multiple other meanings at a much lower level than that, but that's the spiritual answer to your question.

Having fun. Go do bad things, good things, but, live your life. Try doing anything you want to do.

The meaning of life is doing what the Lord asks us to do. And fulfilling whatever He asks us to do.

That can be hard to answer because it's something you would have to think about. Maybe it's God's decision, it might be some other belief, but it really is not an easy question.

Which of those answers most resonates with you? Or do you have a different answer altogether?

*From *Discover Christ: Developing a Personal Relationship with Jesus* by Bert Ghezzi and Dave Nodar. pg 11



Images of God

Who is God (the Father) to you right now? Circle any term below that you feel describes your understanding of and relationship to God (the Father).

<i>Father</i>	<i>All-Powerful</i>	<i>Connecting</i>	<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Angry</i>
<i>Mother</i>	<i>All-Knowing</i>	<i>Ignorant</i>	<i>Imperfect</i>	<i>Fair</i>
<i>Healer</i>	<i>All-Loving</i>	<i>A Person</i>	<i>Non-Existent</i>	<i>Unfair</i>
<i>Guide</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>A Spirit</i>	<i>Outside</i>	<i>Merciful</i>
<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Eternal</i>	<i>A Force</i>	<i>Inside</i>	<i>Punisher</i>
<i>Rescuer</i>	<i>Personal</i>	<i>Unchanging</i>	<i>Supreme Being</i>	
<i>Creator</i>	<i>Mystical</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Not involved in the World</i>	
<i>Ruler</i>	<i>One</i>	<i>More than one</i>	<i>Involved in the World</i>	

What other terms or labels would you use to describe God?

How would you describe the role God currently has in your life?

What about Jesus? Who is Jesus to you right now? Circle any term below that you feel describes your understanding of and relationship to Jesus.

<i>Brother</i>	<i>All-Powerful</i>	<i>Prophet</i>	<i>Perfect</i>
<i>Healer</i>	<i>All-Knowing</i>	<i>Historical Figure</i>	<i>Imperfect</i>
<i>Friend</i>	<i>All-Loving</i>	<i>A Person</i>	<i>Fiction</i>
<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Is God</i>	<i>A Spirit</i>	<i>Involved in the World</i>
<i>Guide</i>	<i>Is Not God</i>	<i>A Force</i>	<i>Not involved in the World</i>
<i>Lover</i>	<i>God's Son</i>	<i>Human</i>	<i>One Way to God</i>
<i>Savior</i>	<i>Alive</i>	<i>Divine</i>	<i>Only Way to God</i>
<i>Rescuer</i>	<i>Dead</i>	<i>Messiah</i>	<i>My Way to God</i>

What other terms or labels would you use to describe Jesus?

How would you describe the role Jesus currently has in your life? How is your connection to him different than your connection to God?

How would you describe the Holy Spirit? What role, if any, does the Holy Spirit currently have in your life?

If you could see God right here beside you now; how would that change the way you interact with him? What would change if you could see Jesus beside you?

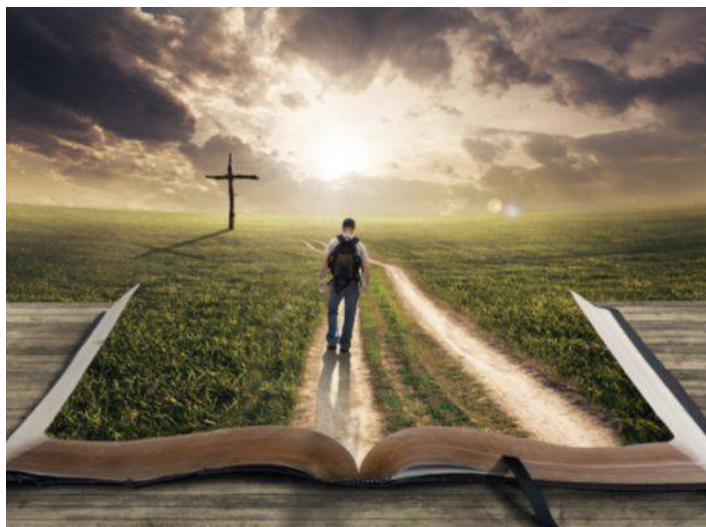
If you could ask God one question that you knew He would answer today, what would it be?

"Once man has lost the fundamental orientation which unifies his existence, he breaks down into the multiplicity of his desires; in refusing to await the time of promise, his life-story disintegrates into a myriad of unconnected instants."

*Pope Francis
(Lumen Fidei)*

FAITH IS NOT ONLY A
JOURNEY, BUT ALSO A
PROCESS OF

*BUILDING
A STORY*



YOUR

Life Experiences

Think back over your life. What important sacramental, religious, or spiritual moments do you remember? Do not feel as though you need to remember every single event. Simply identify the moments in your spiritual journey that spring to mind – the ones that stand out to you as significant (even if you can't necessarily identify why they were significant).

List them with dates (as close as you can remember) like this:

1962, Confirmation

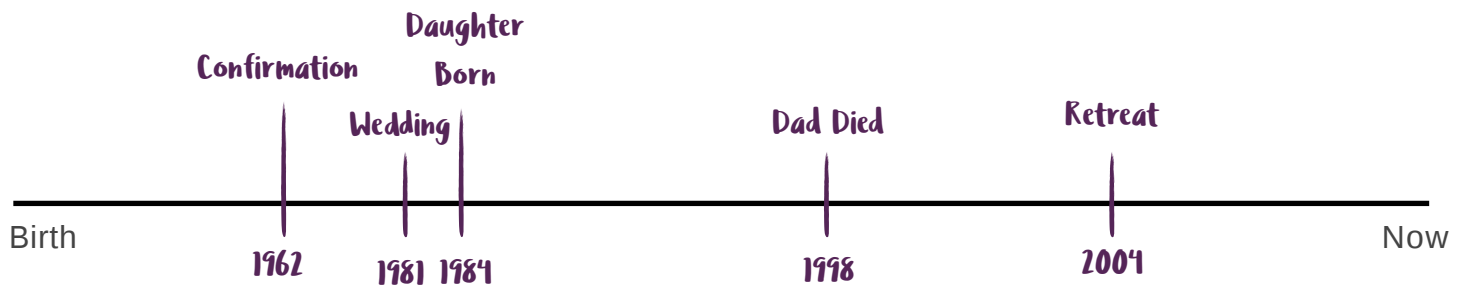
1981, Wedding

1984, Daughter Born

1998, Dad died

2004, Retreat

Or on a timeline like this:



List the important sacramental, religious, or spiritual events in your life here:



Powerful Moments

Think back to an important moment of crisis or turmoil. What happened? What were your feelings then? How did the people in the event appear to you then? Where was God during this event? How did you feel about God then?

Think back to a moment when you were particularly joyful or content. What happened? What were your feelings then? How did the people in the event appear to you then? Where was God during this event? How did you feel about God then?

Describe a time when you had an ache or hurt you wanted to be free of — a pain in your heart you couldn't overcome on your own.

Describe a time when you knew someone loved you. What happened? What did they do or say to make you feel loved? How did that love make you feel? How were you affected by that love?



Greatest Change

Look back on your life and identify the greatest change. It could have been in your childhood or teens or in your adult life. It might have been about family, career or any number of other things. Think about what life was like before that change and after that change.

My greatest change:

How did I perceive myself before the change?

How did I perceive myself after the change?

What was the role of faith during that change?

Who helped me most during that change?



Experiences of God

Try to remember a moment when you consciously thought about God or were aware of His presence. This may not be a “thunder and lightning” type of revelation but rather the point when you said to yourself, “maybe God IS real.”

Describe that moment. Where were you? How old were you? Who were you with? Was it in the context of another event? What was God like in this moment? Was it long-lasting or fleeting?

Have you ever had an experience of God moving in your life?

If so, describe it. If not, would you like to have this kind of experience? Why or why not?

May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit, soul and body be kept blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(1 Thessalonians 5:23)

Pope Benedict XVI wrote,

"We are, therefore spirit, soul, and body. We are part of this world, tied to the possibilities of our material condition while at the same time we are open to an infinite horizon, able to converse with God and welcome him within us."

Think about that for a moment. Built into your 'being' you have a capacity beyond this world for the infinite (called your spiritual soul); an ability to converse with God and to welcome him within you.

Do you believe this? Have you ever thought about this deeply? Do you want to converse with God and welcome him within you? Can you identify a time when you consciously conversed with God?

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter his house."

Revelation 3:20

"Be still and know that I am God."

Psalms 46:10

For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him.

Psalms 62:4

**GOD CANNOT BE
FOUND IN NOISE AND
RESTLESSNESS**

**GOD IS A
FRIEND OF
SILENCE**

St. Teresa of Kolkata



PROCESSING

YOUR STORY

Please take a few moments to reflect on your experience of walking through the Discovering Your Story reflection. When you're finished, **please drop just this last page on the front table.**

In general, what was your experience like going through this reflection?

Where there any sections (or questions) of this process that were more difficult to answer than others? What were they?

Are there more questions or concerns you have that this reflection has revealed?

If you would like someone to follow up with you regarding your questions or concerns, please provide your name and the best way to contact you.

Reflecting on YOUR Story

Choose one of the following to answer below:

Can you name one specific way God has been present in your life up to this point?

Describe a time when someone shared an experience of God with you. What was your reaction?

What is there about your experience of God that you would want to share with someone else?

What areas of your faith do you think others would benefit from hearing about? Why?