

Alexandra's first interview

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3 **Interviewer:** Alexandra, thanks for agreeing to being interviewed for this
4 project.

5 **Alexandra:** No probs.

6 **Interviewer:** I wanted to ask you what you believe about God.

7 **Alexandra:** Um - I believe that in a way he does exist. And - ah - I believe
8 that he gave us free will 'cause, um, he thought it would be
9 better for us to have a - make our own decisions and to choose
10 what is right and what is wrong.

11 **Interviewer:** Okay. And have you always thought about God in this way?

12 **Alexandra:** Um - yeah, pretty much.

13 **Interviewer:** Okay. What about your image of God? Do you have an image
14 of God?

15 **Alexandra:** Um, not a full image, just I believe that he's like in everything
16 alive, like in plants and animals an' stuff like that that has - that
17 is - um - a creation, seen as a creation.

18 **Interviewer:** Yes. Okay. Do you have any words that you would use to
19 describe your relationship with God?

20 **Alexandra:** Um, (short pause) maybe (pause) a word would be - um - ah,
21 just a friendly relationship, I guess.

22 **Interviewer:** Okay. Would you like to talk about that more, why you have
23 chosen the word "friendly"?

24 **Alexandra:** 'Cause like - um - aw there's not much - many words I could
25 describe 'cause - um - it's - it's also at the same time difficult to
26 think of - that God does exist, especially now, and with the
27 relationship an' all that - um - as an adolescent it is - does get
28 difficult with like - um - you have relationship problems like
29 friendship with your other friends and like personal relationships
30 an' like your relationships with your parents an' stuff like that,
31 yeah.

32 **Interviewer:** So, are you saying to me that when those relationships are
33 difficult, then it's difficult for a relationship with God?

34 **Alexandra:** Yeah, because like I connect God with also my parents so i- like
35 it is hard sometimes if we have a fight or something like that - to
36 think that I'm close to God.

37 **Interviewer:** Yes, good. So, in what ways is your faith today different from
38 what it was some years ago?

39 **Alexandra:** Um - I believe a bit more now 'cause - um - when I was younger,
40 I wasn't sure. And as I grew up I went to like - I ca- as I - as I
41 came from a primary school Catholic and to a Catholic high
42 school it really more developed my ideas of God an' everything
43 that

- 44 **Interviewer:** Okay, is Jesus different from God? And if he is, what about the
45 differences?
- 46 **Alexandra:** Um, differences would be that I believe that God is one apart - is
47 apart from Jesus and Jesus is - was sent as a messenger,
48 messenger as well to the humanity.
- 49 **Interviewer:** Is that difference between Jesus and God important for you?
- 50 **Alexandra:** Um - Um - Kind of 'cause - um - I believe that to get to God you
51 also have to - um - worship Jesus, have a relationship with him
52 as well.
- 53 **Interviewer:** Okay. Could you talk a bit about this relationship with Jesus?
- 54 **Alexandra:** Just like to pray and ask for mercy and for- to - to forgive, for
55 forgiveness.
- 56 **Interviewer:** Okay. We'll come back to that one. Was there ever a time
57 when you didn't see any difference between God and Jesus?
- 58 **Alexandra:** Um - I guess when he - I was younger 'cause I was just starting
59 to learn about a religion and about God an' Jesus an' everything
60 that they've done.
- 61 **Interviewer:** Okay. What about the Holy Spirit? How would you explain the
62 Holy Spirit to a friend who isn't - who doesn't believe in God?
- 63 **Alexandra:** Um - (plaintively) Oh -
- 64 **Interviewer:** It's hard isn't it.
- 65 **Alexandra:** Yeah. Um (pause) prob'ly I would explain it as a-nother being
66 that is - um (pause) I dunno. Um - it's like being like Jesus at
67 the same time. It's all Jesus God rolled into one. But, yeah,
68 yeah, something like that.
- 69 **Interviewer:** Something like that.
- 70 **Alexandra:** Yeah.
- 71 **Interviewer:** Okay. When you say "all rolled into one" is there any more you
72 want to add to that?
- 73 **Alexandra:** Like they - they're - um - connected together to - like as a s-
74 more simpler form, I guess.
- 75 **Interviewer:** Did you say "as a more simpler" -
- 76 **Alexandra:** As a more simpler form like - um - I dunno.
- 77 **Interviewer:** You're not sure what you mean by that?
- 78 **Alexandra:** No, like -
- 79 **Interviewer:** Okay.
- 80 **Alexandra:** Not too sure.
- 81 **Interviewer:** If I came back to that question some time later -
- 82 **Alexandra:** Yeah, maybe.

- 83 **Interviewer:** Okay, I'll leave it with you to think about. Alright. You talked
84 about prayer a while ago, so do you pray?
- 85 **Alexandra:** Yeah.
- 86 **Interviewer:** Okay. To whom do you pray?
- 87 **Alexandra:** I pray to Jesus and to God.
- 88 **Interviewer:** How often do you pray?
- 89 **Alexandra:** Every night.
- 90 **Interviewer:** And how do you pray?
- 91 **Alexandra:** Um - I pray either by going to my local Church, or jus' in my
92 personal prayer, like in my room.
- 93 **Interviewer:** When you pray, what's your prayer like? It is like set prayers?
94 Or are they prayers you make up, or what?
- 95 **Alexandra:** Yeah, it's a - bit of both 'cause sometimes I might end it with an
96 Our Father, or a Hail Mary, but at the same time I do like - try to
97 like thank God for like - I -know, jis' good things. Yeah.
- 98 **Interviewer:** Okay. Good. To whom do you pray most often? God? Jesus? Or
99 the Holy Spirit?
- 100 **Alexandra:** Probably to Jesus, y'know.
- 101 **Interviewer:** Why?
- 102 **Alexandra:** 'Cause like I said, I see him as more of a connection to God.
103 And I jis' feel str- more strongly if I pray to Jesus he'll get (short
104 pause) there.
- 105 **Interviewer:** Okay. How are you feeling?
- 106 **Alexandra:** Alright.
- 107 **Interviewer:** You're doing really well. Yeah, really well. Okay. How does your
108 belief in God influence or shape the way you live your life?
- 109 **Alexandra:** Um - I guess like little things like - um - being good to others.
110 Like if I see like someone having problems I like to help them out
111 as much as I can. And jus' like - um - I dunno, like being nice
112 people. Um - in general, like if someone's teasing someone, like
113 jus' try to protect them, or stand up for them if they can't do it.
114 Yeah.
- 115 **Interviewer:** Okay. Good. So what impact has your faith had on your
116 attitude towards suffering?
- 117 **Alexandra:** Um - It's - when I see suffering it really is painful and it's affect-
118 it's affected me 'cause I do think - try to think - um - beyond like -
119 or they deserve it or they don't deserve it, an' stuff like that. I try
120 to think, "Well, if it's supposed to - if it's happening, it's supposed
121 to happen. It's God's - at the same time it's God's will. But - um
122 - suffering, I guess, I think that - um - God can act as another
123 human being trying to help stop the suffering.

- 124 **Interviewer:** Yes. So God in a sense allows the suffering and yet wants to
125 stop the suffering.
- 126 **Alexandra:** Yeah, 'cause he wants to see us help each other out.
- 127 **Interviewer:** Okay. What about the impact of your faith on your attitude
128 towards death.
- 129 **Alexandra:** Um – jus' like the after life, I guess. Like, I believe that we all like
130 are eventually reunited and are all together and happy all - and
131 everything's good and there's no bad.
- 132 **Interviewer:** So that's your vision of heaven?
- 133 **Alexandra:** Yeah.
- 134 **Interviewer:** Okay. What about death itself?
- 135 **Alexandra:** Death - um – jus' like at the pre- at the moment of death?
- 136 **Interviewer:** Particularly when you think about death.
- 137 **Alexandra:** Um – Let's see - um - I guess that - um - my reli- my faith has
138 taught me that - um - I guess that God wants them to be that
139 they've decided - that God's decided that they've lived enough
140 and that they deserve it to go there.
- 141 **Interviewer:** Okay. What about the ways your faith helps to give your life a
142 sense of purpose?
- 143 **Alexandra:** Um - just that the things I do. Like now that I'm leaving - um - I
144 guess - things that I do, like courses I take, an' stuff like that, I
145 believe that God does like lead me into that path to my destiny.
- 146 **Interviewer:** Okay. Do you have any sense of the path you're being led down
147 now?
- 148 **Alexandra:** Um – it's - it gets confusing definitely 'cause you want to do it
149 right 'though you're not too sure.
- 150 **Interviewer:** Is that a form of suffering?
- 151 **Alexandra:** Um - not really suffering. It's just (pause) a - a sense of like - you
152 ha- you have to make your mind up. You have to make your
153 own decisions. And that God won't tell you to do this or that.
- 154 **Interviewer:** So what are you saying about God?
- 155 **Alexandra:** Um - that he does interact with - but through other people. I
156 believe that. Yeah.
- 157 **Interviewer:** What events in your life have led to changes in your relationship
158 with God?
- 159 **Alexandra:** I guess like (pause) like you said, like death - um - had a big
160 influence on me and that's influenced me to go - get closer to
161 get to God, to get closer to God.
- 162 **Interviewer:** Is that something you find difficult to talk about?
- 163 **Alexandra:** Oh, sometimes, yeah.

- 164 **Interviewer:** What have people said or done that has contributed or not
165 contributed to your relationship with God?
- 166 **Alexandra:** Oh I don't get really influenced by people, um - like e- except for
167 like um - like priests - priests and people like that that have had
168 their experiences, I do get influenced.
- 169 **Interviewer:** So is there anything a priest might have said to you in the past
170 that you remember?
- 171 **Alexandra:** Um – Jus', I guess, to believe in myself and, I guess, the Church
172 an' my faith.
- 173 **Interviewer:** And to believe in yourself: how do you see that helping you with
174 your relationship with God?
- 175 **Alexandra:** 'Cause God does in- influence people in their own - in his own
176 manner. And like it might not be directly but it can be like - like I
177 said through - through other people like -
- 178 **Interviewer:** Like priests.
- 179 **Alexandra:** Yeah, like priests and like your own parents.
- 180 **Interviewer:** So there are no words or actions that seem important to you that
181 you can remember?
- 182 **Alexandra:** Um – Jus' like little talks that prie- in my primary school they did.
183 Um -
- 184 **Interviewer:** Can you remember one in particular?
- 185 **Alexandra:** I'm trying to.
- 186 **Interviewer:** It's okay if you can't.
- 187 **Alexandra:** Not really.
- 188 **Interviewer:** Yep. That's alright. Well, we'll move on. Has your faith grown
189 stronger or weaker in the last twelve months?
- 190 **Alexandra:** Um - I guess stronger.
- 191 **Interviewer:** Okay. Do you know why?
- 192 **Alexandra:** Um - not really 'cau - oh well just 'cause I've been growing up
193 and realising that I'm moving off from high school to TAFE an'
194 uni an' all that.
- 195 **Interviewer:** Hmm mm.
- 196 **Alexandra:** And actually developing a n- I guess, you know, ah - your own
197 identity. It has influenced me to go closer to my faith.
- 198 **Interviewer:** What has been the impact of the school on your faith.
- 199 **Alexandra:** Aw - a lot 'cause ah - um – jis' be- it being a Catholic school like
200 the people are different, some people like , you meet like really
201 incredible people that - that really are nice and try to help you
202 out. So that has helped me like grow my own faith. Yep.
- 203 **Interviewer:** Can you talk about someone who has had that impact on you?
204 Someone your own age? Is there anyone?

- 205 **Alexandra:** Ah - yes. Should I say their name?
- 206 **Interviewer:** You could make up a name.
- 207 **Alexandra:** There's this girl called Dillon. Um – she's really nice. An' she's -
 208 um – she's been through some tough times as well, so - um -
 209 yeah, I guess I can relate to her more. An' like, she's really nice.
 210 She wouldn't like try to hurt anyone, although like - yeah.
 211 Everyone mi - someone might be mean to her she still like tries
 212 to help them out or sayi- she doesn't say bad things about them.
- 213 **Interviewer:** So she's had that way of behaving has helped you.
- 214 **Alexandra:** Yeah, general behaviour.
- 215 **Interviewer:** What about significant moments in your school life that have led
 216 to changes in the way you think about or relate with God?
- 217 **Alexandra:** Um – prob'ly like little sp- the talks, like the guest speakers in
 218 religion have influenced me because they've given me their own
 219 poi- point of view of how they see life and religion.
- 220 **Interviewer:** So which guest speakers are you talking about?
- 221 **Alexandra:** I think it was the man that I picked up - um - the - I forgot his
 222 name - he was blind. He - I - I can't remember his name - but I
 223 remember that I picked him up. It was raining an' all that. Yeah.
 224 He really influenced me 'cause he - he made me see through
 225 another point of view, like his own point of view like, "Aw I was
 226 blind an'" - like you have to pick out - not to worry about the bad
 227 things, but focus on the good things in life. So that was one
- 228 **Interviewer:** So was he a guest speaker you had this year?
- 229 **Alexandra:** Yeah. He was a guest speaker in RE. A couple ...
- 230 **Interviewer:** Alright. Has there been anything said in RE that has influenced
 231 you in your faith?
- 232 **Alexandra:** Um - I guess what I just said.
- 233 **Interviewer:** What about in RE lessons?
- 234 **Alexandra:** I can't think of anything.
- 235 **Interviewer:** That's alright.
- 236 **Alexandra:** All I can remember is assignments.
- 237 **Interviewer:** So, is your mind sort of filled with what's happening to you in
 238 Year 12 and you can't see beyond that?
- 239 **Alexandra:** Yeah, pretty much, 'cause everything's like right now and you
 240 can't hold it off.
- 241 **Interviewer:** Okay. Good. What impact have your RE teachers had on your
 242 relationship with God?
- 243 **Alexandra:** Um - I guess they've given me another perspective on - on God
 244 and how they view it and how they feel about it and they've -
 245 how they think we should act towards - behave -

- 246 **Interviewer:** Is there an RE teacher, one in particular, who's had a big
247 influence on you?
- 248 **Alexandra:** I guess Mr Thomas 'cause he's not all that serious and he does
249 like take it light-heartedly and he doesn't force us to think his
250 views.
- 251 **Interviewer:** Okay. Is that important for you to be able to have your own
252 views?
- 253 **Alexandra:** Yeah, I guess that's important for everyone to have their own
254 views to – it's also helps us structure our own beliefs an' the -
255 about God.
- 256 **Interviewer:** What about for you?
- 257 **Alexandra:** It has helped me - um - form my own like other points of views
258 and opinions about religion.
- 259 **Interviewer:** Okay. What have your parents said or done that has prompted
260 you to move closer to God or away from God?
- 261 **Alexandra:** They haven't said anything, or not much anyway. Um - just that
262 whatever - whatever happens it's supposed to happen and that it
263 is God's will no matter how horrible or how good it is it's
264 supposed to happen.
- 265 **Interviewer:** So is that your Mum speaking or your Dad? Or -?
- 266 **Alexandra:** Both, I guess.
- 267 **Interviewer:** How does the influence of your Mother differ from that of your
268 Father?
- 269 **Alexandra:** Um - not much. Um - I look at them both quite equally, so they
270 both try to say their own points of view. Yeah.
- 271 **Interviewer:** So are you a family that goes to Church regularly?
- 272 **Alexandra:** No, not really, though - though I like to go to Church as - I like -
273 not every Sunday but like when - as much as we could 'cause
274 my Dad always works.
- 275 **Interviewer:** So do you ever go by yourself?
- 276 **Alexandra:** I used to but - um - lately I haven't been able to 'cause all of
277 work and tests and assignments.
- 278 **Interviewer:** Okay. What stories from your life describe how each of your
279 parents has influenced you and your relationship with God? Do
280 you have any stories?
- 281 **Alexandra:** No, I don't think so. No. (pause) No. Any stories? I can't think of
282 any at the moment.
- 283 **Interviewer:** Is there any question that I could have asked you and I didn't
284 that you would like to have had asked?
- 285 **Alexandra:** Not really.

286 **Interviewer:** Okay, well we'll close the interview at this point. Alexandra,
287 thank you very much. It was great talking to you.

288 **Alexandra:** Thank you.